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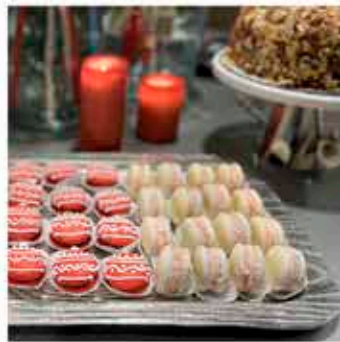
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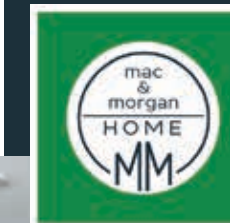
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TABLE OF CONTENTS



16
Preferred Partner Spotlight



24
Top Producers



30
Rising Stars



34
Realtor on the Rise



36
Making a Difference



38
Cover Story: 2023 Featured Agents



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► publisher's note

JANUARY

2024 HAPPY NEW YEAR!

By Robert Smith, Area Director/Publisher

Dear *Upstate Real Producers*,

As we step into a brand new year, we can't help but look back with immense gratitude for the remarkable journey that was 2023. It was a year of resilience, innovation, and unwavering dedication within the real estate industry. Through highs and lows, our Realtors demonstrated remarkable commitment, adaptability, and a deep understanding of their clients' needs.

In this special edition, we're thrilled to present a "Year in Review" that celebrates the incredible accomplishments of our REALTOR'S®. These dedicated professionals have not only weathered the challenges of the past year but have emerged stronger than ever. From navigating market fluctuations to helping clients find their dream homes, the real estate community has shown unwavering strength and determination.

In the pages ahead, you'll find stories of REALTOR'S® who went above and



Sincerely,

Robert Smith
Publisher, *Upstate Real Producers Magazine*

beyond to make their clients' dreams come true. From first-time homebuyers to seasoned investors, our REALTOR'S® have been the guiding force behind countless success stories. They've been the bridge connecting dreams to reality, and we couldn't be prouder of their achievements.

As we usher in a new year filled with hope and possibilities, we want to express our sincere appreciation for your continued support. We are honored to be your source of real estate knowledge and inspiration, and we look forward to another year of providing you with the latest trends, market insights, and expert advice.

May 2024 bring prosperity, joy, and new opportunities to you and your loved ones. We wish you a Happy New Year and a fantastic start to this exciting chapter!

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2023 PREFERRED PARTNER SPOTLIGHTS

preferred partner spotlight



Upstate Structural Repair
Wes Zitnay

Started as Upstate Structural Repair in 2015, there are now thirteen employees working together each day to repair just about every type of structural problem or deficiency within and under houses, along with foundational failures. Before becoming upstate structural repair, the company was a full-scale remodel and renovations company. This line of work opened up the opportunity to get into a lot of foundation and structural work which led to moving the company in that direction full time. Now, the main repairs are done under the houses to address damage from dry rot and termites with a fair amount of work addressing underbuilt areas.

Our ideal customer is a person who wants to invest in the longevity and integrity of the home. We love working with people who want to understand what is happening to their home and then are willing to work on the possible solutions to get it back in working order. Getting their start in the structural and foundation repair market came at the request of real estate agents who knew our work for remodel, which meant cutting their teeth in the industry by learning specific needs of agents. Knowing the specific needs of the industry means making agents' lives easier and allows more time for them to care for their clients.

"Our definition of success is a happy customer at the end of every job. Someone who feels like we took the time to listen to them and make sure they understood the repairs being done. Sometimes success is providing an honest evaluation that leads to less work for us, but piece of mind for the homeowner".



Pest Guard Solutions
Tyler Rehn

It's hard to imagine falling in love with anything related to mosquitoes, termites, bees, spiders, or ants, but that's exactly what happened to Tyler Rehn, owner of PestGuard Solutions in Greenville. "I started in 2010 by working in the industry with my father-in-law at a different pest control company. I learned the industry and fell in love with the multiple services we could provide customers and the business principles I was able to practice by helping run his company," Tyler recalled.

Tidbits about Tyler

As someone whose job it is to eradicate pests, it's not surprising that two of Tyler's favorite pastimes are hunting and shooting. He also enjoys the outdoors, sports, and being with his family.

Definition of success:

Helping customers solve their pest, termite or moisture problems while helping my employees grow in their careers

What do you find most fulfilling about your work?
Helping solve problems and satisfying customers

What significant changes have you seen take place in your profession through the years?

1. Improved ongoing education in the pest control industry
2. Online marketing for pest control



Cross Country Mortgage
Greg Bailey

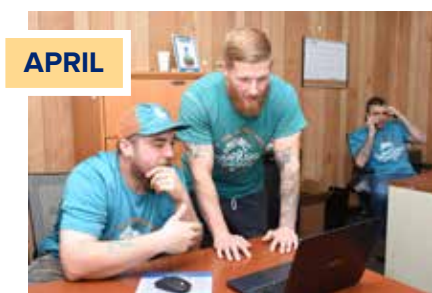
Greg Bailey of Cross Country Mortgage is a happy father, husband and lifelong sports fan. He married his beautiful wife, Wendy, 20 years ago, and together they have three wonderful children: Corbin, 26; Peyton, 16 and Jack, 14.

Born in Charleston, SC, Greg now lives in Spartanburg. He graduated from Clemson University in 1988, where he was a football letterman (go, Tigers!). He enjoys playing golf and spending

time at his family's lake house. They enjoy watersports, including tubing and boating. He is most relaxed in the late afternoon, spending time alone on his boat watching the sunset.

Greg Bailey takes an old-school approach to business. He takes time to sit down and get to know his clients. It's about so much more than just closing a deal. His father always told him that life was like a poker game. You can't control the hand you are dealt, but even a losing hand can be played well and teach you something new.

Swamp Rabbitt Moving
Chris Sweet



Finding your dream home, imagining painting, decorating the kid's rooms, or finding the perfect throw pillows is always fun and exciting, but boxing up all of your belongings and driving a moving truck? Not part of the fairytale. That is where Chris Sweet of Swamp Rabbit Moving transforms into Greenville's own Clark Kent. He and his team make the most stressful part of moving a breeze.

Lending a Hand

Having a positive impact on the community is a core value at Swamp Rabbit Moving. Each month they donate a percentage of top-line revenue to local charities they are passionate about. They are proud to be the "Official Movers for Habitat for Humanity Families." They move all of the families for free! They also support Defenders for Children and Sunday Dinner with a Twist.

Whether you are moving near or far, Swamp Rabbit Moving is here for you- they offer local and long-distance packing and unpacking as well as short and long-term storage. Customer satisfaction is always the number one goal, so if you are looking for a team that will have your back, you should follow the SRM team motto and, "Get in the habit of calling the RABBITS!"

American Financial Network
Caitlyn Marcell



Caitlyn Marcell is many things- an entrepreneur, loving wife, proud boy mom, and a Producing Branch Manager at American Financial Network.

In the Business

Caitlyn joined a large investment company after a brief stint in college, where she felt uninspired and uninterested. She joined the workforce and started at the bottom; she transitioned from portfolio investments to mortgage lending and worked her way up the company. Eventually, she became the National Trainer for Sales Support. Frustrated with "salespeople," she decided to lead by example, so Caitlyn became an Originator herself, then a Sales Manager, and now she is the Producing Branch Manager. Leading a team of mortgage loan originators and personally assisting clients from contract to closing. Blessed with an entrepreneurial spirit, as well as a hard work ethic and strategic money management skills, laid a foundation for her success in mortgage lending. After starting at a large investment firm in 2009, she transitioned into mortgage-specific finance in 2012.

**Steamatic of Greater Greenville
Clint Aycock**

Clint Aycock, proud owner of Steamatic of Greater Greenville, has over 37 years in the cleaning and restoration business. When it comes to home restoration, he is the best in the business! Regardless of the cause, if your home has been damaged by water, fire, or suffering mold, Steamatic of Greater Greenville has your back. Beyond restoration, they are a total cleaning business that includes carpet, air duct, and hard surface cleaning.

Giving Back

South Carolina was the perfect place to raise his children, so

Clint wants to give back to the state. He and his business volunteer their service at the Ronald McDonald House. They also support various charities that other employees champion.

Princilla Bridges, founder of Bridges of Augusta Charity, was one of Clint's favorite clients, admiring her passion for life, living, and her cause. She has survived two fires and helping her charity is a prime example of the amazing work Clint and his team do.

Clint's goal is to serve his family and community. He is working hard to be the best support for his clients in need.

JUNE



JULY

**Culler Roofing
Neal Culler**

After 25+ years, Culler Roofing continues to excel in the roofing industry having gained the trust of both the Upstate and Midlands communities. Their personalized care for each job, undeniable skillset, and excellent

workmanship makes

this family business a reliable source when it comes to all roofing needs. Continuing tradition, Neal Culler shows outstanding customer service and quality work for his community, making him an ideal roofing contractor and businessman.

While this company is successful in its merit, Neal instills the same amount of hard work and enthusiasm in his family. He assures that time spent with his wife, two sons, and daughter is tended to in the same way he manages his business: with care. "My ownership in this company provides me with a great work-life balance," Neal explains. When Neal is not conducting business, he and his family enjoy outdoor activities and support their kids in sporting events and games. His loving and incredibly involved approach with his family makes him that much more of a dedicated and trustworthy roofing contractor.

The future continues to look bright for this family business. Neal has done a phenomenal job showing his three children the true meaning of hard work. Diligence instilled in him by his father and teacher at a young age has set this roofer and businessman up for a successful future.

**Dolly's Roofing
Charles and Jill Dolly**

In the bustling roofing industry, where trust and craftsmanship are paramount, one name stands out: Dolly's Roofing. With a legacy spanning over a decade, Dolly's Roofing has built a reputation for delivering top-notch roofing services in the Upstate of South Carolina. Founded in 2010 by Charles Dolly, this family-owned business has flourished by providing exceptional workmanship and a commitment to customer satisfaction.

The Dolly Difference:

What sets Dolly's Roofing apart from the competition? It's the Dolly Difference. Here are three key aspects that make their business unique:

The Best Materials: Dolly's Roofing is committed to using the finest materials available in the industry. By partnering with trusted suppliers, they guarantee that your roof will be built to last.

Manufacturer-Trained Installers:

The team at Dolly's Roofing consists of manufacturer-trained installers. They undergo rigorous certification and recertification programs every year to stay up-to-date with the latest industry practices. This ensures that your roof is installed with precision and expertise.

Extended Warranties: Dolly's Roofing goes above and beyond by offering longer warranties on their work. These warranties are not only comprehensive but also transferable, providing peace of mind for homeowners even if they decide to sell their property.

Conclusion:

Dolly's Roofing, a family-owned business with a legacy of excellence,

AUGUST



brings a personal touch to the roofing industry. With a commitment to quality, exceptional craftsmanship, and a dedication to customer satisfaction, they have earned their reputation as one of the premier roofing companies in the Upstate area. When you choose Dolly's Roofing, you're choosing a team that will deliver superior results, backed by years of experience and a passion for their craft. Contact Dolly's Roofing today for all your roofing needs and experience the Dolly Difference firsthand.

**Evergreen Custom Construction
Doug Oles**

Building your dream home is a significant milestone in anyone's life. For those in the Greenville, SC area, Evergreen Custom Construction is the premier custom home builder that can transform your vision into reality. With a dedicated team of experienced professionals and a commitment to quality craftsmanship, Evergreen is the go-to choice for custom homes and renovations in the upstate of South Carolina and Western North Carolina. Let's explore why Evergreen stands out in the industry and how they can help you create your perfect home.

Evergreen Custom Construction is the trusted name in custom home building and renovations in the Greenville, SC area and beyond. With their experienced team, comprehensive services, and dedication to excellence, Evergreen brings dreams to life. Whether you're envisioning a stunning new home or seeking to renovate and upgrade your existing property, Evergreen is the partner you can rely on. Contact them today to embark on your journey to a remarkable custom home in Greenville, SC, Asheville, NC, Lake Keowee, SC, or The Cliffs Communities in SC and NC.

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Guest & Brady LLC. Attorney at Law
Kevin Brady

OCTOBER



For the last 18 years, Kevin Brady has met with people from all over the country at the closing table, prepared to help his clients to take a new step in their lives. His desire to give a helping hand to those in his hometown of Greenville, South Carolina, shows that he is not just a lawyer but a man who loves his townspeople and is willing to serve his community.

Guest & Brady LLC has a Caring Team composed of team members who, as the name suggests, seek to support the staff in various ways. Their tasks include providing marriage enrichment weekends for couples with all expenses paid, offering financial management seminars, celebrating birthdays and service anniversaries, and providing low-interest loans and emergency funds for unexpected costs, to name a few. The firm also takes time at a weekly staff meeting with all the locations to have a time for spiritual enrichment from a Christian perspective that includes biblical talks and a time for prayer. If desired, team members can also access the company's on-site chaplain for counseling and prayer.

Kevin, Russell, and their team also have a service function for the community in which financial gifts are gifted to area non-profits for the common good. The duo not only provides funding for these organizations but also encourages their team members to get involved personally with their time and energy and give the company time during the workday to do so.

Pro-Tech Inspections
Dave Adams

Over the last seven years, Pro-Tech Inspections has proven to be a powerhouse not just in the local real estate market, but across the country through the development of its brand and innovation within the home inspection industry. As the founder, Dave Adams is committed to providing their clients with

an easy-going and informative experience while implementing emerging technology, proving that the company is here to stay. In addition, he and his team of inspectors are early adopters of merging technology to increase and improve the information made available to their clients. As a result, the team is well-recognized as one of the country's most modern and forward-thinking inspection companies.

analyzes the damaged homes from those storms, and partners with his research team and the International Codes Council to develop better building codes for single-family residential construction to protect life and property.

Working hard with others is important; however, the most amazing aspect of this growth and leadership can best be attributed to the Pro-Tech Inspections team. Dave would not allow this article to focus on him, but instead insisted it is the team, the individual people, and their individual traits that combine to make Pro-Tech Inspections the special place that so many Realtors in the Upstate and Charleston have come to trust and respect.

NOVEMBER



Being the adrenaline junkie he is, Dave is passionate about storm chasing. He works with NOAA on a research team in the Midwest, collecting data from probes and post-tornado impacts. Then, he puts on his inspector hat,



DECEMBER

Greenville Radon Specialist and Restoration
Nick Jarrett

In the heart of Simpsonville, South Carolina, there's a team on a mission. Meet Nicholas and Robert Jarrett and the dedicated professionals of Greenville Restoration Services & Greenville Radon Specialist, collectively known as Team GRS. With a vision to be the most Reliable Restoration & Radon Company in their service area, Team GRS is changing the game in property restoration and environmental hazard mitigation.

Conclusion:

Greenville Restoration Services & Greenville Radon Specialist, led by Nicholas Jarrett and his team. They are supported by a legacy of family dedication, and are more than just a restoration and radon solution. They are a beacon of hope for those facing property damage or environmental hazards, and their commitment to excellence is paving the way for a safer and more resilient community.

For all your property restoration and radon mitigation solutions, remember the name "Team GRS" - where reliability and integrity meet.

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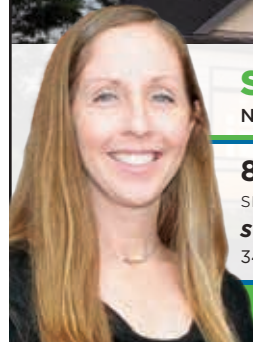
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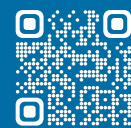
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2023 TOP

PRODUCERS

JANUARY JENNIFER HUBBELL

Jen Hubbell had no intentions of becoming a Real Estate agent —ever. Though her husband had his license and worked as a developer of large master planned golf course communities, Jen loved managing retail stores, owning and operating multiple small businesses and raising their 4 kids. Everything changed when 2008 ripped through the nation's economy, causing a crippling financial shift for the Hubbells. The Hubbells had barely made it on the other side of that crisis when a friend in Florida told Jen that a local real estate brokerage was looking for a leader - not someone who knew real estate per se, but someone who knew how to lead and inspire others, who possessed a high level of business savvy, and wanted to help others achieve their goals.

Although Jen's career has not been traditional, she continues to thrive and loves seeing the growth of the three amazing women (Jessica, Jamie, and Emily) who are the 'associates' of Jen Hubbell and Associates. Through growing her team, Jen has become even more passionate about agent collaboration. She warmly states, "I would not be as successful as I am without learning from and collaborating with other great agents - no matter the firm". Her vision is to build businesses that are living, breathing examples to others of purpose, power, and profit through faith and work. Real Estate provides Jen an opportunity to think bigger and act accordingly. "I love building a business where other people can feel accepted, loved, and challenged to be who they are called to be - I want their life to be better on account of meeting and working with me."

FEBRUARY CARMEN FEEMSTER

Growing up in real estate, Carmen Crigler Feemster is fully pursuing the passion she and her family have always shared. With her grandfather, the late C. Dan Joyner, as a huge role model for her, Carmen continues to look up to him and carry on the legacy of helping people while finding joy in the industry.

Carmen's piece of advice to those starting out would be that if you love it, you have to push yourself to stick with it. Don't give up! Being positive and truly having great relationships is something that Carmen has learned through her family and strives for daily — where you are matters so much! At C. Dan Joyner, REALTORS® is a family environment that truly feels that way from the moment you walk in. Make sure you have a great support system — no matter where you are in life!



MARCH NORELL MITCHELL GRISSETT

Norell Mitchell Grissett, born and raised in New York, found herself in South Carolina after marrying her husband, Lamont. The couple met while she was finishing up her studies at Coastal Carolina University. However, this was not her first experience in the South; her father is from Birmingham, AL, and much of her youth was spent with his family "down south."



She loyally cheers for the Alabama Crismon Tide as a nod to her father's family, but as a faithful Chanticleer, naturally supports the USC Gamecocks.

When asked about her future plans and goals, Norell shares that she believes that she is currently serving in the space that God intended for her. She hopes to continue to grow her business so that she can further support philanthropic organizations in our area on a greater level. Her reasoning for this can be found in the passage in the Bible that reads, "to whom much is given, much is required." Although her children are young, she actively looks for opportunities to model this behavior in the hopes that they will continue to do so when they are older. She ended with a proud smile saying, "It's a good foundation for them. Don't you agree?"

APRIL TROY HARRISON

Troy Harrison of Whitetail Properties Real Estate has lived a life full of many turns, but his family is his constant. He married his incredible wife, Diana, 27 years ago, and they have four children together. Their oldest, Blake, is 22 and lives in Spartanburg after recently graduating from High Point University. Second is Ashlyn, 20, a junior at the University of South Carolina who plans on going to medical school after she graduates. Third is Alexa, 14, a freshman in high school who plays soccer year-round. The last of their bunch is Cole, 12. He is in 7th grade and loves basketball, soccer, and competitive shooting. The Harrisons spend as much time outside as possible; hiking, hunting, camping, fishing, gardening- they do it all! They also love attending sporting events and are very involved with their church.

Passionate about helping people achieve their dreams, Troy's favorite real estate transaction to handle is mini-farms. Where many people would see a sad end, Troy finds beauty. Troy says, "I love working with people who are selling land that has been in their family for generations. Often their children aren't interested in owning or using the land, but you can sense the great pride they have in how they and their ancestors have used and lived on that piece of land. I really enjoy sitting down and learning the history of the land or the farm they are selling." He also celebrates the new owners and their dreams becoming a reality. "I love selling land on which people want to build a homestead or mini-farm. It's so rewarding to see people excited about owning a piece of land they will use to grow food or for recreation."



MAY KIM JOHNSON

Kim Johnson of Coldwell Banker Caine knows the reward for hard work- personally and professionally. After over 25 years in the business and raising two remarkable daughters, she knows the proof is in the pudding.

Mentors

Kim's father was born and raised in a Mill Village; he put himself through college and law school. After many successful years as a lawyer, he was the Speaker of the House of Representatives of South Carolina. His encouragement and lessons on hard work are gifts she has treasured all her life. Her mother was also a mentor to Kim; her love and kindness are lessons that Kim shares with all the people who come into her life.

Christ is at the heart of everything Kim does. She is grateful for God's hand in her life and knows she serves her family, church, and clients. Her favorite quote "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." Philippians 13, are the words she lives by.



JUNE

RICK ANGEL

“The whole world would be a much better place if everyone just followed the two greatest commandments. 1. Love God 2. Love others as yourself,” says REALTOR® Rick Angell. He understands the importance of the Golden Rule. As he says, “If everyone followed it, we would have world peace.”

Closing Comments

Rick is a man who truly cares about others. He’s making a difference with every listing and coming into contact with his clients. He concludes “We truly love, care for and are compassionate about helping others. Our mission statement at Angell Solutions is to lovingly, caringly and compassionately guide others through the home buying or selling process with an emphasis on building relationships that last a lifetime. We model our mission statement after Jesus’s.” With God as his guide and care for his clients, Rick is building a solid foundation for his future and beyond.



JULY

REAH SMITH

Many of us spend our lives searching for our authentic selves. Reah Land Smith of Lake Keowee Real Estate can undoubtedly claim this achievement! Driven by her passion for life, she has found her niche in Real Estate.

Future in Real Estate

Reah cares about more than just the transaction. All of the opportunities made available through real estate- personally and professionally have only increased her love for the field. She wants to help families create generational wealth through homeownership. She said, “I have a real driving desire to work towards advocacy avenues that create opportunities for workforce housing and getting more Americans into homeownership. One of the simplest ways to get started building wealth is investment in real estate through home ownership. I want that message to continue

to be delivered to the next generations and also to the communities that historically have had more barriers to attaining property ownership. My dreams now go beyond how to get my buyers into their “dream lake home.” My dreams include a real estate professional industry that values and strongly upholds federal fair housing laws, that takes their responsibility for fair dealing seriously and equitably for all, that upholds at all cost our Realtor Code of Ethics.”

Reah shared a note for other Real Estate Agents; “I would like to encourage anyone in the readership to reach out to me, especially as it relates to improving our industry and serving as a leader, with or without a title.”



AUGUST

ASHLEY SWANN

Ashley Swann is loving life as a full-time REALTOR® and mother of two. With more than \$50 million in sales since launching her business full-time in 2018, she hasn’t wasted any time establishing her career in the Upstate market. While her journey in real estate has taken some twists and turns since she was licensed ten years ago, Ashley has developed her skills and knowledge in the industry, making Ashley a one-of-a-kind agent.

Having learned so much from many successful agents, Ashley hopes to inspire new, aspiring REALTORS® to handle themselves well in this ever-changing business.

Ashley concludes, “My top advice for new agents is to treat others how you want to be treated and never be embarrassed to ask questions. Real estate can be stressful enough. There is no reason to make it more difficult by not being kind. Part of what I love about this business is that I’m always learning something new. Pretending to know everything isn’t doing you or your clients any favors. Be open to asking about what you don’t know and learning all you can.”



SEPTEMBER

RITA GARNER

Leader and Lover Of Her Community

Rita Garner is devoted to her hometown of Anderson, SC. More than that, she is passionate about helping newcomers to the area see that this is the location to call home. With more than 25 years of experience and knowledge, calling on Rita and her team would be the right decision when navigating this ever-changing real estate industry.

Rita and Joe love helping buyers and sellers, new or seasoned, navigate the world of real estate and achieve their dreams. They are passionate about their hometown of Anderson County and love to share it with others as they decide if they want to make Anderson or Upstate SC their home.

Rita concludes, “The Upstate, specifically Anderson, is conveniently located between Charlotte and Atlanta. We have all four seasons, beautiful landscapes, and are home to Lake Hartwell, Lake Keowee, and Lake Jocassee, among other beautiful lakes. We are an easy drive to big mountain ranges and coastal areas. There is something here for everyone, and we love to help others find the same passions that we have for the area we call home.”



OCTOBER

LEONARDO G. MITTA MOZZO

Eat, Breathe, & Dream Real Estate

“Discipline will take you to places where motivation can’t.”

Leonardo G. Mitta Mozzo continues up that ladder of real estate success with every positive interaction and easy-going transaction he makes. As his career volume continues to rise to new heights, his growing experience and knowledge prove that he is a one-of-a-kind REALTOR®.

When real estate is not on his brain, Leonardo spends time outdoors with his wife, Audrey, and their children, Camila and Brithan. Whether they’re hiking, spending days on Lake Keowee cruising on their boat, or attending all of the Clemson football games; he is happy that this career gives him plenty of time to catch up and love on his three favorite people.

Whether they are new to the real estate process or trying to grow their property portfolio, Leonardo goes above and beyond for all his clients. He believes that putting hard work into anything one can do will earn the best results. With his tenacity and courage to be a better REALTOR® than he was the day before, he has definitely earned his.



NOVEMBER

HOLLY DOUGLAS

Building Dreams, One Home at a Time

Meet Holly Douglas, a remarkable Real Estate Agent with Clardy Real Estate, Inc., whose journey through the world of real estate has been nothing short of inspiring. At the age of 34, she combines her roles as a wife, mom, Christian, associate broker, avid reader, Crossfitter, and former University of Tennessee Lady Volunteer student athlete into a career that she’s truly passionate about.

Defining Success

Holly defines success as making her family proud, honoring God, and serving others. Her ultimate goal is to bless others financially and through her investments, nurturing new dreams and opportunities.

In Conclusion

Holly Douglas is not just a successful Real Estate Agent; she’s a team player who believes in winning together. Her journey from a walk-on athlete to a top-performing Realtor mirrors her resilience and determination. With a heart for service and a vision for community, Holly Douglas is a remarkable presence in the world of real estate.

DECEMBER
KAREN BINNARR
A Realtor with a Heart

In the dynamic world of real estate, one name that stands out for her passion, commitment, and dedication is Karen Binnarr. She's not just a real estate agent; she's a passionate advocate for her clients, a protector of their interests, and a powerhouse of knowledge.

The Most Rewarding Aspect

For Karen, the most rewarding part of her business is the relationships she builds with her clients. She takes immense joy in helping people achieve their real estate goals, whether it's escaping generational poverty, buying their first home, downsizing, investing, or relocating to the Upstate of South Carolina. Her commitment to her clients goes beyond real estate; she also supports local businesses through her "LoLo" campaign, giving back to her community.



In Conclusion

Karen Binnarr's journey from teacher to real estate agent is a testament to her unwavering dedication to her family and her clients. Her passion, integrity, and commitment to giving back make her a stand-out professional in the real estate industry. Karen's approach to real estate goes beyond buying and selling; it's about building relationships, fostering growth, and serving her community.

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2023 RISING STARS

FEBRUARY

Wes Edwards

Wesley Wayne Edwards Jr., more commonly known as Wes, graduated from Erskine College in 2007 and naturally began working for the family company, Draiser-Edwards Music, from 2005 to 2018. He eventually worked his way up to general manager. In 2018 his family business which had grown across three states with over 80 employees, was purchased by a large investment company. At 35, Wes could step back and decide what he would enjoy as a career.



When we asked Wes what advice he would give to the up-and-coming top producer, he shared this wisdom: “Surround yourself with people who will help you take care of your clients at the highest level. Take advantage of resources and try your best for your clients and the rest will take care of itself.”

Wes says he appreciates “the opportunity to work with other agents and thinks that in most transactions, we are all working for the same end results while representing the best interests of our clients, either the buyer or seller, so I try and operate with open professionalism that hopefully helps close transactions timely and smoothly.”

Wes is thankful for all his clients and the support he has received in the real estate industry of upstate South Carolina. He wants to be remembered for giving his best efforts while honoring the Lord and helping others.

MARCH

Olga Bridges

Olga Bridges, a REALTOR® with Ponce Realty Group, knows how challenging life can be. Originally from Ukraine, she came to the U.S. with a dream of being a real estate agent. She earned two degrees while living in Ukraine, one in languages and the other in economics, and she always dreamed of owning her own business. A practical woman, she decided to enter the field for two reasons; first, because of the price of getting an education in the United States. Second, because she already had two college degrees. REALTOR® classes are affordable and a good investment in herself. Beyond cost, Olga explained that “real estate combines two main requirements that my business had to meet: it is challenging, which makes me a better expert every day; second, helping people.”



SUCCESS

Olga’s favorite quote is from Rory Vaden; “Success is never owned, it is rented, and the rent is due every day.” Olga herself defines success as finding a balance in life. Be happy with what you have today, but strive for more. She doesn’t view success as a destination but as part of the journey, as having the courage to start over even when you fail.

ADVICE

“Work hard without expecting an immediate reward, and you will achieve success.” She says, “Business is always about getting better, learning, meeting new people, and overcoming challenges. A top producer needs to have the mindset of a fighter, a warrior who can overcome difficulties and help others.”

Olga wants to inspire; inspire people to chase their dreams regardless of other people’s opinions or how impossible they may seem. She wants to be the reason someone smiles.



MAY

Talia Gila

Talia Gila of Keller Williams of Greenville Central is unafraid of hard work. Originally from Israel, Talia served in the Israeli army. During her years serving in the military, she learned how to serve others and build trust in the community. Passionate about helping others and possessing experience in sales, Talia thought Real Estate would be the right path for herself. Talia loves connecting with new people- hearing their stories. Being trilingual (English, Hebrew, and Spanish) allows her to connect with people from different cultures.

ADVICE

Talia advises other Realtors to “get connected and surround themselves with successful agents, people sphere because you can always learn from them. “

Talia’s favorite quote is from George Bernard Shaw “Life isn’t about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.” Success isn’t handed to you; Talia explains, “success in actions knowing your core and knowing why is so important... success is Not Final, and Failure is Not Fatal: it is the Courage to Continue that counts. Sometimes it is just showing up at the right time and place. Other times it is showing up again and again. It doesn’t matter how great you or your product is if you are not continuously showing up. Show up, show up, show up. Close the deals, get the sale, and scale it.”



JUNE

Drew Torres

A HOME-GROWN SUCCESS STORY

Growing up in Holly Tree of Simpsonville, SC, Drew Torres always assumed he’d “grow up and move away.” He did, originally working for an executive staffing company based in NY. While the work and pay were great, the constant travel was brutal.

When he missed daughter Ava’s 1st birthday, he and his wife Chelsea took stock of what was truly important and decided to move back home, landing in Botany Woods. Their search process could have been a lot better, which prompted Drew to consider residential real estate as his next career move.

The flexibility of sales allows him to achieve his most important goal: being a hands-on Dad to Ava, and an equal partner with Chelsea, who also works full-time. Their new puppy wreaks havoc and completes their family. Drew defines success as “Doing something because you want to, not because you have to. I truly enjoy helping my buyer and seller clients. I’m now comfortable where I am, both personally and professionally.”



JULY

Emily Clough

Real Estate has been a central part of Emily Clough’s life since she was a student at the University of South Carolina. She is now a Realtor with The GVL Group - Keller Williams, Real Estate, but she entered the field as a Real Estate Assistant in Columbia, SC, while she majored in Business with a focus on Real Estate at USC. After graduation, she moved to Greenville and worked as a Single Agent for a year at Berkshire Hathaway before she joined a team with KW. It was on this team that she met her incredible husband, Logan. After two years on this team, they started their partnership, The GVL Group. Together they have spent the past five years building their business.

ADVICE

When asked what advice she had for upcoming Realtors, Emily wisely shared, “Consistency is the key. Be consistent with your lead generation, processes with clients, and contact post-closing, and you’ll see your business grow.” She shared how her experience in 2023 has varied from years prior “I’ve helped more clients in the hard seasons of life. (Divorce, death, job loss, etc.) I’m passionate about making these transactions as easy as possible when I know my clients are already dealing with a lot personally.” Emily goes above and beyond to give each client the support they need.

Buying a home is a life-changing investment, especially for younger first-time buyers, but Emily loves what she does. “I enjoy real estate because I feel like I get to help people and work beside my family while I’m doing it. I take the time to get to know my clients on a personal level and end up becoming good friends with many of them.”



AUGUST
Evan Whaley

Inspired by his hardworking mother and dedicated to wanting to help others, Evan always knew he was meant to become a REALTOR®. With only four years of experience and a career volume of over \$36 million in sales, there is no doubt that his outstanding work in the industry makes him a powerhouse in the Upstate.

Evan states, “My advice to the new top producers is to become decisive on what they want their business to look like and what sacrifices they are willing to or not willing to make to get there. Then, make sure that those you love understand your goals as well. After that, create a schedule and stick to it. Hard work and consistency will create amazing results over time.”

Ultimately, Evan’s mission is to serve his clients to the best of his ability and help build community. He cheerfully remembers assisting a woman looking to purchase a home where her grandson could make friends and play in a safe neighborhood. Thanks to Evan, in the first week of living in their new home, his client’s grandson made a friend, learned to ride a bike, and began to play with other kids his age. As a devoted family man, a high-producing agent, and a community supporter, he is the ideal businessman to work with when finding one’s dream home or helping someone sell their home for the highest amount possible.

SEPTEMBER
Gabrielle Campbell



Gabrielle Campbell of BrandName Real Estate is a few states south of her home state. Originally from New York, she has happily settled in South Carolina with her golden retriever, Rogue.

ON THE JOB

Following her father’s example, Gabrielle makes the best business choices for herself, including working with BrandName Real Estate. With a straightforward business plan, their compensation plan is something she appreciates; she gets 100% commission for \$200 a month. This allows her to invest more money into her business team and clients.

Gabrielle finds joy in helping millennials. She is passionate about educating first-time buyers, sellers, and investors. One of her favorite experiences from 2022 is helping a client buy two investment properties and flip them- he was only 20!

As her business is social media based, all her clients are her Facebook friends. She loves following their lives and being invited to weddings, baby showers, and more! Gabrielle explained, “I don’t have a specific charity I give it to; it’s more of people I encounter that have a need in that moment.” Gabrielle loves supporting people her age; women starting businesses or young couples starting businesses, and more! In all aspects of her job, she goes above and beyond; if her clients are having a tough time, she sends them a care package. She loves to celebrate happy times too! If they are engaged or expecting, they are getting a surprise at the door! She loves to spoil people.

Remember your clients after the closing. Make an effort to see them two or three times a year, and “don’t let people rob you of the impact you are supposed to make because you’re afraid of what they think.” Her goal for herself is not to be a luxury specialist realtor but to be remembered as “loving everyone I encounter and leaving everyone I encounter feeling loved.”

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2023 REALTOR ON THE RISE



JUNE JOHN ARMSTRONG

John Armstrong of Wilson Associates Real Estate is a true outdoorsman. He spends his free time duck hunting, fly fishing, or playing tennis. Based on his favorite quote, "Never knew a man not to be improved by a dog," from Robert Ruark, John is a much-improved man! He and his wonderful wife Rebecca spend their lives surrounded by their three precious dogs, Taos, Cleo, and Cricket.

Growth

John Armstrong is constantly pushing himself to learn and grow. His current aspiration is to be in the top one percent of agents in Greenville, SC and to become a broker. His lifelong dream of being a business owner will only come to fruition if he puts in the time, and he certainly has.

Being a Real Estate Agent was a good fit. He is the type of man that makes small talk everywhere he goes- he has never met a stranger! He loves to build friendships with his clients and create positive experiences for them. Giving his buyers "off-market opportunities in sought-after areas in the Upstate" is one of his favorite parts of the job. Receiving countless referrals from past clients is a testament to the skill and care he provides all of his clients.

OCTOBER SUSAN WRIGHT

Tending To Her Community One Client At a Time

With six years under her belt and an estimated \$20 million in sales, Susan Wright is proving to be a fine REALTOR® in the Upstate market. Her desire to help her clients attain exactly what they need when finding or handling property makes her the one to call with any real estate needs.

Working With Her Heart On Her Sleeve

Susan is honored that her many clients and their referrals trust her in their journey to buying or selling

their homes. It is imperative to her that she finds creative and lucrative ways to assist her customers in the Upstate market. As the area's market continues to grow, it has proven challenging over the years to find housing where buyers are not pushed out further and farther geographically to find what they can afford. Susan has taken on the task of understanding the best ways to help those in her community find fair-priced housing in their own backyard.

Susan states, "It turned out that getting into real estate was the best career move I've ever made. I love that each day is different and challenging. There are new people to meet, new personalities to navigate, and new problems to solve for my clients."



NOVEMBER LYNN BLANTON

Business Couldn't Be Better

Lynn states, "Meeting potential clients and residents interested in the area makes me happy and motivated to make sure they choose Abbeville. As a lifelong resident, seeing folks moving into our neck of the woods for a better lifestyle brings me joy. Showing my client's property on my pontoon along Lake Secession is absolutely the best! There's nothing wrong with good small-town living."

Lynn is proud that she finally has a career she should have had all along. Helping people, which is her passion, is what the real estate business is all about. She finds it rewarding when her clients ask for help listing their properties. Coaching them through what can be a daunting process leads them to end an old chapter, giving them the opportunity for a fresh new start.

Lynn loves what she does for a living, which gives her a feeling of accomplishment. Helping others brings her joy.

Lynn concludes, "I am grateful for all of the blessings in my life; so much so that I would love to give new agents some advice when stepping into this industry. Build solid and friendly relationships with new and current clients. Do your best to make them feel important."



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▷▷ making a difference

2023 MAKING A DIFFERENCE

RACHEL DANKEL



MAY
RACHEL DANKEL

RACHEL THE RUNNING REALTOR

Filled with a deep love of running, Rachel describes herself as well-rounded, and always striving to maintain balance. She has an incredible drive to embrace and thrive in all aspects of her life. Happily married for over 25 years, Rachel has raised two wonderful, successful daughters with whom she shares a strong bond. She works hard to be a role model for them, a woman they can look to for inspiration and support. Outside of her love for her family, she has cultivated a healthy lifestyle, nurtured friendships, reached personal financial goals, and is succeeding in her real estate business.

ADVICE

Rachel wants to remind fellow Realtors “to take care of your health and well-being! As Realtors, we often have very unpredictable, hectic schedules. We need to make time to exercise and eat well! Training for a marathon gives me a great framework and keeps me accountable, but everyone doesn’t have to run marathons to have a great routine. Find what works best for you. I like writing down my workout goal week by week and checking it off as I do it. This holds me accountable, and it’s fun to look back and see what I have accomplished! Remember, you only have one body; treat it well!”

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2023 FEATURED AGENTS

cover story

JANUARY

Cassie Simpson

"Aim so high you will never be bored!" REALTOR® Cassandra Simpson, also known as Cassie, lives by those words. She got her real estate license in 2008 and has a career volume that tops 100 million dollars.

Integrity is everything to this independent and self-made REALTOR®. Cassie comments, "I pride myself in being one of the best in a very unique way." A very direct and thorough REALTOR®, Cassie never misses any opportunity to save money for her clients.

Her high attention to detail is an asset in the real estate industry. She explains, "I make sure everything is above board and legal, so we have no surprises at closing!"

Final Thoughts

Cassie concludes, "A house is not just a house, it is a HOME ... a place where dreams come true!" She delights in helping her clients find the property that is right for them. From IT to real estate, Cassie has made a name for herself in real estate. Her heart for others and her driven and determined nature has helped her to succeed!



FEBRUARY

Amy Hammond



"Real estate is not my first love (my husband Jody came along first), but it's my first and only career. I've been selling real estate for over 20 years, since I was 19! I can't imagine doing anything else, and not just because it's all I've ever known. The people I work with and the clients I work for tell me I'm pretty good at it. I welcome the constant learning experience," says REALTOR® Amy Hammond, broker associate with Joan Herlong & Associates Sotheby's International Realty's Clemson/Lakes office.

Final Thoughts

"Real estate is what I do. It's not who I am," says Amy. "I strive to be better every day, making me a better broker for my clients."

At 19, Amy never dreamed of the success she's achieved today. She's living proof that learning from every deal, embracing every opportunity, and always putting your client's interest first combine to create a natural path to top producer.

As Joan Herlong likes to say, "Amy is amazing. She has an inner strength that her clients and friends know they can rely on; she takes care of people."

MARCH

Rupesh Patel



Seeking a better way of life, Rupesh got into real estate because he knew he had a passion for people. "Real estate would give me a vehicle to provide for my new child," he explains. He got his license in 2009 and started as a part-time independent agency with Century 21 Blackwell & Co.

He was a natural at real estate, selling 15 homes before going full-time. The week his daughter was born, Rupesh juggled three pending closings. The following year, he sold 38 homes and continued to do well.

Top Tips

Eager to be the best he can be, Rupesh takes time to learn and grow as a person. He encourages others to do the same. He explains, "Leaders are learners. Take time to read, go to events, get in big rooms with powerful people better than you, take time to reflect, journal and get out of your comfort zone."

Closing Comments

Rupesh is an inspiration. Arriving from England with no connections, he found his foundation and his future in real estate. In the process, he has made many the dreams of countless clients come true!

APRIL

Berenice Ramage

Life is an adventure for those who embrace the journey. REALTOR® Berenice Ramage is one such individual. Originally from Mexico, Berenice earned a law degree from her home country before moving to the United States in 2002. The road wasn't easy, but it was worth it.

No Shortcuts to Success

Berenice and Brian know that there are no shortcuts to success. As Berenice can attest, "Real estate requires a lot of dedication." Not only do you have to work hard, but your heart has to be completely in it. "This is a job that you have to put the work in to get the return, but it is very rewarding," she says.

Final Thoughts

"I want to be remembered for being the best REALTOR® in the Upstate," smiles Berenice. She loves working together with Brian as a husband-wife team. Berenice concludes, "We work together to be able to be available at all times for our clients."

Dedicated. Driven. Determined. Berenice overcame the odds, moving from Mexico to America, mastering the English language and helping people with all their real estate needs. She and Brian are an inspiration to their clients as they seek to exceed their expectations, each and every time!





Kiersten Bell

her family businesses as a child and a teenager, landing her first job outside of that when she was 13. Riding her bike on Hilton Head Island (sometimes in the rain!), she biked to her job faithfully at a t-shirt shop.

Relentless

A loyal go-getter with a heart of gold, Kiersten lives to laugh, smile, and cultivate relationships with others. Helping others is what this driven REALTOR® is all about.

“A client once described me as implacable. I had to look it up but I had to agree with her and it made my day. One of my friends got me a t-shirt that says implacable on it,” she says. This t-shirt suits her to a tee!

A Heart of Gratitude

When reflecting over her real estate career, Kiersten wants to thank those who have helped her get to where she is today, including her REALTOR® peers.

“I want to thank my husband for being my number one fan and ultimate supporter. He and our kids are the ultimate prize. We have the life that I have always dreamed of and at the ripe ole age of 34, I was finally able to live,” she concludes.

Kiersten is an inspiration, overcoming obstacles and becoming the Top Producer she is today. Her authentic nature shines through in everything she does, resonating with her clients as she builds relationships with them. She’s come a long way from her first job at the t-shirt shop, now selling real estate instead of retail!

Entrepreneurs have the grit, drive and determination to blaze their own trail in life. Meet Kiersten Leah Bell who recognized her entrepreneurial side when she was a child.

“I worked from an early age,” says Kiersten. She started working for

Cliff Stoltzfus



Cliff Stoltzfus, a Real Estate Agent with Clardy Real Estate, is a steadfast man who works until the job is done. In 2019, he joined Clardy Real Estate and never looked back, “I love working with people, and I love real estate. Also, I love pushing numbers and doing math. Real estate has all of this. It goes very well with real estate investments.”

Advice

When asked what advice he had for new Real Estate Agents, Cliff said, “Sales can be up and down like a roller coaster. When sales are slow, and times get hard, stay at it, keep chasing your goals, and keep helping everybody that you can. You might think a small lot isn’t worth your time, but after you build a relationship with that person, they

end up referring you to many more, more substantial sales. Take the time for everyone.” Also, don’t limit yourself. Cliff has sold lake homes, small lots in the country, and everything in between; he is interested in helping his clients get what they want- buying or selling!

Gratitude

Beyond being thankful for his wife and family, Cliff said, “I’m so thankful to my Jesus who is so big, and blesses us in ways we can’t even imagine. I am reminded of the Bible verse in Ephesians 3:20 that says, “God is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, and above all, we could ever ask, imagine, or think, according to his power in us. To Him be the glory.”



Emily Slabaugh

knock-you-on-your-knees days. By way of my sports experiences, building a family, and establishing my real estate career, Christ has been my constant strength through both the good and bad days,” this woman of faith reflects.

Smooth Sailing

Emily is passionate about offering extraordinary service to her clients while having a lot of fun along the way. She knows she is supporting people at an extremely stressful time in their life. For most clients, this will be the largest purchase or sale in their lives, and her goal is to make it as smooth and comforting as possible.

Turning confusion and concern into balance and success for clients and developing relationships that become lifelong friendships is what it’s all about to this driven real estate agent. For Emily, the

Philippians 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.”

That Scripture verse has been Emily Elizabeth Slabaugh’s life motto through sports, raising kids, and now as a real estate agent. “Being a REALTOR® can be filled with top-of-the-world days and

relationship with the client continues after the transaction is complete.

She explains, “I view real estate as a lifetime adventure, keeping in touch with clients over the years and continuing to support them as their needs change.”

A Bright Future

Emily is a talented and dedicated real estate agent who has achieved great success in her field. Her passion for serving her clients with exceptional care and support has earned her a reputation as a reliable and trustworthy agent. Emily’s commitment to her clients, her team, and her family is an inspiration to all who know her. With her enthusiasm, positivity, and dedication, Emily is sure to continue making a positive impact on her clients and the real estate industry for many years to come.

Jason Pillar



Driven. Dedicated. Determined. All of these qualities describe Jason Pillar, CRS, with Home Link Realty, LLC. A self-described easygoing and funny individual, he is committed to his career. Prior to real estate, he was a truck driver, but envisioned a better life for himself.

Finding His Home at Home Link Realty

“I chose Home Link Realty after interviewing with several of the bigger agencies,” says Jason. He found that Brandon and Home Link Realty offered unparalleled support and resources to assist him in serving his clients effectively.

With over 300 transactions completed and over 36 million dollars in sales, real estate

was the right fit for Jason. He caters to his clients and is eager to be the best he can be. “I look up to Bob Loeffler, the Fearless Agent. He does things the complete opposite of the majority of REALTORS®. I like that,” he says.

Final Thoughts

In the competitive world of real estate, Jason Pillar stands out as a testament to the power of ambition, drive, and a genuine passion for helping others. With his charismatic personality, dedication to his clients, and an unwavering commitment to personal growth, Jason continues to make a lasting impact in the industry. Aspiring real estate professionals can learn valuable lessons

from his journey, including the importance of forging authentic connections, working with like-minded individuals, and charting their own path to success.

Justin Coleman

A Career Dedicated to Excellence

Throughout his real estate career, Justin has focused on providing exceptional service to his clients. His commitment to going above and beyond has earned him a reputation as a trusted, knowledgeable professional and his success is a testament to his dedication and hard work.

Passion for Making Dreams Come True

The most rewarding aspect of Justin's business is helping his clients achieve their dreams. Whether it's assisting them in finding their perfect home or guiding them through the process of selecting the ideal lot to design and build a custom home, Justin takes joy in making a positive

impact on their lives. Seeing his clients find happiness and fulfillment in their real estate endeavors brings him immense satisfaction.

Defining Success

To Justin, success is not merely measured by financial achievements but by finding happiness and fulfillment in what you do. He believes that when you love what you do, success naturally follows. Celebrating small wins, cherishing life's simple joys, and making a positive impact on others are the cornerstones of Justin's definition of success. Justin also leans heavily on his faith and says, "There's a great Bible verse that comes to mind regarding success - 'Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans (Proverbs 16:3).'"



Justin strives to be remembered as an authentic, loyal, and integral person who made a difference in the lives of others. His dedication to helping people and his commitment to living a life of integrity shape his interactions and guide his professional journey.

Betina Conway

Gratitude + Positive Attitude = Success

"Behind every successful person is a substantial amount of coffee and chocolate," jokes REALTOR® Betina Preisler Conway. Betina, who started her own team – Betina Conway & Associates – at Allen Tate Realtors, is just shy of \$70 million for her personal career volume with over \$22.5 million in sales last year.

A strong and fiercely independent woman, Betina earned her SC real estate license in 2018. Her brother-in-law, who resides in Denmark, was a Broker/Owner of a huge real estate company, which led to conversations about real estate.

"I was intrigued. I thought it sounded so wonderful to help people with the biggest transactions in their lives," says Betina.

Advice from a Top Producer

Betina's advice to up-and-coming real estate professionals is to be authentic, work hard, be honest, and never stop learning. She emphasizes the importance of treating everyone with kindness, respecting others, and always prioritizing clients' best interests. This advice served her well through the years.

A Grateful Heart

In looking over her real estate career, Betina wants to be remembered for her gratitude and appreciation for everyone in her life, and for her unwavering commitment to integrity and kindness. Betina's passion, hard work, and relentless pursuit of excellence have made her who she is today.



Michael Roach



Family + Fun

Mike's family has a special place in his heart. He and his wife Lisa like going to dinner, taking trips to the beach to relax and unwind, and spending time with their dogs. They also treasure time with their children. With his daughter Peyton, they enjoy spending time on the lake and playing golf together, when they aren't working in real estate.

"My son Granger owns his own construction business, Outdoor Restorations," adds Mike. "We work together often as I get him jobs from my clients." To relax, they enjoy hunting together.

In his free time, Mike enjoys deer hunting, golf, and water sports. He also loves Clemson sports. Savoring time with his friends is important to him. A loyal friend, good friends are very special to Mike.

A Top Gun

Mike's mantra, "If you are early, you're never late," perfectly sums up his approach to business and life. Always prepared, driven, and disciplined, Mike continues to soar as a top gun in the world of real estate, leaving behind a legacy of excellence and inspiring others to reach for the stars in their own endeavors.

"Real estate has been great to me. A perfect fit! I'm not the type to sit at a desk all day or in an office," says REALTOR® Mike Roach with Top Guns Realty. He loves what he does and it shows with his enthusiasm. Connecting with others is what he does best and he likes working with new people.

Lisa Vogel



A Legacy of Caring, Expertise, and Kindness in Real Estate

In a world of hustle and bustle, kindness and compassion can go a long way, especially with one of the most stressful times of life – moving. That's where REALTOR® Lisa Vogel with Joan Herlong & Associates at Sotheby's International Realty shines. "I care about my clients more than I care about 'the deal,'" she comments. "It all boils down to helping and caring," she explains. Whether an elderly couple is moving to be closer to medical facilities, or a family looking to purchase a lake home, every transaction needs to be treated with the care and compassion that it deserves. Lisa

excels in this aspect of her career with her clients turning into lifelong friends.

Words of Wisdom

With her years of experience and expertise in real estate, Lisa has some words of wisdom. She concludes, "Be humble. Life is all about timing and hard work. Sometimes you can get lucky by being in the right place at the right time. It isn't about what I have accomplished; it's more about what have I done to help others?"

Lisa is a shining light of compassion, expertise, and integrity—a guiding light for both her clients and her peers. Her journey

illustrates the transformative power of putting clients first, caring deeply, and embracing the essence of what it means to truly excel in the field of real estate.

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dynamic duo

2023

Dynamic Duo

LEIGH IRWIN AND TONI LEOPARD

AUGUST

Leigh Irwin and Toni Leopard

Dynamic Duo

Leigh Irwin and Toni Leopard are powerhouses in the fast-paced real estate business. Long time teammates, this female-empowered dynamic duo has cracked the code on negotiating favorable, yet, fair deals for their many clients, whether buying or selling. Their motto, "Teamwork makes the dream work," applies to every aspect of their life and business. Their love for collaborating and building strong

relationships with amazing people helps them achieve their goals.

Two talented ladies of realty with one mission. With Leigh's years of experience and knowledge and Toni's grit and commitment, any new or recurring client would be in the best of hands.

Leigh states, "Toni has a strong commitment to success and is a very big people-person. It is very rare to find someone you can trust and work alongside as well as we do. Her 'fresh eyes' have been a gift for the past three years and her love and



enthusiastic spirit for celebrating our clients excites me."

Toni states, "Our teamwork has had huge success since we started this journey together. Leigh's professionalism and attention to detail encourage me to stay on top of my game and grow even more as an agent. I have proudly outdone myself each year and have no intentions of slowing down anytime soon."

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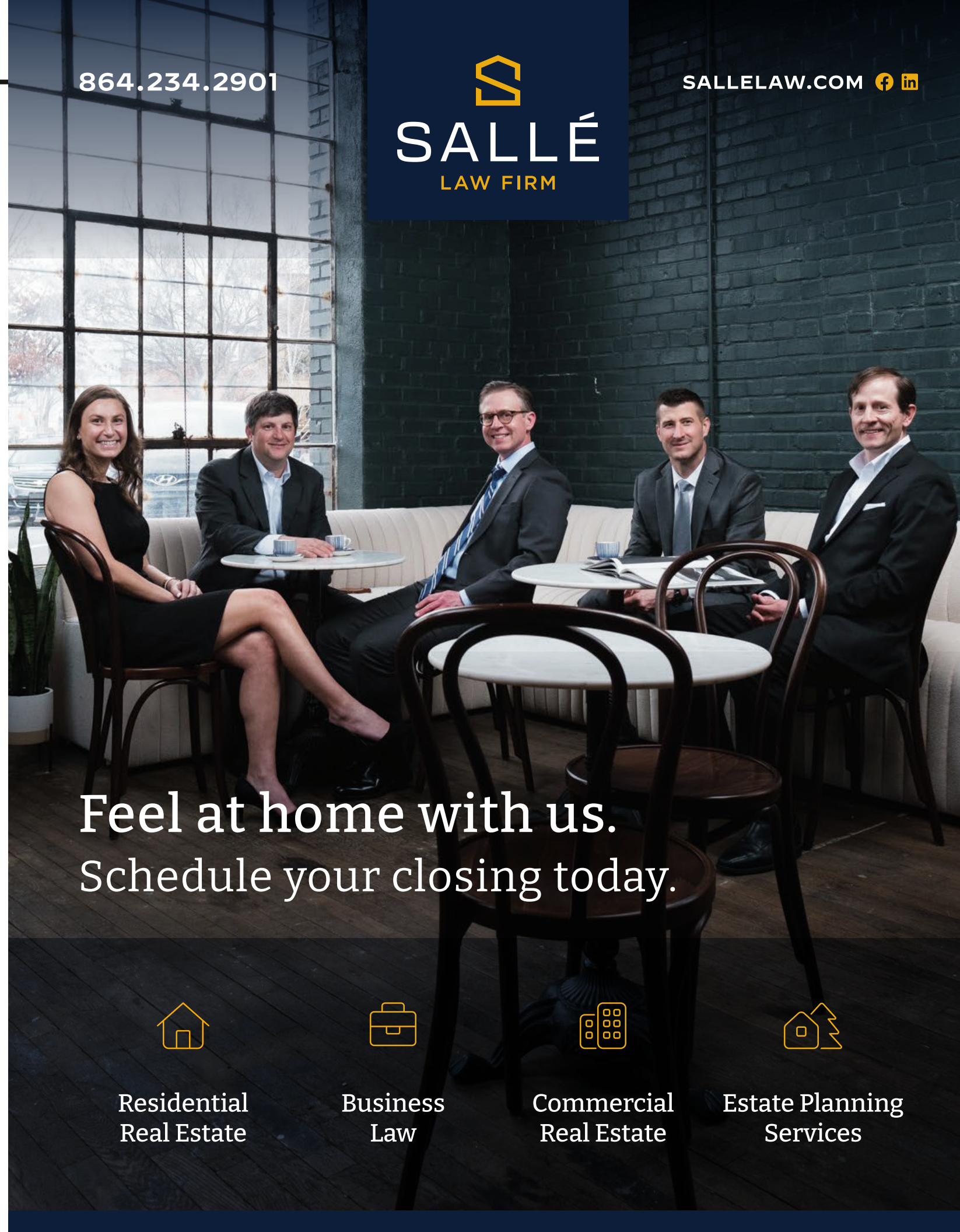
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FEBRUARY
TONYA HARRIS COPELAND

“The most important kind of freedom is to be what you really are.” — Jim Morrison

REALTOR® Tonya Harrison-Copeland lives the wise words of Jim Morrison in full. Tonya knows people come from all walks of life, and the best way to make people comfortable is to be yourself. Whether you meet her wearing a three-piece suit or sweats, you can be confident that you are meeting the authentic Tonya.

ADVICE

Her advice to up-and-coming REALTORS® is “It’s not easy, but nothing worth having is. It’s more to being a successful REALTOR® than just passing the test the first time (I failed my REALTOR® and broker exam three times). Don’t look for any handouts. Outwork the work!”



APRIL
LISA ALEXANDER

A rebel at heart, Lisa DeLuca Alexander of Del-co Realty Group became a Real Estate Agent for the same reason she made most of the big decisions in her life; someone told her not to.

A LABOR OF LOVE

Lisa nurtures past relationships with clients, cheers on their success, and consoles them when things don’t go according to plan. All her clients can attest that Lisa runs her business like it’s her family. She constantly strives to be a better agent, broker, friend, mother, and wife and upholds honesty and fairness as her core values. She works to instill these same goals in her REALTORS, “teaching my agents to have a servant heart mentality is number one in my book!” After decades of experience, she confidently advises new Realtors; “don’t define success with money; I always lead with my heart and that has never steered me wrong.”



MAY
WENDY TURNER

Wendy Turner of Turnaround Homes, brokered by Real Broker LLC, is a woman that embodies the mindset, “I work to live, not live to work.” She dedicates her life to her family and Christ.

Before becoming a Real Estate Agent, Wendy was a teacher. It was not until two years after completing her Real Estate course that she took the test. At the time, Wendy owned her company, Smockadot Kids and Preppy and Personalized. She was unable to dedicate herself fully to a career in real estate and did not want to cost her family money due to her lack of experience. Her original plan was just to list the houses she was flipping with her husband.

THE FUTURE

When we think of the future, teachers often come to mind, and at heart, Wendy Turner will always be a teacher. When she envisions her future, she says, “I am looking to grow my team, so I can help even more agents grow a business that helps them fulfill their dreams. I plan to continue to be active in production for the next several years, then my focus will be on coaching and training... I have loved helping the agents on my team reach their financial and professional goals. Seeing them help so many people achieve their real estate dreams while helping them achieve their personal goals is my favorite part of real estate.”



JULY
CORINNE NICKELL

Success is not freely given, it is earned, and Corinne Mehrling Nickell, owner and Broker in Charge of Nest Realty, is a testament to this fact. During her first years in Real Estate, she worked as a licensed assistant; but the housing market crash of 2008 made her transition into Real Estate turbulent. Despite the financial situation, her boss paid to keep her health benefits, but it was insufficient to make ends meet. Corinne did not complain; she explained, “I started cleaning houses on the weekends to make ends meet. I am a roll up your sleeve and do what you gotta do to make it work kinda person.”

GRATITUDE

Corinne is thankful for her family and team and excited to see how Nest Realty will soar in the coming years.



2023
celebrating
leaders
CELEBRATING LEADERS

MARCH
MICHAEL HILL

Michael Steven Hill, the owner of Bob Hill Realty, is a man that is familiar with change. At only 46 years of age, he has lived in 31 homes and attended 11 schools across 4 states. He entered the real estate world in 2003 at Bob Hill Realty, a real estate agency started by his grandfather. After the economic boom of 2005 and 2006, he was unprepared for the rapid change to his lifestyle that would come with the economic crash of 2008. Working for a company owned and run by his family for generations did not spare him. Utterly unprepared for the crash, Michael went from a man in his 20s making six figures to a man in his 30s making four figures in a few short years. It was a painful transition.

ADVICE

Michael stays updated on everything in his community and advises new REALTORS® to educate themselves on more than just knowing contracts and forms. Know the area, demographics, new businesses, the best restaurants, hospitals, crime, and anything else that is happening or may be coming. Be the most knowledgeable about everything around the area you service. Also, get involved with the community and give back every chance you can. He explains, “You will never succeed in real estate by only going to the office and then going home. You got to give to your community in order to receive. Have the heart of a servant and be humble and gracious in everything you do.”



SEPTEMBER
SHERRY TRAYNUM

An Advocate and REALTOR® of Her COMMUNITY

Sherry Traynum feels blessed to have been born and raised in Anderson County, which she considers the most incredible place in South Carolina. Her love and dedication to her hometown and willingness to play a part in its development make her an ideal representative and REALTOR® to do business with. Sherry is happy to show newcomers the many reasons why they should call the Upstate home.

As much as Sherry enjoys serving the community and developing her career, nothing gives her more life than her family. She and her husband, Josh, have been married for 22 years and have been blessed to have three amazing children and a lovely adopted niece. Sherry swells with pride to see her family growing and thriving and is enthusiastic about her soon-to-be new title, Granny! Sunday afternoons following church is her favorite part of the week as her family comes together at her home to spend quality time around the dinner table.

Even with all her endeavors and passions, Sherry's motive as a REALTOR® is the driving force behind her "why." She is not motivated by the number of transactions she clears but rather by serving those who need her services. Ultimately, she prays that her many clients feel God's love through her work.



DECEMBER
RONNETTA GRIFFIN

In the fast-paced world of real estate, it's essential to find individuals who combine professionalism, dedication, and a genuine commitment to serving their clients. Ronnetta Griffin, the Owner and Broker in Charge of Griffin Fine Real Estate, is one such professional. With a unique blend of experience, compassion, and a drive to make a difference, Ronnetta's journey in real estate reflects not only her success in the industry but also her remarkable life beyond it.

DEFINING SUCCESS AND LEGACY:

For Ronnetta, success is defined by living up to one's full potential and achieving it with integrity and kindness. She emphasizes the importance of being compassionate, honest, and fair in all business dealings. Ultimately, she hopes to be remembered as an entrepreneur who paved the way for others, a creative individual with a servant's heart, and a family person who left a positive impact on the lives she touched.

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2023 AGENT SPOTLIGHTS

OCTOBER WILL RAY

Family First, Then Real Estate

Will Ray is the epitome of a family man. His commitment to his family and community exemplifies him as the ideal agent to conduct business within the Upstate.

Will states, "In this field, I am passionate about my clients and growing the consumer experience. Making sure that they are 100% satisfied with my professionalism, communication, and service during what could be a disheartening process is what matters to me the most."

Will does not take his role as a devoted husband and father lightly. He and his college sweetheart and now-wife, Whitney, have five beautiful children: Lorelai, Malachi, Mordecai, Zacharai, and Adlai. His family of seven is his why when it comes to the industry. Their love for their community, its sites, and its luxuries make the county of Greenville feel even more homey and worthwhile for Will. He desires to provide a lifestyle they can aspire to by displaying a genuine work ethic and commitment to being the best agent he can be.

In the end, it is Will's mission to educate not only his children but his current and future clients on the ability to attain a legacy that will exist beyond their lifetime, leaving a legacy. It is a duty and a privilege to ensure he can prepare anyone for a promising future regardless of what they think they don't know. Will encourages his clients that no matter their background, they can have the future they've always dreamed of.



NOVEMBER JILL CODY

The Best Career of Her Lifetime

No mountain is high enough to keep Jill Cody from rising to the top in the real estate game. With four years of realty know-how and reaching almost \$40 million in career volume sales, Jill has proven to be a producer who has earned her turn in the spotlight.

Business Is Booming

It's safe to say that Jill and the team at Keller Williams were a match made in heaven. Although Jill calls her own shots as an agent, she is proud of her supportive team and credits her leadership for their fantastic training and willingness to help her think outside the box. They encourage her to be the best version of herself and to create the life she wants, a goal she already had from the very beginning.

Helping Many Along the Way

Jill states, "I define success as one ending their day saying they helped to make another person's day easier, better, comfortable, empowered, or confident."

Jill is on a mission to help those in her community and those in her field who may also struggle with confidence in their ability to do well as REALTORS®. She has a few words of advice for new agents ready to take on the industry as she has:

Jill concludes, "Show up mentally every day and be ready to work, learn, and listen. Attend every training you can and learn as much about the industry as possible. Don't compare yourself to anyone else. This career is your journey. This is a long game, so put in your time and don't give up."



DECEMBER ANALEISA LATHAM

Balance Is Key

Analeisa Latham is one of the hardest-working agents in the Upstate. She is motivated to do her best in all her endeavors, whether in her personal life or professional pursuits. With a career volume of \$70 million and nine years of exceptional experience, it's her time to have her name in the real estate spotlight.

I Love What I Do

Analeisa is passionate about making her clients feel welcomed and valued throughout their real estate journey. From the working Mom who needs flexibility and understanding when trying to sell her home to the low and high price point clients, she does her best to treat her customers from all walks of life with dignity and respect.

Analeisa believes in putting forth her best effort in all her endeavors and creating a life and business that reflects her success and a genuine love for what she was born to do. Because of her expertise on how to make this business work for her, she hopes to coach other agents to do the same.

Analeisa concludes, "I encourage my fellow REALTORS® to remember that it is essential to maintain a healthy work and family life. This industry can be highly demanding; however, know your priorities and do your best not to lose sight of them."

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