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REAL PRODUCERS TEAM



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BUT WAIT, ISN'T HE THAT WEATHER GUY?



After publishing our first edition a few months ago, the chatter started amongst the offices. Even agents who didn't receive the publication and were not in the top 300 grabbed copies or saw it online and questioned, "Isn't that the meteorologist from TV...what's he doing in real estate?"

Correct you are, for the last 13 years I've been informing you about the weather. My job has been to keep people safe, inform them, and most importantly to gain their trust. When I decided to leave TV, I needed to find a way to continue to feel fulfilled in as many of the aspects of my life that brought me joy in my first career. Connecting people, finding interesting stories, and serving the community have always been the most important aspects of what I aspired to do in my adult life.

As luck would have it, I was one of the first FAA 107 commercial drone pilots in Connecticut, and as a side gig I was shooting aerial real estate photos/videos for a handful of you over the years. Real estate has always been a curiosity of mine. In an ideal world, I would be on your side of this publication and not mine.

The transition outside of full time television (although I am still doing some freelancing at WFSB in Hartford) was an easy one as I started making connections with so many of you. Once I began to learn about the businesses you work with that provide the most amazing service to agents, the rest was history. My goal continues to be to put your trust in me, to find the interesting and inspiring life experiences many of you have, and to ensure that the partners who end up in this publication are the kinds of businesses that will improve the value you offer to your clients. That's a forecast you can trust!



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6 • July 2024

WHAT IS Real Producers?

WELCOME TO NEW HAVEN & MIDDLESEX REAL PRODUCERS!

We provide a platform to connect, elevate and inspire the top real estate professionals across the Connecticut Shoreline.

It is a privilege to introduce Real Producers to our region and to celebrate the exceptional contributions each of you makes to the Connecticut Shoreline real estate community. Having lived here my whole life and worked in television/media for the last 14 years, it brings me profound joy and excitement to have the opportunity to showcase your achievements, nurture your connections, and acknowledge your unwavering commitment to excellence in serving your clients.

Real Producers originated as a simple concept in 2015 in Indianapolis and has rapidly expanded nationwide. The thriving Real

Producers community now spans over 130 locations, revolutionizing the way the real estate community collaborates throughout the U.S. As we begin this journey together, I commit to fostering community connection and forums dedicated to acknowledging and highlighting the unique qualities that make each of you iconic.

In the years ahead, my goal is to conduct interviews with each of you, sharing your success stories in upcoming issues. I eagerly anticipate commemorating your achievements at our events, offering valuable tools and connections

to support the growth of your businesses, and representing your collective passion for this industry that we all share.

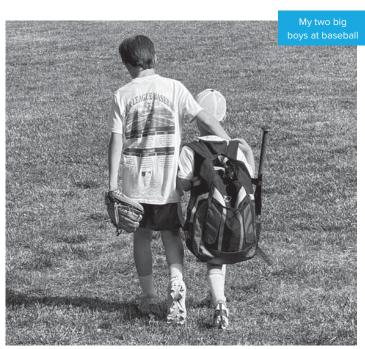
Here are some quick facts about Real Producers:

DISTRIBUTION:

This magazine will be delivered to the mailboxes of the top 300 agents in New Haven and Middlesex Counties every month. The selection of these 300 agents is based on compiled MLS data over the last year. If you are receiving a hard copy of the publication, it is because you belong to the distinguished group representing the top 5%.

CONTENT:

This publication revolves around YOU—the Connecticut Shoreline real estate community. Our aim is to share personal and distinctive



stories about members of this community, providing a platform for you to inspire greatness in others. As we expand, our commitment remains to deliver fresh content exclusively centered on the top 5% and our Preferred Partners. It's important to note that we have nothing



to sell to real estate agents;

being featured in this publication is absolutely FREE. Agents can be featured by nomination from a peer, leader, or influencer. We actively encourage nominations and appreciate learning about agents who are making a significant impact in our market.

PREFERRED PARTNERS:

Those identified as "Preferred Partners" in the index of this publication are integral members of this exclusive community. You will find them featured in every issue, participating in our private events, and actively engaging in our online community. We maintain a selective approach, allowing only those businesses recommended by members to be a part of our community.

Each Preferred Partner showcased in this publication has been recommended by one or more of you. Our objective is to provide you with an extensive array of resources to enhance your business, ensuring that you consistently stand as a trusted referral source for your clients and customers.

EVENTS:

In addition to our monthly publication, we organize social and educational events throughout the year. Our aim is to unite the best of the best while contributing to and bolstering our local communities. And, of course, we fully intend to have a good time doing it! Information about upcoming events will be shared through the publication. Stay tuned for exciting updates!

CONTRIBUTION:

If you are interested in contributing, nominating REALTORS® for certain features, know of additional top-notch affiliate

partners who would be a great fit for our community, or would simply like to learn more, please reach out to me anytime. I look forward to meeting with every one of you in the near future.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge our Preferred Partners for their vision and belief. Their commitment is an essential part of bringing New Haven & Middlesex Real Producers to life and will provide the framework for our continued growth and success. Hope you have a fantastic summer filled with all of the things that make us love living in New England.

I appreciate you all and I look forward to seeing you all at our launch party coming soon!

Sam Kantrow

Owner/Publisher New Haven and Middlesex County Real Producers

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The first Real Producers magazine started in Indianapolis in 2015. Real Producers is now in over 130 markets across the nation and is continuing to grow nationwide.



Q: WHO RECEIVES REAL PRO-**DUCERS MAGAZINES?**

A: The top 300 real estate agents across New Haven/Middlesex County Real Producers and our preferred partners.

Q: WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THIS MAGAZINE?

A: We believe that we are better together. When we surround ourselves with other successful, like-minded people, we grow to new heights. Real Producers is a platform that brings together the most accomplished individuals in the New Haven/Middlesex County Real Producers real estate sector.

By curating an exclusive community comprised of the top 300 real estate agents and RP-vetted businesses in each market, we foster a shared space for sharing stories, celebrating successes discussing market trends, and highlighting

upcoming events. Our monthly publication is dedicated to connecting, informing, and inspiring, encompassing anything that contributes to the enrichment of our community.

Q: DOES REAL PRODUC-**ERS HAVE EVENTS?**

A: Yes! We have specific networking events throughout the year.

Q: WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR BEING FEATURED IN THIS MAGAZINE?

A: The process for getting featured in our magazine is straightforward. To be eligible, you need to be on

the top 300 list, and we value nominations highly. Whether you're a real estate agent, business, broker, owner, or someone who admires the work of others, you can nominate individuals, including yourself. Even office leaders have the opportunity to nominate outstanding real estate agents. We take every nomination seriously and consider anyone from the top 300 list who is brought to our attention. While we cannot guarantee a feature, we strongly encourage you to connect with one of our team members, show support for Real Producers, and participate in our private events. These steps can enhance your chances of being featured in our publication.

Q: WHAT DOES IT COST A REAL ESTATE **AGENT/TEAM TO BE FEATURED?**

A: Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing to agents, so nominate away! We are not a pay-to-play model. We share **REAL** stories of **Real Producers**.

Q: WHO ARE THE RP-VETTED BUSINESSES?

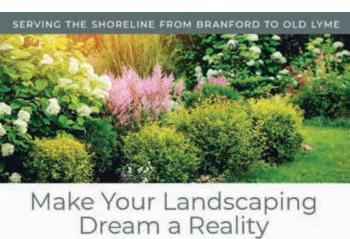
A: The RP-vetted businesses featured in our publication represent the some of best in the business in their respective categories within the New Haven/Middlesex County Real Producers. You can easily locate them in our index. We do not randomly select businesses, nor do we collaborate with every business that approaches us. We prioritize businesses that have received your stamp of approval through recommendations and each business showcased has been personally recommended by many of the top agents featured in our publication. Before featuring any business, our team conducts additional vetting to ensure they align with our community's values and bring substantial value. Our aim is to build a robust network that not only includes the best real estate agents but also features top-tier businesses, fostering collective growth and strength within our community.

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A BUSINESS?

A: If you want to recommend a business that works with top real estate agents, please email or message us -Email: sam.kantrow@realproducersmag.com







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By George Grotheer

Medicine to carpentry? A career change is a familiar concept to many people - whether that is stepping from one field into an adjacent profession or rebuilding a professional life from scratch, it is an experience shared by a large portion of our community. The time between fields can be spent in limbo – trying new hobbies and passion projects to see what would lend itself to new work. For Tessa Samuelson, the decision to leave medicine behind was an easy one, for just one reason: a desire to be self-employed.

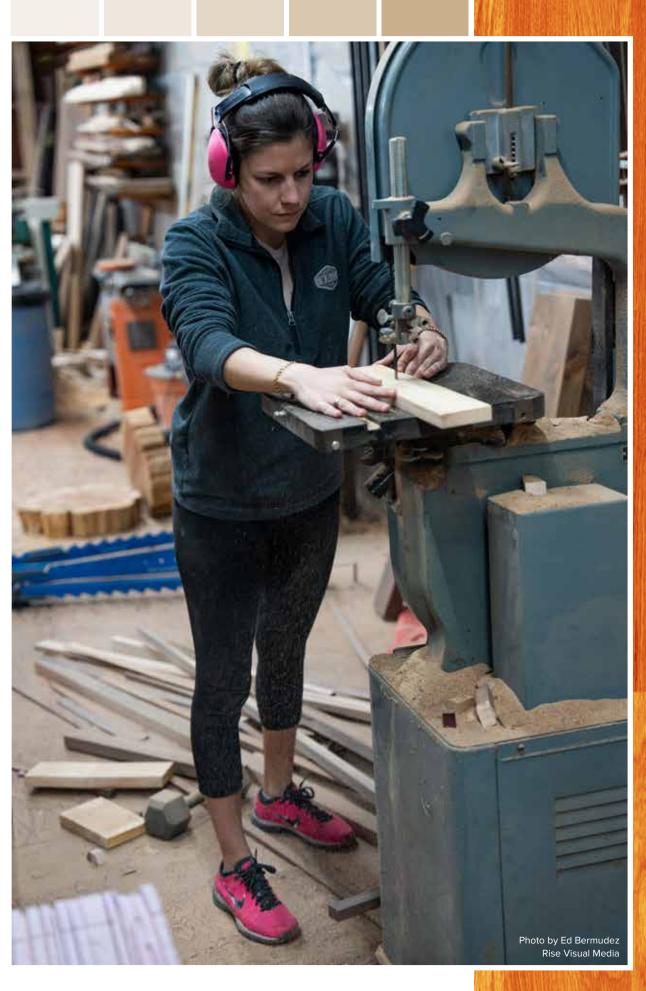






Nearly a decade ago, while working in the medical field, Samuelson began creating homemade furniture in her garage. She developed these artistic pieces with tips from online videos and good old-fashioned trial-and-error until she found a system that worked best for her. Samuelson worked with her hands to come up with unique designs and sell her products online, laying the groundwork for what has become a successful small business. Sometimes, she says, she had to take a step backwards to move forwards, like moving into a smaller garage space after getting started. However the road moved, it has led to success in Madison: that small independent startup has blossomed into a brick and mortar retail space at Modern Oak - an outlet for those seeking a quality rustic look in their homes.











Of course, with furniture design, a key component is finding the right wood. Chopping down a tree in one's backyard won't always cut it – and when building new furniture, wood quality comes first. Samuelson says local mills and marketplaces are often ripe with options – and often lead her to other mills and marketplaces, and to others, and so on. This community has developed its own network to build itself up along the shoreline and around the region.

As the consumer walks through the always-growing stockpile of wooden creations at Modern Oak, Samuelson says they will notice a plethora of original designs with no piece identical to its neighbors. Coffee tables, dining tables, cabinetry, and bars are the big sellers, but there are many pieces large and small that pique customers' interest. Cutting boards, for example, are among her most popular items around the holidays, as she says her distinctive designs make wonderful gifts.

At this point, with a prosperous small business she has built from the ground up, Samuelson says there is still only one way to go: bigger. She is interested in down the road finding a new location with a much larger footprint to fill with furniture, tripling her available space, hiring more employees, and expanding her collection. Samuelson sets herself apart from big retailers by doubling down on the distinctive nature of each piece. She says large furniture outlets mass-produce products, prioritizing uniformity and depth of stock.

At Modern Oak – and with every piece Samuelson creates – it will be, like her business, one of a kind.



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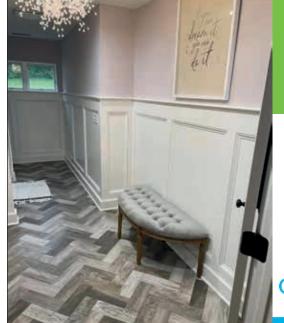
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One plus one equals three. One.
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math may not work on a calculator,
the mindset has guided Ralph Lewis
through twenty years in real estate
and brokerage, tens of millions of
dollars in sales, and the ups and
downs of raising half a dozen children
along the Connecticut shoreline.

While he may have come up through the commercial side of the industry, Lewis is no stranger to residential sales. He uses a baseball analogy - saying the more pitches he knows how to throw, the more batters he can face. Part of what has made him so successful in adding residential real estate to his arsenal is his innate ability to know his market. Working heavily in Bridgeport's North End, he has catered his workflow to younger clients, many of whom are students at Sacred Heart University. In the last five years alone, he has sold just under 200 houses in that neighborhood... and that allowed him to expand into his current hometown of Stratford - where he has consistently climbed through local rankings to reach the top overall spot in his community.

If you look at the back of his baseball card, the statistics speak for themselves. Lewis sold the Tanger Outlets in Westbrook for forty million dollars, a Cheshire shopping plaza for over twelve million dollars, and a handful of retail tenants. He has handled leases for everything from warehouse space to fitness and day care centers. His team at Coldwell Banker has more than a dozen hitters ready to come up to bat, and he has his hand in local real estate all over Connecticut: Bridgeport, Stratford, Milford, Cheshire, Wallingford, and more... with dreams of going national.

With a laundry list of accomplishments in local real estate, his largest may be at home in the Lordship neighborhood of Stratford, where he spends his days managing a roster of six kids – five boys and a girl – with his wife Brittney. Aged three to thirteen, his kids are reaching an age where their schedules are as active as their bodies and minds, and that keeps the Lewis clan busy.

His family has faced challenges beyond work and school schedules. Four years ago, his fifth son, Johnny, was diagnosed with leukemia. Lewis calls that experience a different kind of hell on Earth – bringing a toddler to chemotherapy appointments and learning about leukemia and childhood cancer is a nightmare no parent wants to experience. He says the cancer treatment – coupled with the earliest months of the COVID-19 pandemic - was an up-and-down road, calling certain times better and others harder... navigating through a life-changing situation when the world goes on spinning. Two-and-a-half years later, Johnny received his last dose of chemo. With his son's cancer thankfully behind his family, Lewis has found a new appreciation for each moment in life. He and his wife spend a lot of time focused on residential flips - he says he often depends on her creative eye as part of their partnership.

"One plus one equals three," sure – but he is just taking things one day at a time.









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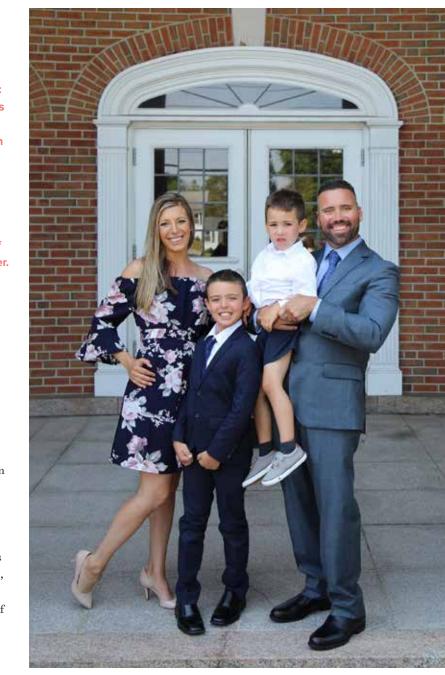
By George Grotheer Photography by Rise Visual Media

HaurieAnn Hansen

COMPASS, GUILFORD

Criminal justice, nursing, parenting – and now real estate. There is a new "agent to watch" in the Guilford market: LaurieAnn Hansen. Even though she has only been working in the industry for sixteen months, that brief time has been very productive in buying and selling in local neighborhoods. Like many in Connecticut, across the country, and around the world, COVID-19 provided an opportunity for a reset in Hansen's life, allowing her to pursue her hobby of working with houses as a full-time career.

Hansen's background began in criminal justice, but her time in the field was cut short due to a hiring freeze at the state level in 2006. When she decided it was not meant to be, she shifted her focus to nursing. As it happens, life finds a way of providing new opportunities at the perfect time: Just as Hansen graduated nursing school, she had the first of her two sons, eleven years ago. She spent the next several years as a full-time mom - prioritizing parenting, spending time working on household projects, gardening, and enjoying summers at the beach with family. When the pandemic began, that time spent with family expanded; as the lockdowns and restrictions subsided, she began to plan her next steps. On the advice of her husband - a Battalion Chief at the Milford Fire Department - she set her sights on local real estate as the next move in a life full of interests.





In each interaction with clients - whether she is helping people buy or sell a property - Hansen lives and works by her motto "love where you live." She wants to bring people into spaces in which they can build their lives, creating a dream home environment for all involved. She prides herself on dedication to her clients during their professional relationship and pushes the connection further by making herself available from the start to long after the closing. She says that bond between herself and those with whom she works can be boiled down to one simple phrase: once a client, forever a friend.

She began looking for listings in Connecticut, trying to find the basis for her own clientele. Her first three sales came from referrals – closing quickly on her first deal just over one year ago. She closed seven transactions in her first year. Hansen says she wasn't aware of that meteoric trajectory until her coworkers pointed out the impressive run with which she had begun her career.

A major component of her rapid ascent is her activity on the internet. Hansen has become very popular on social media in recent years, with over 70,000 followers between TikTok and Instagram. She says she would like to integrate some of her real estate work into her online presence. She partners with Amazon to show off home décor on top of her usual content of contracts and closings. Hansen says TikTok has massive potential with younger homebuyers - and the broad audience she has built may give her a leg up on the competition when these younger TikTok users begin to look at where they may settle down.





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