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TOP AGENT:

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NICKLA



RISING STAR:

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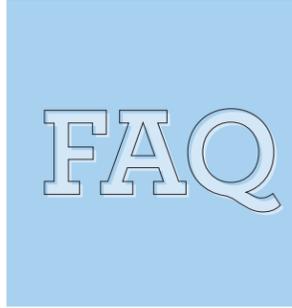
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	08 Meet the Team		10 Publisher's Note		12 Partner Spotlight: Wendy Krischke
	18 Rising Star: Jacquelyn Brubaker		24 Cover Story: Alex Nickla		30 FAQ: All about Northwest Indiana Real Producers

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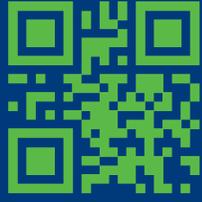
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If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email us at colt.contreras@n2co.com.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

IF WE HAVEN'T MET, YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING, "WHAT IS REAL PRODUCERS, AND WHY AM I RECEIVING THIS MAGAZINE?"

If we haven't met, you might be wondering, "What is Real Producers, and why am I receiving this magazine?"

It's simple: you've earned it! You are one of the top 300 Realtors® in Northwest Indiana by dollar sales volume last year. If you are holding this magazine in your hand, you should be incredibly proud! You can't buy this magazine. You can't pay to be featured in this magazine. You can't pay to attend our social events.

This magazine will be a vehicle to highlight all the top-producing agents across the Region and to share what makes them so special. We want to validate your business and achievements. We will celebrate our local legends, industry icons, rising stars, and partners each month and all the success they've created.

Along with the magazine, we will host quarterly events to bring the realtor community together. Our social events are funded by our partners and are FREE for Realtors®—food and door prize giveaways for everyone in attendance. The events and publication are designed to increase social connections between top agents and top affiliates so that the best of the best can grow their business together.

In our industry, who you know can be just as important as what you know. Attending industry events, participating in local community activities, and engaging with fellow Realtors® and referral partners opens new doors to new opportunities and collaborations. Networking is not merely about exchanging business cards; it's about forging genuine relationships that can lead to mutually beneficial partnerships. By being an active participant in our vibrant community, you position yourself to tap into the collective knowledge, experience, and influence of your peers. Every connection you make has the potential to amplify your success. Watch for details to come for our launch party coming this August!

As we move forward, I want to thank you for your support. It's your engagement that shapes us and your enthusiasm that drives us. Here's to a fantastic summer and all the possibilities it brings us.

COLT CONTRERAS

Owner/Publisher
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NOMINATE YOUR FAVORITE TOP AGENTS!

People often ask me, "How do you decide who you feature each month in Real Producers?" My answer: "Through our nomination system." Top real estate agents and the preferred partners who invest in this publication through advertising and sponsoring our events decide who we feature each month through their nominations. Additionally, we have multiple events throughout the year, and top agents with top numbers are present at these events; we receive many nominations here among those who attend. **Please contact Colt Contreras at (219) 309-7142 or colt.contreras@n2co.com to nominate top agents.**

Our team meets with and gets to know each nominee. In this meeting, we collect all the cool facts about the agent and gather nominations for other top agents and businesses we should consider for our vetted Preferred Partners list.

Our selection team decides who gets into each issue. We use the "5 C" criteria below as a guide. An agent must meet the first three — the fourth and fifth items are not required; however, we love celebrating successes of a giving or victorious nature.

Collaboration: The number of nominations usually indicates that nominees are respected by their peers and work well with other agents and our preferred partners.

Competition production numbers: Let's face it — the name of the publication is Real Producers,

so folks need to be top producers to get into the magazine

Character: While most in the industry have great character and integrity, we will not feature anyone — agent or business — who has not been recommended or nominated by top agents as a person or business operating with integrity.

Contribution: We adore inspiring stories about agents who give back to the real estate and local/global community.

Compelling story/Conquering a life challenge: Who doesn't love an against-the-odds success story?

In planning each issue, we try to make sure we don't feature agents from the same brokerage or firm in the same issue. We also try to cover the territory geographically so that agents from each area we cover are featured proportionately. With so many wonderful nominated agents, the decision each month is difficult — so make sure we know who you are!

Remember, real estate agents and brokers do not pay anything for feature stories; everything we do for them is free. While other programs may look similar, we are not a pay-to-play model. We select articles months in advance and notify folks one to

two months before their feature appears that we have selected them. Keep those nominations coming.

We would love your feedback on how we are doing and what, if anything, we can do better to help everyone in the industry **Collaborate, Elevate** and **Inspire** each other. Please email, text, or privately message all suggestions and feedback directly to me.

Please contact Colt Contreras at (219) 309-7142 or colt.contreras@n2co.com to nominate top agents.

Wendy and her team enjoy hosting Sip & Sparkle realtor networking events.

THE WENDY KRISCHKE TEAM

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WENDY KRISCHKE'S IMPACTFUL CAREER

HELPING CLIENTS AND CLOSING DEALS



From her early days as a crisis counselor to becoming a powerhouse in the mortgage industry, Wendy Krischke is inspiring and impressive. Her career spans nearly 30 years. Krischke is ranked among the top originators in the United States, licensed in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Arizona, Texas, Kentucky, and Florida. She is expanding her reach and maintaining a high level of excitement with every clear to close.

Krischke's career began in the mental health field at the Lake County Jail. She managed a recreation program for inmates, emphasizing the importance of a positive mindset and goal-setting. She faced danger and a near-fatal encounter that pushed her to make a career shift

That shift eventually led to the mortgage industry. "I answered an ad to be a mortgage broker, and within two weeks, I was in training. I got my first application quickly and was just addicted to seeing people buy homes and how happy they were," she says. Her transition from counseling to real estate marked a path to helping others in new ways.

She navigated the financial crisis by opening a mortgage company despite facing obstacles like limited funding and a challenging location. She recounted opening her office in 2012. "I had this great idea, signed a lease, and my supposed partner didn't show up. But I was determined. I opened an Office Depot credit card, got all the desks, and my husband helped put them together," Krischke shared. Her resilience paid off, turning potential setbacks into a successful business.

Managing a successful career while raising a blended family is no small feat, but Krischke handles it gracefully. Her children are best friends, bonding over activities like softball. Wendy Krischke's secret to balancing family and career lies in her meticulous organization. She uses a detailed personal calendar and a tracker to manage her time effectively. By time-blocking and delegating tasks, Krischke ensures she remains productive without compromising her family time. She mentioned accommodating her busy schedule and daughter's

▶▶ partner spotlight

By Giavonni Downing
Photography by Melinda Nicole Photography

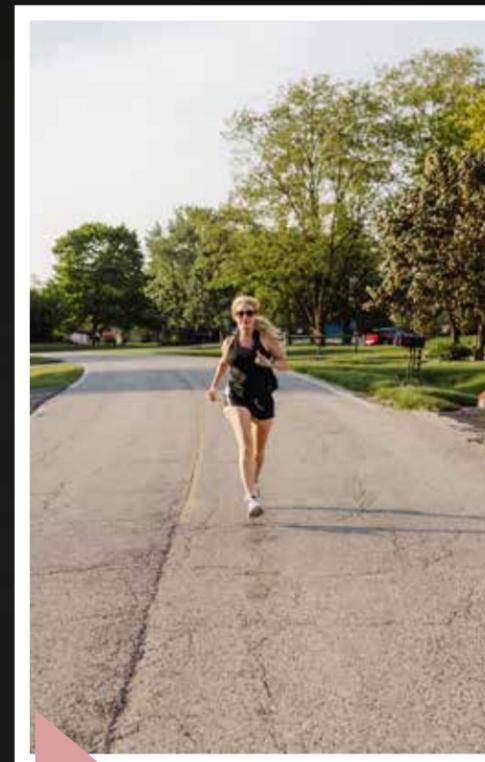




softball tournaments, “We bought an RV because I need some place to work that’s not in the car.”

Outside of work, she loves spending time on her boat and running. She was beaming with excitement about the idea of running in the Chicago marathon this year. Running sparks her competitive nature. “I’m very competitive. Even if I’m in mile three and someone is casually walking their dog, I think I have to beat them,” Krischke said, highlighting her pursuit of success.

“My parents always emphasized that ‘you can always do better,’ and my father would say, ‘You can talk and talk,



“**YOU CAN TALK AND TALK,
BUT YOU HAVE TO HAVE THE DRIVE;
IF YOU DON’T GET MOVING,
YOU’RE NEVER GONNA ACCOMPLISH IT.**”

but you have to have the drive; if you don’t get moving, you’re never gonna accomplish it,” Krischke recalled. This competitive spirit is something I’ve carried into my parenting, often challenging my children by asking, “So what are you going to do about that?” and encouraging them to start working towards their goals immediately.

Krischke is a branch manager with a winning mindset. To stay positive and focused, she relies on personal mantras. “If I start feeling negativity, I have mantras that go through my mind,” she explained. “I meditate on Jesus, family, health, and success to get me back on track.

She is deeply committed to helping first responders, offering reduced closing costs and a death benefit



“ IF YOU DO IT TO ACTUALLY
 HELP PEOPLE AND SEE THE LIGHT
 THAT YOU CAN GIVE THEM,
YOU’LL BE SUCCESSFUL. ”

program for police, fire, and EMTs. This initiative provides financial relief and underscores Kriskche’s dedication to supporting those who serve the community.

When asked about her advice for new real estate professionals, she said, “If you do it to actually help people and see the light that you can give them, you’ll be successful.” Wendy Kriskche’s passion for helping people and infectious energy have contributed to her longevity and success in the industry.



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**BORN INTO REAL ESTATE:
JACQUELYN BRUBAKER'S JOURNEY INSPIRED BY HER MOTHER'S LEGACY**

Jacquelyn “Jacki” Brubaker is a real estate professional, wife, and multi-tasking mom who fuses integrity, openness, and an unwavering dedication to clients. Even while browsing the aisles at Target, one of her favorite places to shop, she consistently thinks of ways to provide exceptional service for buyers and sellers. As a second-generation realtor, she brings a treasure chest of wisdom and passion for the industry nurtured from her early years.

In a recent conversation, Brubaker delved into her career, goals, and the philosophies that guide her work ethic. Brubaker jumped into real estate and became



one of the top agents in Porter County, IN, within three years. Last year, she closed over \$5 million, and this year, she has set even higher goals. She is already on the path to having her highest-performing year.

Brubaker revealed a professional dedicated to more than just closing deals—she is committed to offering a full picture to clients, ensuring they understand potential challenges and opportunities. “Being honest and transparent is crucial,” she shared. “I believe in sharing everything with my clients so they can make informed decisions. It’s about building trust.”



I WORK FROM MY CAR, I WORK FROM STARBUCKS,

I CAN WORK FROM ANYWHERE

AND GET THE JOB DONE.



Balancing a flourishing career and family responsibilities is a significant part of Brubaker's story. She has mastered the art of a flexible work schedule, ensuring she is present for her children while meeting her clients' demands. "I work from my car, I work from Starbucks, I can work from anywhere and get the job done," she



Her journey in real estate began early, influenced by her mother, a successful real estate agent in Lake County, IN, who later transitioned to title companies and mortgages. "I was around real estate my whole life, since birth," she reminisced. After staying home as a wife and mother, she followed in her mother's footsteps. "After I stayed at home for 12 years raising my four girls, it was the obvious next step to go get my license."



explained. “Last week, I worked at the laundromat. Between my phone and my computer, I can do anything.”

This real estate agent star is certainly on the rise. Despite her success, Brubaker admits to struggling with self-doubt and questioning whether or not she is doing enough to help her clients. “Self-doubt is something many of us deal with,” she reflected. “But it’s important to keep pushing and to remind ourselves of the value we bring to our clients.”

Brubaker’s commitment to education and mentorship in real estate is evident. For those new to the field, she emphasized prioritizing education and transparency as essential for building client trust. “This is a relationship business, not a transactional business,” Brubaker said. “I would never be in this if it was just about seeking the next transaction. I’m about helping others achieve their goals.”

One of Brubaker’s recent experiences underscores this approach. “I actually just had a transaction fall through, and it was such a teaching lesson,” she recounted. “None of it was wasted time. I helped a first-time homebuyer learn so much about the home-buying process.” Jacquelyn Brubaker’s goals are to help more clients, achieve new levels of success, and nourish her real estate foundation with honesty, transparency, and client-focused service.



THIS IS A RELATIONSHIP BUSINESS,

NOT A TRANSACTIONAL BUSINESS,



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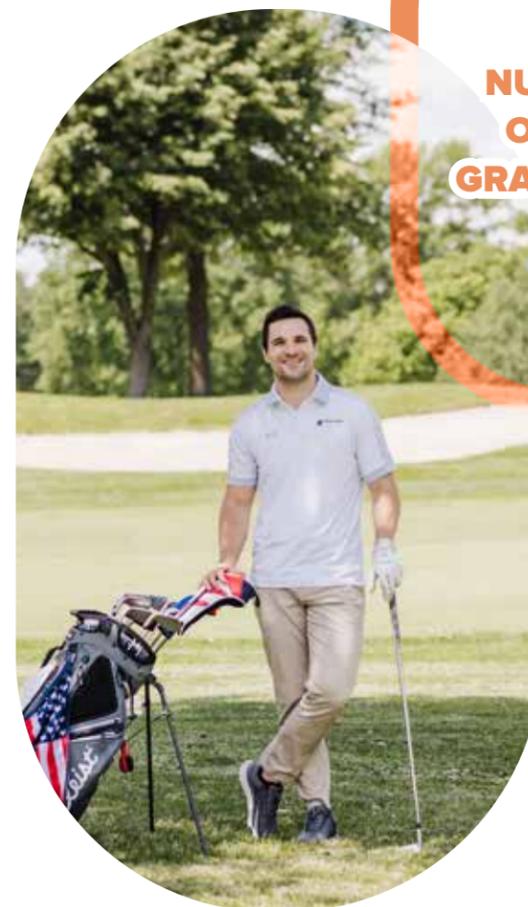
LOCAL ROOTS TO REAL ESTATE LEADER

ALEX NICKLA knows best that success isn't just about transactions; it's about mentorship, hard work, and a commitment to personalized service. Alex Nickla's office is in the heart of Crown Point. His passion for serving the community proves Crown Point's unique place in his heart. Nickla is a lifelong resident who first nurtured his competitive spirit as an athlete representing the Crown Point Bulldogs. There, he noticed a pattern of being often selected for team leadership roles.

Today, Nickla is a broker and team leader of the Nickla Group, one of the top Real Estate teams in Northwest Indiana. He finds fulfillment in teaching, coaching, training the team, and building the business while having precious time reserved for his family.



“
NUMBER ONE IS GRATITUDE.
”



Alex Nickla's journey in real estate began under the guidance of mentor Steve Likas. Nickla attributes much of his success to his invaluable mentorship experience.

“I met Steve, and I followed Steve around basically for two years everywhere he went and learned as much as I could from him.” This formative experience propelled Nickla into the realm of real estate at the tender age of 19, marking the beginning of a remarkable career trajectory that has spanned over a decade. In his first two years as a real estate sales professional, Alex Nickla became one of the top 50 real estate agents in sales volume throughout Northwest Indiana at the age of twenty-two.

Today, The Nickla Group produces about \$50 million yearly with 100-200 transactions. Beyond

▶▶ cover story
By Giavonni Downing
Photography by
Melinda Nicole
Photography



professional accolades, Nickla emphasizes the importance of personal development and growth. Through an impressive consumption of audio-books, podcasts, and other resources, he has cultivated a mindset of consistent personal growth and gratitude.

Gratitude, personal development, respect, accountability, and commitment form the bedrock of his team's philosophy. Nickla expounds on these principles, revealing, "Number one is gratitude." The international symbol of gratitude is embedded in the Nickla Group logo. Nickla said, "I found that if you can't be grateful for what you do, it doesn't matter how successful you are." This unwavering focus on gratitude sets the tone for every interaction, fostering a culture of abundance and positivity.

“
**YOUR
SUCCESS
IS UP
TO YOU
& YOU
ALONE.**
”

He also emphasizes the importance of accountability, stating, "Your success is up to you and you alone, you know, and you have to be accountable." This commitment to personal responsibility underscores the team's ethos, ensuring each member is empowered. He describes the Nickla Group as a top-tier real estate team in Northwest Indiana, driven by genuine relationships and a commitment to excellence.

Nickla reflects on his career and the industry, advocating for reforms prioritizing transparency and empathy toward clients. He envisions a real estate landscape where professionalism reigns supreme, akin to other esteemed professions like medicine. "Real estate is an industry where it's too easy to be a part of it... And I find





that interesting because if you want to be a doctor, it will be at least eight years,” highlighting the need for greater diligence in the field.

Nickla stresses the importance of emotional intelligence for new real estate professionals, particularly in a profession where 24/7 availability and flexibility are the norm. Nickla acknowledges that managing internal thoughts and emotions in real estate transactions can pose a challenge.

Nickla enjoys golf, working out, team sports, and martial arts when he is not working. He takes a holistic approach to his overall health to stay energized and equipped for leadership. When asked about his role as a husband and father, Nickla proudly explains how he keeps his family priorities intact, “It’s all about

“

**I FOUND THAT
IF YOU CAN'T
BE GRATEFUL
FOR WHAT
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IT DOESN'T
MATTER HOW
SUCCESSFUL
YOU ARE.**

”

setting boundaries and mastering time management.” Amidst the hustle and bustle of his career, Nickla prioritizes moments that align with his faith and values. He focuses on creating a legacy that resonates with his children’s future perceptions by creating a legacy beyond business achievements.

Nickla’s success transcends monetary gains; it’s about faith, family legacy, personal growth, and community. As Nickla envisions, true success lies in building a team so exemplary that people flock to be a part of it, with the shared vision of making a difference in the lives of others. It’s a reminder that success isn’t measured solely by financial milestones but by the depth of relationships forged and the legacy left behind. His ultimate goal is to leave a lasting impact on people’s lives.



FAQ

ALL ABOUT NORTHWEST INDIANA REAL PRODUCERS



Q: WHO RECEIVES THIS MAGAZINE?

A: The top 300 agents in Northwest Indiana based on volume for the previous year and our Preferred Partners. There are thousands of agents in NWI, and you, in this elite group, are the cream of the crop. Just to be included in this group is an accomplishment that testifies to your hard work, dedication, and proficiency.

Q: DO REAL ESTATE AGENTS HAVE TO PAY FOR MAGAZINES OR EVENTS?

A: NO! The magazine and events are FREE to agents and funded by the partners who advertise.

Q: WHAT KIND OF CONTENT WILL BE FEATURED?

A: This is all about you. We'll do personal and unique stories on members in the community, providing you with a platform to inspire others. As we grow, we'll add fresh content focused

entirely on you. It costs absolutely nothing for a REALTOR® to be featured. We are not a pay to play model; we write real stories, about Real Producers, and we're always accepting nominations. We will consider anyone brought to our attention-- we don't know everyone's story so we need your help to learn about them!

Q: WHO ARE OUR PARTNERS?

A: Anyone listed as a "Preferred Partner" in the front of the magazine is funding and fueling this community and is an essential part of it. They are the top professionals in their industry. They will have an ad in every issue of the magazine and attend our events. One or many of you have recommended every single Preferred Partner you see in this publication. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best REALTORS® in the area, but the best affiliates as well, so we can grow stronger together.

Q: DOES Real Producers HAVE EVENTS?

A: Yes! Along with the magazine, we will host quarterly events exclusive to this community, where you —the best of the best— get together at local venues to socialize, mastermind, deepen our connections, and better our businesses. We will communicate about events through the magazine, via email, and on social media.

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A BUSINESS OR FEATURE STORY?

A: If you are interested in contributing, nominating REALTORS® to be featured, know of top-notch affiliate partners who you believe should be a part of our community, or would simply like to network; email or call us. I look forward to hearing from you!

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