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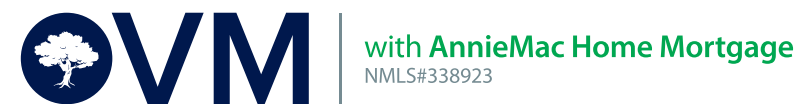
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If you are interested in contributing or nominating real estate agents, affiliates, brokers, owners or even yourself for stories, please email us at [joni@realproducersmag.com](mailto:joni@realproducersmag.com).

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▶▶ cover story

Story by Maddie Podish  
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# *Justin Wynings*

**RE/MAX Peninsula**

Justin Wynings, a dedicated REALTOR® with Lighthouse Real Estate Team, RE/MAX Peninsula, has served clients on the Peninsula for the past decade. Starting as a fresh-faced 21-year-old, looking back, he chuckles at how far he has come after navigating the dynamic real estate world.

Born and raised in Hampton Roads, Justin has deep roots in the area. He attended local schools and studied finance at Christopher Newport University. Inheriting an entrepreneurial spirit from his parents, who both owned local businesses, he started his first company during college. Justin built a thriving landscaping company that he grew and then sold before launching his real estate career.

“Real estate was always my plan,” says Justin about selling his company and obtaining his license. “My dad was a real estate appraiser, so I grew up around houses.” His grandfather was a savvy real estate investor, providing perspective and motivation for his growth. Justin’s drive is to help clients navigate one of the most significant transactions of their lives.

His youthful appearance was initially met with skepticism; however, Justin thrives on turning obstacles into strengths. He specifically remembers advice from his real estate coach: “You can either be the hall of famer or the number-one draft pick, so just try to go the route that fits best for you.” This guidance established his commitment to knowledge, honesty and transparency with clients, ensuring they receive the highest service levels.

Real estate is a unique landscape with a variety of clients. Justin is passionate about guiding his clients through the nuances of the real estate process, ensuring communication through a rapidly changing industry. Several clients are going through the largest generational wealth transfer in real estate due to their stage of life.



“Many of these clients have been in their homes for 10 to 20 years, stirring more emotions through a process they have not participated in for years,” he explains. “I love being there to support and guide them to their next step.”

Justin’s calm demeanor and problem-solving attitude are the cornerstones of his success. He finds that

the most rewarding aspect of the career is the vital role of helping clients transition smoothly to their next chapter. “Being able to help someone navigate the process so they feel informed and know what to expect is incredibly fulfilling,” he remarks.

Justin is as passionate about his family life as he is about his professional one. He shares a blended

family with his significant other, Brooke; his son, Witten (4); and Brooke’s children, Cailyn (12) and Brennan (9). Harbor, their 11-week-old Bernedoodle, who joins them on boat rides and beach outings, completes the family that prioritizes experiences, traveling and making memories.

Justin's commitment to community extends beyond his real estate work. He has been a part of the Virginia Peninsula Rotary Club and served as a board director for the YMCA. Through RE/MAX Peninsula, he supports the Miracle Children's Network, donating a portion of his commission to the Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters (CHKD).

As Justin looks to the future, he focuses on providing the best possible service to his clients. "The conversations I have with my clients and being allowed to be a part of their lives drives me," he

smiles. For him, success is defined by his clients winning while maintaining a flexible schedule that allows him to be present for his family.

Despite starting young, much of Justin's success comes from consistent, productive activities. He advises new agents to diligently create a database and find a system that works for them. "There are dozens of ways to do this business successfully; find the way that works for you and, above all else, work that system consistently," he recommends.



"Justin is an impressive young man. He has a knack for connecting with his clients and then going above and beyond for them. Recently, he repotted some herbs that a seller and her late husband had planted together in the backyard of their family home. When he took the pots to her, she was overcome with emotion at the thoughtful gesture. That's just the kind of person he is; he is genuine and takes care of his clients."

—Al Abbitt, Principal Broker/  
Owner, RE/MAX Peninsula

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Originally from Hampton Roads, Carol Cook has lived a life full of unexpected plot twists and is happy to be settled back in her hometown after being away for nearly four decades. Carol's former husband's job as a special agent with the United States Secret Service took their family from Chicago to Los Angeles to Louisville, KY, where they divorced. In her mid-30s, Carol went to college and became a paralegal. She spent years working with attorneys specializing in sexual harassment and discrimination in housing and employment law.

While working through a particularly egregious case, Carol was tasked with convincing a young client to settle a case for a nominal sum. She refused and made clear she would help the client find new legal representation. With a new legal team, the victim was awarded millions at a jury trial. "I knew then, and I know now, that I did the right thing for the client," Carol shares. "But the consequences were terrible both personally and professionally."

On her daughter's horse farm in upstate New York, Carol found absolute joy caring for layups (horses needing rest and rehabilitation), retired show jumpers and one very old and feisty miniature horse called Pony. Unfortunately, the joy she found at the farm came to an abrupt end when a horse kicked her while she was closing a stall door, shattering her right arm. "It wasn't the worst day of my life, but it was close," she recalls.

Though the pandemic was in full swing, Carol visited her niece, Tara, in York County. "I could not imagine what the future would look like," she reveals. "I knew I couldn't care for horses for a very long time, if ever. I was so weary. My broken arm was put together with a plate and screws, but my spirit felt more broken than my arm. I was 57 years old, couldn't do farm work and had not worked as a paralegal in years." Tara immediately had a solution. Meet with Greg Garrett, become a REALTOR® and come home. Problem solved.

Meeting Greg changed the trajectory of her life. "Greg said it didn't matter if I knew anything about real estate; the company would train me," Carol remarks. He said my age was a bonus. The most important thing about real estate is taking care of people, and he said, 'You are going to be more successful than you can even imagine.'"

Carol was ready to come home, but she first needed a house to go home to. Again,

Tara knew exactly where her aunt needed to be. She urged her to buy in Hilton Village. "The first house I saw needed more love than I had to give to it," Carol comments. "The second house was sad, but hopeful. I, too, was sad but hopeful. I bought it. Not until the day I moved in did I realize the enormity of what I visualized, and I had to make it happen."

# Carol Cook

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## on the rise

Story by Maddie Podish  
Photos by Susan Fowler, Fowler Studios



Within a month of being in her new home and starting in real estate, Carol skyrocketed to being one of the top producers of her office. “The training and encouragement at GRP is

phenomenal,” she gushes. “I truly believe you are only as strong as the people you surround yourself with, personally and professionally. Lindsay Pennington, Mary Baker, Chuck Dunlap and Nicole Kuch have supported and encouraged me from day one, and they have become so dear to me. I treasure these relationships.”

“Starting a new career in my late 50s and moving back after 40+ years was daunting,” Carol explains. “However, I was also determined and fortunately, I found I have a great passion for real estate. I thoroughly enjoy the thrill of the hunt and take great satisfaction in assisting my clients in finding a home they love and feel secure in. Collaborating with other agents to create win/win

deals is also something I deeply enjoy. I love my little Hilton Village home so much, and I want my clients to feel the same way about the home they buy.”

Carol is most proud of her daughters, Jennifer, a two-time Emmy Award-winning investigative journalist, and Juliana, a digital copywriter in the wellness technology space. “It isn’t their professional accomplishments but that they are truly good human beings that makes me proud,” beams Carol.

With a whirlwind of a past, Carol is finally “home.” Hopelessly devoted to her dogs, Mavis and Murrow, you can find her strolling the neighborhood with dog friends and their humans, working in her flower garden and enjoying time at her favorite restaurant, Circa 1918.



“When Carol joined Garrett Realty Partners, I immediately noticed a spark in her personality and just knew she would be a natural for this business. As I got to know her, my first impression was only further validated. I am always so impressed with how she manages her clients, puts her heart into every deal and leaves each closing becoming friends with those she represented. Her energy is contagious, and the loyalty she feels for her clients far extends past settlement. We are so very lucky to have Carol at Garrett Realty Partners, and we are honored to be a part of her real estate journey!”

— Lindsay Pennington, Managing Broker and Partner, Garrett Realty Partners

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# ANDY SUTTER

▶ partner spotlight

Story by Jacki Donaldson  
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Andy, hailing from Little Falls, New York, joined the United States Navy in 1988. After serving his country for more than 26 years, he retired in 2014 in Norfolk, where he was stationed for his entire career. He purchased the local Freedom Boat Club franchise in 2018. "Using my military training, my 200-ton Coast Guard captain's license and my knowledge of the area, I figured it was a good business for me to buy and grow," Andy says.



Good business is right. Andy has grown to three locations — Newport News, Norfolk/East Beach and Portsmouth — to meet the area’s demand, and he recently brought on Nathan Holder as a business partner. Nathan, originally from Stafford, VA, has served since 2018 in a training and operations role and worked himself up to become part owner of the club. Together, Andy and Nathan offer a diverse fleet of center consoles, pontoons, bowriders, offshore fishing boats and wake boats, and their team takes care of maintenance, cleaning, repair, insurance and storage. Members receive unlimited training and on-water instruction from qualified captains to ensure that everyone is confident and safe at the helm, and memberships vary to match each person’s boating needs.

You can bet that Andy and his wife, Janet, spend many moments relaxing on the water. The proud parents of two adult sons, Zachary and Joshua, and grandparents of one Beckett Ashby Sutter adore their surroundings. “It is a great place to live, work and call home,” Andy smiles.

When he is not working, Andy enjoys skiing and golfing, and he is forever grateful for the mentors who helped him grow up through the Navy and his family and friends who reached down,



picked him up and dusted him off when times were tough.

Andy, who defines success as leaving a legacy, being the person your dogs think you are, volunteering and being well respected in the community, welcomes the opportunity to serve you and your clients. He makes boating simple, and simplicity is certainly a gift in the fast-paced and hectic real estate industry.

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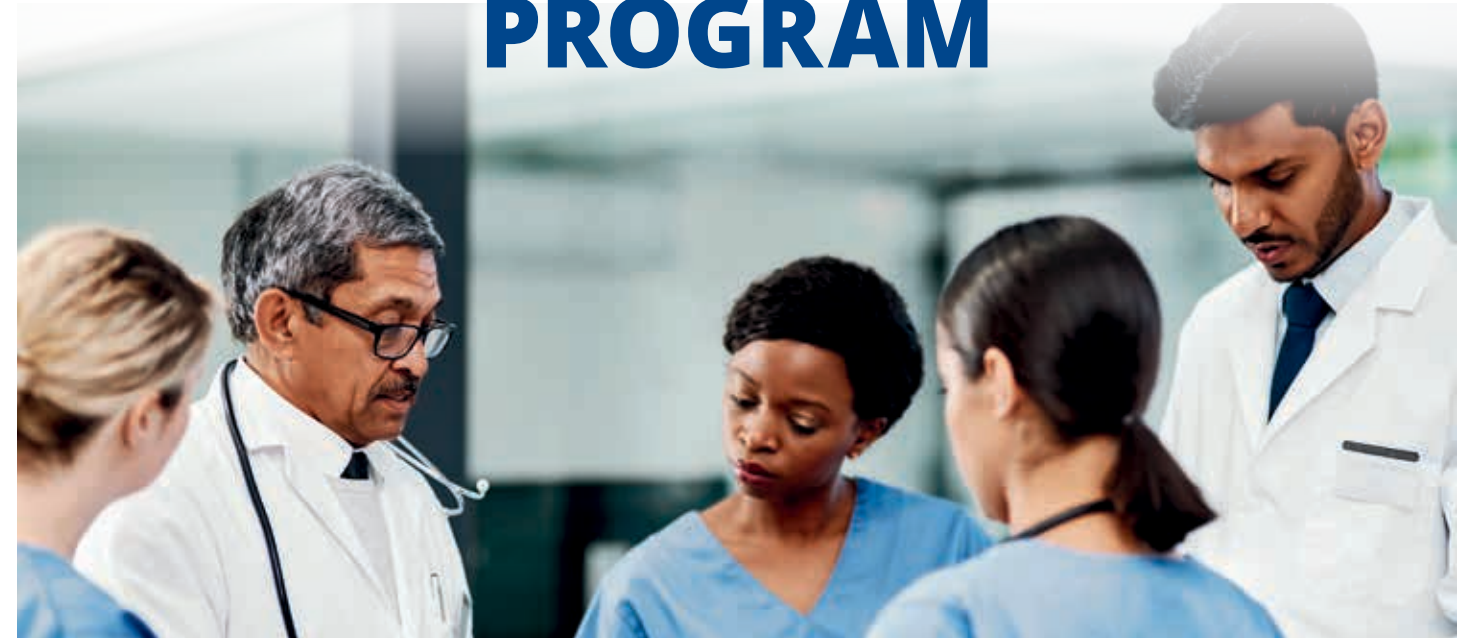


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Fulton Bank, N.A. Member FDIC. Subject to credit approval. <sup>1</sup>Medical Doctorate degree required. Restrictions apply. <sup>2</sup>Financing is based on the lower of either the appraised value (fair market value) or contract sales price. <sup>3</sup>Monthly payment for a \$250,000 15-year term mortgage at 3.582% Annual Percentage Rate (APR) would be \$1,774.71. Monthly payment for a \$250,000 30-year term mortgage at 3.582% Annual Percentage Rate (APR) would be \$1,108.43. Payment does not include amounts for taxes and insurance and the actual payment will be greater. <sup>4</sup>Adjustable rates are subject to increase after the initial fixed-rate period.



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# NOMINATE YOUR FAVORITE TOP AGENTS!

By Publisher Joni Giordano-Bowling

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 me at 757-348-7809 or [joni@realproducersmag.com](mailto:joni@realproducersmag.com) to nominate top agents.**

Of those nominated, our team meets with and gets to know each nominee in person or via Zoom. 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?

We also get to know the agents engaging in our private Facebook group for top REALTORS® and partners. Please contact me if you would like an invitation to that page, as membership is limited to agents on our past and present Real Producers list and to real estate brokers and current preferred business partners.

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 most articles six to 12 months in advance (sometimes years in advance for cover agents) and notify folks one to two months before their feature appears that we have selected them. Please don’t be discouraged if you have met with us and have not received the call to be featured. Keep those nominations coming.

We would love your feedback about 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.

Joni Giordano-Bowling | 757-348-7809  
| [joni@realproducersmag.com](mailto:joni@realproducersmag.com)



# FAQs

## RP WELCOME TO REAL PRODUCERS!

Some of you may be wondering what this publication is all about, which is why we have created this FAQ page. Here, we will answer the most commonly asked questions from around the country regarding our program. My door is always open to discuss anything regarding this community — this publication is 100% designed to be your voice!

### Q: WHO RECEIVES THIS MAGAZINE?

**A:** The top 300 agents on the Peninsula in Hampton Roads, VA. The Peninsula is defined as from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel in Hampton to the greater Williamsburg area and everything in between. We pulled the MLS numbers (by volume) from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, in the Peninsula and Williamsburg area. We cut the

list off at #300, and the distribution was born. For this year's list, the production level for our group was between just below \$5 million and \$50 million in 2023. The list will reset at the end of 2024 for next year and will continue to update annually.

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

**A:** The process is simple. Every feature you see has first been nominated. You can nominate REALTORS®, agents, affiliates, brokers, owners or even yourself. Office leaders can also nominate real estate agents. We will consider anyone you bring to our attention because we don't know everyone's story, and we need your help to learn more. A link to our nomination form is on our Facebook page ([facebook.com/peninsularealproducers](https://facebook.com/peninsularealproducers)).

### Q: WHAT IS THE COST TO FEATURE A REALTOR®, AGENT OR TEAM?

**A:** Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. **The feature costs nothing**, my friends, so nominate away! We are not a pay-to-play model. We share real stories of real producers based on achievement and nominations.

### Q: WHO ARE THE PREFERRED PARTNERS?

**A:** Anyone listed as a preferred partner in the front of the magazine is a part of this community and will have an ad in every issue of the magazine, attend our quarterly events and be a part of our online community. We don't just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. One or many of you have recommended every preferred partner you see in this publication. We won't even meet with a business that you have not vetted and stamped for approval, in a sense. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network for the REALTORS® and agents in the area and the best affiliates so we can grow stronger together.

### Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A PREFERRED PARTNER?

**A:** If you have a recommendation for a local business that works with top real estate agents, please let us know. Send an email or text to [joni@realproducersmag.com](mailto:joni@realproducersmag.com) or call 757-348-7809.

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