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from
**MAY 22ND
PANEL**
Inside!

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



06

Index of Preferred Partners



10

Publisher's Note: Gearing Up for an Unforgettable Awards Gala



16

Special Events: Photos from Our Top Producers' Panel on May 22nd



22

Rising Star: Kris Peay



28

Partner Spotlight: Andrea Young, Intuitive Staging



32

Cover Story: Jen Gong



If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email michele.kader@n2co.com.

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►► publisher's note

GEARING UP FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE AWARDS GALA



"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."
—Colossians 3:23 (NIV)

Dear Real Producers of South OC,

It's hard to believe that half of 2024 has already passed. We hope everyone is having a fantastic year so far!

We are currently planning our highly anticipated Real Producers' Awards Gala, scheduled for October 7th at Marbella Country Club, an elegant location perfect for large events. Our community will transform the space with unprecedented glitz and glam, with everyone dressed in their absolute finest for an unforgettable evening!

Only the Top 500 agents and their teams in the South OC market will be invited to this exclusive event. In addition to the usual fine beverages, delectable food, and foot-tapping live music, we will be handing out prestigious awards for 2023, including Best Cover Story, Impact Award, Leader of the Year, Team of the Year, Rookie of the Year, Spirit Award, Most Inspirational Story, and more. Keep an eye on your inbox for information on how

to nominate agents you think deserve recognition and for your exclusive invitation to the event. We're going to have some serious fun at the Awards Gala as we kick off the final quarter of 2024!

This month, we are excited to bring you our cover story on Jen Gong, a top producer with Keller Williams Irvine; a feature story on Rising Star Kris Peay, a former TV news journalist turned REALTOR®; and a spotlight on Andrea Young and Intuitive Staging, one of our highly valued vendor partners. Also in this month's issue, be sure to check out the photos from our impactful May 22nd Top Producers' Panel & Cocktail Reception on growing your business with systems.

Enjoy your summer and we look forward to seeing you all again soon!

With gratitude,



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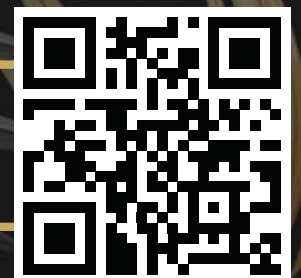
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Photos by WASIO faces



We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who attended our Top Producers' Panel & Cocktail Reception on May 22, 2024, at Marbella Country Club and made the event a resounding success. This event would not have been possible without our wonderful panelists, engaged attendees, and the unwavering support of our preferred partners and event sponsors.

Our panelists, **Dave Archuletta**, **Simon Guy**, and **Helena Noonan**,

brought a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the discussion, sparking insightful conversations that left a lasting impact.

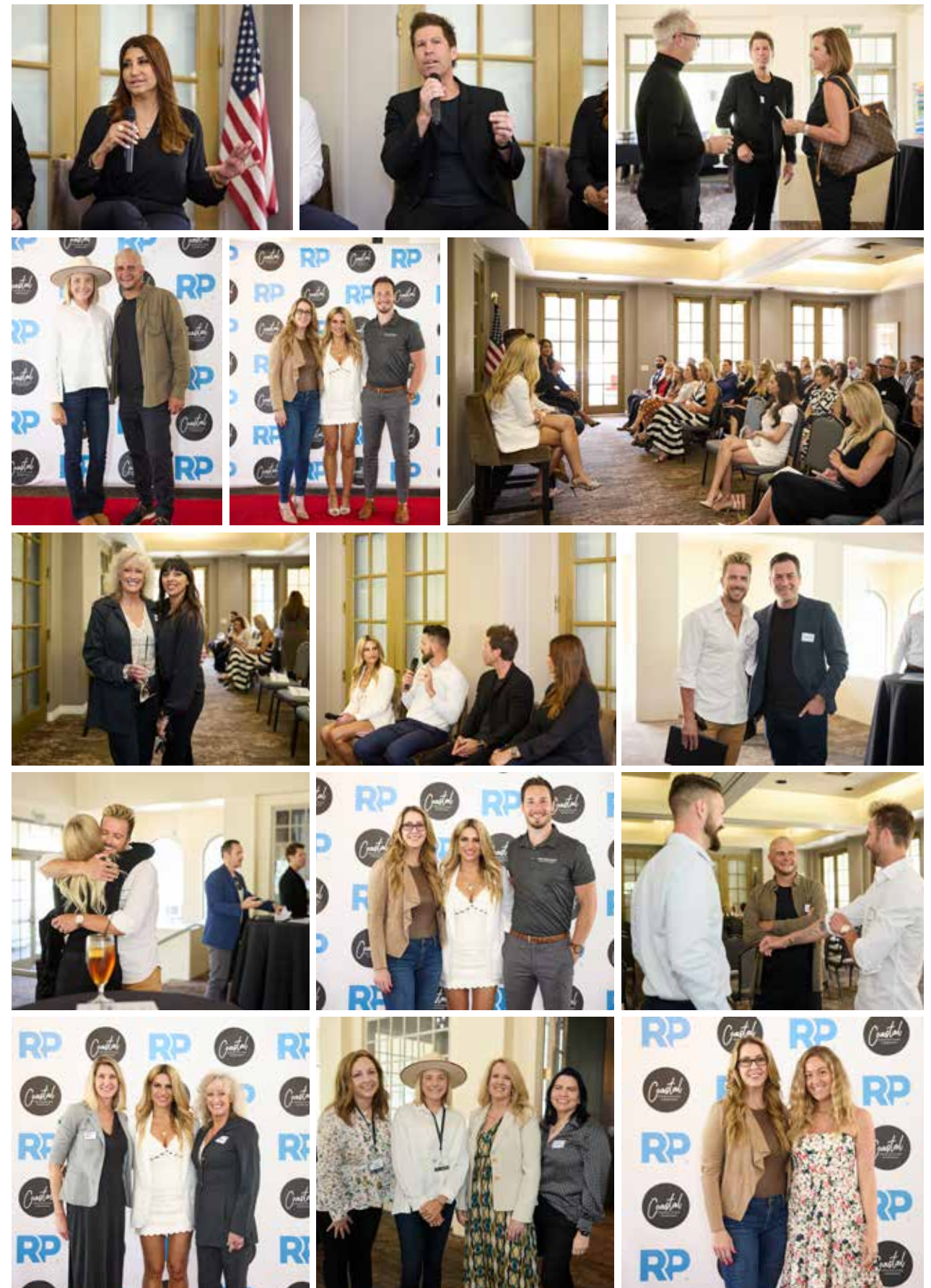
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made this special gathering possible. We couldn't have done it without you!

Big shout-out to our incredible photographer, **Sasha Wasiek, of Wasio faces**, for capturing memorable images.

We look forward to future collaborations and hope to see you at our next event!

For more information on all South OC Real Producers events, please email us at ocrealproducers@n2co.com.





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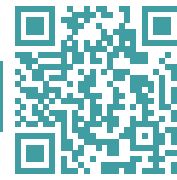
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KRIS PEAY



HITTING
HER
SECOND
STRIDE

Photo by Jenny McMasters

▶ rising star



Photo by Jenny McMasters

By Jess Wellar

KRIS PEAY USED TO REPORT THE DAILY NEWS; NOW SHE'S BUSY MAKING HER OWN HEADLINES. AS A SEASONED BROADCASTER TURNED PROMISING REALTOR® WITH COMPASS IN DANA POINT, KRIS IS FLOURISHING IN HER SECOND ACT, HELPING CLIENTS FIND THEIR DREAM HOMES WHILE LIVING HER BEST LIFE.

A STRONG FOUNDATION

Raised in Danville, California, by a trail-blazing single mother, one of the few successful female attorneys of her time, Kris is quick to credit her upbringing for her relentless drive and integrity.

“My mom instilled in my sister and me the value of doing the right thing because it’s the right thing, not because someone else is watching,” Kris recalls. “Now, my husband and I get to pass along that same advice to our own children.”

After graduating from USC with a bachelor’s degree in communications, Kris enjoyed a fruitful, 14-year career in communications, spanning roles from broadcast news to public relations for major companies like Nintendo, Mattel, and Disney Online. After stepping away from her work to raise three children, however, Kris suddenly found herself at a crossroads when her youngest son geared up to leave the nest for college.

“I have a hard time slowing down, and I knew I had to figure out what I wanted to do — my calling after life with kids,” she explains. “I’ve always been obsessed with real estate and enjoy managing our property in Northern California.

“More importantly, I knew I wanted to work in an industry where relationships matter, where I could continue to build community and help others solve a need,” she continues. “So I got my real estate license at the end of 2020 and hit the ground running in early 2021.”



Rising Star Kristen Peay is a Realtor with Compass in Dana Point. (Photo by Jenny McMasters)

I FEEL VERY PRIVILEGED TO
DO WHAT I DO, BEING A GREAT
RESOURCE FOR MY CLIENTS,
AND I LOVE THAT I AM STILL
LEARNING EVERY SINGLE DAY.



A NEW CHAPTER

Over the past three and a half years at Compass, Kris continues to impress. In the past seven months alone, she has closed almost \$11 million in sales and projects \$15 million by the end of 2024. Supported by Ashley Rosenhain and Rhonda Russell, her helpful teammates with Beach to Ranch Associates, Kris is quick to credit both ladies for graciously showing her the industry ropes.

“Our team consists of three like-minded, hardworking, motivated women who focus on client service and attention to detail,” Kris affirms. “When I joined Compass, I worked and shadowed Ashley and Rhonda, and they were both absolutely phenomenal mentors.

“I’ve really enjoyed the Compass culture, too, with its forward-thinking technology, and tremendous support staff,” she adds.

Kris says her secret sauce is her unique blend of professional rigor with a personal touch.

“I’m compassionate, hardworking, and solutions-driven,” she emphasizes. “I’m also incredibly honest, so my clients know I have their best interests in mind since most of them are going through some sort of big life transition.

“I also enjoy cultivating relationships and being a problem solver. Inevitably, challenges arise during a transaction, and I love being able to help guide and advise clients to a resolution, and ultimately purchase their ideal home ... I liken it to matchmaking. I find great joy in being a part of that process.”

Her advice to budding real estate professionals echoes her own ethos.



Photo by
Jenny McMasters

“Stay true to yourself, maintain integrity, and acknowledge the importance of our job as Realtors,” she asserts. “We are partners in administering a significant transaction, and that responsibility should not be taken lightly; moreover, it is best served with a passion to serve others, not to personally benefit.”

ON THE HOMEFRONT

Outside the office, Kris enjoys a rich family life with her husband of 29 years, Brian, and their three adult sons: Austin, Trevor, and Luke. As empty nesters now, the couple cherishes their downtime together and with close friends, whether it’s playing tennis or golf, enjoying date nights, or simply sharing a meal together. They also enjoy doting on their two gorgeous golden retrievers, Harper Rose and Sadie Rose.

“Their middle names are the same as my mother’s middle name, whom I lost at 23 years old,” Kris shares. “Having three boys, I was happy to finally honor her name somehow.”

In her off hours, Kris dedicates plenty of time to various organizations reflecting her deep commitment to her local community, while being a self-described ‘tennis junkie and proud Trojan alum.’



Kris Peay and her husband, Brian, with their sons, Austin, Trevor and Luke; and their golden retrievers, Harper Rose and Sadie Rose. (Photo by Lisa Renee Photography)

Kris is a member of the USC Board of Alumni Emeritus and the TCU Parent and Family Council, and actively participates in Tennis Serves Others, while previously serving on the Trojan League of Orange County's board. In addition, Kris recently joined the Boys & Girls Club - WeCan initiative and sits on the El Niguel Country Club Membership Committee as well.

Looking ahead, Kris's future appears to be shaping up as rosilily as her past. With ambitions to continue growing within the real estate sector, Kris also aims to maintain the close-knit family and friendship ties that have supported her throughout her life. Improving her golf game would be an added bonus, she says.

"I feel very privileged to do what I do, being a great resource for my clients, and I love that I am still learning every single day," Kris concludes with a smile. "It's also very true what they say: no two transactions are ever the same, and I welcome the challenge!"

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ANDREA YOUNG INTUITIVE STAGING

Elevating Listings Through Artistry & Expertise

First impressions can be everything. Savvy real estate professionals know that from the moment potential buyers step through the door, the ambiance and presentation of a property can make all the difference in securing a sale. Andrea Young, the principal and lead designer of Intuitive Staging, understands this principle intimately. Though her innate talent for design and interior decorating dates back years, Andrea's journey into the world of professional staging began in earnest five years ago with a serendipitous opportunity.

"I was approached by a friend of mine who works for a large brokerage in my hometown. She asked me if I would

come look at a listing and if I would be interested in staging it," Andrea reminisces. "The property was a stunning, 6000-square-foot home with ocean views in North Tustin. I said, 'Sure, I can stage it. Where's the furniture?' She laughed and said, 'You have to go *get* the furniture!'"

Andrea rose to the occasion, staging the property with her husband over the course of three days. The house sold just five days later.

"I was literally crying while removing items from the walls," Andrea recalls. "I thought, what am I going to do



▶ partner spotlight

By Ellen Buchanan
Photos by Jenny McMasters

with all this furniture?! My husband looked at me and said, 'I guess you're going into business.'"

Driving the Vision of Intuitive Staging

Today, Andrea has a dedicated team of professionals alongside her: her husband, Wally, the company's COO and CFO; Lead Designer Brooke Kaczor; Staging Assistants Tina Krudwig and Tami Telson; and Operations Manager Steve Curtis. Together, their collective expertise and passion are driving the business forward.

"We've just exponentially grown year over year. Ninety-five percent of my business has all been referrals," Andrea notes, "and I'm so grateful for that."

Intuitive Staging boasts a 5000-square-foot warehouse in the Irvine area that houses their extensive collection and offers clients a glimpse into their innovative designs and the meticulous process of staging.

Their online presence is equally impressive, with Andrea actively engaging with clients and followers on Instagram. Through captivating visuals and insightful stories, Andrea offers a behind-the-scenes look at her creative process and beautiful stages.

A Boutique Approach

"I definitely consider my company a boutique staging company. We only do about 100 houses a year," Andrea explains. "We don't just come in and drop furniture; we work closely with agents to enhance every aspect of the listing's presentation."

Andrea is proud to offer exceptional customer service to her clients, personally taking each call and ensuring that every client receives unparalleled attention and support.



Andrea Young is the owner of Intuitive Staging, a premier home staging company in South Orange County.

"We really like to partner with real estate agents, working with them on the total package of the marketing for their listing, from the beginning all the way to the end. That starts at the front curb appeal and goes all the way through the house to the backyard, really creating that lifestyle look for potential buyers to envision themselves living in the home," she says.

Crafting Cohesive Environments

At the heart of Intuitive Staging's philosophy is a commitment to creating cohesive environments that evoke a sense of home and belonging.

"Our designs are very curated and layered," Andrea says. "We don't really have a staged kind of look; it's more a homier, lifestyle vibe."

Intuitive Staging is also one of the only staging companies in the area still doing occupied staging.



"We're the one of the last Mohicans in Orange County that does occupieds," Andrea notes with a touch of pride. "We will come in and work with someone living in the home and blend their furniture with our inventory, touching every room, to make the listing look cohesive and as phenomenal as possible."

Home Is Where the Heart Is

Beyond her professional endeavors, Andrea finds joy in her home life and family. Married for nearly 28 years, Andrea and her husband, Wally, have built a life together in North Tustin and have two children: Josh, a junior at the University of Boulder, Colorado, and Carly, a graduating senior who will be attending the University of Alabama in the fall. Their household also includes two beloved golden retrievers: 13-year-old Cody, and Fynn, their 3-year-old "Covid baby."

In her free time, Andrea enjoys taking walks with her husband and their dogs, riding bikes in their neighborhood, and indulging her passion for the culinary arts. A self-described "foodie," Andrea loves cooking in her remodeled kitchen, as well as dining out and trying new foods, cocktails and wine pairings. Her love for the ocean often inspires her choice of vacation destinations, where she seeks out serene water views to relax and recharge.

A High-Value Partner

When asked what she enjoys most about her work, Andrea is quick to point not only to the joy of transforming spaces, but also to how much she genuinely appreciates collaborating with her real estate partners.

"I love going out and meeting new agents and working with my clients. We really want to partner with agents and be part of their team," she asserts. "I'm always available to take calls or come out for a consultation and give advice on paint and carpet selections and lighting."

With a portfolio filled with stunning transformations, a reputation for delivering exceptional results, and countless satisfied clients, Andrea and her team at Intuitive Staging continue to redefine the art of staging in Orange County — elevating every listing they touch to new heights.

For more information, call Andrea Young at 714-287-5399, visit Intuitive Staging on Instagram (@intuitive_design_studio) or visit their website: Intuitive-Staging.com.



Jen GONG

▶▶ cover story

By Jess Wellar

From Humble Beginnings to Real Estate Stardom



Jen Gong's journey from a young student in Dalian, China, to becoming one of the leading Chinese real estate agents in the United States is a testament to the power of perseverance and the American dream. Born in the beautiful harbor city of Dalian, Jen's early love for the beach would later influence her career in coastal California real estate.

Arriving in the United States in 1998 as an international student, Jen faced significant challenges. She lived on patio furniture and rented rooms from others — a far cry from her current success.

"I came here with nothing but the mindset of helping others," Jen reflects. This principle has been the foundation of her empire.

Educational Excellence and Early Career

Jen's academic prowess was evident from her days as a top student in China. In the U.S., she continued to excel, graduating from Cal State Fullerton with an MBA in accounting. For the next 14 years, Jen thrived in the corporate world, eventually becoming the assistant controller for Kelley Blue Book.

The Transition to Real Estate

Although successful in her corporate career, Jen's entrepreneurial spirit yearned for more.





Jen Gong with her husband, John Remar, and their children, Lily and Jake

She began flipping houses in 2009 during the period of short-sale opportunities, which led her to obtain her real estate license. When Kelley Blue Book was acquired by Autotrader in 2015, dissolving her division, Jen took it as a sign to dive into real estate full-time.

Dominating the Market

Since going full-time, Jen has been unstoppable. In 2023 alone, she sold \$81 million worth of real estate. Halfway through 2024, she's already hit the \$50 million mark. Her career sales have surpassed \$550 million, placing her in the top 0.1 percent of agents in Orange County and among the Top 10 Agents nationwide by the Asian Real Estate Association of America.

Jen's journey in real estate has seen her transition from a small boutique firm to Coldwell Banker in 2019, where she was part of the Number 1 Small Team in Orange County, Number 7 in California, and Number 21 nationwide. Now with Keller Williams Irvine, she's found a more conveniently located support system to handle her ever-increasing volume.

A Unique Approach to Real Estate

Jen combines her exceptional design sense and MBA skills to offer a unique approach to selling, negotiating, and marketing

properties. She excels in design expertise, personally involving herself in helping stage homes, ensuring every detail is perfect. Her understanding of Feng Shui and the importance of color and light makes her listings stand out.

In addition, she uses comprehensive marketing strategies, including high-quality photos, virtual tours, online listings, social media campaigns, and mega open houses.

Finally, Jen excels in skilled negotiations, leveraging her MBA degree and deep market knowledge to negotiate favorable terms for her clients.

The Workaholic with Heart

Jen describes herself as a "workaholic," but it's not just about the daily grind. She wants to be a role model for her children and lead by example with her drive. Her approach to business is rooted in integrity, professionalism, and relentless hustle.

"I love to solve problems and help people realize their real estate dreams," she offers. "I tend to do whatever it takes to make my clients happy since it's the biggest investment of their lives, and I want them to know I'm committed and show them that respect at all times."



Community Involvement and Giving Back

Beyond her professional life, Jen is deeply involved in her community. She hosts large parties in Orchard Hills, bringing together families and fostering a sense of community with events like photos with Santa, Easter egg hunts, the Lunar New Year party, and Recycle and E-Waste event. She also supports many nonprofits like CHOC Children’s Foundation and St. Jude Children’s Hospital Donation, further demonstrating her commitment to giving back.

Family Matters

When she’s not helping clients, Jen enjoys spending every free moment with her family. Her husband, John Remar, is a VP of marketing and referee on the TV show “BattleBots.” They have two children, 12-year-old Lily, who loves fashion and aspires to be an interior designer, and 10-year-old Jake, who might just join his mother’s team one day. Their family also has a rescue dog named Laser.

Looking Ahead

Jen is laser-focused on leaving a meaningful legacy for her loved ones while continuing to provide phenomenal value for her clients.

“I want to continue servicing as many people as I can and help them achieve their real estate goals,” she affirms. “My long-term vision is to build a legacy business that my children can inherit, instilling in them the values of hard work and determination that have driven me.”

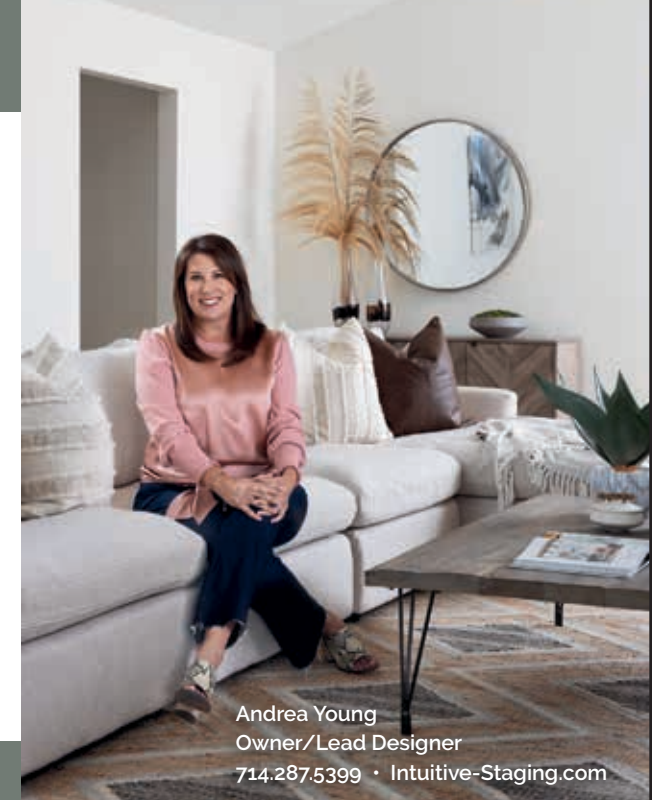
Jen Gong’s story is one of determination, hard work, and the realization of the American dream. From humble beginnings to becoming a top real estate agent, she embodies the spirit of success through perseverance and dedication to helping others.

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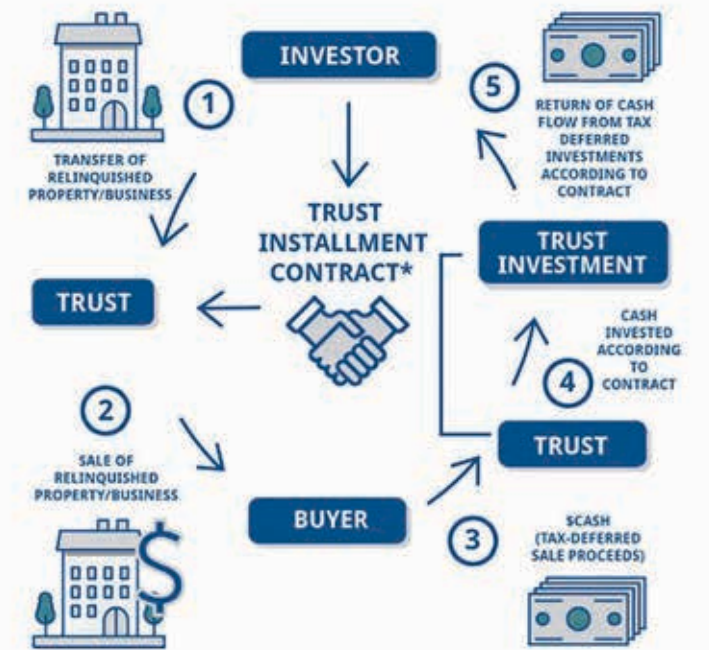
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