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# TABLE OF CONTENTS



**12**  
Meet the Team



**16**  
Cover Story:  
Betsy Thompson



**26**  
On the Rise:  
Alexis Lans



**32**  
Partner Spotlight:  
Manami Workman,  
PESTOUT



**38**  
Leader Spotlight:  
Mary Rice



**48**  
FAQ

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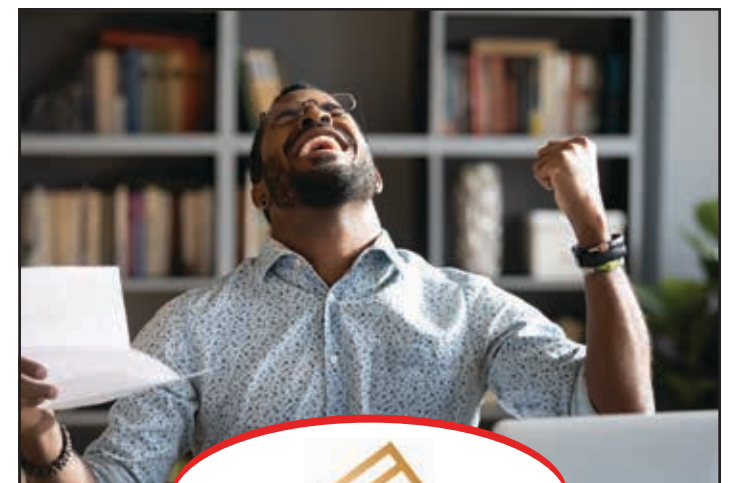
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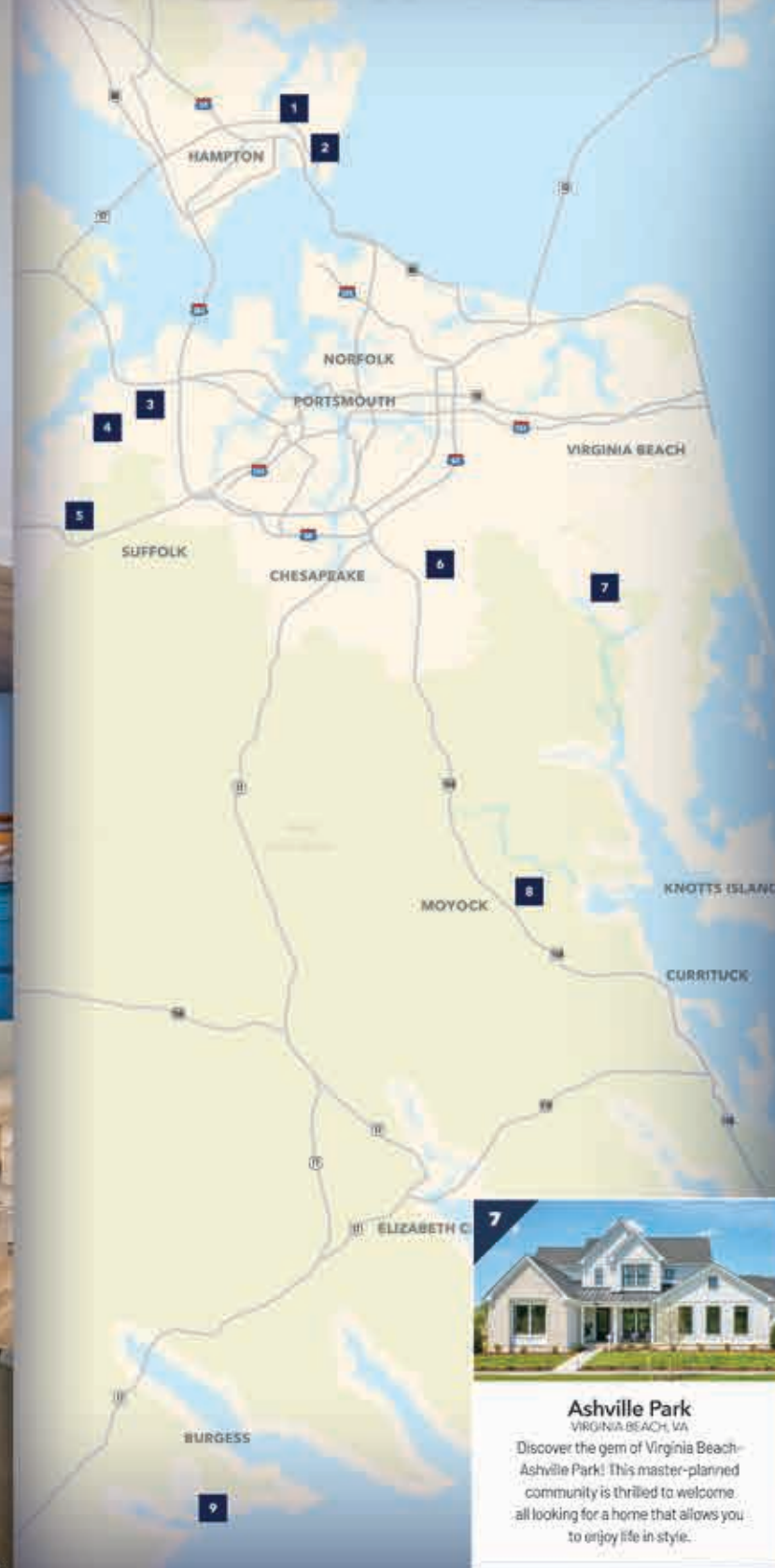


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BETSY

cover story

Story by Jacki Donaldson  
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(unless otherwise noted)

## THE AGENCY COASTAL VIRGINIA

Anyone who tells you that work-life balance is the non-negotiable key to a meaningful and satisfying career has never met Betsy Thompson, accomplished real estate agent and Managing Partner of The Agency Coastal Virginia. "I don't have work-life balance because I love what I do," she says, revealing that working 14-hour days seven days a week is not uncommon for her and her husband, Alan Thompson, Broker and Managing Partner of The Agency Coastal Virginia. They wouldn't have it any other way.



Before becoming a top-producing agent consistently earning Circle of Excellence Diamond awards, rising to the #1 agent in Chesapeake by Broker Metrics statistics and receiving the honor (four times) of #1 agent in Coastal Virginia in *Coastal Virginia Magazine*, Betsy was selling timeshares in Virginia Beach. The job was not the position she imagined getting with her Radford University communications degree, but she credits it for shaping her future. "It was a phenomenal beginning to my career and one of the things that made me

who I am today," shares the Great Bridge born-and-raised girl who would live in Williamsburg, California and Florida before coming home to build a real estate business with Alan, whom she met in 2008 and married in 2012.

Betsy gave real estate a whirl while living in Destin, FL, but she didn't know anyone and didn't see a future in the business there. Alan, already a successful agent since 1989, told Betsy, "If we are going to do this, let's move home and do it." In 2015, with their daughter, Brianna, they went home.

Determined to leverage her network, build a sphere and database and work only from referrals, Betsy sold her first house to her cousin, Amanda Stover, now her Operations Manager. She hosted her first event at Chesapeake Park for 100 people, complete with food trucks, DJ, giveaways and sweltering summer temperatures. And boom, she was off. "I've never bought a lead in my life," she comments about how pop-bys, coffee meetups and always answering her phone set her on a productive course. During her first year, she sold 35 houses. In her second year, she sold 55, and in the following two years, she sold 66 and 100, respectively. Lucky Realty came during her second year, and a year and a half ago, her greatest achievement arrived: The Agency Coastal Virginia.



Photo by Dave Schwartz, Coastal Exposures

The Agency is Betsy and Alan's legacy for their daughter who is embarking on her college career. Already, the brokerage has 18 top-producing agents, and the plan is to grow to 40 agents who close a minimum of \$5 million. "Our goal is to take productive agents and help them achieve new heights in their careers," states Betsy, whose teaching and training extend to other platforms, like the Tom Ferry Coaching Network and Brian Buffini Coaching.

The joy Betsy finds in real estate abounds. She names





Photo by Dave Schwartz, Coastal Exposures

her buyers, sellers, investors, agents, assistants and marketing team, plus Alan and The Agency Owner Mauricio Umansky, as her core source of happiness, and she lists the steps she has taken over the years that helped her emerge victorious in the real estate industry: having a coach, doing events and pop-bys, sending birthday cards with lottery tickets, keeping a database and making sure her people know that she cares about them more than a commission check. "I truly believe that people don't care about you until they know how much you care about them," she asserts.

The primary beneficiary of Betsy's goodwill in the community is the YMCA, the leading nonprofit committed to strengthening individuals and communities across the country. Inspired by Alan's experience with the YMCA amidst a difficult upbringing, the couple contributes significant financial resources. "I don't think enough people realize that the more you give, the more you receive," Betsy imparts. As a cancer survivor living with multiple sclerosis, Betsy knows the power of paying kindness forward.

Although Betsy does not embrace a daily work-life balance, she and Alan do travel once per month; Cancun is one of their favorite destinations. They also work out together twice a week. You won't find Betsy dabbling in

any hobbies, though, and if you advise her to slow down, she'll likely respond, "Why the heck would I slow down?" Betsy follows in her dad's hard-working footsteps and applies what her parents taught her about being a force in the world.

Alan is at the top of Betsy's grateful list. "Without an Alan Thompson, there is not a Betsy Thompson," she declares. "My husband and my daughter are my world, and I can't imagine my life without them." One other thing that she can't imagine is a life without real estate. As author and inspirational speaker Simon Sinek says, "When we work hard for something we don't believe in, it's called stress. When we work hard for something we love, it's called passion." Betsy is not stressed. She is passionate.

"I have taught thousands of real estate agents in my career, and the difference in those who are good versus those who are great always comes down to work ethic and commitment. Betsy has the most phenomenal work ethic that I have ever seen, and her passion for both the business and her clients is reflected in the quality of her service. Yes, full disclosure, she's my wife, but even if she weren't, I would be chasing after her every day! Why? Because she is a force to be reckoned with, both in real estate and in life. She's got that drive, that passion, that X-factor that just makes her unstoppable!" —Alan Thompson, Broker and Managing Partner of The Agency Coastal Virginia

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# ALEXIS LANS

1ST CLASS REAL ESTATE FLAGSHIP

on the rise

Story by Maddie Podish  
Photos by Leah Wallace, Leah Ariel Photography



**A**lexis Lans' life revolves around three values — God, family and career. Raised in the heart of Hampton Roads, Alexis strives to be a beacon of hope and help make her clients' homeownership dreams a reality. But before becoming one of the top real estate agents at 1st Class Real Estate, Flagship, Alexis traveled different paths, each leading her closer to her calling.

With three degrees under her belt, including a master's degree in criminal justice, Alexis had once aspired to serve her country. After being selected out of 20,000 applicants for the FBI, she faced a choice that would shape her future: sacrificing time away from her family for training or seeking another path. A devoted mother, Alexis couldn't fathom being apart from her children and steered away from the bureau's offer.

Life took a different turn when Alexis found herself working at a local jail, where her commitment to justice intertwined with the challenges of parenthood. After welcoming twins into her family, Alexis confronted the reality of needing to pivot her career. Corporate America's allure dimmed compared to her desire for flexibility and purpose. Driven by a profound faith and an innate desire to help others, Alexis prayed, seeking guidance on her next steps. During this time, she discovered her passion for real estate. Inspired by her journey of finding a home and helping her mother find her home in 2015, Alexis realized the potential to secure houses and also transform lives.



“Alexis Lans was a superstar immediately. She came to 1st Class Real Estate in April or May of her first year and exploded. In the remainder of her first year, she made our top President’s Club and qualified for our annual trip that year to St. Martin. She is consistently one of our top monthly producers and has qualified for our President’s Club trip every year since. She is an awesome advocate for her clients and for our company, as well. Alexis also mentors several agents, teaching, guiding and even providing shadow opportunities to them.

It would take an entire page to adequately express what Alexis means to our company at 1st Class Real Estate Flagship. As her Broker, I cannot say enough good things. I honor and respect her, and I’m proud that she is to be highlighted in this month’s Hampton Roads Real Producers magazine.”  
 — George E Misok, Principal Broker, 1st Class Real Estate Flagship



Becoming a real estate agent wasn’t merely a career choice for Alexis, but a calling. Empowered by her unwavering devotion and genuine compassion, Alexis embarked on a journey to redefine success. “I start every day asking the Lord, ‘Who can we help today? What can we do today to help make someone’s homeownership dreams come true?’” With five kids, all at different stages of life, she found the transition seamless as her clients’ scheduling needs aligned with hers, reaffirming that real estate was where she belonged.

Now, three years into her career, Alexis has helped more than 80 families, crediting her success to being eager, driven, bold and dedicated. Above all, she credits God. “My main goal is to help people get out of their own way and help break those generational curses for individuals whose families may have never bought a home to show

them that anyone can own one,” she shares. One shining example she loves sharing is that her oldest daughter, Di’nasty, bought her first home at 23, right after graduating college.

Alexis’ family’s greatest strength is celebrating each other’s accomplishments and supporting one another through challenges. Alexis shares a deep connection built on love and mutual support with Carlton, her best friend, to whom she has been married for six enriching years. Their home is bursting with love and laughter with five children, including two sets of twins, Carlton and Carlysia (8) and Nicholas & Nickyah (18), and Di’nasty (23), who works as a registered nurse at a hospital. Tearfully, Alexis shares, “My mom is my biggest supporter. She was there for me when I had nothing, and I wouldn’t have been able to do this without her.” Her father cheers her on from the sideline and offers Godly advice when she faces tough moments.

As Pastor of BreakThrough Ministries, Alexis leads by example, organizing fellowships with women to recognize the unspoken sacrifice they make daily. “As wives, as mothers, as caregivers, we take on so much, and sometimes, we get overlooked and unrecognized for the handwork we do,” she explains. Through these gatherings, she aims to uplift and celebrate the resilience of women who often carry the weight of the world on their shoulders.

For Alexis, success transcends financial gain; it’s about making a meaningful difference in others’ lives. Drawing from her experience and dedication, she advises aspiring agents to lead with integrity and infuse passion into their work. Looking into the future, Alexis envisions expanding her reach of helping others while her values remain at the frontlines of everything she does: God, family and career.

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and systematic, allowing people to relax and enjoy the fun part of buying a home while she handles the details that can often seem overwhelming. Katie has guided countless families into homeownership, turning the impossible into possible. Check out a few of her 5-star reviews. Their experiences speak louder than words!

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▶▶ partner spotlight

Story by Dan Clark  
Photos by Mason Murawski Photography



# Manami Workman

## PESTOUT

In the real estate industry, finding a contractor you can trust and rely on is essential. In the world of pest control, PESTOUT is working to make life easier for those in the market for its services. Taking the ease of scheduling and exceptional customer service to the next level is the driving force behind the business, and PESTOUT's fearless leader is making it all happen.

Manami Workman, President of PESTOUT, a veteran-founded and woman-owned business based in Newport News, offers a wide range of pest control solutions, including standard termite, rodent and other mitigation services, as well as moisture management, repairs and abatement programs for potential future problems. Manami prioritizes integrity, insisting on doing what is right at all costs, and if mistakes happen, she works diligently to rectify them. With a rich history of collaboration within the real estate industry, her company has developed a unique and refined system that streamlines its processes. Offering a convenient, 24-hour online inspection request form, you can book that inspection while burning the midnight oil.

Living a life without regret is a goal many of us strive to achieve, but Manami embraces the mantra daily in every aspect of her life. On the career side, she considers her employees an integral and fundamental cog in the company's operations and strives to provide exceptional

value to customers while minimizing unnecessary environmental impact. "Our attention to detail is unmatched," she shares. "Plus, our inspectors are WDI (Wood Destroying Insect) certified, ensuring top-notch expertise. We're here to provide reliable and trusted pest control services, always striving for excellence."

Outside of work, Manami has many passions and pours herself wholeheartedly into them. To wind down, she enjoys gardening and practicing aerial silk and yoga. Her meticulous mindset spills over into her personal life as she engages in self-improvement activities, organizes her home and commits to continual learning. Everyone needs to get away, though, and the Workman family of four loves to go biking and even plans a skiing and snowboarding trip together at least once a year. That doesn't keep them from having a social life, though. Manami recently brought her mother in to live with the family, and they also enjoy many social activities and entertaining friends.



When asked what she wants to be remembered for, Manami states, "If my existence inspires someone in any way, I will consider that an honor." Gratitude is foundational to her existence, extending to every opportunity and experience she has had, which have been paramount in her learning journey. As evidenced by her love for gardening, she says that nature's beauty is something she cherishes daily. In addition, she highly appreciates her employees at PESTOUT, recognizing that their dedication is the backbone of the operation. "I'm thankful for the hard work of every team member," she smiles. "Their effort keeps the company thriving, saving me from spending my days in crawl spaces, behind the wheel or on the phone managing logistics."

No stranger to logistics, Manami began her career in administrative roles at trading companies in her native Japan, which formed the base of her knowledge to carry to her current role. She also taught English part-time during that time. When she married her husband, she became involved in the administrative side of the business, learning all aspects of pest control, eventually leading to her current role as President.

Her experience and success are evident, too. Carrying the company into its third decade in business, PESTOUT continues to grow and provide exemplary services to the greater Hampton Roads region, from the Southside to

Williamsburg on the Peninsula. Five-star reviews abound, with many touting professionalism, punctuality, quality and responsiveness. The bottom line is that with PESTOUT, you get dependable service *and* a smooth closing process.

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# Mary Rice

▶ leader spotlight

Photos by Rachel Saddleire Photography (unless otherwise noted)



## Liz Moore & Associates

Navigating the real estate landscape can be daunting, especially with its constant shifts and twists. In light of recent market fluctuations, staying well-informed is more critical than ever. Mary Rice is deeply committed to ensuring her clients are informed and empowered to adapt to whatever the market presents and have fun doing it.

“I truly believe in equipping buyers and sellers with a thorough understanding of the industry’s dynamics,” Mary emphasizes. She touches on a common issue: the gap between media narratives and real-world realities. “Media often sensationalizes, but the truth is, substantial changes are rare. It’s about deciphering the noise and ensuring our clients grasp the genuine shifts,” she explains.



Transparency is at the core of Mary’s approach. “Transparency breeds confidence in decision-making,” she asserts. She acknowledges that her directness might surprise some, but she sees it as a vital part of education. “I believe in being candid because sugar-coating doesn’t serve anyone well when it comes to such significant decisions,” she admits with a chuckle.

“Mary has been a rare and true find for us! We have so much confidence in her that she was the catalyst for us to finally open an office on Southside that we have been dreaming about for years. We’re grateful to be in that market with a small but mighty presence!”

— Liz Moore, President of Liz Moore & Associates



Witnessing her clients make informed choices and seeing those decisions pay off is what drives Mary’s passion for her work. “The sense of fulfillment when clients reap the rewards of their educated decisions is unparalleled,” she declares. Whether guiding clients to a wise investment or ensuring they don’t overpay for a property, Mary finds joy in their successes.

Though real estate wasn’t her initial career path, Mary’s dedication to helping others has always been unwavering. Originally from Michigan, her journey led her to the Tidewater area, where she eventually found her calling in real estate.

Reflecting on her transition, she admits she wishes she'd discovered her passion for real estate sooner. "But everything happens for a reason," she muses. "It's shaped me into the agent I am today." As a transplant herself to the area, she feels strongly equipped to help her relocating clients.

Joining Liz Moore & Associates has been a transformative experience for Mary. The brokerage's emphasis on education and service resonates deeply with her values. "I've finally found a place where I belong," she enthuses. Being part of the expansion into the Southside Tidewater area has been both exciting and fulfilling for her. "I cannot wait to witness this office grow and bring the LMA way to the Southside clients," she comments.

Mary acknowledges the misconceptions surrounding real estate careers and aims to challenge them head-on. "There's this perception that it's all about business or sales, but it's about so much more," she explains. "It's about building trust and relationships."



Photo submitted by Mary Rice



**"I knew the moment I met Mary that she would be a great fit for our company. She is such an asset and has been instrumental in building our presence on the Southside. She is well respected by her peers and is an all-around great agent and mom!"**  
 — Donna Moyer, Principal Broker, Liz Moore & Associates

Her dedication to her clients has fueled her success, evidenced by her thriving referral-based business.

Outside of real estate, Mary finds solace in activities like yoga, sailing, gardening and spending moments with her family in nature. She hosts a yearly event called Galantines Day to benefit Samaritan House, a local nonprofit. "I come from hardworking parents who taught me early about community and service, and it's something I want to model for my kiddos," she notes.



Photo submitted by Mary Rice



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## hampton roads REALTORS® association

By Dr. Dawn Kennedy, PhD, CAE, RCE, C2EX, GREEN Hampton Roads REALTORS® Association, Chief Executive Officer

# CELEBRATING HOMEOWNERSHIP ALL YEAR LONG



Those celebrations began with REALTORS®. According to Enact (June, 2023), the concept for celebrating homeownership began in the 1920s “as a week-long celebration thanks to local REALTOR® associations wanting to promote the idea of homeownership.” In 1956, NAR officially endorsed the homeownership week. In 1976, it was renamed Private Property Week, and in 1986, it was retitled as American Home Week. In 1995, President Clinton expanded the concept by endorsing it nationally. President G. W. Bush in 2002 proclaimed the entire month of June as National Homeownership Month, lengthening its observance to highlight the importance of homeownership to our country.

Every month in the Hampton Roads REALTORS® Association (HRRRA) New Member Orientation, we focus on the sheer weight of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) influence over homeownership. REALTORS®, through our advocacy and the REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC), are the gatekeepers of the American Dream of homeownership. The preamble of our Code of Ethics states, “Under all is the land. Upon its wise utilization and widely allocated ownership depend the survival and growth of free institutions and of our civilization. REALTORS® should recognize that the interests of the nation and its citizens require the highest and best use of the land and the widest distribution of land ownership.” Our aspirational goal can be distilled down to the widest land distribution to the widest population.

Celebration is one thing, but just what is NAR doing to promote homeownership, to make it a reality? In 2022, after receiving an alarming report from NAR on housing affordability, the White House submitted a historic funding request for affordable housing. NAR representatives met multiple times with White House officials to give input into the legislation and testified before Congress on housing supply and affordability constraints. In 2023, NAR lobbied for and won a reduction in mortgage insurance premiums (MIPs) by 30 basis points, making FHA-mortgaged homes more attainable. NAR leadership testified before the U.S. House Committee on Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance about the FHFA's new loan level pricing adjustments (LLPA) fee increase on borrowers. This, with immense political pressure from REALTORS® across the country, caused the FHFA to rescind its proposed loan level pricing adjustment upfront fee on borrowers, which was slated to go into effect August 1, 2023.

Locally, at HRRRA, we monitor city council agendas and testify if necessary. In the last 12 months, we have successfully advocated for more rooftops in Suffolk and Chesapeake. Early this year, we met with Portsmouth legislators and business leaders to educate them on NAR's Smart Growth Principles as the city continues to grow. We will continue to support local regulations and legislation that promote attainable housing and advocate against policies that harm the real estate market or private property rights. National Homeownership Month doesn't end in June for HRRRA but is something we work on all year.

All three levels of the REALTOR® association protect that ideal daily, not just in June. Because we are an organized branded group, legislators know who we are, who votes, who contributes to campaigns and how many of us there are. REALTORS® sit at more of the nation's kitchen tables than any other profession, and our legislators know that our clients and customers depend upon us for their real estate information. Individual non-REALTOR® brokers and their agents simply cannot effect change or prevent the erosion of the American Dream the way a group of 1.5 million all speaking with the same voice can. Celebrating June National Homeownership Month means supporting the REALTOR® organization through membership.



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# ULTIMATE SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS IN ANY MARKET

## An Interview with a 2024 HRRR Board Member



**MICHAEL LITTLE**  
2024 BOARD MEMBER

I continue to choose to support and be an active member of the Hampton Roads REALTORS® Association because it's the absolute best vehicle for us to directly impact our industry and community! Our local chapter is the link to a regional and national audience which results in reform or improvement of a multitude of issues pertaining to housing, community, and the laws governing each. I look forward to an impactful year with the leadership team we have in place. Let's continue to collaboratively propel one another to conquer the summit of life.

That's Who We R!





## REAL PRODUCERS

# FAQ

### 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: South Hampton Roads Real Producers:** The top 500 agents in South Hampton Roads (Smithfield to Sandbridge and into the North Carolina border). We pulled the REIN-MLS numbers (by volume) from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, in the South Hampton Roads area. We cut the list off at #500, and this year's distribution was born. For this year's list, the production level for our group was between \$7.8 million and \$71 million in 2023. The list will reset at the end of 2024 for next year and will continue to update it annually.

**A: Peninsula Real Producers:** Same as above, but we pull out the Peninsula/Williamsburg agents and cut the list off at the top 300. For the 2022 calendar year, Peninsula Real Producers agents sold more than \$6 million.

**NOTE:** We identify REALTORS®/agents by where their broker is located in the MLS. Please contact us if you fall into any of these unique scenarios:

- Your broker address in the MLS is not in the South Hampton Roads region, but you are a commission agent working primarily in South Hampton Roads or the VA Peninsula area.
- Your broker address in the MLS is on the Peninsula, but you would prefer to be associated with South Hampton Roads Real Producers instead of the Peninsula.
- Your broker address in the MLS is Southside, but you prefer to be part of the Peninsula Real Producers magazine instead of South Hampton Roads Real Producers.

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

**A:** The process is simple. Every feature you see has first been nominated multiple times. Top agents, office managers, brokers or industry leaders can nominate top REALTORS®, agents, affiliates, brokers, owners and industry leaders who work in the areas we cover.

Scan the black QR code to nominate your favorite Real Producers.



Once nominated multiple times, the next step is a preliminary interview with us to learn more about you; our article selection committee uses an extensive process to schedule each article, and we usually book up to a year in advance. Once we select and schedule, we put the wheels in motion for our writer to conduct an interview and for our photographer to schedule a photoshoot.

#### 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.

#### Q: WHO ARE THE PREFERRED PARTNERS?

**A:** Anyone listed as a preferred partner in the front of the magazine is part of this community and will have an ad in every magazine issue, attend our social events and be 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 mission 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 and their clients, please scan the blue code.



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