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Zach Payne

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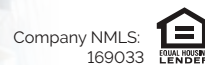
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<p>09 Meet the Greater Atlanta Real Producers Team</p>		<p>10 Preferred Partners</p>		<p>13 Publisher's Note: A Season of Change</p>
	<p>16 Partner Spotlight: Achosa Home Warranty</p>		<p>20 Cover Story: Zach Payne</p>	<p>FAQ</p>	<p>25 FAQ About This Magazine</p>
	<p>28 Agent on Fire: Terrence Stephens</p>		<p>32 Broker Spotlight: Lisa Johnson & Blaine Palmer</p>		<p>36 Announcement: Follow us!</p>



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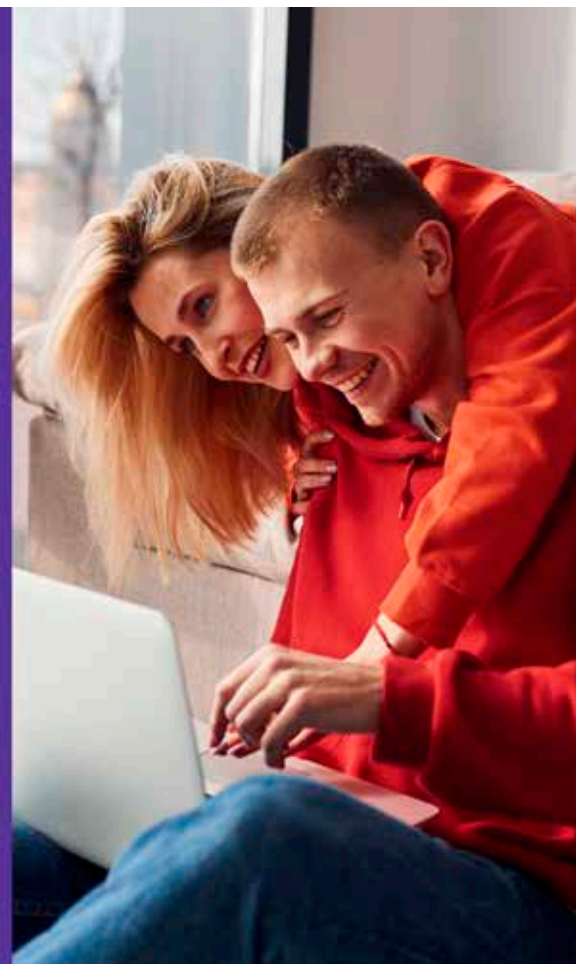
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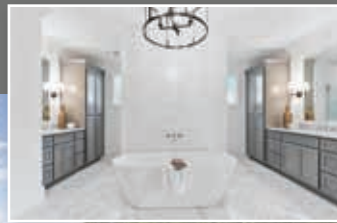
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publisher's note

I am thrilled to step into the role of Publisher and Owner of *Greater Atlanta Real Producers* magazine, and I am beyond excited for the journey ahead. With over a decade of experience in our franchise, I've had the privilege of witnessing the growth and development of Real Producers markets across the country. Now, I am eager to bring that wealth of experience to our vibrant community here in Atlanta.

First and foremost, I want to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you who have contributed to making *Greater Atlanta Real Producers* the premier publication for the top 500 REALTORS® in our metro area. Your dedication, expertise, and unwavering commitment to excellence have truly set the standard for our industry, and I am honored to be a part of this extraordinary community.

As we look to the future, I am committed to continuing the tradition of excellence that has defined *Greater Atlanta Real Producers* since its inception. My vision for the magazine is simple yet profound: to serve as a platform for connection, collaboration, and celebration within our real estate community.

With this in mind, I am thrilled to announce our upcoming social event on **March 19th at HOBNOB Alpharetta/ Halcyon**. This event will be a unique opportunity for us to come together, connect with one another, and celebrate the incredible achievements of the top 500 agents in our metro area.

We will gather to enjoy light bites, refreshing beverages, and most importantly, networking among the elite agents in the are. It will be a time to reflect on our collective successes, forge new connections, and lay the foundation for a future filled with even greater achievements.

I cannot emphasize enough how excited I am for this event and for the opportunity to connect with all of you in person. Your presence and participation will make this event truly special, and I cannot wait to celebrate the Real Producers community of agents with each and every one of you.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of you for your continued support and dedication. Together, this community has built something truly remarkable, and I am confident that the best is yet to come. Here's to a future filled with success, prosperity, and endless possibilities.

With warm regards,

When: March 19th, 2-4pm

Where: HOBNOB Alpharetta/Halcyon

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Who: The Top 500 agents and teams in Greater Atlanta

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Aaron Hutchison
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ACHOSA

HOME WARRANTY

▶ partner spotlight

Photos by Regis Lawson

EMBRACING INNOVATION

Amidst the whirlwind of real estate transactions in Atlanta, there's a name that resonates with reliability and innovation: Evyn Jackson with Achosa Home Warranty. Born in Warner Robins and raised between the vibrant cities of Louisville, Kentucky, and Chattanooga, Tennessee, Evyn's journey has been as dynamic as the markets he serves. Armed with a degree in Marketing from Tennessee Wesleyan University, class of 2013, Evyn embarked on a career path that was both unexpected and rewarding.

"I fell into sales," Evyn chuckles as he reflects on his journey. "But sometimes, the best paths are the ones we stumble upon." His career trajectory took shape as he managed a prestigious members-only tennis club in Chattanooga before transitioning to The Evans Group, where he played a pivotal role in launching their Inside Sales team. It was during this time that fate intervened in the form of a relationship with Tammy Dale from HSA Home Warranty.

"After building a relationship with Tammy, she mentioned a role opening up in the Atlanta market," Evyn recalls. "Two weeks later, I found myself in Atlanta, ready to embark on a new chapter in the home warranty industry."

With over a decade of experience under his belt, Evyn's expertise shines through his role as the sole representative for Achosa Home Warranty in Georgia. Despite his solitary title, Evyn thrives on building relationships across state lines, embodying Achosa's ethos of personalized service and tailored solutions.

"The pandemic hit me hard," Evyn admits. "As a social creature, I thrived on face-to-face interactions within the real estate community. But necessity breeds innovation, and it pushed me to adapt, to pivot, and to reassess the industry I had grown disillusioned with."

But amidst the turmoil, Evyn found solace and renewed purpose in Achosa's revolutionary approach to home warranties. "Their new way to warranty brought light back into my life," he shares. "No more endless repairs, no more long hold times – just a streamlined process that puts homeowners in control."





“
Success is quietly achieving personal goals, making a positive impact on others, and finding contentment in the journey.
”

His passion for Achosa's vision is palpable as he speaks of empowering homeowners to choose their own vendors and redefine the warranty experience. "It's amazing stuff," he beams. "And it's reignited my faith in an industry I had nearly given up on."

Beyond the boardrooms and negotiations, Evyn finds fulfillment in the bonds he shares with colleagues and clients alike. "Coming back to work with friends and relationships I've built in the last 10 years – that's been the most rewarding part," he reflects.

Looking to the future, Evyn envisions a continued partnership with real estate professionals, fueled by Achosa's game-changing vision. "With Achosa, I plan on being here for many more years to come," he affirms.

Outside the realm of business, Evyn's interests paint a picture of a well-rounded individual – from his love for art and literature to his adventurous spirit, evident in his passion for kayaking even during the winter months.

When asked to define success, Evyn's answer is a testament to his humble nature and genuine outlook on life. "Success is quietly achieving personal goals, making a positive impact on others, and finding contentment in the journey," he shares.

Yet, amidst his professional accolades and personal endeavors, Evyn remains grounded, cherishing the moments of whimsy and quirkiness that make him who he is. "I am the world's biggest nerd," he laughs. "And I wouldn't have it any other way."

As our conversation draws to a close, Evyn leaves a lasting impression with his favorite quote by Jane Austen: "There is no charm equal to tenderness of heart." It's a sentiment that encapsulates not only his approach to business but his philosophy on life – one of empathy, authenticity, and unwavering positivity. In the annals of real estate and home warranties, Evyn Jackson's name will undoubtedly be remembered – not only for his expertise but for the smile, energy, and positivity he brings to every interaction, leaving behind a legacy of warmth and genuine care.



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PAYNE

From Broadway
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▶▶ cover story

Photos by Allie Santos

Zach Payne traces his roots back to the picturesque town of Dahlonega, Georgia. His upbringing, however, unfolded amidst the rolling hills and verdant landscapes of Cleveland, GA, a place he fondly recalls as home. “Growing up in the north Georgia mountains was a pretty incredible experience – one I wouldn’t appreciate fully until I was much older,” Zach reminisces. His formative years were steeped in the world of real estate, with parents deeply entrenched in the industry. “Every family

vacation, every road trip, every trip to the grocery store... just about every time we were in the car, the conversation revolved around real estate,” he recalls with a smile, highlighting the indelible mark his upbringing left on his career trajectory. As far as how he likes to conduct business, Zach says with a smile: “I’m a cowboy boots and hat guy. I sell multi-million-dollar homes, but my image is more Ralph Lauren western than suit and tie.”

After graduating from a small private school in Gainesville, Zach ventured into the bustling metropolis of New York City to pursue his dreams at NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts. “I left a graduating class of 42 and went into a freshman class of over a thousand students, in the biggest city in the country,” he reflects. His journey at NYU saw him explore the realms of acting before transitioning to advertising, a decision that would profoundly shape his future. “I figured acting was one in a million... businesses will always need advertising!” he quips, showcasing the pragmatic mindset that guides his career choices.



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I'm a cowboy boots and hat guy.

I sell multi-million-dollar homes, but my image is more Ralph Lauren western than suit and tie.

In 2012, armed with a BA in Visual Communication with a concentration in Advertising and Design from Savannah College of Art and Design, Zach embarked on a path that seamlessly blended creativity with commerce. His foray into the advertising industry laid the groundwork for his eventual transition into real estate. "I think it's in my blood if I'm being honest," Zach remarks, acknowledging the incredible six generations of real estate ties in his family that drew him to the industry. "Family business can have longevity and legacy beyond a single generation, even if you have entirely different markets and clients," he notes. His journey took an unexpected turn when family responsibilities beckoned him back to Georgia, prompting a shift towards a career in real estate.

Joining Keller Williams marked the beginning of Zach's illustrious real estate career. Under the mentorship of seasoned professionals, he honed his skills, imbibing invaluable lessons along the way. "Your first years are all about the training," he affirms, underscoring the importance of mentorship in his professional development. As he navigated the intricacies of the industry, Zach's commitment to integrity and client-centric practices emerged as the cornerstone of his approach. "I



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I always try to put myself in my client's shoes...

someone who brings you a solution, not a problem.

always try to put myself in my client's shoes... someone who brings you a solution, not a problem," he emphasizes, epitomizing the ethos of service that defines his practice.

Over the years, Zach's dedication and expertise have garnered him widespread acclaim, earning accolades such as life membership in the Multi-Million Dollar Club and setting records for the highest residential sales prices in multiple counties. He was the number one residential agent in his brokerage by sales volume before he left, and he's been the number one KW agent many times for the southeast region in volume sold. Yet, for Zach, success transcends mere accolades. "Success is not about how much you have in the bank... it's about the journey," he muses, embodying a philosophy rooted in humility and gratitude.

Beyond work, Zach's passions extend to philanthropy and advocacy. Together with his wife Jordan, he channels his love for animals into meaningful initiatives aimed at rescuing and sheltering abandoned animals. "We personally rescue and take care of a lot of animals... providing safety, shelter, and love," Zach shares, reflecting on their shared commitment to making a difference in their community.

As he charts the course for the future, Zach remains steadfast in his commitment to excellence and innovation. With the recent launch of PAYNE Real Estate, he embarks on a new chapter, driven by a vision to redefine luxury and elevate the client experience. "We are planning some incredible new projects that are going to be really groundbreaking," he teases, hinting at the bold endeavors that lie ahead.

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FAQ

about Greater Atlanta Real Producers

Ever since we launched *Greater Atlanta Real Producers*, I have heard some of the same questions from many of you. I figured it would be most efficient to publish the answers here in case more of you had the same questions. Remember, 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 500 Realtors and teams that fall within the top 500 in the Greater Atlanta area. We pull MLS numbers (by closed volume) in the Atlanta market each year and we cut off the list at number 500. The list resets at the beginning of each year based on the prior year's totals and continues to update annually.

Q: What is the process for being featured in this magazine?

A: It's really simple — one or multiple peers have first nominated every featured agent you see. You can nominate or be nominated by other agents, affiliates, brokers, owners, and office leaders. A nomination currently looks like this: you email us at: ahutch@realproducersmag.com with the

subject "Nomination: (Name of Nominee)." Please explain WHY you are nominating them to be featured. It could be that they have an amazing story that needs to be told, perhaps they overcame extreme obstacles, they are an exceptional leader, have the best customer service, or they give back to the community in a big way, etc. Once the timing is right, the next step is an interview with us to ensure it's a good fit. If all works out, then we put the wheels in motion.

Q: What does it cost to be featured?

A: Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing, my friends, so nominate away! This is NOT a pay-to-play model whatsoever.

Q: How can I write an article to be printed?

A: If you are interested in writing an article to contribute your ideas, experience, knowledge, expertise, or stories to the *Greater Atlanta Real Producers* community, please email us at: Content@atlrealproducers.com - Even if you don't consider yourself a prolific writer, let's talk!

Q: Who are the Preferred Partners?

A: Anyone listed as a "Preferred Partner" in the index at the front of the magazine is an integral part of this

community. They will have an ad in every issue of the magazine, attend our events, and be part of our social media groups. We don't just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. One or many agents have personally referred every single Preferred Partner you see. We won't even take a meeting with a business that has not been vetted by one of you and is "stamped for approval," in a sense. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network not only of the best agents in the area but the best affiliates, as well, so we can all grow stronger together.

Q: How can I refer a local business to join Greater Atlanta Real Producers as a Preferred Partner?

A: If you know and want to recommend a local business that would like to work with more top real estate agents, please email me at: ahutch@realproducersmag.com or visit AtlRealProducers.com and introduce us! This is the only way we can grow and strengthen this community, through your referrals. It's much appreciated!

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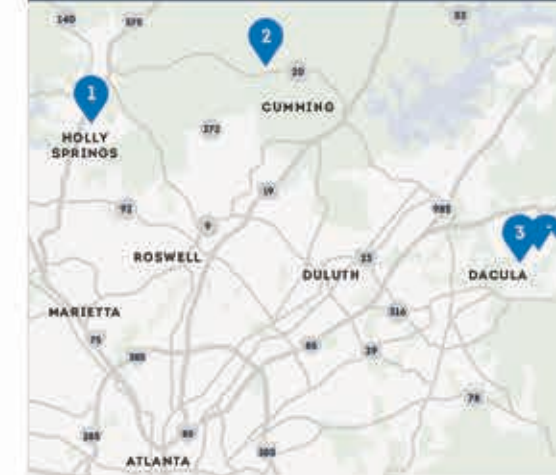
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TERRENCE STEPHENS

From Tackling People to Tackling Homes

Born in the heart of the nation's capital, Terrence Stephens' journey from the gridiron to the real estate scene embodies a narrative of passion and purpose. "I was always drawn to guiding people through life decisions, being relatable and personable," reflects Stephens on his transition from professional sports to real estate. "Simply, it felt like a career path that was right down my passion and purpose." His desire for genuine connection and a knack for strategic thinking led him to pursue a career in real estate, where he found fulfillment in creating spaces for others and building lasting relationships.

After obtaining his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with Honors from Stanford University in 2013, Stephens embarked on a career in professional football. However, his journey took a turn towards the world of real estate, driven by a desire to avoid the corporate grind and align his career with



his values. "I knew it was important to get 'back to the basics' and show up for your people," he emphasizes, reflecting on his early years in the industry.

Joining Keller Williams initially, Stephens later transitioned to Palmerhouse Properties in 2019, where he established his brand, "Taking the Town Real Estate Group," in 2020. "Coming into the business as a 'recruit' off the street, I was welcomed into the world of Keller Williams," he recounts. "This has for sure been a journey,"

he adds, reflecting on his evolution within the real estate landscape.

Throughout his career, Stephens has amassed numerous accolades, including recognition as one of Atlanta Board of Realtors' Top Producers for the last four years. His dedication and commit-

ment have translated into impressive career volumes, with a total volume exceeding \$65 million.

Yet, amidst his professional success, Stephens faced a significant setback in 2019 when a vacation turned into a medical emergency, resulting in a month-long hospitalization and emergency surgery. "I had to find a way to close out that business while in the ICU," he recalls, highlighting the resilience and determination that defined his recovery and subsequent success.





“
I was always drawn to guiding people through life decisions, being relatable and personable.”

Today, as the leader of “Taking the Town Real Estate,” Stephens is passionate about expansion and exposure. “Our team’s new emphasis is on the Three R’s: Relationships, Results, and Resilience,” he shares, underscoring his commitment to providing clients with an unparalleled experience in the competitive metro Atlanta market.

Beyond his professional endeavors, Stephens is deeply involved in philanthropy, with plans to establish a non-profit focused on Black male mentorship in the industry. As a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated and a community advocate, he remains dedicated to serving others and giving back to his community.

When asked about his ultimate vision for the future, Stephens envisions owning a boutique real estate brokerage that transcends geographical boundaries. “When I have ever said ‘Take the Town,’ that is a declaration to create your space in this world,” he explains, emphasizing his commitment to providing exceptional service to clients statewide and beyond.

Reflecting on his journey, Stephens imparts valuable advice to aspiring real estate professionals: “Always have a plan. Manifest what you want but do the work to get it.” He emphasizes the importance of perseverance, preparation, and self-care in achieving success in the dynamic real estate industry.

As his story continues to unfold, Terrence Stephens remains steadfast in his commitment to serving others, leaving behind a legacy defined by integrity, compassion, and unwavering dedication to his craft. “Success leaves behind clues,” he reminds us. “Make sure you are always aiming to be the person trying to lift as you climb!”

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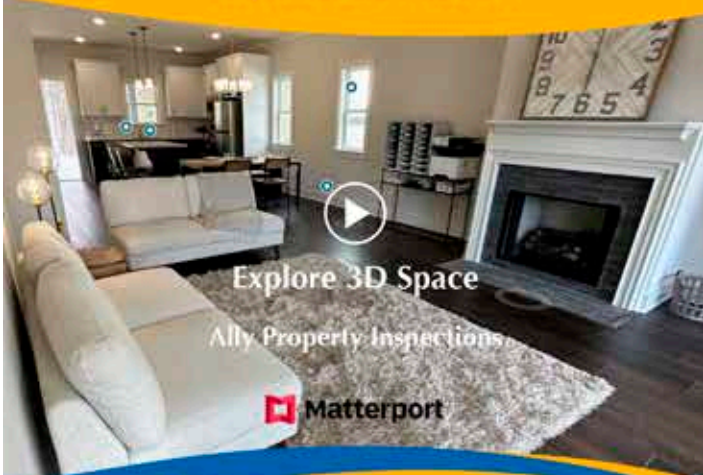
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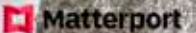


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BUILDING DREAMS TOGETHER

Two prominent figures in local real estate, Lisa Johnson and Blaine Palmer, stand as exemplary models of this ethos within the industry. With decades of combined experience and a profound commitment to their craft, their journey reflects a profound understanding of the human element in the realm of property transactions.

Lisa's roots trace back to the vibrant city of Los Angeles, California, where she was born. Lisa started her real estate career in 1997 and reflecting on her early years, she shares, "Real Estate is not my passion; people and relationships are my passion." Her sentiment encapsulates an approach that prioritizes genuine connections over mere transactions, emphasizing the importance of understanding clients' needs and aspirations.

Similarly, Blaine's upbringing in Southwest Georgia fostered a deep appreciation for community and collaboration. "Being able

to connect people with homes and vice versa was something I did without knowing I was doing it," he recalls, reflecting on his innate affinity for real estate. Blaine's journey, marked by an entrepreneurial spirit and a passion for sales, seamlessly merges his personal interests with professional endeavors.

by a real estate Broker. I had no desire to do real estate but I was young and took the chance.

Blaine, driven by an early fascination with houses, merged his pharmaceutical background with his entrepreneurial spirit, laying the foundation for a transformative career in real estate. He recalls, "At an early age, I always had an interest in houses and real estate. Stories are often told that I would "show" visitors our house at the age of 4... describing features and benefits and asking for the sale. Being able to connect people with homes and vice versa was something I did without knowing I was doing it. My time in the pharmaceutical industry afforded me the privilege of learning how to take my entrepreneurial spirit, combine it with my passion for sales, and marry it to my hobby of real estate. Being able to combine all of these factors has led me to a life where I never work a day but enjoy every minute... and for that I consider myself to be blessed and grateful!"



Their entry into the real estate realm wasn't conventional, yet it epitomizes the serendipitous nature of career paths. Lisa recounts her transition, noting, "I was working for a moving company in sales and I was approached

Over the years, both Lisa and Blaine have left a mark on the industry, navigating through various roles and responsibilities with finesse. From serving as Managing Brokers to assuming leadership positions within prestigious organizations, their journey exemplifies resilience and adaptability. Lisa says, "In September of 2022 I was promoted to Executive Vice President of Atlanta Fine Homes Sotheby's International Realty. That same year we opened Mountain Sotheby's International Realty in Blue Ridge Georgia and I co-manage that office with Bill Rawlings. In 2022, Blaine Palmer was added to our leadership team, and I am very grateful that co manages the Intown office alongside me. This has truly had an amazing impact on me and the agents."

"After becoming a formidable competitor in the market, I wanted to take my brand, business, and self to the next level and joined Atlanta Fine Homes Sotheby's International Realty. After 10 years with AFHSIR, I worked along side Lisa Johnson on my career path and had missed the opportunity to develop others and help others succeed in their career (a seed planted years before in Human Resources). In 2021 I was named the Associate Broker of the Intown office and subsequently in 2023 named Vice President and Co-Managing Broker of the Intown location with Lisa Johnson."

Right now in my role, I am passionate about connecting agents with resources that provide clarity and strategic positioning so they are able to live the life they have dreamed of. Helping people succeed and reach their goals makes for an incredible ability to leave a legacy," says Blaine.

Reflecting on the most rewarding aspects of their careers, Lisa emphasizes the profound impact of mentorship and empowerment. "Often times I see potential in an agent they do not see in themselves," she shares, highlighting her role in nurturing talent and instilling confidence in others. Blaine echoes this sentiment, underscoring the significance of leaving a lasting impression on clients and mentees beyond mere transactions.

Outside of work, Lisa loves to spend time with her family. "I am very proud to say that my husband and I have been married for 28 years and have an 18-year-old daughter. One of our favorite things to do is go out on the lake. Being on our boat or anyplace on or near the water is my happy peaceful place," she says.



“
For me, this is more about the people and the life events they are going through.
”

For Blaine, he says: "I enjoy spending time with family at our beach house in Mexico Beach, Florida. Time spent competitively playing games, putting puzzles together, cooking incredible meals, or just sitting on the beautiful Gulf of Mexico sand and watching perfect sunset is time I never take for granted."

Beyond their professional endeavors, both Lisa and Blaine are ardent advocates for philanthropy and community engagement. Blaine's involvement with animal charities and Lisa's dedication to supporting meaningful causes underscore their shared commitment to making a positive difference beyond the realms of real estate.

As they look towards the future, Lisa and Blaine remain steadfast in their dedication to fostering meaningful connections and empowering others to achieve their dreams. "For me, this is more about the people and the life events they are going through," Blaine reflects, encapsulating the essence of their collective journey.

Lisa Johnson and Blaine Palmer stand as beacons of compassion, leadership, and dedication to people. Theirs is a story not merely defined by accolades and achievements but by the profound impact they've had on the lives they've touched.

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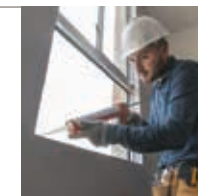


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