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I often hear the question, “How do you decide who gets featured 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; many nominations are generated here among those who attend.

Of those nominated, our *Real Producers* connection managers meet with and get to know each nominee in person or via Zoom. In this meeting, they collect all the cool facts about the agent at a very high level and gather nominations for other top agents and businesses we should consider for our vetted preferred partners’ list.

Our selection team will decide who gets into each issue. We use the “5 C” criteria below as a guide. An agent must meet the first three to be considered for an article. The fourth and fifth items are not required; however, we love celebrating successes of a giving or victorious nature.

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

2. 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.

3. 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.

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

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

Our nominations committee will also get to know the agents who are engaging in our private Facebook group for top REALTORS® and partners. Send me a PM if you would like an invitation to that page, as membership is limited to agents on our *Real Producers* list past and present, real estate brokers and current preferred business partners.

To nominate your favorite agents and businesses, all you need to do is fill out the short nomination form by scanning the QR code on this page. Top agents and current business partners can nominate as many agents and businesses as they want.

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 to be featured; everything we do for them is free. While other programs out there 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 they have been selected. 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 on how we are doing and what, if anything, we can do better to help everyone in the industry **Collaborate, Elevate and Inspire** each other. Please text, email or PM all suggestions and feedback directly to me.

Joni Giordano-Bowling
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▶▶ real producer

Story by Jacki Donaldson
Photos by Charles Townsend Photography

Katie Hammer

WAINWRIGHT REAL ESTATE

Drop by Baja Coffee, Taste or Civil Libations and you might run into Katie Hammer and her clients discussing home buying, selling and investing. She and her clients will also likely be chatting about who delivers the best pizza and how far the closest dance studio is, how to smooth out the bumps of military relocation or how she can help sellers save money at the closing table.



Whether she's connecting with her 100% referral-based clientele at her favorite local spots or theirs, Katie, who earned her license in 2006 and has been an agent with Wainwright Real Estate since Day 1, has one overriding goal: to find the right home for the right family — and she will do whatever she can to make good on that goal, including making herself available 24/7 to assist her clients all over the world, furniture shopping for military buyers, feeding and relocating chickens numerous times for clients, painting trim for clients who have already left the area and other less-than-glamorous acts to keep deals together for her clients.

Katie also has an affinity for details. "I remember tiny details about every home I have seen over the years, even though I can't remember where I left my car keys half the time," shares Katie, who is committed to partnering with folks and figuring out what they truly want (and then delivering a fantastic deep clean before they move into their homes).

Before real estate, Katie worked in the nursing and medical field. "I was a military spouse with three young children and a husband on a busy deployment schedule," she says. "We had rental properties, and I was looking for something more flexible." She found what she was looking for in Bob Wainwright, whom she met via a friend and fellow agent. "I really liked the small family-owned company and the large amount of agent support that was offered," she states. "My hope is to be in the business another 20 years. I have a wonderful passionate team that I hope to continue to grow."

Seeing happy buyers' when they walk into their new homes and know they have found "the one" is part of what makes Katie's work so fulfilling, and most memorable to her are the multi-generational sales she's made. She explains, "I love that the children who were running around when I sold their parents a home are now my clients, as well, or that the young military person is coming back to me to purchase another new home, now with a spouse and children."

Katie, who has repeatedly ranked in the Top 1% of Hampton Roads real estate agents and whose clients are 90% military special ops would not do much differently if she were to start over in real estate — except start sooner — and by her definition, she has found success in her career. "Success to me is loving what you do, creating a good balance between family and work and putting your clients' needs over your financial gain," she expresses, adding that she has learned one significant lesson in real estate. "You learn something new with every transaction whether you have been in the business 20 minutes or 20 years. Don't let your ego get in the way of learning new things."



“Katie Hammer is one of our top agents! She is very knowledgeable about the Hampton Roads real estate market, our contracts and all the ins and outs of the industry.

She has a huge veteran following and always does right by her clients — they are lucky to have her. I am so proud of her and all her achievements.

She is consistently ranked as one of the top agents by volume in Hampton Roads year after year — for good reason. She has wowed us all with her ability to multitask and maintain the highest level of professionalism. Katie is a star at Wainwright Real Estate!”

— Faye Zinas,
Managing Broker,
Wainwright Real Estate



On the family front, Katie enjoys spending time with her husband, a retired EOD Master Chief to whom she has been married for almost 30 years, and their two Bernadoodle pups, two grown sons and two beautiful granddaughters that she gets to watch a few days per week. A new fan of fitness and 80 pounds lighter than she once was, Katie, a Sandbridge resident for 30 years, works out daily with a personal trainer at GRIT, walks on the beach with her husband and dogs, boats on Back Bay and has recently been playing pickleball and entering 5Ks.

Most grateful for her health, family and the opportunity to have raised children who make a difference and leave an impact on the world, Katie mentions her daughter in heaven. “I was a special needs mom and primary caretaker for 21 years to our daughter with severe autism and a seizure disorder,” she reflects. Her daughter passed away in June of 2021 from Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP). Our deepest and sincerest condolences to Katie and her family.

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JAY MITCHELL

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Every day is an adventure! Real estate is one of the biggest adventures for our clients, since they don't typically do what we do every day. So, it's up to us to do it right and to carry all the tools that make it as easy as possible for their dreams to come alive. The more we talk to each other, help each other, encourage each other, and be kind to each other, the more likely we all are to make each day of adventure a great reward and a business win-win for all involved. Our job as REALTORS® is to smooth the way—to keep property rights front and center, to help people solve issues and make good decisions, to lend a helping hand, and to celebrate the successes of our clients and ourselves! Your REALTOR® Associations (HRRRA, Virginia REALTORS® and NAR) are here to help you find a way to do all these things with grace and style.

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Melissa Gates

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Dedication, motivation and confidence are only a few of the words that describe Melissa Gates with The Bryant Group Real Estate Professionals. Born and raised in Michigan, Melissa relocated for her job to Virginia Beach in 2009. After three years, her boss noticed her extensive dedication as a general/area manager overseeing multiple restaurants and presented her with the opportunity to pursue her dream role of managing restaurants in Chicago. She was not only leaving behind the beautiful beaches of Virginia for her new role, but she was also leaving behind her now husband, Mike, and his two kids from his previous marriage.

As fate smiled down on the Chicago Cubs as they were heading to the playoffs, Mike and Melissa's relationship rekindled. The two agreed Mike would travel to Chicago if she got playoff tickets. By 2017, she had moved back to Virginia Beach to be with him, maintaining her responsibilities by flying back and forth from Virginia to Chicago for almost two years.

At the beginning of 2018, Mike and her now broker, Jenn Bryant, encouraged her to pursue real estate, believing she would excel even when she doubted her potential. Now, Melissa's only regret is not starting sooner. She quickly fell in love with the challenges of the ever-changing market and helping her clients achieve their dreams by finding

the perfect home. Her passion for providing excellent service goes deeper than just serving clients. She shares, "I feel that if REALTORS® and agents could work more together than against each other, we would motivate and inspire each other to reach new heights and set a benchmark for higher excellence."

Melissa is eternally thankful for the knowledge and confidence that Jenn has instilled in her throughout the years, which has inspired her to pay it



forward by becoming a mentor herself. “In 2021, I mentored about 18 agents at once,” she beams. “Watching them put clients under contract and close deals is so rewarding. I love creating long-lasting relationships with real estate agents and with the partners I use.” She expands, stating that having close relationships with her lenders, closing attorneys and home warranty partners has allowed her to create a positive and smooth transaction for her clients. “I know my relationship with Matt Beckwith and his team at OVM and LT Caplan and his team at Caplan Law have excelled my career,” she comments. “Their support, knowledge and dedication to all their clients set them apart from others.”

Pouring into new agents isn't the only thing Melissa enjoys supporting. As a lover of small businesses, she frequently chooses closing gifts from Rose + Reid Designs and Cuts and The Crafty Ash. “Rose + Reid specializes in handcrafted wood decor and does such an amazing job showing detail through their work,” smiles Melissa. “Crafty Ash is great for closings with kiddos. You always want to be sure you include them.”

“Melissa Gates is an absolute powerhouse! I witnessed her incredible journey through the real estate course and her dedicated transformation into a full-time real estate agent. Melissa’s unwavering resolve sets her apart. She pours her heart into everything she does. Once committed to a goal, nothing can stand in her way, truly making her a go-getter. Always ready to extend a helping hand,

Melissa derives genuine pleasure from assisting others, and her significant contributions have been a cornerstone of our firm’s success. She holds herself and the agents she mentors to the highest standards. Embracing challenges, Melissa never settles for ‘average’ anything. If she doesn’t know something, she will learn it. A formidable negotiator, she knows how to create wins everywhere. Adored by her clients and highly esteemed by the agents she trains, Melissa Gates is undeniably a force to be reckoned with in the real estate world.”

— Jenn Bryant, Principal Broker/Owner, The Bryant Group Real Estate Professionals

Fun facts:

- “I am a twin. I have a fraternal twin sister who lives in Michigan — she is five minutes older than me.
- I have to go to doesthedogdie.com before I watch any movie.”



Mike, a licensed REALTOR®, intends to delve into real estate upon retirement; however, for the time being, he takes pleasure in supporting Melissa from behind the scenes. She shines as she shares that her two bonus children, Taylor (22) and Dylan (19), are excelling in their college education. Their German Short-Haired Pointer named Chief, dubbed the “million dollar pup” due to a costly immune disease, adds a calming presence when Melissa works from home. Come Sundays, the family enthusiastically supports their preferred teams; while Mike and the kids rally for the Miami Dolphins, Melissa passionately cheers for her hometown team, the Detroit Lions.

Melissa goes back to the feeling that as a REALTOR®, she wants to ensure that her clients receive the best version of her. Looking ahead, she envisions her career and The Bryant Group as a collective entity continuing to provide exceptional service through continual education, learning from challenges and celebrating each other’s wins. “If you were to ask me which brokerage I see myself at in 10 years, I will still tell you The Bryant Group,” Melissa states. “Jenn had provided a unique blend of knowledge, confidence and education that I couldn’t obtain elsewhere.”

With the backing of her family and brokerage, Melissa is profoundly grateful for those who have believed in her journey. Additionally, she expresses gratitude to God for having faith in her daily, providing guidance for the next steps and encouraging her to persevere. Melissa defines success on various levels, encompassing personal, financial and business achievements. “Some days, success is just leaving my house on time to be able to stop at Starbucks,” she chuckles, “but in all seriousness, those are challenges that a person goes through that no one else may be aware of, but they pick themselves up every day and move forward. Those successes deserve the biggest pat on the back.”



Kimberly has been originating loans since 2011 with extensive knowledge of VA, first-time buyers, and self-employed borrower mortgage loans. Her expertise helps clients make smart and strategic financial decisions beginning with their mortgage loan. Kimberly works to build wealth through real estate for every family, every day.

When she's not helping her clients achieve their goals of homeownership, Kimberly devotes her time to serving as a member of the Board for the Women Against Violence and Development Committee of the Samaritan House.



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A Night of Recognition for ▶▶ event recap Top Real Estate Agents

Photos by Charles Townsend Photography



We recently hosted an joyous event to honor and celebrate the recently published articles of some outstanding real estate agents. Among the stellar professionals we recognized were Herb Culpepper Jr., Jeremy Allen, Mary Barclay, Christina Fleck, Christine Cahoon, Julian Rivera, Melissa Boyce, Lori Gomoke, Sheri Maser and Shelly Taylor and teams. The event served as a heartfelt acknowledgement of their dedication, hard work and significant contributions to the real estate industry.

Partners from various facets of the real estate world came together to express their gratitude and admiration for the honorees. The collective appreciation extended beyond individual accomplishments to recognize the collaborative spirit that fuels success in this dynamic field. The presence of partners underscored the importance of teamwork

and the interconnected relationships that are vital to navigating the intricate landscape of real estate. Their support was a testament to the community's commitment to uplifting one another and fostering a culture of shared success.

Special thanks to our hosts at The Broker who welcomed us into their well-designed office space for this celebration. Alvin Lapitan and Greg Bell, along with several of their team members, ensured that we were able to honor the REALTORS®, agents and brokers featured in the December 2023 and January 2024 issues of *Hampton Roads Real Producers*. We can't wait to do it all again with the agents featured in this issue later this month.



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In the world of mortgages, Katie Brinson is a force to be reckoned with. She's not just a loan officer; she's a relentless advocate for her clients, and an experienced mortgage advisor with a heart and a passion for helping her clients leverage their investments to create generational wealth.

Katie works with all types of borrowers and is known for her specialization in self-employed clients. She has created a process that is streamlined

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!

★★★★★ CLIENT REVIEW

Katie and her team kept us informed every step of the way. She was very pleasant to work with and reassuring during the whole process. We never had to guess where we were during the process. We will definitely recommend her and her team. - Michael G.

★★★★★ CLIENT REVIEW

Her professionalism, attention to detail, and prompt communication made the entire process smooth and stress-free. I appreciate their dedication to finding the best options for me and guiding me through each step with expertise - Sophia B.

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CYNTHIA LEWIS

NEW DOMINION MORTGAGE

The headquarters of New Dominion Mortgage, located in the heart of Chesapeake, is an exciting new partner in mortgage lending. At the helm of this innovative enterprise is Cynthia Lewis, a dynamic and mission-focused entrepreneur dedicated to revolutionizing the real estate experience. “We help REALTORS® save time and money through our Secret Sauce Program,” Cynthia explains. “We help mortgage loan originators get off the hamster wheel and increase their quality of life, and we protect potential homebuyers from making financial missteps when securing a loan to purchase a home.”

Cynthia’s career in the mortgage industry spans more than two decades, with her latest adventure being the opening of New Dominion Mortgage in 2023. Before taking the entrepreneurial plunge, she navigated the intricacies of the retail side for an impressive 19 years. She says, “We did a quick stint at a local brokerage for about seven or eight months to learn the lay of the land, then we went out on our own and became fully licensed in May 2023.”

The standout feature of New Dominion Mortgage is its unique QCM process. Understanding that time is the most valuable resource for REALTOR® partners, Cynthia’s team goes the extra mile before potential buyers even step into a home. “We understand that for our REALTOR® partners, a lead is a paycheck, and time is their most valuable resource,” she explains.



“Our responsibility is to protect our REALTORS®’ money and time, so before they show potential buyers homes, we run them through QCM to eliminate unwanted surprises that can happen once a buyer has gone under contract.” Cynthia acknowledges that the process does require some upfront work on her company’s end, but says, “We are OK with that because it creates a better experience for everyone involved, especially our REALTOR® partners.”



Cynthia wants top real estate professionals to know that New Dominion Mortgage is not just a business; it's a purpose-driven entity. Back when she ran a sales team, she found ways to give back to the community. "At New Dominion Mortgage, we donate a coat to a family in need for every loan we fund," she says. "This gives all of our clients and REALTOR® partners the opportunity for their transaction to make a difference."

Cynthia is also proud of New Dominion Mortgage's 2nd Opinion Program. "We are running the program through this month," she says, going on to explain the premise. "We work hard to match or beat a rate quote and are doing a buy-down of 1% in the first year of the mortgage, then back to the original locked rate in the second year for the duration of the term."

Drawing on her extensive business expertise, Cynthia advises those in the real estate industry, "Learn your profession, invest in education and pay attention to the market." While the industry evolves, she believes that consumers will always seek the guidance of experts.

For Cynthia, the most fulfilling aspect of her work is witnessing how New Dominion Mortgage makes the lives of everyone around them easier. From buyers to REALTOR® partners, loan originators and staff, the consensus is that working with Cynthia's team is a seamless experience. Her focus on making things easy has defined her career, and she has no intention of slowing down.

A proud local born and raised in Virginia Beach, Cynthia places great importance on family. "I think about all the descendants of my grandparents," she reflects. "We are a very close family in that aspect — both my parents and the majority of my aunts, uncle and cousins are local and see each other all the time and spend most holidays together. I love it!" When she's not immersed in the world of mortgages, Cynthia is an active member of her church, where she teaches Sunday School and hosts prayer calls throughout the week.



LEARN YOUR PROFESSION, INVEST IN EDUCATION AND PAY ATTENTION TO THE MARKET.



For Cynthia, success isn't just about professional achievements; it's about helping as many people as possible live the life they desire and that God wants for them. She wants her work to speak for itself, leaving a legacy that reflects her giving heart and the positive impact she has made on countless lives. She says, "I would like for the work I have done to speak for me and for it to say that I had a giving heart."

Cynthia believes every day is an opportunity, a blessing for which she is profoundly grateful. "We are so blessed for the opportunity we have each and every day we are here," she says. "To be able to share my journey and be able to help someone along the way is what I am ultimately grateful for."



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Laura McGuire

IRON VALLEY REAL ESTATE HAMPTON ROADS

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mbarking on a career in real estate is often a tale of passion, dedication and a genuine desire to make dreams come true. Laura McGuire, a dynamic force in the real estate industry, shares a journey filled with twists, turns and an unyielding commitment to helping others achieve homeownership. From poker halls to closing tables, her story is a testament to resilience and an unwavering belief in the power of human connection.

Before venturing into the world of real estate, Laura navigated a diverse range of occupations. Initially working as a waitress, she ingeniously used her earnings to excel at poker tables. As her financial acumen grew, she ventured into various entrepreneurial pursuits, establishing a daycare center and later a cleaning and staging company. Her journey took a scholarly turn when she pursued project management at Villanova University, showcasing a thirst for knowledge and professional growth.

The turning point in Laura's life occurred during a poker game. A chance encounter with a gentleman who turned out to be a broker led to a bet that would alter the course of her career. Armed with determination, she challenged fate and made a bet. "I bet him the cost of real estate school and one year's salary and made him sign a napkin with the bet on it," Laura shares. Winning that bet catapulted her into real estate, marking the beginning of a remarkable journey.

Personal connections are Laura's driving force both in life and her business ideology. "They paved the foundation of why I do what I do: making sure everyone feels important," she says. "One moment that has always stood out to me (amongst hundreds— if not thousands— of beautiful moments) was at my first brokerage. I had a client with a very modest budget, and she was about 65 years old. The day of closing, she cried happy tears and said no one would return her calls because of her price range or her age. She never owned a home before, and it made her dream come true." This heartwarming moment fueled Laura's drive to make every client feel important, special and cared for.

Laura's commitment to using success to uplift those around her reflects a philosophy deeply rooted in kindness, compassion and a belief in the interconnectedness of humanity. Her ultimate desire is to be remembered as someone who made lives better.

Although she counts such classics as *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and *How to Win Friends & Influence People*, as well as more current works like *The Like Switch* and *7 Levels of Communication*, among her regular business reading, Laura finds a more unique source to sum up her drive. She explains, "Rick Ross said it best: 'How many people you bless is how you measure success.' If you aren't using your success to make the lives of everyone around you better, you've failed. We're all on this journey together, and we're all supposed to help each other."

Laura's passion for helping people doesn't extend only to her clients, driving her to continue expanding beyond her current teams in Virginia, North Carolina and Florida. She adds, "Our motto is 'People First. The Rest Is Just Paperwork.' I want to grow my team of like-minded agents and staff who really take that message to heart. I want to use our accomplishments in real estate to make a positive ripple effect in the lives and community around us."

Laura hopes to keep spreading that positive ripple as far as she can and hopes to keep growing teams across the country, a task



helped along by her love of travel. In fact, her frequent traveling is what inspired her to start her team in Florida. “We were going back and forth to Florida so much that I decided it made sense for me to just buy a house and set up shop there also,” she comments. “I want to keep growing across the country and finding my tribe in each area we head to. It’s been a beautiful journey so far, meeting so many amazing people, and I don’t see this stopping any time soon.”

To Laura, the most important part of her job is helping people and sharing their joy. “I will do whatever it takes to help,” she states. “I have sacrificed commissions, as well as time with my family, and have fronted money for repairs on listings so sellers can net what they should be getting for their house. It isn’t about the money for me. Helping people and the joy I get to share with them — that’s what has kept me in this business all these years. I would never get tired of being there for people.”



Laura is a consummate professional known for her family-oriented team atmosphere. She possesses the ability to cultivate culture and closings at an elite level. Laura runs her team like a business, and they hold client satisfaction above all else. The VA Realty Professionals team has been a stellar addition to the Iron Valley family.”

— Mike Little, Principal Broker/Owner, Iron Valley Real Estate Hampton Roads

Laura McGuire is not just a real estate professional; she is a friend, a survivor and a beacon of positivity in an industry that often revolves around transactions. Her journey from poker tables to real estate triumphs is a saga of resilience, compassion and an unwavering commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of those she encounters. As she continues to expand her footprint across states, Laura remains an embodiment of the transformative power of passion and purpose in the world of real estate.

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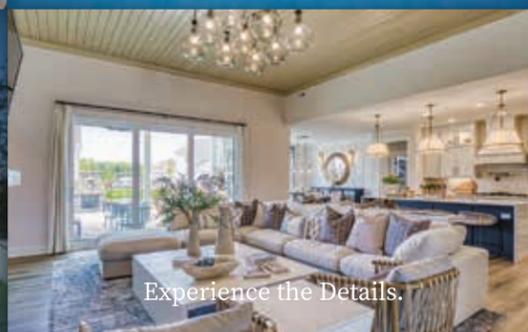
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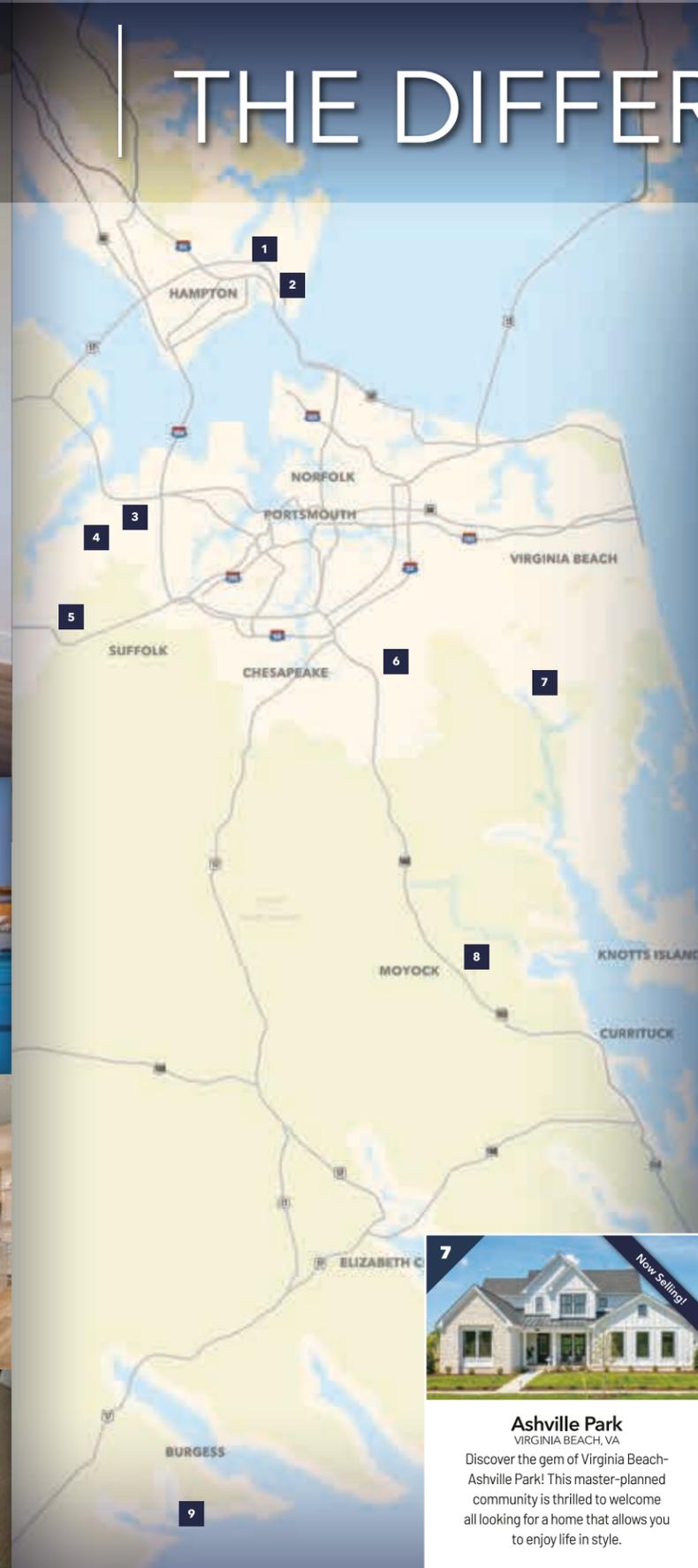
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▶ event recap

Photos By Charles Townsend Photography



REAL PRODUCERS PARTNER LUNCHEON UNITES INDUSTRY LEADERS

Returning to the location of our very first *Real Producers* event at Mangia Qui Italian Bistro, the distinguished representatives from the *Real Producers* partner businesses supporting local real estate agents gathered for an exclusive luncheon. This event united carefully vetted preferred partners with a singular objective: to engage in a strategic brainstorming aimed at advancing support provided to the top real estate agents within our market.

The ambience exuded sophistication, providing an ideal backdrop for this group of industry leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals to engage in meaningful dialogue. The crux of the luncheon was fostering collaboration and innovation, with participants contributing their perspectives and insights in a manner that underscored their commitment to excellence.

The luncheon commenced with a gracious welcome, recognizing the pivotal role each participating

business plays in bolstering the success of local real estate agents of distinction. Conversations unfolded organically, with participants exchanging experiences and articulating their aspirations.

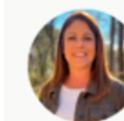
Beyond a conventional networking event, the luncheon evolved into a community-driven initiative, wherein the *Real Producers* team successfully cultivated an environment celebrating and nurturing the shared passion for excellence in both business and real estate.

As the luncheon ended, the lingering sense of camaraderie among attendees affirmed the success of the event. Attendees exchanged contact information, partnerships were solidified, and a collective pledge to fortify support for top real estate agents resonated throughout the venue.

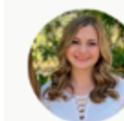
This gathering transcended the confines of a mere networking occasion, serving as a testament to the efficacy of collaboration and shared dedication, underscoring the commitment of industry professionals to **Connect, Elevate** and **Inspire** the real estate sector through strategic partnerships.



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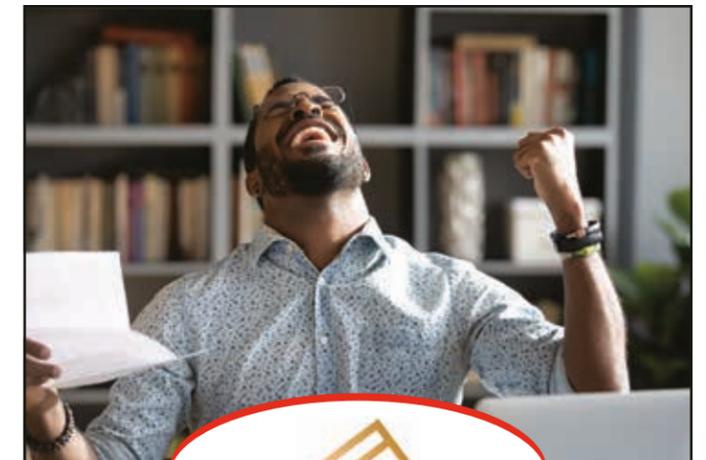


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TRACING OUR ROOTS, PART 1

President Theodore Roosevelt said it best, *“Every man owes part of his time and money to the business or industry to which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere.”* Over the last several decades, we have watched as so many have taken from what the REALTORS® have built, from technology to how we compile sold data to listing syndication to benefitting from our national, state and local advocacy, and yet they give back nothing in return. The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) wasn't formed to provide a slew of benefits and tools to the practitioner, although we do; it was formed to create “unification of thought and purpose among the country's real estate interests” (Day, National Real Estate Journal, May 15, 1910, p. 116). This was also a part of a concentrated effort to raise real estate sales from a service to a profession.

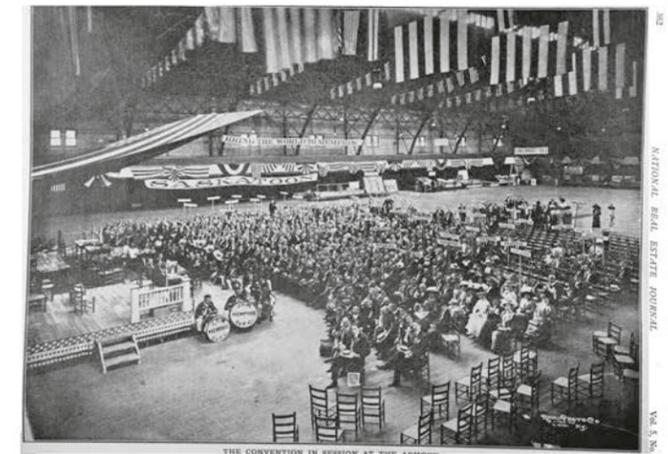
The hard work, talent and money of those who call themselves REALTORS® are responsible for the healthy industry and profession shared by agents and brokers today. The first members of the National Association of Real Estate Exchanges sought to change the perception that the real estate brokerage was a “refuge for the down and out and the disreputable” (Hornstein, 2005, p. 3). It was the early REALTORS® who created the dominant cultural trend of homeownership. Seeking to bring order to a disorderly market, these

early entrepreneurs were a vital part of city planning and zoning as the U.S. was growing exponentially. At their founding convention, the first draft of NAR's constitution and bylaws and its preamble stated that the organization sought to “unite the real estate men of America for the purpose of exerting effectively a combined influence upon matters affecting real estate interests.”

This is why the NAR was formed, and this is why it remains supported today. A natural progression of this movement of real estate as a profession was the adoption of NAR's Code of Ethics in 1913.

While great strides were being made into developing the concept of the American dream of homeownership, something terrible happened. Black Friday, the Great Crash followed by the Great Depression. It was the REALTOR® association that led our nation out of the depression and back into a thriving economy. Throughout the 1920s, the association used its political savvy and influence to make homeownership integral to the identity of the middle class, but in the 1930s, it created what exists today, and that is the idea of homeownership enshrined in U.S. politics as a public good. In the 1930s, NAR played a leading role in federal housing policy. NAR worked hand in hand with President Hoover to create the concept of the free-standing, owner-occupied, single-family suburban home. It was in 1932, at a joint conference of government, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and NAR that the 30-year mortgage was created with the government having a role in financing through the Federal Home Loan Bank Act.

REALTORS® did not only create the middle class and create the 30-year mortgage, but we also broke the glass ceiling for female entrepreneurs as early as the 1920s. By 1930, prominent women brokers organized and formed the Women's Council of



NAR Convention Floor, Louisville, KY, 1912

REALTORS® (WCR). By the second World War, WCR, led by its original California founders, bravely demanded, and received, inclusion into the male-dominated real estate profession, opening up opportunities for women and changing the composition of the industry. From 1935 to 1962, these women absolutely changed the landscape, giving females the opportunity to enter a lucrative profession. The WCR precursor held its first national conference in 1927 where its national speaker was San Franciscan home builder and broker Grace Perego, who declared that women had a special advantage in real estate — their skills in running a home. NAR has been a leader in raising its professionals up in every category, and along with that tide, those in the industry who choose to withhold their support. A country without REALTORS® would be a country without an opportunity to achieve the quintessential American dream.

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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. Nominations can be made by top agents, office managers, brokers or industry leaders. Nominations for top REALTORS®, agents, affiliates, brokers, owners and industry leaders who work in the areas we cover are always welcome — click [HERE](#) to nominate your favorite Real Producers: <https://forms.gle/8CzSqF7STUT8tt1y9>

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 issue of the magazine, 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 let us know by clicking [HERE](#): <https://forms.gle/hHEWTAIDPrJHYs3Q7>

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