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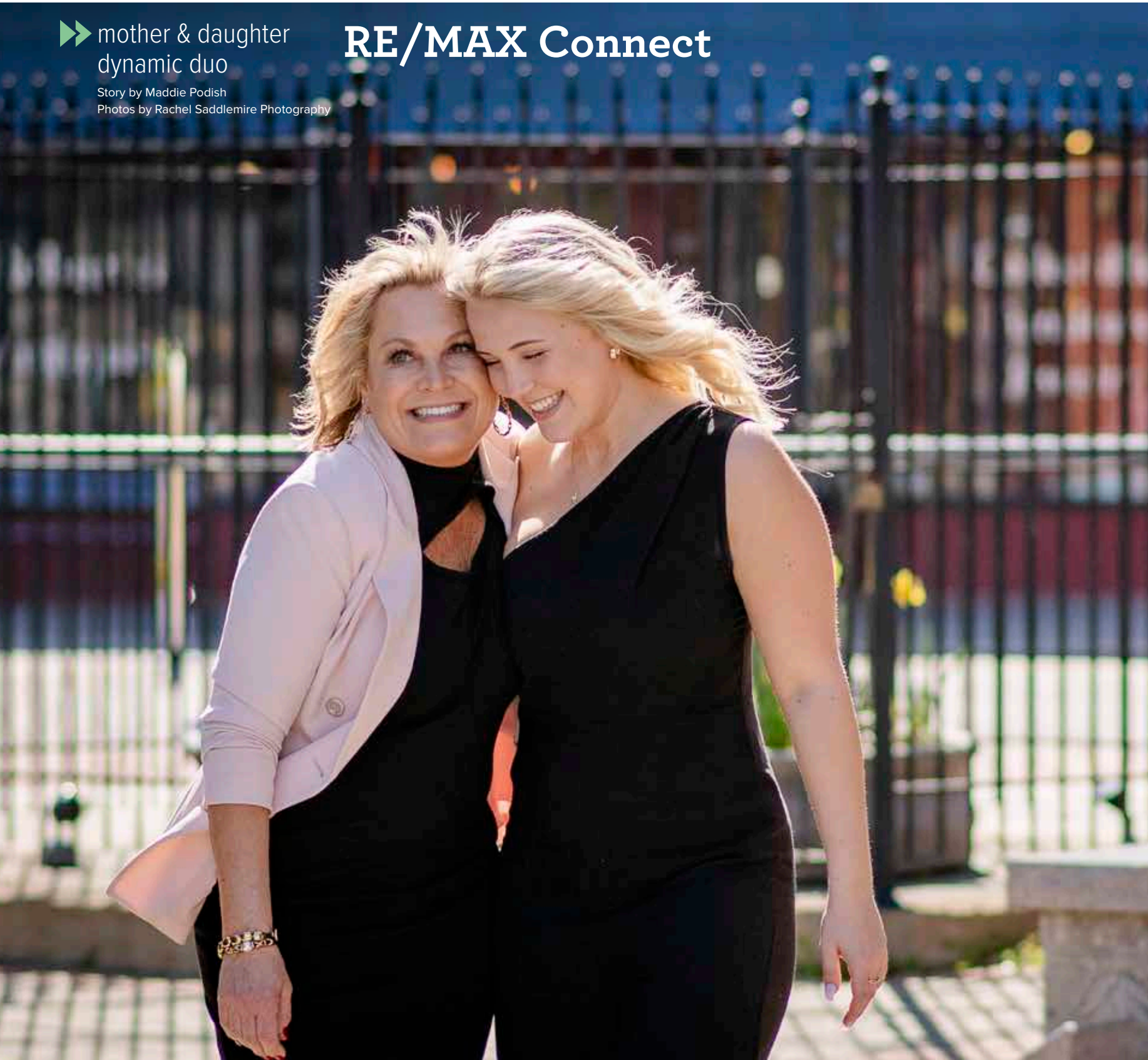
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Leigh & Olivia *Barefoot*

▶ mother & daughter
dynamic duo

RE/MAX Connect

Story by Maddie Podish
Photos by Rachel Saddleire Photography



For Leigh and Olivia Barefoot, real estate isn't just a job — it's a calling that feeds their passion for positively impacting the lives of those they have had the privilege to serve. "I say all the time, I was born to do this," shares Leigh. "Every day, I get to do something I love that allows me to control my destiny." During the past 20 years, Leigh has cultivated a thriving career on the foundation of serving others. Unbeknownst to her, she was inspiring her daughter, Olivia, to follow in her footsteps. "Growing up and seeing my mom build a successful career based on helping others while also being there for us was life-changing," explains Olivia. "I just knew it's what I wanted to do."

At the outset of her career, Leigh received a surprising call from a seller. Olivia, only in middle school then, overheard the caller, her teacher, sharing that she was interested in selling her home. "She said someone had insisted she call because 'my mom's the best,'" Leigh chuckles. "To my surprise, it was Olivia. I remember thinking that baby's going into the family business." Later that day, Leigh posted about the encounter on Facebook, a memory that still pops up on her timeline.



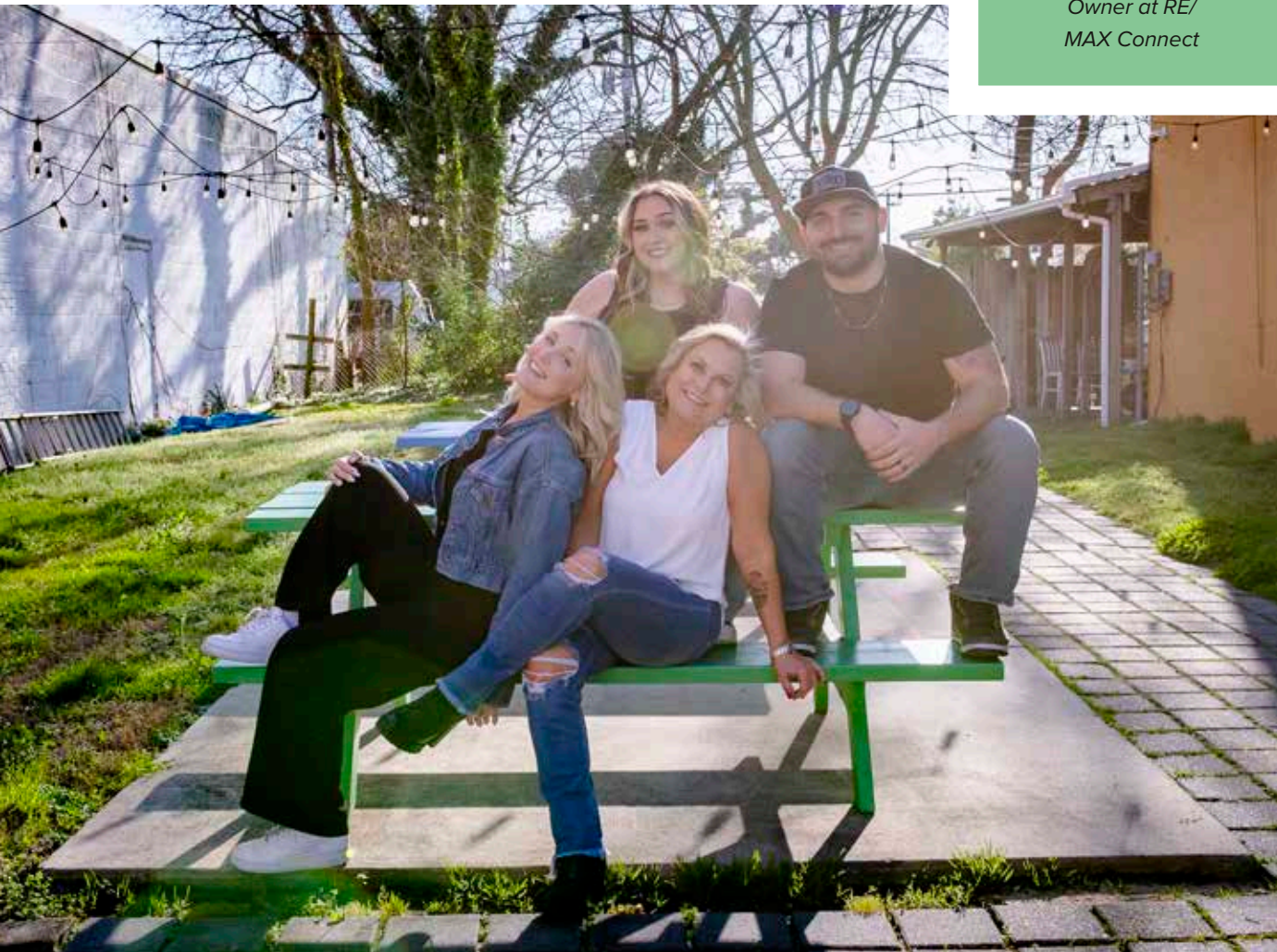
From the early days of assisting her mother in high school to pursuing a degree tailored to complement her future in real estate, Olivia's dedication was evident. When COVID-19 abruptly halted the world, Olivia pushed forward, taking control of her future. She comments, "I remember thinking to myself, 'Why not now?'" Leigh remarks on her proud mom moment. "It wasn't the fact she wanted to start in real estate; it was seeing her take charge of her life," she notes.

With Leigh's seasoned expertise and Olivia's fresh perspective, this mother-daughter duo embodies a synergy that blends knowledge with innovation, creating unparalleled service for their clients. "We're a two-for-one deal," Olivia

smiles. "Our clients appreciate knowing that one of us is always available." By continuing Leigh's gold standard, the team works naturally off referrals. "I think growing up, she learned the importance of why I (now we), prioritize our clients, not the transaction," Leigh continues. "We strictly take care of our clients, and they take care of us. Many of my clients have become close friends. They have all watched Olivia grow up." This approach has led them to what Leigh describes as one of the greatest honors — clients choosing them to help their children. "We help people through some of the happiest times and the saddest," she expresses. "It's not about the sale to us; it's about being there for our clients." she expresses.

"I have loved seeing these two amazing women thriving in their real estate careers! While Liv is youthful in her age and career, she is extremely proficient and courageous in her approach. A testament to her mother and how hard she pushes her to be the very best. Leigh cuts Liv no slack. That's for sure!"

— Shannon Edwards,
The Coastal VA
Real Estate Team,
Principal Broker,
Owner at RE/
MAX Connect





Like any team, Leigh and Olivia have faced their share of challenges. Initially, undeveloped boundaries blurred the lines between their roles as team leader/agent and mother/daughter. However, they've learned to navigate these obstacles with grace and resilience through open communication and a mutual understanding of each other's boundaries. Leigh also recognizes that, at first, her natural maternal instinct to resolve issues immediately led her to struggle to refrain from intervening when Olivia encountered hurdles. Nonetheless, by consciously stepping back, she has observed Olivia adeptly navigate difficult situations and emerge stronger. Olivia

confidently adds, "When it comes to my clients, I'm not afraid to fight for them, their needs and what's right."

As they continue to grow their legacy, Leigh and Olivia find solace in spending time together by grabbing lunch or bonding in the office. The family deeply loves the outdoors, no matter the temperature. Whether at their beach house in the Outer Banks or skiing and snowboarding at Wintergreen in the Blue Ridge Mountains, this family makes the best of every adventure. "Everything we do is centered around family. Whether that be all of us (Forrest, Johnnie Rianna and the grandkids) or just Liv and I, it's all about the experience and spending time together."

Individually, Olivia enjoys painting, reading Japanese manga and hitting the gym. Leigh delights in outdoor concerts, bonfires and long weekends traveling with her cousins.

As they look ahead, Leigh and Olivia envision a future filled with growth and opportunity. "There's no end to what you can accomplish," states Olivia. "I never want to stop moving forward and becoming a better version of myself." While their roles may evolve, their commitment to serving their clients with integrity and dedication remains unwavering. Leigh closes with, "You should always treat others with kindness. How you treat others is your brand; your brand is your business."

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MAGAZINE CELEBRATION PARTY

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Photos by Rachel Saddlemire Photography

Top real estate professionals from across the Virginia Peninsula recently gathered to celebrate a shared commitment to excellence and collaboration in the industry. The event, hosted at Second Street Bistro in Newport News, provided a vibrant backdrop for more than 50 REALTORS®, agents, brokers and best of the best businesses to come together and honor each other's achievements.

During the celebration, attendees were presented with framed copies of their articles featured in *Peninsula Real Producers*, highlighting their outstanding contributions to the

market. On this beautiful spring day, guests enjoyed food, drinks and meaningful connections with fellow industry leaders.

This successful event wouldn't have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors. A special thanks to Andy Sutter, Freedom Boat Club, and Rachelle Stannard, Budget Blinds of Williamsburg and Budget Blinds of Hampton Roads, for their contributions as bar sponsors.

Additionally, we extend our gratitude to Nick and Carrie Spencer at 360 Tour Designs, Craig Brown at Creekview Property Inspections, Ben Temple and Kaylan Eldridge at OVM

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We are also indebted to Rachel Saddlemire Photography for capturing the essence of the event with her incredible photographs.

At *Real Producers*, we are committed to showcasing the top talent in the market each month, and we rely on your nominations to maintain the integrity of our magazine. Please refer to our social media pages for a link to our nominations form or contact Joni via text or email to nominate outstanding REALTORS®, agents, brokers and businesses supporting top agents.



As we look ahead, we eagerly anticipate our next gathering and the opportunity to continue celebrating the success and collaboration that define our vibrant real estate community. We look forward to seeing you all at the next event!

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Julie Crist & Leah Crist Henson

THE CRIST TEAM, RE/MAX CAPITAL



Due to a series of unforeseen life events, she quickly found herself needing to support her family. “I needed something that would allow me to manipulate my time to cover my business and family commitments on a single income,” she explains. Julie decided to dive headfirst into real estate. Motivated by her commitment to supporting her family, she rapidly gained recognition, becoming Rookie of the Year at her firm. As her business grew, so did her clients’ needs, empowering her to start her property management company — Crist Management LLC. Julie states, “Everything in life is cyclical; to succeed, you have to keep evolving.” Evolution and growth are constant themes as Julie and Leah’s businesses grow.

The impending arrival 10 years ago of Julie’s first granddaughter drove Leah Crist Henson, REALTOR® with The Crist Team, to leave her career in social work to pursue a more flexible and purpose-driven lifestyle. “I wanted my daughter to grow up around family, so I joined my mom and began working as an unlicensed assistant,” she shares. Even though Julie was already noticed as a top producer by many of her peers, they both recognize that Leah’s structure and organizational skills helped the business grow beyond the typical individual real estate salesperson mindset.



Julie Crist



Leah Crist Henson

Motivated by an “all-in” mindset, Leah pursued her real estate license, recognizing its potential to bolster the expansion of the team and management company while initiating the development of her own business and book of real estate clients. With her background in social work, she leans into her empathic personality to fulfill her goal of building and maintaining lasting relationships with others, a passion that this mother and daughter share. They describe themselves as

▶▶ mother & daughter dream team

Photos by Mason Murawski Photography (unless otherwise noted)

For their whole lives, Julie’s granddaughters have watched her and their mother build the framework for a thriving multidivisional real estate business that will hopefully leave a legacy they can be proud of.

Whether captaining the ship of her own busy and boisterous four and sometimes six-child household, running the office and backend of a medical equipment sales company or leading the board of PTA or scouting troops in her year before joining the real estate industry, Julie Crist, Associate Broker and Team Leader of The Crist Team Sells | RE/MAX, Capital diligently refined the skills she needed to run a business.



“Working for the Crist Team is a breath of fresh air. Julie and Leah are highly effective communicators and prioritize properly completed paperwork. Their thriving business is driven by repeat and referrals from past clients. Once the Crist Team closes on a transaction, they remain in flow with them, continuing to provide them value and service after the property has closed. For these reasons, their clients love to send repeat and referral business their way because they want their friends and family to have the same experience with The Crist Team. Having Julie and Leah associate with our office has been a blessing. They promote a positive culture and healthy client relationships.”

— Bobby Jankovic, Broker, RE/MAX Capital

perfectly balanced, with their strengths and weaknesses complementing each other, thereby providing their clients with the best customer service.

A goal these ladies share is helping give their clients and those they encounter the confidence and knowledge to take control of their financial future. Leah highlights the instrumental role of the property management company in advancing these goals from the ground up by educating their tenants and establishing a growth mindset with their owners. “By using the property management company as a vessel, it has allowed me to feel like I have made a long-lasting impact on the community,” smiles Leah. Real estate as an investment has become a thriving part of both businesses, helping clients buy homes and commercial space, flip homes and hold and maintain rental and commercial properties.



Photo by T&A Photographers

there are no barriers, including age, hindering folks from achieving their goals. Leah offers a different perspective, emphasizing that transitioning from work isn't about retiring but embracing a shift toward enjoying more of life while feeling at peace, knowing she is using her knowledge to continue building and leaving a lasting legacy for their family.

Community service, visiting and highlighting small businesses, connecting with clients and creating long-lasting multifaceted relationships rather than transactions are the driving forces of their current team dynamic. From supporting various charities and organizations like the Children's Miracle Network to hosting seasonal gatherings to enrich the community, their generosity knows no bounds. Whether delivering pizzas during Police Appreciation Week or hosting a back-to-school family dinner night with free supplies and a prepared meal every August, their efforts aim to leave a lasting impact.

Looking into the future, Julie expresses she has no plans to "retire" anytime soon, drawing inspiration from the dedication of fellow female REALTORS® who worked for decades alongside their families and stayed consistent producers in their area. Julie considers one of the greatest luxuries of this career that



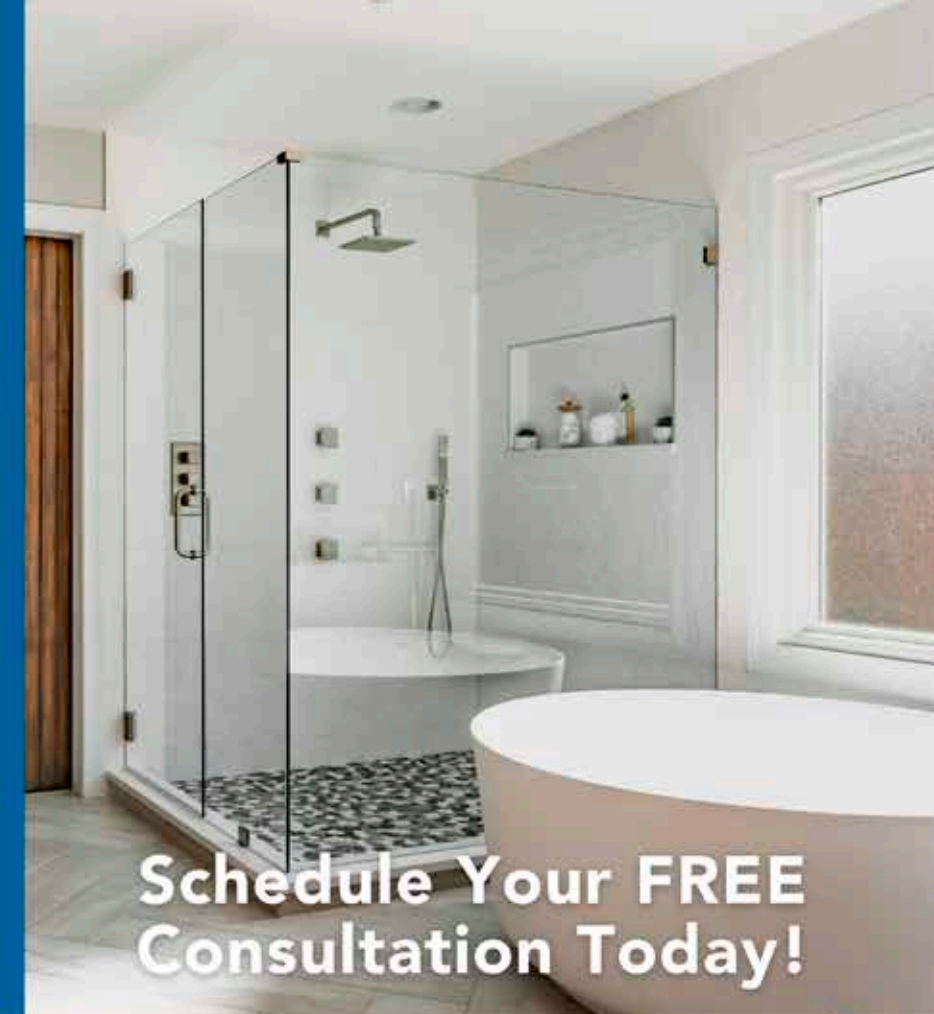
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Tina Carneal & Maddie Podish

ACHOSA HOME WARRANTY, LLC

▶ mother & daughter power partners

Story by Jacki Donaldson
Photos by Susan Fowler, Fowler Studios

Achosa Home Warranty Senior Sales Executive Tina Carneal knew in 2022 that she needed to bring someone on board to meet the demand in her booming Virginia territory. She'd been rapidly increasing her home warranty reach since she began working with the one-of-a-kind Achosa in July 2020, and she set her sights on a young woman she knew would shine in serving real estate professionals and their clients. "If I'm going to work with someone every day, I want to be sure I like the person and know that we have a similar work ethic," shares Tina, who approached her ideal candidate — her daughter, Maddie Podish.



Maddie knew a bit about her mom's work. She'd helped behind the scenes since Tina joined the home warranty industry in 2012, so she already had a foot in the door. Ready to embark on a new career, Maddie took a chance, and on February 13, 2023, the mother-daughter home warranty team became official.

Together, Tina and Maddie are championing the merits of Achosa, Virginia's trusted non-traditional home warranty partner since launching in 2020. The home warranty model, which empowers homeowners to take control of their claims process, has a rock-solid reputation, and Tina and Maddie are proud to sing its praises. "We provide peace of mind to homeowners by

protecting the major systems and appliances in their homes when they fail due to normal wear and tear," they explain. "One of the things that sets us apart is that homeowners get to choose a service provider they know, like and trust." Aptly named, Achosa means "the power to choose."

Using the Achosa warranty is as simple as the client making three phone calls to the claims department: (1) call to report the problem and receive a service order number, (2) call when the service provider arrives to begin processing the claim and (3) call

when the job is done so Achosa can pay the provider. "We are so grateful for our claims department," Tina and Maddie comment. "Our average claims call time is less than 10 seconds."

Equipping clients with the power to choose, versus traditional home warranty coverage that typically requires homeowners to use in-network repair professionals, results in faster response, stronger communication, trustworthy contractor relationships and higher quality work.

Achosa pays service providers full retail rates, and parts are sourced locally, keeping claim dollars in the local economy and reducing homeowner wait time. Achosa pays service providers when they complete the work and are still in the home, only after the homeowner is satisfied. Having previously worked for a traditional home warranty company for eight years, Tina finds Achosa to be a breath of fresh air, and Maddie, in her role as Senior Sales Executive, is already a champion of the company that is transforming the industry.

Tina and Maddie are doing their part to drive the transformation. Tina's hustle has earned her Diamond Elite Performer status, and Maddie has helped grow the business by about 15% in her first year. "She is killing it as the youngest Achosa rep," Tina says. "I was not selling home warranties at age 24 like she is. She is a pro on the phone, and



Tina Carneal



Maddie Podish

Did you know?

Tina worked for the Virginia Peninsula Association of REALTORS® for seven years before she started in the home warranty field. Maddie previously worked in healthcare for six years and works as a writer and social media coordinator for several Real Producers publications.

Tina is a proud mom of two — her son, Triston, currently serving in the United States Air Force, and Maddie. She is also quite fond of her son-in-law, Thomas, whom she has known since he and Maddie started dating at age 16. Maddie is a proud mom of her and Thomas' son in heaven, Kane Wolfe Podish.



Being an integral part of solving a homeowner's problem when something fails is part of what Tina finds most rewarding about her work. "We get the home back up and running on the same day and help the client avoid headaches and save money," she notes. "The other part is seeing my daughter grow in the field." Maddie reports that supporting her real estate partners is one of her biggest joys. "I'm their biggest cheerleader," she states. "I'm their best friend on social media cheering them on and building relationships. Their clients become our clients. It's all about uplifting the real estate industry as a whole."

Tina and Maddie are elevating the concept of choice, trust and efficiency in serving homeowners and real estate professionals. With Tina's seasoned

expertise and Maddie's fresh perspective, they are changing the home warranty landscape through their impact on the lives they touch.

Tina Carneal
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2022 Diamond Elite Performer
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she's planting all these seeds that are coming to fruition." Maddie credits Tina for laying the foundation for her to succeed. "If she hadn't done the groundwork for the years before I joined her, I would not have this opportunity," she remarks. "I hope I can give back like she's given to me."

Although she is nowhere near retiring, Tina realizes that Maddie has more time ahead of her and is committed to helping her make a name for herself. "The day will come when I exit, and I don't want people to think, 'Tina left the industry; now what do we do?'" I want them to say, "Tina left the industry, and her daughter is doing such a phenomenal job that we're not going anywhere."



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PREFERRED PARTNER LUNCHEON: ELEVATING PARTNERSHIPS, EMPOWERING AGENTS



As trusted partners in your success, we at *Real Producers* understand the significance of collaboration and innovation in fostering excellence within our industry.

With great pleasure, we share the news of our recent exclusive luncheon, where our carefully vetted preferred partners came together for a strategic brainstorming session. The objective was to advance the support provided to our market's top-tier real estate agents.

Set against a sophisticated ambience at the James River Country Club, the luncheon provided an ideal space for

industry leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals to engage in meaningful dialogue. At its core, the event aimed to foster collaboration and innovation, with participants contributing their unique perspectives and insights, all underscored by a shared commitment to excellence in supporting you as top agents.

The proceedings began with a gracious welcome, acknowledging each participating business's pivotal role in bolstering the success of distinguished local real estate agents like yourselves. A series of organic conversations followed, with participants exchanging experiences and



articulating their aspirations. We also discussed the future events honoring your success.

What distinguished this gathering from conventional networking events was its evolution into a community-driven initiative. Here, the *Real Producers* team successfully cultivated an environment that celebrated and nurtured our shared passion for business and real estate excellence.

As the luncheon drew to a close, the palpable sense of camaraderie among attendees affirmed the event's success. Contact information was exchanged, partnerships were solidified, and a collective pledge to fortify support for top real estate agents resonated throughout the venue. In navigating the ever-changing dynamics of our industry, we must continue to work together. We remain committed to providing the

support and resources necessary for your continued success.

Join us in warmly thanking all *Real Producers* vetted preferred partners for their unwavering dedication to excellence. We look forward to continuing to collaborate and grow as we pivot in providing the best possible products and services to top agents and their clients.

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FAQ



WELCOME TO REAL PRODUCERS!

Some of you may be wondering what this publication is all about, which is why we have created this FAQ page.

Here, we will answer the most commonly asked questions from around the country regarding our program. My door is always open to discuss anything regarding this community — this publication is 100% designed to be your voice!

Q: WHO RECEIVES THIS MAGAZINE?

A: The top 300 agents on the Peninsula in Hampton Roads, VA. The Peninsula is defined as from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel in Hampton to the greater Williamsburg area and everything in between. We pulled the MLS numbers (by volume) from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, in the Peninsula and Williamsburg area. We cut the list off at #300, and the distribution was born. For this year's list, the production level for our group was between just below \$5 million and \$50 million in 2023. The list will reset at the end of 2024 for next year and will continue to update annually.

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

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

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

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

Q: WHO ARE THE PREFERRED PARTNERS?

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

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A PREFERRED PARTNER?

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

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