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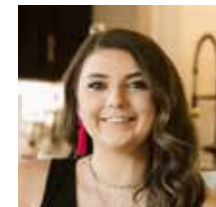
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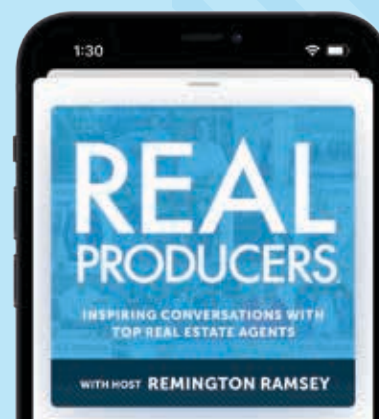
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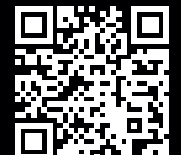
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By Beth McCabe
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UNIT'S

Moving and Portable Storage

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In a digital age where AI rules supreme, phone calls are answered by call centers, and messages are answered by bots, it's always refreshing to find a company with good old-fashioned customer service. Expect the phone to be answered and concerns to be handled with care at UNIT'S Moving and Portable Storage of Southeast Michigan. Owned by local residents Megan and Mark Fijalkowski, this local business has come to the rescue of real estate professionals.

"We both lived the corporate America life," explains Megan. "We wanted to do something in the local community that would help change the landscape of the industry." When they had a child 2 years ago, they wanted to make the most of family time and help others in the process. They decided that UNIT'S Moving

and Portable Storage would be a great industry to explore and a perfect fit for Southeast Michigan.

"Moving can be a very stressful time for many people," explains Megan. "We wanted to help alleviate some of that stress by giving people an affordable, local option for moving solutions and portable storage containers." Since opening in March 2023, their goal has been to build an honest business in the community where they live, work, and play. Mark explains, "As a small, local business, at the end of the day we want to love what we do, the people we help serve, and the company we are building. It's important for us to be members of the community. Our business is a model that you will always see us involved as owners, every step of the way."





SERVICES OFFERED

When it comes to moving and storage, UNIT'S Moving and Portable Storage has you covered. “We have two sizes of portable storage containers,” explains Megan. Clients can choose between 12- and 16-foot containers. “You can use them for a realm of possibilities, from moving to storage to restoration or renovations.”

Containers are dropped off at a client's house or business. “They can fill them themselves or our moving partners can help to fill the containers,” explains Mark. “The containers can be stored on-site, or in our climate-controlled warehouse located on the West side of Ann Arbor. We also can move full containers with our level-load and unload system, which gives us the flexibility to work in different industries with a plethora of varying uses.”

What makes UNIT'S Moving and Portable Storage a practical solution is that it's an expandable warehouse that can hold up to 1,200 square feet of household goods with a small enough footprint to fit into one parking space. Megan explains, “For REALTORS®, we focus on staging or decluttering. If you have a home that goes on the market and need to get items out so you can properly stage the house, UNIT'S containers

are an easy way to store those items.” Showings can go on without clutter, ensuring that listings sell faster and often for higher price points.

UNIT'S Moving and Portable Storage also helps clients with mismatched closing dates. When people sell homes without knowing where they will live next, they can store their furniture and belongings in a container in the warehouse, which is convenient for them. Clients will have the ability to access their containers with only a short notice needed, providing a flexible and convenient off-site option that helps reduce the burden of too many touches.

Mark adds, “A big selling point for REALTORS® is that once things come out of the house, they don't have to go back in the house.” That makes it easy for open houses. With their climate-controlled warehouse facility, clients' items can be stored in a temperature-controlled setting before they reach their final destination.

WHY CHOOSE UNIT'S?

When it comes to choosing a moving and portable storage company, choose local. “We are the only locally owned and operated portable storage company in the state of Michigan,” explains

Mark. “We are also your neighbors; we know the area and we know how to help navigate through the space,” points out Megan.

Best of all, they offer the best customer service in the industry. When people call, they talk to a small group of 4 people, including owners Mark and Megan. “You get a real person every time you text, email, or call,” says Megan. “We answer the phone at all hours of the day and night. We know that this is a stressful time in people's lives. We want to make it as easy as possible and simplify the process.”

Another benefit of UNIT'S is that they deliver containers through a ROBO-delivery system which acts as a remote-controlled robot that maneuvers the containers into place. Mark explains, “We drive the container on and off the truck with the ROBO. You don't have to worry about damage to your contents within the container or damage to your property as we maneuver with the ROBO.”

In addition to their ROBO-delivery system, UNIT'S requires much less space than their competition. “We can deliver the container wherever we have 8 feet and 3 inches of space,” points out Mark. Low-hanging wires or tree branches or narrow driveways cause no issues for UNIT'S. Their competitors require much more space for clearance.

The containers themselves are also best-in-class with solid steel construction and barn-style doors that open for easy loading and unloading, providing space maximization. “They also have stainless steel vents that allow the goods within the container to ‘breathe’ during the hot summer months,” adds Megan. In addition to the vents, there is also extra weather-stripping that is installed on the containers to ensure contents stay dry.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Life is too short to have cluttered open houses. Choose UNIT'S Moving and Portable Storage as a moving and storage option for clients. With their exceptional customer service and variety of moving and storage solutions, you'll be glad that you did.

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▶▶ woman to watch

By Beth McCabe
Photos by Hilary Nichols Photography

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Rose
MEZA

Designing Dreams

Rose Meza, a standout in the world of real estate, is a woman whose career embodies resilience, dedication, and passion. As a proud Latina and an accomplished REALTOR® at Century 21 Affiliated, Rose's story is one of perseverance and success against the odds.

SOLID VALUES

Rose's journey began in Michigan, where she grew up in a hardworking family. Her mother, a nurse, and her father, an immigrant from Ecuador who worked in hospital maintenance, instilled in her the values of hard work and determination. As the first entrepreneur and first American born on her father's side, Rose had to navigate her path largely on her own.

"I was the first entrepreneur in my immediate family," says Rose. "I started at Washtenaw Community College when I was 18 both working full time and attending school full time." She earned a degree in science, graduating with honors, and was then awarded a scholarship to Lawrence Technological University for Technical Communications. Despite not completing her degree at Lawrence Tech, the education she received was invaluable. Rose explains, "My education is ongoing. I got an excellent base from both WCC and LTU, and I use my studies in everything I do, making me a huge education advocate, and I continue to take opportunities to learn in any capacity." She worked at Washtenaw Community College for 11 years, climbing the ranks in various technical and professional roles.

After she purchased her house, Rose reasoned with herself, "If you want to make a change, now is the time." She wasn't married and had no kids. That's when she decided to go into interior design. "It wasn't good timing," she reflects. "I did okay and got some business out of it, but poor timing in terms of the market/economy. People were not re-designing but it led me to real estate."

When she spoke to clients, including telling them how remodeling their kitchen would add value to the house, Rose jokes, "I realized that I sounded like a REALTOR®." In 2016, she got her license and found it "super easy" to get. "But it's not easy being a REALTOR®," she adds.

RISING IN REAL ESTATE

Rose began her career in 2017. Her excellence in the field has been recognized with both Bronze and Silver awards, and she was named one of the top agents in sales at Century 21 Affiliated in the first quarter of 2024. She is also active in community involvement, governmental affairs committees for Ann Arbor Board of Realtors as well as NAHREP (National Association for Hispanic Real Estate Professionals).

What makes Rose stand out above her competition is her talent in design. Her background in interior design allows her to offer valuable advice on home staging and improvements, which adds significant value to her clients'

properties. She shares, "Great staging sells a home!" Buyers also appreciate staging. "They love to brainstorm ideas for a space." Focusing on where fashion meets function is important.

She is also dedicated to making real estate transactions smooth and stress-free for her clients, ensuring transparency and excellence at every step. Her commitment to client satisfaction has resulted in a strong base of repeat and referral clients.

Rose's path to success was not without its challenges, however. Being an entrepreneur in a family with no entrepreneurial background meant she had to figure things out on her own. In sports and other competitive areas, she often had to work harder to earn her place, a pattern that continued into her professional life.

“
**My prosperity
would not be
without God's
love and light.**
”

“Any sport that I played, I had to work hard to get those top spots,” she reflects. That overcoming spirit made Rose who she is today. She applies her competitive spirit to poker and euchre and jokes, “I’m underestimated all the time and I win. Never underestimate a woman.”

In real estate, Rose fights for her clients and takes care of them. Whether moving deals to the closing table or negotiating on behalf of her clients, she handles complex transactions with ease.

**PERSONAL LIFE
AND INTERESTS**

When not working, Rose enjoys spending time with her husband, Jonathan Smith, whom she has been with for 16 years and married to for six. “He is my love and my Rock; together we can conquer the world!” They share a close bond with family, including regular “Taco Tuesdays” at either her brother’s or sister-in-law’s. “Good food, good times, and great family time!” she smiles. Rose also has two younger sisters and a stepbrother. She adores her two nephews and godson in Ann Arbor. Both her father and mother were pivotal figures in her life. Although divorced when she was younger, they were very doting.

“I wouldn’t be who I am or where I am without such great support from them. They are my heroes because they worked their tails off for us!” Currently, they are both medically retired, and her mother, who lives with Rose, is a miracle. She has survived two craniotomies and is a great inspiration. “It’s not an easy road relearning everything but she has the motivation and determination to overcome anything. I’m glad I am there to support her and cheer her on!” Her father and stepmother are her biggest cheerleaders! Her dad coached all the sports Rose played (which were many) and has been very involved in everything she has done throughout her life.

Rose’s hobbies include involvement in community activities, book clubs, and enjoying the arts. She loves music – all music. “It has to be good music,”



she points out. A child of the ‘90s, she likes all the music of the time: Rock, Rap, Country, Salsa, and Classical, but her favorite band is still Tool.

She loves traveling and has a passion for exploring new places, with a recent voyage to Ecuador at the top of the list thus far. “I love to travel,” she smiles. She likes beach vacations to escape and unwind, especially in the winter months. That’s when you can find her under a palm tree on the West Coast or Florida.

“I’m also working on my house,” adds Rose. “We bought a fixer-upper.” Transforming it into a home, remodeling/updating can be a task, but the décor and gardening are fun for her.

Her love for her pets, two adorable Shih Tzu-Bichon Frise mixes named Da Vinci (1.5 years) and Mona Lisa (6 months), adds joy to her daily life “They make us better people and if all the doggies are happy, the world is right!”

A woman of faith, Rose is a Christian and credits God for all of her blessings in life. She starts her day with meditation and prayer to get centered. “It’s also a great way to start the day.” It provides the motivation to do her best every day. She gives all the glory to God for her success. “My prosperity would not be without God’s love and light,” she points out.

TOP TIPS

For those looking to follow in her footsteps, Rose emphasizes the importance of organization and community engagement. She advocates for maintaining a well-organized calendar, setting “clear business hours, planning and tracking ALL of your time- everything you do, every day and plan for breaks!” and being actively involved in the community. Her favorite quote, “Carpe diem,” encapsulates her approach to life and business—seize the day and make the most of every opportunity.

Rose’s rise in real estate illustrates the power of perseverance, passion, and the pursuit of your dreams. She found her purpose in real estate, changing many people’s lives in the process.



“ I’m underestimated all the time and I win. Never underestimate a woman. ”

“

It's all about helping you find the ideal lifestyle. The houses take care of themselves.

”



ERIC

MELDRUM

PERSEVERANCE AND PERSISTENCE PAID OFF

“I had a 10-year background in supply chain management,” says Eric Meldrum, reflecting on his journey from corporate America to real estate success. A graduate of Western Michigan University, Eric’s career took him all over the world, setting up logistic centers all over the world, including the Netherlands, and China. But by 2016, the constant travel began to take its toll. “Travel soon became more grueling than what I wanted. We got the news that we were expecting our first child in 2016, which got me thinking about a change of pace in my life.”

In 2018, Eric got licensed as a real estate agent. For the first two years, he balanced his new career with a full-time job, tirelessly working to establish himself in the industry. “I dove into marketing, specifically on social media, and learned everything I could about Facebook advertising. I realized quickly that I needed to generate leads, so I focused on learning everything I could about online lead generation.”

Eric’s efforts paid off. In his first year, he achieved \$1 million in gross sales. Each subsequent year saw impressive growth: \$3.5 million in the second year, \$6 million in the third, and \$12 million in the fourth. “I kept doubling sales each year,” he proudly notes.

Eric’s operations background plays a crucial role in his success. “Keeping it detail-oriented and understanding there are only so many hours in a day, you have to let some things go. Our main focus is attracting people that truly want to work with us and making sure they get the best possible service when buying or selling, period.”

THE TRU LIVING GROUP

In 2021, Eric partnered with long-time friend Juan Alcala to start the Tru Living Group with eXp Realty. “We’ve been growing our

►► top producer

By Beth McCabe
Photos by Kelly Stork Photography

team ever since,” he says. Now, the Tru Living Group operates in both Michigan and Florida, with a team of six agents, administrative support, and full media production department to support the team’s commitment to video.

A significant part of their success has been their innovative use of YouTube. “In 2022, we decided to go all-in on our YouTube channels. It’s been a huge portion of our lead generation.” Their content, which includes videos about living in Michigan and Florida, has led to over 240 Zoom calls with potential buyers in the beginning half of 2024 alone.

Tru Living Group is all about lifestyle. “It’s all about helping you find the ideal lifestyle. The houses take care of themselves.” He emphasizes the importance of innovative marketing and getting maximum exposure for listings. “With any of our listings, people have probably seen me online,” he adds, referring to their robust online presence, including the “Brighton Michigan Happenings” Facebook group and the “What’s Up Brighton” podcast.

A HEART TO HELP OTHERS

But Eric’s commitment extends beyond real estate. He has a heart to help others. He’s a passionate supporter of Fund A Life, a nonprofit helping families in some of their darkest

moments. “My mom died of cancer when I was 10 years old. I was a recipient of people extending a helping hand, so now that I am fortunate enough to give back I love being able to do so. “

FAMILY + FUN

When he’s not selling real estate, Eric loves spending time with his beautiful wife Brianna and their daughters, Mila (8) and Chloe (6). “We love spending time downtown Brighton, enjoying places like the Brighton Coffeehouse and Theater, Imagination Station, and local favorites like Blankslate for ice cream and Jackie’s Custard.” His daughters are active in ballet, gymnastics, and cheerleading, and the family enjoys being outdoors and swimming.

COMMITTED TO THE COMMUNITY

Eric’s passion for community shines through in his work. “Brighton is a fantastic community. Having grown up in metro Detroit, moving out to Brighton in 2016 was a fresh awakening. The community rallies around things and there are tons of great people and businesses.”

As he continues to grow Tru Living Group, Eric remains dedicated to bringing his community together and helping his clients live their ideal lifestyles. “I’m excited to be here and help others find their place in our amazing community.”



“

I’m excited to be here
and help others find
their place in our
amazing community.

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