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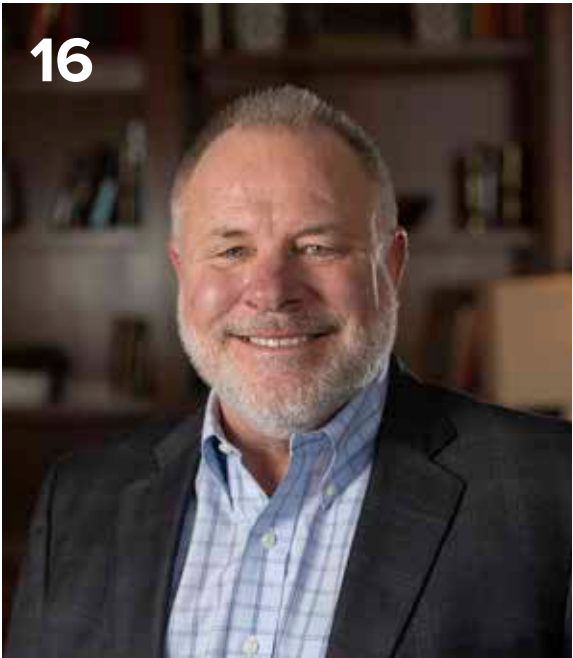
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Ken Fraine, Soil & Structure Consulting Inc.



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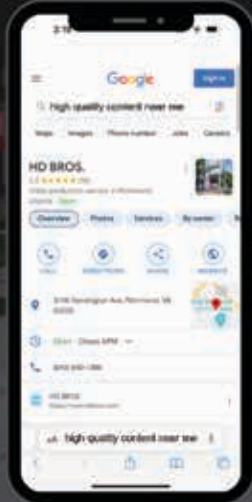


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Publisher's Note

Hello April, the Season of Possibility!

As spring blooms around us, April brings a sense of energy and endless possibilities. It's a time to celebrate the beauty of growth, explore new ideas, and continue the work that fuels our community's success.

This year, we're thrilled to celebrate **six incredible years** of bringing together top agents, partners, and industry leaders! To mark the occasion, we're hosting a special Cheers to **6-Years Anniversary Bash** on **May 14th**, and we can't wait to celebrate with all of you. Stay tuned for more details on this exciting event!

We're also excited to welcome **Protec** as our newest **preferred partner**! Their dedication to excellence and industry expertise make them a fantastic addition to our community, and we look forward to many successful collaborations ahead.

As we move through April, let's reflect on this thought:

"The beautiful spring came; and when Nature resumes her loveliness, the human soul is apt to revive also."

Wishing you a season of renewal, inspiration, and new beginnings!



Kristin Brindley
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3 Videos Every Realtor Should Be Making **RIGHT NOW!**

BY WADE VANDER MOLEN

The Spring market is here! Over the next 120 days, are typically the most fruitful in our industry. The snow melts, and housing inventory starts to rise. If you haven't been creating video content for your real estate business, there is no better time than right now. You might be asking, "What do I create videos about?" If you are new to creating video content or want a refresher, I have three videos that I feel are important for Realtors to post to their social networks and their sphere of influence.

Re-Introduction Video

You may think that everyone who interacts with you or is connected to you on social media knows you. They know "an aspect" of you, but do they really know you and what you are all about? In many cases, they don't. Now is a great time to create a re-introduction video and dive deeper into who you are, what are your value propositions, and get personal. Sure, you help people buy and sell homes, but what else? Where were you born? What did you do before real estate? What are you striving to achieve in life?

This allows the end watcher to see you as a human being, not a flashy Realtor on a video. In the days of social

media, people want a down-to-earth approach. It will also help you stick out in a sea of Realtors.

Story Video

It shocks me how often I see on social media a Realtor posting "Just Sold!" or "Sold in 2 Days Over Asking!" It adds to the stereotype that what you do is simple and easy. When that is far from the truth. Create a video and tell the story of how you sold that home so quickly. What were the activities you did to prepare the home for the market? How did you come up with your pricing strategy? What part of your marketing strategy paid off the best?

Tell the story. It outlines all the hard work you do with the end result is a home that sold quickly and over asking. Cutting straight to end without providing the proper context lowers your status with others. With the Spring market here, we certainly don't want to do that.

Selling the Team Video

Regardless of whether you run a team or are a solo agent, you have a team. You have a lender, Title, inspector, painter, roofer, and flooring person. You get the idea. The importance of *selling* the team when hiring you, raises your status with

potential prospects. Sure I work for Pruitt Title, but I'm not a processor or an attorney. I have to sell my team to win clients. Create video content that sells your team and processes to the masses.

Let them know the value these others bring to the table when they hire you as their Realtor. Going at it alone can be costly, especially as a solo agent. This is the time to pump your chest and let your audience know that when they hire you, they hire a team of professionals.

Creating and posting these three videos will help create even more credibility for your real estate business in the Spring market!



Wade Vander Molen is senior vice president of business development at Pruitt Title LLC in the Northern Virginia/Washington, D.C., area and has been in the title industry since 2005. Wade helps real estate professionals with all facets of their marketing and teaches a new, sustainable business model to help them grow their businesses. You can visit Wade at www.DCTitleGuy.com.

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KEN FRAINE

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Bringing Stability to Homeownership

BY GEORGE PAUL THOMAS
PHOTOS BY RYAN CORVELLO

Some people build businesses, while others build trust. Ken Fraine, owner of Soil & Structure Consulting, Inc., has done both. A friendly and solutions-focused professional, Ken has spent decades helping homeowners, buyers, and real estate professionals navigate the complexities of structural and drainage issues. His company is more than a business—it's a resource for education and problem-solving, ensuring clients understand their homes and the solutions available to them.



Ken Fraine using advanced tech for inspections

Engineering Success

Ken's story begins with a military upbringing that took him worldwide. Born in Guam to a Navy family, he spent his early years living on various military bases before settling in Alexandria, VA. Moving frequently taught him adaptability, resilience, and the ability to connect with different people—skills that would later serve him well as a business owner and industry leader.

Like many young professionals, Ken didn't immediately land in his ideal career. "I've always been an engineer, but I worked a lot of different jobs along the way," he recalls. From construction labor and pizza delivery to bartending and grocery store clerking, he gained hands-on experience in various

fields before fully committing to his engineering path.

That journey began at Virginia Tech, where he initially pursued a degree in Electrical Engineering. However, it didn't take long to realize he was on the wrong track. "I really, really hated it," he admits. Fortunately, a career advisor pointed him toward Construction Management, a subject that immediately clicked. "I took one course, switched my major to Civil Engineering, and never looked back."

This pivotal decision led to his first role as a Geotechnical Engineer, where he quickly realized that solving structural

and drainage issues was more than just a job—it was his professional calling. A few years later, at just 30 years old, Ken took the leap and founded Soil & Structure Consulting, Inc. in 1998.

As the company's owner, Ken manages the business while remaining hands-on in residential structural and drainage inspections. "I still go out on jobs because I believe in providing direct expertise to homeowners and realtors," he says. Over the years, the company has grown into a 30+ employee firm based in Reston, VA, serving a wide range of clients with the same mission in mind: helping people understand and solve their home-related concerns.

While growing a business is never easy, Ken points to building a sustainable company that supports dozens of employees as one of his proudest achievements. "The biggest challenge has been making sure we can consistently provide good jobs and a strong service," he says. But the rewards make it all worth it. "At the end of the day, what I love most is helping

“

We're not just here to identify problems—we're here to help you and your clients understand structural and drainage issues.”



homeowners and homebuyers feel confident in their decisions.”

Family, Rugby, and Life Beyond Work

For all his professional success, Ken's greatest source of pride is his family. He and his wife, Missy, have been married for 24 years and are raising three boys—two first-year high school students and one college freshman. Like many parents, he finds immense joy in watching them grow, supporting their ambitions, and being there for every milestone.

As a family, they love traveling, particularly on beach vacations, and they share a deep passion for rugby. “We spend a lot of time at rugby matches and tournaments, whether watching, coaching, or refereeing,” Ken says.

Rugby isn't just a hobby—it's another way he gives back. As a coach for Loudoun Rugby and a referee and educator for USA Rugby, Ken is dedicated to mentoring young athletes. “If I weren't in this career, I'd be a full-time rugby coach,” he says without hesitation. The sport mirrors many of the lessons he values in business: teamwork, discipline, and problem-solving under pressure.

Looking Ahead

Looking toward the next decade, Ken's goals are clear and personal. “I want to watch my three boys achieve their goals and support my wife in her career,” he says. While business remains a priority, family always comes first.

For those in the real estate industry, he has one key piece of advice: “Continue to develop your network of trusted

professionals and give back as much as you can.” He believes real success comes from relationships and expertise rather than just transactions.

At Soil & Structure Consulting, Inc., education is at the heart of their service. “We're not just here to identify problems—we're here to help you and your clients understand structural and drainage issues,” Ken explains. “Once you understand the issue, we work with you to find the best possible solution.”

Ultimately, Ken wants clients and realtors to know one simple thing: “We are here to help—contact us anytime.”

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Ken and his family enjoying time on the field at their kids' rugby practice.

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MARNIE SCHAAR

BY AMELIA ROSEWOOD
PHOTOS BY RYAN CORVELLO

More Than a REALTOR®

For over two decades, Marnie Schaar has been a trusted name in Northern Virginia real estate. As a team leader at Compass in Reston, she has built a reputation for professionalism, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to her clients. With a background in psychology and recruiting, Marnie brings a unique blend of strategic thinking, market knowledge, and personal connection to every transaction. Her approach is deeply rooted in understanding her clients' needs, guiding them through major life transitions, and making the buying and selling process as seamless as possible.

Roots in Reston
Originally from Cape Cod, Massachusetts, Marnie moved to Reston, Virginia, in 1979 and has called it home ever since. With decades of personal and professional ties to the area, she has cultivated strong relationships

throughout the community. Her deep understanding of the local market allows her to offer valuable insights and expert guidance to buyers and sellers alike.

Marnie's long-standing presence in Reston has also shaped her professional journey. Encouraged by her husband, a real estate developer, she transitioned from a successful career in technical recruiting to real estate in 2002. Starting while nine months pregnant with her son, she quickly proved that she was built for the fast-paced, client-focused world of real estate.

Marnie has always prioritized the needs of her clients above all else. Her friendly, outgoing, and hardworking personality makes her an ideal advocate, and she takes immense pride in ensuring that every client feels valued and supported. "I truly care about my clients," Marnie

shares. "I want their experience to be as stress-free as possible. I take on the details so they can focus on the excitement of their next chapter."

With an innate ability to make people feel comfortable, Marnie ensures that each transaction is guided with care, transparency, and efficiency. She is known for going the extra mile, often losing sleep over how to best serve her clients, demonstrating just how personally invested she is in their success.

Her commitment to excellence is evident in her impressive career achievements. In 2024, her team closed \$40 million in sales volume, serving over 65 clients. Her dedication to results and superior service has led her to be consistently recognized as a top producer in her office and a recipient of the Maximize



Marnie Schaar with her dedicated team, Debbie Anguizola and Lauren McCormick

expertise makes her an invaluable resource for anyone considering a move.

The Power of a Strong Team
As a team leader, Marnie understands the power of collaboration. She leads a tight-knit group of professionals, including Debbie Anguizola and Lauren McCormick, who specialize in providing personalized service to clients. Together, they work to ensure that every aspect of the buying and selling process is handled with precision and care.

"My team is incredible," Marnie says. "I couldn't do what I do without them. We each bring unique strengths to the table, and that makes all the difference for our clients."

Your Strength Award, one of Compass' core principles.

Despite these accolades, Marnie remains focused on delivering an unmatched real estate experience rather than chasing titles. She attributes her success to the trust and loyalty of her clients, many of whom return for future transactions and refer their friends and family.

A REALTOR® with a Renovator's Eye
Marnie doesn't just help clients buy and sell homes—she helps them see their potential. With extensive renovation experience, she brings a unique perspective to real estate.

In early 2020, Marnie and her husband purchased a 1975 Deck House on Lake Thoreau, a complete fixer-upper. They took it down to the studs, added a major addition, and spent nearly two years transforming it. This hands-on experience, combined with her work renovating investment properties, gives her deep insight into home potential.

"I love helping clients see beyond what's in front of them. Sometimes, a house just needs the right vision to become a dream home."

Whether guiding buyers through renovation possibilities or helping sellers maximize value, Marnie's



Beyond real estate, Marnie is an active member of the Reston community. She supports local initiatives such as the Reston Home Tour, Cornerstones in Reston, The Core Foundation, and the Reston Chamber of Commerce. Her dedication to philanthropy reflects her belief in strengthening the communities where she lives and works.

Life Beyond the Listings

Outside of her thriving real estate career, Marnie finds joy in spending time with her husband and two children, all proud graduates of Virginia Tech. The family shares a deep bond and enjoys attending Virginia Tech football games together, embracing their alma mater’s spirit.

Marnie also has a passion for outdoor activities, particularly walking through the scenic paths of Reston, often accompanied by friends, and enjoying time on Lake Thoreau, where she lives. An avid entertainer, Marnie loves hosting gatherings at her home, where she welcomes friends, clients, and colleagues, ensuring everyone feels connected. “I love to entertain,” she shares. “Making people feel welcome is something I genuinely enjoy.” Her ability to make people feel comfortable extends far beyond her real estate career—it’s simply who she is.

Her love for community involvement is reflected in her dedication to



Reviving history: Marnie’s beautifully transformed 1975 Deck House on Lake Thoreau

Reston’s local organizations, where she continuously finds ways to give back. Whether it’s supporting philanthropic efforts, attending local events, or mentoring new agents, Marnie’s commitment to building meaningful relationships extends in every direction.

Expanding Horizons

Marnie’s passion for real estate shows no signs of slowing down. With her husband and two children by her side, she envisions continuing to serve her Northern Virginia clients while expanding her reach to Cape Cod,

Massachusetts, where she and her family own a home.

“I don’t see myself ever retiring from this, just maybe doing it less,” she says. “Helping people navigate one of the biggest decisions of their lives is something I’ll always be passionate about.”

Her philosophy remains simple: Be kind, be authentic, and always put people first. These values, combined with her expertise, dedication, and community spirit, have solidified Marnie Schaar as a standout in the real estate industry.

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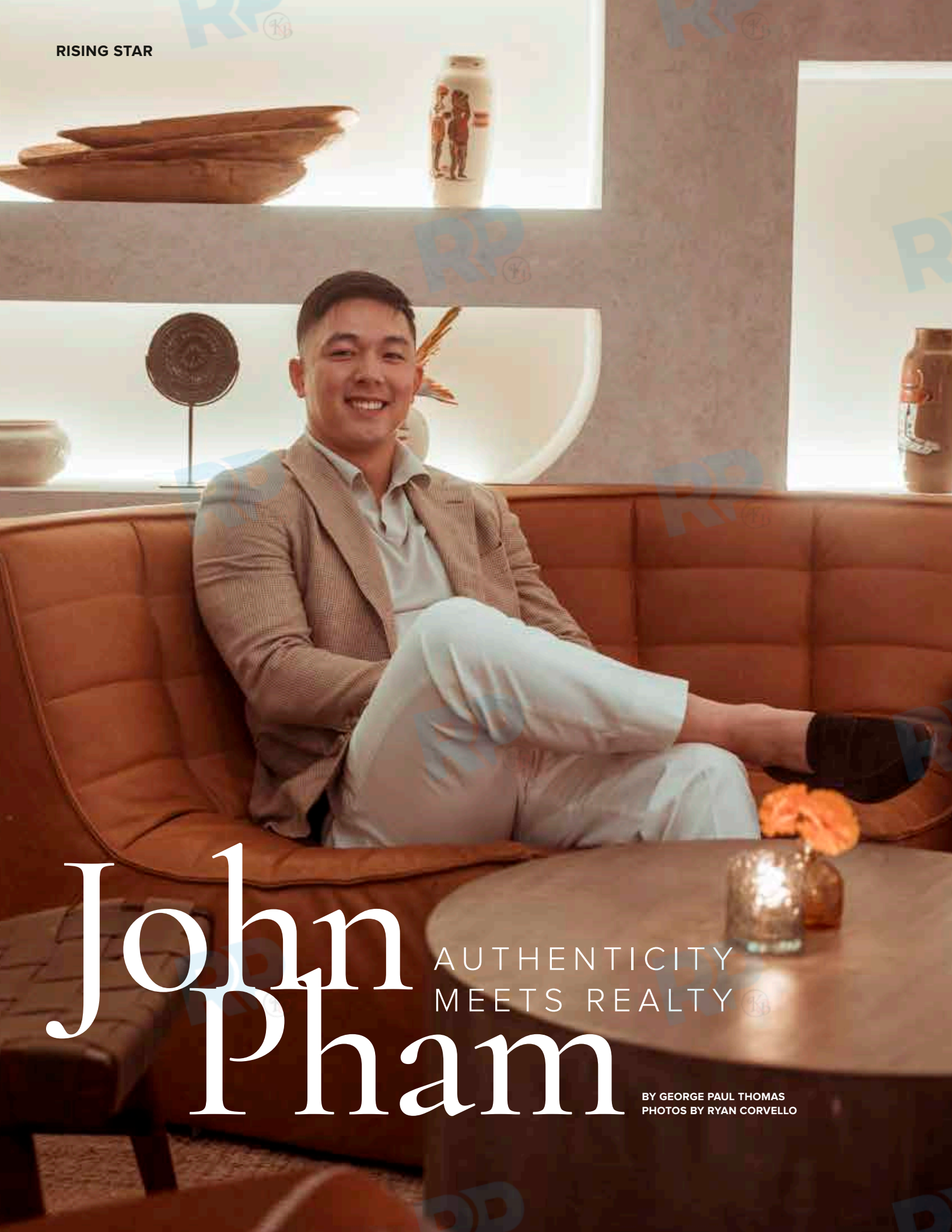
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John Pham

AUTHENTICITY
MEETS REALTY

BY GEORGE PAUL THOMAS
PHOTOS BY RYAN CORVELLO

John Pham is not your typical REALTOR®. With a laidback and outgoing personality, he brings a unique blend of humor, spontaneity, and authenticity to every real estate transaction. A proud member of Spring Hill Real Estate, John is also a certified Real Estate Negotiation Expert (RENE) and the team leader of The Topaz Group. Known for his down-to-earth and lighthearted nature, he makes the home buying and selling process feel friendly and approachable. His active lifestyle and genuine love for connecting with people set him apart in a field that can often seem stiff and overly formal. John's practical approach and fun spirit create a refreshing change, making each client interaction as enjoyable as it is effective.

A Bold Leap

After earning a Bachelor's degree in Business Information Systems, John ventured into the world of IT. For four years, he worked as a Systems Engineer, contributing to projects at Fortune 500 companies and even at Amazon. Despite the lucrative salary and prestigious roles, John quickly discovered that technical expertise was not what fulfilled him.

Reflecting on his past, he explains, "I wouldn't say my professional background necessarily shaped who I am today—it was more the relationships I built along the way."

Those connections, more than any technical skill, opened doors throughout his career. Although his parents initially envisioned a career in dentistry, John's path took an unexpected turn as he embraced the collaborative nature of technology. Yet, even as he thrived in IT, he felt a growing discontent. The repetitive routine

and lack of personal connection in his daily work led him to reconsider his future.

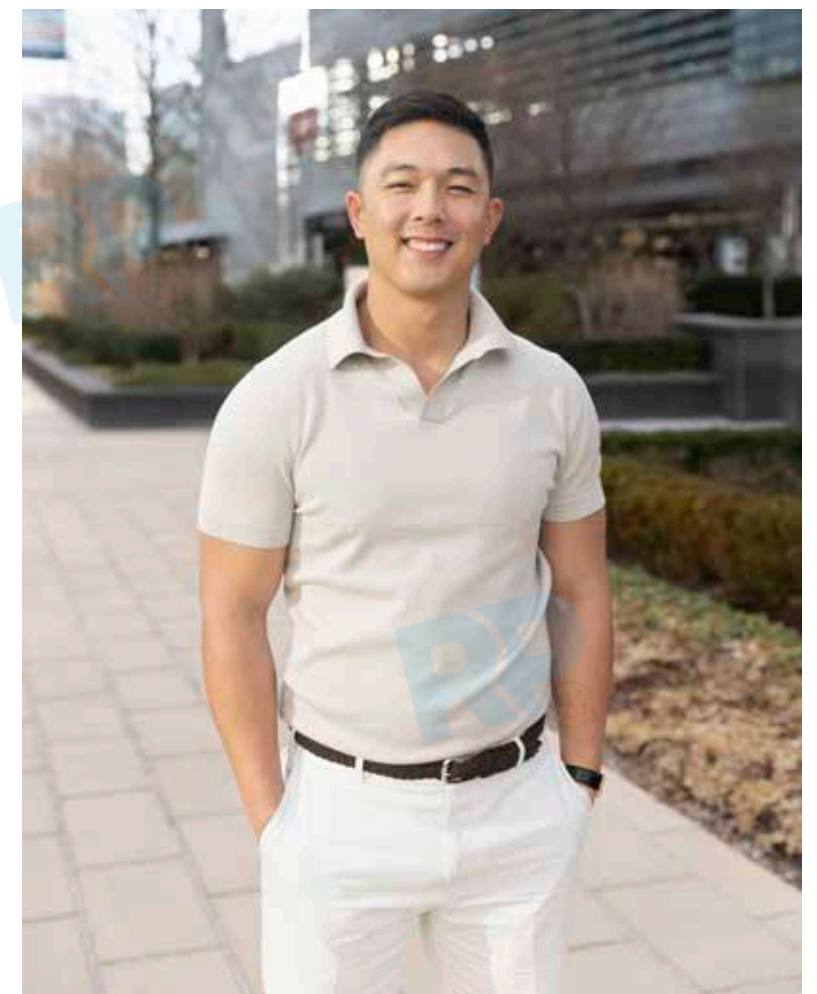
In 2019, after just a year balancing dual careers, he made a bold decision to leave IT behind and pursue real estate full-time. "I saw an opportunity to get the mentorship I needed," he recalls, crediting top-producing Realtor Ava Nguyen for inspiring his transition. This pivotal moment marked the beginning of a journey driven by passion, trust, and a desire for genuine human connection.

Professional Prowess

As the team leader of The Topaz Group, John has quickly become a force in the real estate market. John not only guides his team

but also sets a high standard for service and results. Last year, John closed transactions totaling \$10.6M, and his projected volume for this year is set to surpass \$20M.

His knack for negotiation and his authentic personality have earned him accolades from clients and peers alike. Clients appreciate his ability to simplify complex deals with clarity and humor, ensuring that every transaction is handled with care and expertise. His dedication to fostering genuine relationships and his relentless drive for excellence have made him a standout figure in the industry, proving that success in real estate is built on trust and commitment rather than mere technical skills.





Life Beyond Listings

Outside real estate, John's life is filled with vibrant family ties and a passion for food and adventure. Coming from a close-knit family, John shares his life with four siblings: Elizabeth (10), John Pham Jr. (13), Jasmine (28), and Margaret (33).

He humorously notes, "My dad is John Pham, I'm also John Pham Jr.—and, yes, I have a little John Pham Jr. in the family, too!"

Food plays a central role in his life, as both his parents are exceptional chefs. His father, who owns a popular pho restaurant, is renowned for his seafood dishes,

while his mother is celebrated for her traditional Vietnamese cuisine.

John playfully confesses, "My mom's pho ga is unbeatable—better than anything you'd find at my dad's restaurant," highlighting his lighthearted approach to family traditions.

When not busy with work, John stays active by playing pickleball, basketball, and engaging in outdoor activities like running, golf, and skateboarding. His recent snowboarding trip to Niseko, Japan, is a testament to his love for adventure. Always ready to explore, John frequently visits local breweries and

restaurants, combining his love for food with his zest for life.

Future Horizons

Looking ahead, John sees real estate as far more than a series of transactions—it's a chance to build genuine relationships and foster lasting community impact. For him, every home sale is an opportunity to weave trust into the fabric of a neighborhood and to help build generational wealth with a down-to-earth flair.

John's approach is refreshingly straightforward. With a strong commitment to his core values—expertise, integrity, and genuine connection—he's on a mission to expand The Topaz Group and explore innovative avenues in real estate investing. "Real estate isn't just about deals; it's about the people you meet and the bonds you build," he says, adding that every handshake is a step toward a more connected community.

His advice to aspiring agents is as candid as it is inspiring: "Join a team that prioritizes communication, negotiation skills, and core values. Early on, don't stress about making a lot of money. Success in real estate is built on trust, and that takes time." This no-nonsense guidance reflects his belief that true success comes from mastering the fundamentals and putting people first.

By blending his business acumen with his lighthearted, spontaneous nature, John is paving a future where business success and personal fulfillment go hand in hand.



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LIZZY

CONROY

BY AMELIA ROSEWOOD
PHOTOS BY RYAN CORVELLO

FROM MARKET CHALLENGES TO MILLION-DOLLAR SUCCESS

Approachable, professional, and energetic—Lizzy Conroy embodies the qualities of a top-tier real estate professional. As the principal of the high-producing HBC Group under Keller Williams Realty, she has built a reputation for being disciplined, focused, and a true servant leader. With a strategic mindset and a deep commitment to her clients and community, she has become a driving force in the market.



With more than a decade and a half in the industry, her ability to connect with people, analyze trends, and negotiate effectively has set her apart. Her leadership, combined with an innate understanding of client needs, has made her one of

the most respected names in the Northern Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. housing markets.

From Oklahoma Roots to a Career in Real Estate
Lizzy was born and raised in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

She was an elite gymnast and former USA Gymnastics Junior National Team member, an experience that taught her the power of grit and perseverance. Her academic journey took her to Georgetown University, where she earned a degree



in economics—an education that would later prove invaluable in her transition to real estate.

Her professional path began outside of the housing industry. Right after college, she worked as a legal assistant for the International Trade Group at Hogan Lovells, a prominent multinational law firm in Washington, D.C. She later transitioned into the tech sector, taking on a marketing role at MicroStrategy, a major player in Northern Virginia’s tech boom of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Her experience also includes business development positions with Newmark, LLC, a commercial real estate firm based in New York City, and Kalmia Construction, a boutique commercial

construction company based in Maryland.

After stepping away from the workforce to focus on raising her young children, Lizzy reentered professional life in 2009—this time, in residential real estate.

Overcoming Challenges, Building Success

Lizzy entered real estate in 2009, a time of extreme market uncertainty. Despite the challenges, she embraced the opportunity to learn the business from the ground up. “In hindsight, it was the best time to learn because nothing came easy,” she says. Her early years were spent handling short sales, navigating price reductions, and counseling clients through difficult financial situations—experiences that strengthened her

problem-solving skills and market expertise.

As the principal of the HBC Group, Lizzy has built a business rooted in service, expertise, and adaptability. “Our directive is service—to our clients, our employees, our agents, and our community,” she explains. She recognizes that buying

or selling a home is often tied to life-changing events and approaches each transaction with both strategic thinking and empathy.

Her approach goes beyond transactions—it’s about understanding market trends, educating clients, and positioning them for success. She provides

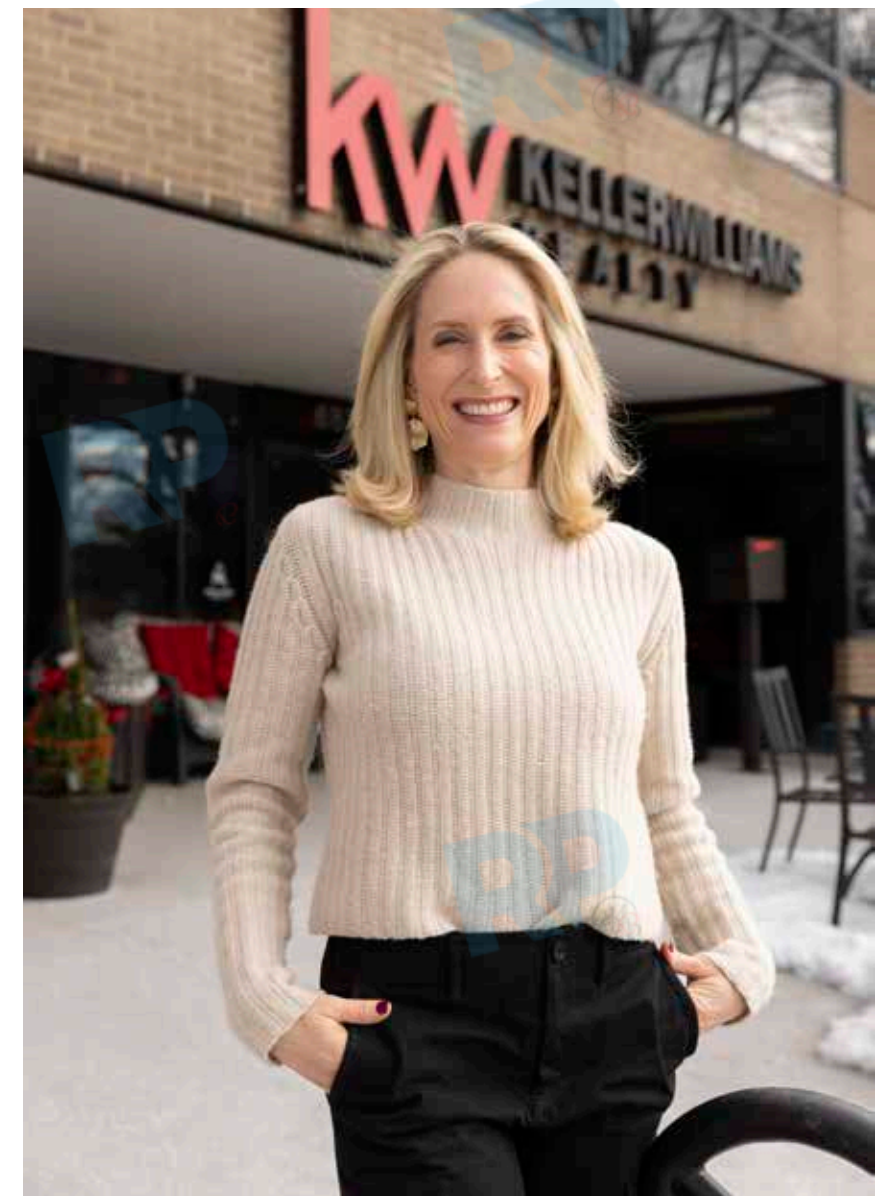


Lizzy with her family—husband Steve, son Steven, and daughter Emery—celebrating the holiday season together.

Her client-first philosophy has translated into outstanding results. In 2024, the HBC Group closed 80 sales and 27 rental transactions, totaling \$102 million in volume. With a goal of reaching \$150 million in gross volume and 120 transactions in 2025, Lizzy continues to push her business forward while maintaining a reputation for excellence.

The team’s consistent ranking among the best in the industry is a testament to her leadership. The HBC

Group has been recognized in Washingtonian Magazine, Northern Virginia Magazine, and Arlington Magazine. The HBC Group consistently ranks as the #1 team in Keller Williams McLean Great Falls, and in 2024, was ranked the #8 large team in Virginia by Real Trends. Most recently, Lizzy was ranked #115 out of 22,000 agents on the Top 500 Real Producers List for 2025—an achievement that underscores her influence and success in the real estate world.



detailed market analyses, ensuring that buyers and sellers understand pricing, competition, and future projections. “The market is always shifting, and you have to be able to think critically and pivot when necessary,” she says. “My job is to help my clients make the best possible decisions, no matter what the market looks like.”



Leadership, Teamwork, and Mentorship

While Lizzy has achieved remarkable personal success, she strongly believes in teamwork and mentorship. As the principal of the HBC Group, she has cultivated an environment where agents thrive through collaboration, professional development, and shared expertise.

“My role isn’t just about leading transactions—it’s about developing people,” she says. She invests in training, ensuring that her agents stay ahead of market trends and maintain the highest level of service. The culture at HBC Group is one of learning, growth, and unwavering client dedication.

In addition to mentoring within her team, Lizzy is a strong advocate for professional women in real estate. She often shares her experiences and lessons learned, helping others navigate career transitions and build their own success stories.

Life Beyond Real Estate

Outside of her demanding career, Lizzy’s life revolves around her family. She has been married for 23 years to her husband, Steve Conroy, who also plays a key role in the HBC Group. Their daughter, Emery, is currently a freshman at Boston University, while their son, Steven, is a junior at McLean High School. Both have been actively involved

in sports, competing in track, football, gymnastics, and cheerleading.

Fitness is a major part of Lizzy’s routine. She enjoys weightlifting in her home gym, running with a close friend—a tradition that has lasted 15 years—and practicing yoga. “When I can, I love hiking, especially while on vacation,” she adds. “Maine and Greece are at the top of my list of places to visit.”

Her passion for food also plays a significant role in her personal life. “I’ve been a foodie ever since I was a kid,” she says. She enjoys cooking on weekends, particularly comfort foods like stews, and keeps her home stocked with grass-fed, grass-finished beef from a local farm.

“MY ROLE ISN’T JUST ABOUT LEADING TRANSACTIONS—IT’S ABOUT DEVELOPING PEOPLE.”

Just as she finds joy in creating meals for her family, she also finds fulfillment in nurturing her community through philanthropy and local initiatives. Lizzy believes that real success is measured not only by

professional achievements but also by the impact made on the community. She is deeply involved in philanthropy and local arts initiatives, including serving on the board of the McLean Project for the Arts.

She is particularly excited about the upcoming MPA Downtown Arts Center, a project that will bring new cultural opportunities to the area. “It’s going to be a huge game-changer for McLean,” she says. The new space will feature a café, a gallery showcasing notable contemporary artists, and classrooms—creating an inspiring cultural hub for the community.

Looking Ahead

Faith is a cornerstone of Lizzy’s life. “My faith is a very central part of my life,” she says. “I read the Bible and pray every day—it’s very important to me and helps me stay grounded.”

Looking ahead, Lizzy’s personal goal is simple but meaningful: “I want to instill kindness and hard work in my children and also hope they are gainfully employed after college!” Professionally, she aims to continue growing the HBC Group while maintaining its core values of service, strategy, and excellence.

At the heart of her success is a deep commitment to relationships. “I am a hard-working, caring, insightful, and lifelong learner,” she says. She thrives on building connections, learning people’s stories, and helping them navigate major life decisions. To her, real estate is not just about transactions—it’s about people.



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PHOTOS BY RYAN CORVELLO

Day to Remember: *NOVA Real Producers* Magazine Party

The recent *NOVA Real Producers* gathering was a celebration of connection, collaboration, and community! Hosted at a breathtaking home provided by **Kara Chaffin Donofrio**, this event was a perfect blend of networking and appreciation. We are truly grateful to everyone who attended and made the day so special!

A special thank you to our event sponsors, **Chuck Hall of Winston Chimney** and **Trey Tatro of Amazing Listing Photo**, for their generous support in making this event possible. We also want to recognize Yelina of Curds and Cuts for the delicious charcuterie spread that kept our guests mingling and snacking throughout the day.



Every special moment was beautifully captured by Ryan Corvello's stunning photography, while HD Bros created an incredible video recap, allowing us to relive the event's best moments.

These gatherings are all about fostering meaningful connections among top-producing agents, industry leaders, and professionals. The opportunity to network in an intimate, inviting atmosphere is invaluable in building relationships that drive success.

*Magazine parties are smaller gatherings where we celebrate all of the rock star agents who have graced our pages in the past few months. *For more information on all NOVA Real Producers events, please reach out to us at info@novarealproducers.com.*



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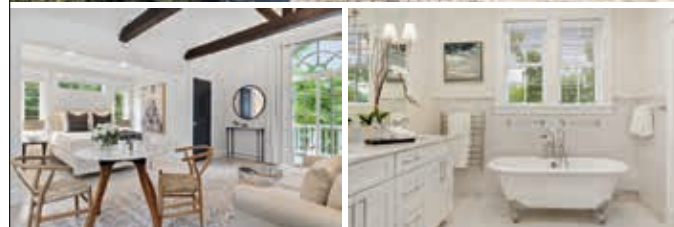
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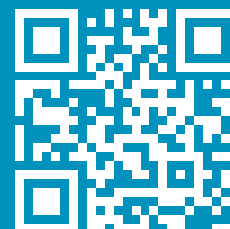
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