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APRIL 2025

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Rising Star:

Ashley Nicole Tarver of @properties

Partner Spotlight:
SCCS NWI

Winter Event Recap:
Toast to the Top 300 of 2025

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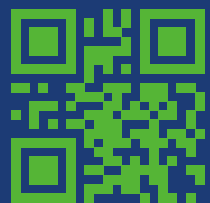


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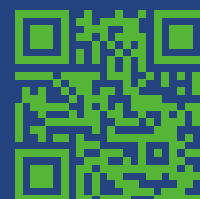
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DELIA CURTIS



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All About Northwest Indiana Real Producers



Q: Who receives this magazine?

A: The top 300 agents in Northwest Indiana based on volume for the previous year and our Preferred Partners. There are thousands of agents in NWI, and you, in this elite group, are the cream of the crop. Just to be included in this group is an accomplishment that testifies to your hard work, dedication, and proficiency.

Q: Do real estate agents have to pay for the magazine?

A: NO! The magazine is FREE to agents and funded by the partners who advertise.

Q: What kind of content will be featured?

A: This is all about you. We'll do personal and unique stories on members in the community, providing you with a platform to inspire others. As we grow, we'll add fresh content focused entirely on you. It costs absolutely nothing for a real estate agent to be featured. We are not a pay to play model; we write real stories, about Real Producers, and we're always accepting nominations. We will consider anyone brought to our attention— we don't know everyone's story so we need your help to learn about them!

Q: Who are our partners?

A: Anyone listed as a "Preferred Partner" in the front of the magazine is funding and fueling this community and is an

essential part of it. They are the top professionals in their industry. They will have an ad in every issue of the magazine and attend our events. One or many of you have recommended every single Preferred Partner you see in this publication. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best agents in the area, but the best affiliates as well, so we can grow stronger together.

Q: Does Real Producers have events?

A: Yes! Along with the magazine, we will host quarterly events exclusive to this community, where you—the best of the best—get together at local venues to socialize, mastermind, deepen connections, and better our businesses. We will communicate about events through the magazine, email, and on social media—be on the lookout for info on our next one in May!

Q: How can I recommend a feature story?

A: If you are interested in nominating agents to be featured, scan the QR code, email, or call us. With so many wonderful nominated agents, the decision each month is difficult — so make sure we know who you are! 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.



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5 Areas of the Home to Focus on Updating Before Selling

BY ASHLEY SUMMERS,
HOMESTRETCH:
NW INDIANA

Selling a home can feel overwhelming for a number of reasons. But, prioritizing making the right updates can significantly impact buyer interest and maximize your offers. In a competitive market, proper preparation is crucial. Focusing on key areas can enhance your home's appeal and even increase its value by making a lasting impression on potential buyers. Breaking it down to these five areas of the home to focus your attention on makes the home prep process a little more digestible. Some improvements are low-cost and can be a simple DIY weekend project. Other projects may require a small investment, like refreshing the interior walls with a fresh coat of paint, but the payoff will be well worth the effort.

- Lighten the wall color with a fresh coat of neutral paint
- Freshen up the staircase by painting the spindles, bannister, treads, or risers
- Replace flooring or carpet on the staircase
- Switch out light fixtures



Kitchens

Kitchens tend to be the most expensive investment when renovating or updating a home. Renovating an entire kitchen can be pricey and time consuming, but small tweaks, like updating hardware, can make the room look new.

- Paint the walls
- Paint the cabinets in lieu of replacing with new ones
- Switch out cabinet pulls and faucet hardware
- Update light fixtures
- Add new floorin
- Update appliance
- Remove clutter/ small appliances from countertops



Bathrooms

Buyers can fall in love with a bathroom or view it as a dingy space that's on top of their list to tackle when they move in. Give the buyer a reason to love the house

even more with a handful of swaps and small tasks in the main bathrooms.

- Paint the bathroom vanity
- Swap out vanity hardware
- Paint the wall
- Update mirrors and vanity lights
- Add a new towel bar, toilet paper holder, and towel ring
- Paint dated-colored tile to neutralize the space
- Remove or replace the shower curtain with a neutral color
- Deep clean the space



Exteriors

Don't forget the outdoors! Curb appeal is important and can be a dealbreaker to some buyers... It's their first impression. Small updates here make all the difference.

- Paint exterior brick
- Paint accent items like shutters, the front door, fascia boards, and garage doors
- Update sconces or other outdoor light fixtures
- Clean up the landscape including trimming bushes, pulling weeds, mowing the lawn, and laying fresh mulc
- Pressure wash sidewalks and the driveway



Main Entryway

The entryway is the first thing visitors will see when they walk into your home for an open house or in listing photos. Make sure that it's welcoming, uncluttered, and updated. If you can only choose one space inside your home to spruce up, make it the entry.

Main Living Space

The living space can be a bigger time and money investment. But if we think about it, it's where most families spend the majority of their time. Small updates can make a major difference to make the room pop.

- Choose a neutral wall color
- Paint the trim
- Whitewash red brick
- Update aging carpet
- Remove window treatment
- Consider staging instead of using personal furniture and belongings in photos
- Remove any family photos from the space
- Switch out light fixtures

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Winter Event:

Toast to the Top 300 of 2025

PHOTOGRAPHY BY T-23 PRODUCTIONS

Rain or shine, nothing could dampen the energy at our Toast to the Top 300 of 2025 event on March 4th! South Shore Jaguar Land Rover proved to be the perfect setting for an afternoon of celebration and connection. Over 140 of Northwest Indiana's top real estate professionals and industry-leading vendors came together to toast to your success as well as our December, January, and February features. And let's talk about hospitality—the dealership's staff went above and beyond, even escorting guests in with umbrellas to keep the momentum going strong!

It was incredible to see so many top producers and partners in one space, sharing ideas and strengthening relationships. Our Real Producers events aren't just about networking—they're about building real connections that fuel business growth and friendships. A huge thank you to event sponsor Scott Kosteba of Everwise Credit Union, Eagle Eye Media and T-23 Productions for capturing the magic of the day, and the Hage Agency for the photobooth. And what a milestone to celebrate—NWI's Top 300 agents closed a staggering \$2.95 billion in sales volume in 2024! That's something worth raising a glass to. We are grateful for this amazing community and can't wait for our next event in May!



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BY GIAVONNI DOWNING PHOTOGRAPHY
BY MELINDA NICOLE PHOTOGRAPHY

Vinnie Nowarita and his family have transformed personal hardship into a mission to help others. The journey began in 2004, when his family moved to Northwest Indiana and his young son Mick started experiencing severe respiratory issues. “He was getting Croup,” Vinnie recalls. “He had to spend a week in the hospital in a Croup tent. We didn’t know what was going on.” The culprit was mold lurking beneath their home’s carpet. This early experience ignited a concern for indoor air quality that would shape Vinnie’s future.

VINNIE NOWARITA AND SCCS NWI’S JOURNEY TO CREATE HEALTHIER HOMES

Years later, in 2007, a similar crisis struck. His son Will, sharing a room with Mick, was plagued by respiratory problems. “Mick was starting to develop respiratory issues again; he was seven, and my younger son Will was three,” Vinnie explains. A hidden water leak, stemming from storm damage, had fostered mold growth behind Will’s bedroom wall, producing major health problems for both boys.

The ensuing battle with the insurance company was grueling, lasting nearly two years. This ordeal, however, became a catalyst. Vinnie sought assistance from a public insurance adjuster, and soon his experience led to sales opportunities with others facing property damage.

This exposure to the restoration industry and his family’s mold-related health issues sparked an idea. “I started learning more about mold, and thought it would be a good idea to be a contractor and help people in similar situations,” Vinnie reflects.

By 2013, Vinnie leaped, leaving his national sales position to dedicate himself entirely to his burgeoning business, Specialty Cleaning and Contracting Service (SCCS) NWI. SCCS NWI provides comprehensive fire, water, and mold remediation services to Northwest Indiana, offering everything from mold testing and mitigation to water damage mitigation.

Today, Vinnie and his son Mick focus on water and mold mitigation, driven by a passion to help those facing similar challenges. “We deal with many people who call feeling sick, and they want to know why,” Vinnie explains. “We can do air quality testing now, and we can help customers determine what type of mold is in their home. This gives us the data we need to determine a successful strategy to help each family.”

Mick, now working alongside his father, shares this dedication. “Being able to do the work and then see the positive change is what I enjoy,” Mick says.

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I FEEL LIKE
THAT’S SUCCESS.”**



states. Vinnie emphasizes the importance of building relationships within the community, particularly with Realtors. “Our partnership comes from doing good work,” he says. “Having a good reputation and being in the community is critical.” Vinnie’s ultimate reward comes from witnessing the positive impact of their work. “It’s rewarding to know that our team helps get people back in their homes,” he says. “We had a customer in Valpo that couldn’t sleep in her bedroom for months, and she didn’t know why. She had mold growing under her floor, in her crawl space. When she came back home after we were done, she said, ‘I had the best night’s sleep in months. That really made me feel good.’”

When he’s not tackling mold or mitigating water damage, Vinnie enjoys spending time with his family, indulging in his love for music, and staying active. “I enjoy doing anything that’s physical activity. I play basketball, work out daily, and like playing golf in the summertime. We both love listening to music,” Vinnie says, referring to his impressive record collection. Vinnie and Mick enjoy attending concerts. Mick has a particular fondness for the Windy City Smoke Out festival in Chicago. “It’s a country festival,” he explains. “I always have a blast going there.” Vinnie’s love for classic rock shines through his deep admiration for the Rolling

Stones—he’s seen them live more than a dozen times. It’s no coincidence that his son is named “Mick”. Perhaps his most cherished concert memory dates back to 1984, when he witnessed the iconic Michael Jackson on his Victory Tour with the Jackson 5. This was the tour that followed the “Thriller” album. “That was pretty incredible to see. I had no idea I was witnessing such an iconic moment in time,” Vinnie reminisces. Beyond music, Vinnie shares a love for cars with his sons and enjoys traveling with his family. This diverse range of interests provides a well-rounded balance to his demanding work, ensuring that Vinnie approaches each day with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

Looking ahead, Vinnie envisions expanding his business to Florida, aiming to replicate their success while maintaining their high standards.

Ultimately, Vinnie and Mick Nowarita define success by their ability to make a difference in people’s lives. “When I could see the impact in somebody else’s life that we’ve made through our hard work, I feel like that’s success,” Vinnie concludes. Their story is a testament to the power of personal experience, community connection, and a genuine desire to help others breathe easier.





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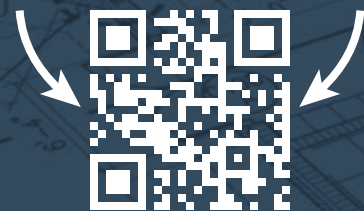
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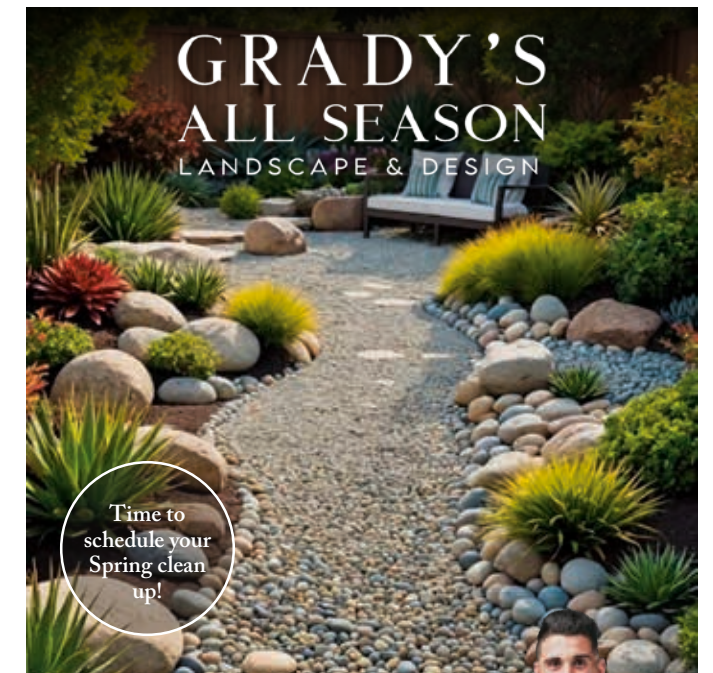
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From the Lab to Luxury Listings:



ASHLEY NICOLE TARVER'S FAITH-FUELED RISE IN REAL ESTATE

BY GIAVONNI DOWNING • PHOTOGRAPHY BY MELINDA NICOLE PHOTOGRAPHY

Ashley Nicole Tarver is emerging as a powerful force in real estate. From the sterile confines of a science lab to the high-stakes world of real estate, her journey is a testament to the power of unwavering faith and work ethic. “Faith-first” isn’t just a mantra for Ashley; it’s at the core of everything. She kicked off her real estate career in June 2022 with 10 deals. A year later, she’d hit \$2 million in sales; by June 2024, she’d hit a remarkable \$7 million. With over \$12 million in total sales since she started, it’s clear that this isn’t luck—this is divine orchestration coupled with a relentless drive.

Ashley’s backstory includes 14 years of sales experience, a career as a biopharmaceutical sales rep, and a knack for translating complex concepts into crystal-clear communication. Her unique career path started with becoming a chemist with a math minor, responsible for the vibrant and iconic bumblebee yellow and tuxedo black paint on the Chevrolet Camaro Classic. Ashley’s personality is just as lively, and her career trajectory knows no limits, taking her from steel-toed boots and lab coats to high heels and closing deals.

The beautiful reality of single motherhood sidelined her medical school dreams, leading her to pivot to chemistry, where she was among the top 100 Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) graduates and the only Black female in her category. Her son, now a pre-med student at Tennessee State University, is a testament to her dedication. “Representation matters,” she states. “I’m grateful to stand as proof that people can evolve, expand, and succeed in ways they may not even imagine yet.”

Growing up, Ashley watched her mother navigate the ups and downs of life, becoming her first real estate role model with an investment in a two-bedroom, one-bathroom home. Ashley describes her childhood as modest but rich in love, support, and strong family bonds. Her father, a salesman and landscaper, planted the seeds of entrepreneurship early.

Ashley considers her career trajectory a series of divine nudges. Early on, she felt that the lab coat wasn’t the best fit. “My personality was just too big for the lab,”

Ashley laughs. This led to a transformative phone call—an act of God, she insists—propelling her into industrial gas sales. Ashley conquered the pharmaceutical world from there, working for giants like Eli Lilly and Amgen. In 2021, she added “investor” and “private chef” to her impressive resume, leveraging her culinary skills and financial acumen to build a private dining business and flip properties.

Ashley didn’t flinch when her pharmaceutical role was phased out. Armed with a potent blend of experience and a heart for service, she dove headfirst into real estate. Her pharmaceutical background sharpened her

ability to advocate for clients, ask the right questions, and understand the “why” behind the “what.”

“I’ve learned to hear people beyond their fears,” she says. “I’m a trusted partner.” She helps sellers bridge the gap between Zillow dreams and market realities with profitable strategies. Her network of lenders, title companies, and vendors enforces her ability to serve clients.

Success means emotional fulfillment and financial stability for Ashley without compromising her values. Currently, she is focusing on building her team. She travels and indulges in



“
Faith
equals
success.”
”

culinary adventures when she’s not closing deals. An active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., her church, and a mentor to others, she embodies service.

“Faith equals success,” she declares. At any point when you can’t find a job, it is time to step out on faith and make one.” Her experience

as an investor adds a layer of expertise. Ashley fights for her clients and is hardworking, passionate, and dedicated to serving others. She believes God rewards those who show up and do the right thing. She wants to instill the same values in her son, teaching him the power of entrepreneurship.

As Ashley looks to the future, she sees growth in real estate with her team and eventually opening a restaurant.

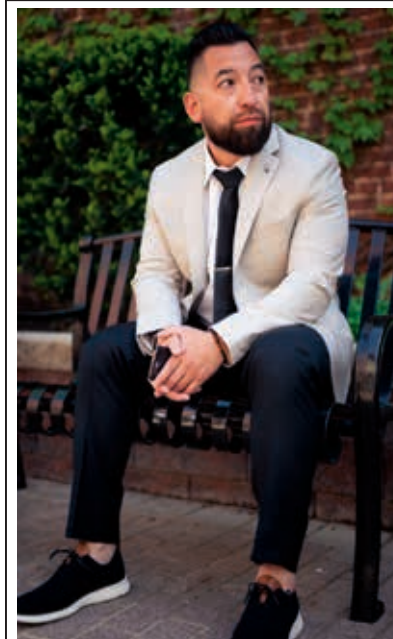
Whether it’s a perfectly plated dish or a dream home deal, Ashley delivers an unparalleled experience that caters to her clients’ practical and aspirational needs.

Ashley Nicole Tarver is an inspiration, proving that anything is possible with faith, determination, and a passion for service.

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FROM **HOMEBUYER** TO **INDUSTRY LEADER**

BY GIAVONNI DOWNING
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MELINDA NICOLE PHOTOGRAPHY

Mike Tezak's journey to success in real estate is anything but ordinary. His story is about resilience, determination, and a commitment to building a business that puts his people first. From his early days as an agent to his current role as a broker/owner and team leader, Mike's career has been marked by the pursuit of excellence and a passion for helping others succeed.

The Leap into Real Estate: A Builder's Influence

After attending Providence Catholic High School and Quincy University, he met his wife Pam, married, and had two children, Emily and Ashley. He was balancing family life with working in management at a casino, but he had a desire for more. At the time, real estate was not on his radar. "I don't have the patience to work for other people," he admits. "Pam was an inspiration to me; she taught me that there was nothing I could not do."

An unexpected encounter sparked Mike's entry into real estate. While searching for their step-up home, Mike and Pam felt their agent wasn't truly advocating for them as young homebuyers. Frustrated by the experience, Mike thought, I can represent people better than this. The disappointment was so great that they abandoned the idea of buying an existing home and chose to build instead.

When signing their contract, the builder nudged Mike to get his real estate license in the



MIKE TEZAK

of Realty Executives Premier



“

THERE'S NO SPECIAL PILL TO TAKE. IT'S BEING WILLING TO WORK HARDER THAN OTHERS, ANSWERING YOUR PHONE, AND GIVING MORE WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE GIVING UP.”

summer of 2001. Mike took the leap, earned his license, proceeded to win “Rookie of the Year” at his first brokerage, and the rest is history. By 2004, Mike represented 8 builders and his first development.

Building a Team and a Brokerage
Mike's entrepreneurial spirit and passion for teaching led him to create one of the first real estate teams in Northwest Indiana. “I had a team long before it was popular. I realized I couldn't be in 10 places at one time,” he explains. “So it was easier to train people to help.”

This team-based approach became the foundation for his brokerage, Realty Executives, which he opened in 2008. Mike's vision was clear: to create a place where agents felt supported and valued. “I wanted to open a place where the agent came first,” he says.

At Realty Executives, Mike fosters a culture of collaboration and growth. He is always available to answer questions, offer guidance, and help his agents navigate challenges. His wife, Pam, plays a crucial role in the company. She manages the front office and brings her unique skills to the team. “Pam flies far under the radar but is respected by so many in our business.”

A Commitment to Growth and Retention: The Power of Culture
Mike's leadership style has paid off. Realty Executives boast an impressive agent retention rate. “Success to me is having happy people,” he says. “My biggest

satisfaction comes from retaining and nurturing top talent.”

The Importance of Goal Setting and Persistence: A Winning Mindset

Mike's success is a testament to the power of goal setting and persistence. “It's simple,” he says. “There's no special pill to take. It's being willing to work harder than others, answering your phone, and giving more when you feel like giving up.”

He inspires his agents to set clear goals and stay dedicated to achieving them. “If you have a goal, you can achieve it—as long as you stay focused,” he says. This mindset stems from his athletic background, where he learned that “winning is everything. Where there's a will, there's a way.”

Mike is always seeking new ways to grow and take on fresh challenges. He owns a building company, Generation Homes, and an investment firm, and he recently teamed up with two of his original agents to develop Stonebridge, a high-end subdivision in Valparaiso.

Beyond Real Estate: A Passion for Family, Sports, and Community

When he is not busy running his real estate empire, Mike enjoys spending time with his family. “I'm incredibly proud of both my daughters,” he shares. “Emily, my eldest, is a nurse practitioner, and she's building a wonderful life and business in the panhandle of Florida. And having my youngest daughter, Ashley, on the Realty

Executives team is beyond fantastic. She's a hard worker with a real passion for real estate, and it's been a joy to watch her grow and develop on her own.”

Mike stays active and fully embraces his love of sports. He is a regular at Orangetheory Fitness, a dedicated fantasy football player (a topic he could talk about for weeks), a passionate sports memorabilia collector, and an avid golfer. His energy is magnetic and he admits that he needs to be in constant motion.

Mike is also an enthusiastic supporter of the community, particularly the Boys and Girls Club. “I try to do things that focus on the kids,” he says. “I want to ensure young kids receive the support they need and are exposed to opportunities to help them grow. Kids are the next generation of our communities, and we must invest in them.”

A Legacy of Success: The Future of Realty Executives

Under Mike's leadership, Realty Executives has become a dominant force in the Northwest Indiana real estate market. The company has been recognized as a top respected brokerage for over 17 years and in Porter County boasts the #1 producing office since 2016, a testament to his vision and the agents' hard work.

Looking ahead, Mike is excited about Realty Executives' future. Fueled by changes occurring in the industry, he remains committed to prioritizing quality over quantity.

As Mike, his team, and the company continue to grow, his passion for real estate only gets stronger. “I learned years ago that if I am going to have to work, I better love what I do. And I absolutely love what I do.” Through real estate, Mike Tezak is building a legacy of success that uplifts his family, company, team, and community.



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