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FEBRUARY 2025

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Michelle Kauffman

MICHELLE KAUFFMAN
REAL ESTATE AGENCY



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PAGES 6-7

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Michelle Kauffman

Michelle Kauffman
Real Estate Agency

STORY BY JACKI DONALDSON
PHOTOS BY ALICEA MULLINS, ALICEA JARE
PHOTOGRAPHY (UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

When Michelle Kauffman launched her real estate career in Kansas City in 2009 during a recession, most people were fleeing the industry. Michelle, instead, saw an opportunity. Armed with determination and a talent for thinking outside the box, she carved out a niche in short sales and corporate-owned properties, quickly becoming a rising star. “It was hard but very rewarding,” Michelle recalls. Today, as the founder of her brokerage, the Michelle Kauffman Real Estate Agency, she continues to transform challenges into triumphs, proving that with vision and grit, success is always within reach.

Born and raised in Houston, TX, Michelle graduated from Texas Tech University in 2002 with a business degree in marketing and a minor in management. She began her career with a Fortune 500 company, eventually rising to Business Sales Executive overseeing North Texas. In 2009, a nationwide hiring freeze derailed her career. She and her husband, Ryan, were two weeks from relocating at the time. “I was moving to Kansas City jobless,” Michelle recalls. Then, real estate fell into her lap.

Having just survived the roller coaster of selling her home in Lubbock and meeting a REALTOR® friend of Ryan’s in Kansas, Michelle wanted to learn more about the industry. Before long, she had her license and was poised to help others tackle the monumental task of buying and selling properties. Within three years, she was emerging as a top producer in the Kansas City real estate scene. Then came another move.

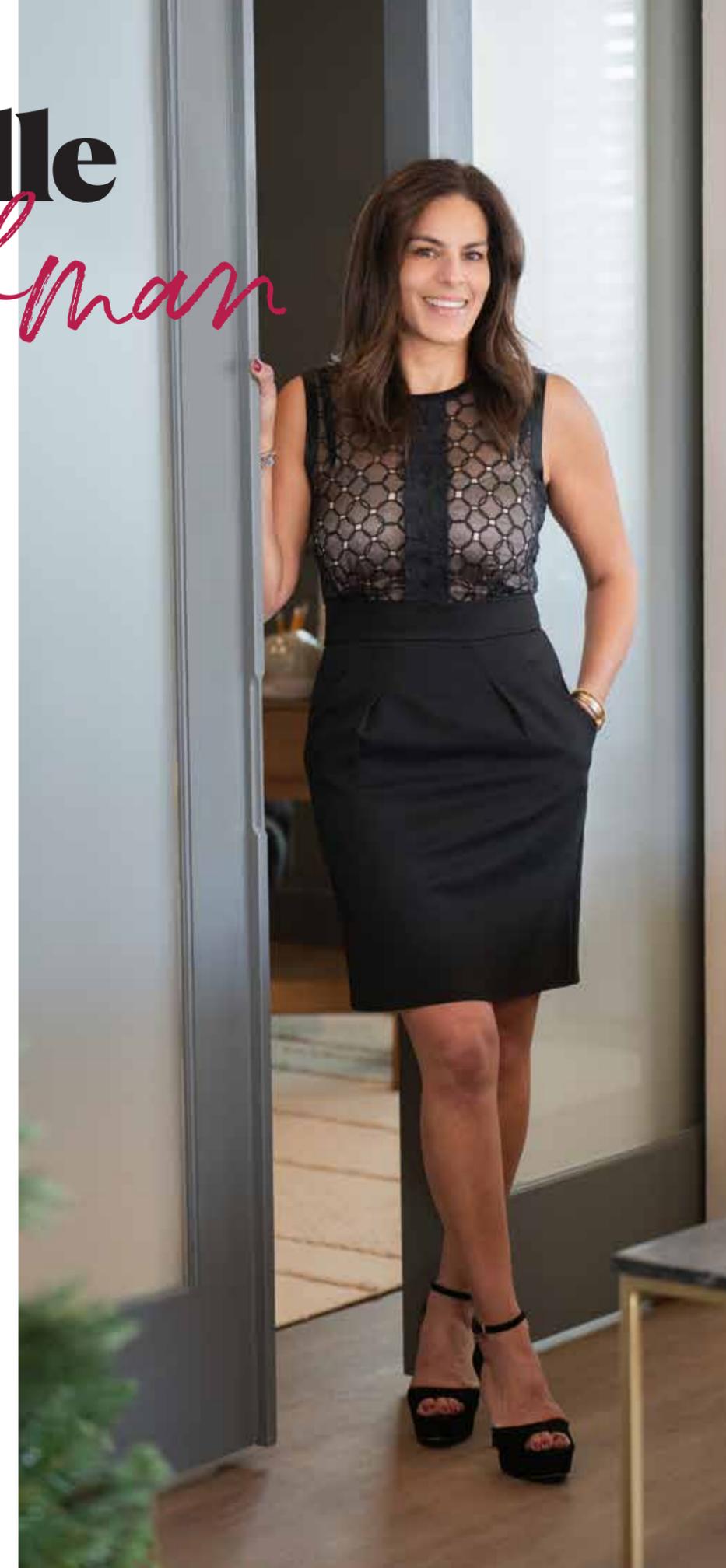




Photo by Mikaela Waldon Photography



“When we ironically moved back to Lubbock in 2012 for my husband’s job, we were assigned a relocation agent for the buying side, and we had an experience that I knew could be better,” Michelle notes. “I found my career heading in a new direction. I learned as much as I could and began to specialize in corporate relocation and, eventually, new construction.”

Michelle’s love for Lubbock shines through in her work. “I absolutely love new construction,” she emphasizes. “We all know Ventura Homes is my favorite—not only because I represent them, but also for what their homes and communities do for Lubbock. With the growth Lubbock and the surrounding areas are experiencing right now, developing our community to meet the increasing demand and ensure it continues to thrive is so important.” Michelle is proud to welcome new Lubbockites and help them find their place here. “The most fulfilling part of what I do is having the opportunity to make a real difference in people’s lives,” she adds. “It’s not just about that ‘one deal’; it’s about supporting them through every step of the journey and being available when they need guidance, reassurance, or just a listening ear.” In addition to helping clients, Michelle also finds joy in mentoring and collaborating with agents.

A defining moment in Michelle’s career came when she launched her brokerage, showcasing her bold vision and determination. “I believed in the power of possibility—the possibility to create something meaningful, impactful, and rooted in my passion for helping others achieve their dreams,” she remarks. Her brokerage embodies her mission of empowering agents, supporting clients, and fostering community growth. “I wanted to create a space where clients feel genuinely supported and agents are inspired to grow,

thrive, and love what they do. It’s been a journey of challenges and triumphs, but every moment has been worth it to build something that reflects my values and serves my community.”

Choosing her most memorable client experience is difficult for Michelle, who has had many remarkable client encounters. She does reflect fondly on one phone call she received from a potential buyer about a duplex she had listed. “He was calling a few different agents to see who would answer the phone and answer his questions, and he explained he was shopping agents and had 37 duplexes he needed to sell,” Michelle recounts. Impressed by Michelle’s responsiveness, he allowed her to sell them, culminating in a \$6 million transaction. “So many other amazing (and difficult) events have happened during my career, but this one has always been a reminder of being the best I can be and treating every deal as if it were my own.”

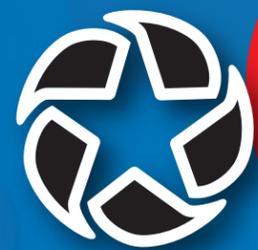
Michelle finds her greatest happiness at home with Ryan, their two teenagers, Cameron and Emma, and their rescue dog, Hattie. “Knowing I get to come home to my beautiful family each evening recharges me and reminds me why I do what I do,” Michelle comments. Whether hiking, traveling or simply relaxing with reality TV, Michelle cherishes the balance between family life and her thriving career.

For Michelle, success means aligning her work with her values and having the freedom to choose her commitments. “Being able to choose or decline business based on my workload means the world,” she shares. Her goal: “to be remembered as a great mom, wife, follower of God, and an exceptional agent,” she says with a smile.

As she reflects on her journey, Michelle remains grounded in gratitude. “Everything happens for a reason, even though I might not understand it at that very moment,” she comments, adding that she has no plans for slowing down and appreciates every step of her real estate career. “I wouldn’t change a thing,” she declares. “Every experience has helped me grow and improve. If I changed any part of my journey, I wouldn’t be where I am today, surrounded by incredible people and doing work I’m passionate about.”



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COLLEN MELTON



BRICK & LOFT REALTY

STORY BY KAELEA PENA • PHOTOS BY ROWDIE RICHARDSON, ROWDIE BRIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY

Collen Melton is determined to shoot for the stars. With aspirations of ranking among the top 1% of REALTORS®, he aims to own more property, develop land, and create a lasting impact in real estate.

Real estate has always intrigued Collen, but mentoring with a well-known agent in Lubbock solidified his passion. “I couldn’t wait to start my real estate journey,” he recalls. In November 2021, before officially launching his career, Collen spent time learning the ins and outs of the business. Before then, he was pursuing a business degree and working at a paper company in town. These experiences reinforced his determination to choose the right brokerage to ensure he would succeed as a REALTOR®.

Brick & Loft Realty stood out to Collen because of its specialization in real

estate investment—a field he’s always been passionate about. He chose the brokerage he believed would challenge him to push his limits. “I’ve learned so much being here this year, made great friends, and created unforgettable memories,” Collen highlights.

Collen attributes much of his growth to three key mentors. Rex Andrews introduced him to real estate and showed him what was possible in the field. “I can’t thank him enough for showing me the ropes and getting me into the business,” Collen shares. Travis Turner helped him develop a fresh perspective on real estate and guided him in exponentially growing his business this year. Finally, Collen’s mom, whom he describes as the strongest person he knows, has been a constant source of inspiration. “She’s pushed me to be the best I can be and shown me resilience through her struggles,” he explains. “I can’t think of a better person to have in my corner.”

What sets Collen apart in a competitive field is his combination of youth and knowledge. “I’ve been tested in this business, and I believe knowledge is power,” he asserts. “The more you know, the better you can serve your clients and yourself.” He enjoys helping first-time and seasoned investors recognize the potential of the Lubbock market. For him, the most rewarding aspect of the job is helping people achieve their dreams, whether their dream is owning a first home or building a robust investment portfolio. “The stories I hear and the people I meet in this business are amazing,” he adds. “Connecting with so many people right here in Lubbock is a privilege.”

Collen enjoys golfing, watching sports, and spending time with friends outside of work. His family includes his girlfriend of nearly seven years, Ellery, and their two pups, Crimson and Helix. Collen has an older brother and treasures the time he spends with his



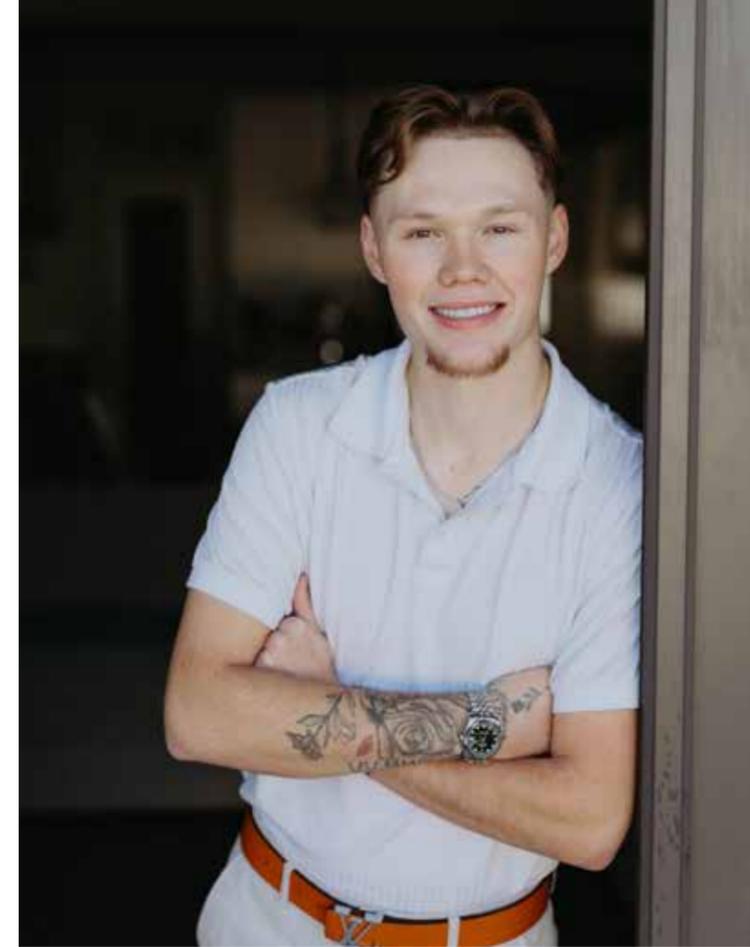
“

I want to be remembered as a Godly man, someone who loved, provided, and was there for his family.

family, whether dining out, watching football, traveling, or enjoying each other’s company.

Success means different things to different people; for Collen, it’s about providing for his family and achieving financial and spiritual security. “I want to be remembered as a Godly man, someone who loved, provided, and was there for his family,” he shares.

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▶ REMINGTON Reeder

Hub City Home Inspection

STORY BY DAN STEELE
PHOTOS BY ROWDIE RICHARDSON,
ROWDIE BRIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY



Home inspections are one of the most critical aspects of real estate—with the potential to completely change the course of a transaction—and can be the source of tension for buyers and sellers. Remington Reeder of Hub City Home Inspection says that delivering the most accurate information to the client is paramount, and he and his company go above and beyond so clients can confidently move forward in the transaction.

“We are here to help provide thorough and accurate information to the client and REALTOR® so they can move forward with confidence,” Remington shares. “We strive to put ourselves in the buyers’ or sellers’ shoes and be aware of the big concerns when approaching a large investment such as a home.” To this end, Hub City offers multiple types of inspections to help home buyers and sellers, delivering standard inspections, as well as sewer scopes and septic tank and well inspection. When the time comes to check for termites, the team works with local pest companies. “With our network of specialists, we aim to answer all inspection questions,” Remington declares. “We understand inspections can be scary or cause high anxiety, and we work to ease that tension by presenting a big picture of what a home is telling us and not a ‘the sky is falling’ picture.”

Agents and clients often stress about inspections, but in Remington’s experience, most issues he and his team find don’t end up derailing the transaction. “Most of the time, buyers and sellers get worked up over small things that are completely fixable,” he explains. “Keeping the big picture in mind is most important. Most homes will need some work or TLC, but if the client is excited about the home, the issues are usually minor in comparison to the joy they will get from owning this home over time.”

One of the most fulfilling parts of Remington’s job is doing walk-throughs with clients so he can break down the information in the inspection report and help put their minds at ease. “We can help make the reports they are about to receive less scary,” he explains. “We get time to discuss the things they are about to see in the report and hopefully put them at ease instead of on edge. When a

“
 Keeping the big picture in mind is important.”



client chooses to walk through the home after the inspection and discuss items that will be noted in their report, we can see them relax and feel more confident about moving forward.”

With his lifetime of experience with homes, clients can rest assured they are working with a professional who knows the ins and outs of the inspection process. “Growing up with parents who invested in real estate over the years and a dad who believes everything is fixable (he happens to be a home inspector, as well), I was used to being in and out of homes and discussing concerns and solutions,” reveals Remington, who owned and operated a carpet cleaning and water mitigation company for 10 years in New Mexico before he and his family moved to Lubbock. “The transition, while a challenge learning building code and the do’s and don’ts of inspecting, went along with my past experience working with people and in homes.”

When he isn’t helping his clients move forward with confidence in real estate transactions, Remington loves to spend time with family, whether taking his wife out to dinner, going to hit golf balls or shooting guns with his son, or attending a painting class or doing something artistic with my daughter. “We enjoy everything from visiting various businesses around town, playing outdoors, and having movie nights cozy in the home we’ve been blessed with,” he shares. He also enjoys reading about and staying current on topics and subjects that grab his interest, as well as Bible study, learning what a life led by Christ should look like.”



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What's in Your Bag?

Curious about what makes RP's owner/publisher tick? We took a peek inside Kathy McCandless Pettit's bag to discover the essential tools she relies on for success.

Kathy Pettit is the founder, owner, publisher, and connector of the *Lubbock Real Producers* magazine platform, the premier publication for Lubbock's top-performing real estate agents. Through the print magazine (exclusively mailed to Lubbock's best agents), invite-only events, and much more, Kathy connects Lubbock's most impactful players with the area vendors who serve them best.

- 1 Brighton wallet to hold my necessities (credit card).
- 2 My cosmetic bag is my mini toolbox: light-up lipgloss, lotion, and touchups.
- 3 Gives me a breath of fresh air when meeting a REALTOR®/client.
- 4 Without this, I can't go anywhere. LITERALLY!
- 5 I love my pens and Consuela notebook because nothing says I'm organized like scribbling on pretty paper.
- 6 Every good connector has business cards on hand.
- 7 Stacked bracelets help me show my style.
- 8 Cool Brighton sunglasses that are also VERY functional.
- 9 My go-to accessory: Kendra Scott earrings.

THE BAG, ALONG WITH MOST OF KATHY'S ITEMS, WAS PROVIDED BY J. HOFFMAN.

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Leslie Kleman

Keller Williams Real Estate

STORY BY KAELEA PENA
PHOTOS BY ALICEA MULLINS, ALICEA JARE PHOTOGRAPHY
DRESSED BY J. HOFFMAN'S

For Leslie Kleman, failure was never an option. Balancing two full-time careers until June 2023, she transitioned to focus solely on real estate. After graduating from Texas Tech, Leslie spent about four months in a corporate job before quickly deciding to pursue her real estate license. Though she had casually considered real estate during college, the idea did not fully click until she started researching various career paths.

A recommendation from a family friend led her to a broker, where she explored whether the job was what she thought it was and if she would be good at it. By the end of her meeting with the broker, Leslie was signing up for real estate courses. “Looking back, I don’t know how I juggled two full-time jobs at once,” she reflects. “But I did what I had to do to make it work.”

Choosing the right brokerage was a critical decision for Leslie. She was drawn to Keller Williams for its unmatched culture and collaborative environment. “I get to learn from the best of the best—high-producing agents who make up nearly 20% of the market share,” she mentions. Leslie values the camaraderie at Keller Williams, where seasoned agents are always ready to answer her questions, offer advice, and cheer her on. She also appreciates the energy and perspective of a younger group of agents who have become good friends. “Another incredibly valuable tool is analyzing market numbers in-depth at monthly team meetings,” she adds. “It deepens my understanding of the market and empowers me to serve my clients better.”

Above all, Leslie credits her faith as the foundation of her success. “I serve an amazing God who always provides for me,” she shares. “He called me to this career, and I trust that even the tough days are shaping me into the woman He wants me to be.” Knowing that even veteran agents face challenges motivates Leslie to surround herself with a supportive network that keeps her focused on her purpose.

What sets Leslie apart is her innovative approach to social media marketing. As a young entrepreneur, she leverages her fresh perspective to create engaging content beyond simply showcasing homes. But Leslie doesn’t stop at online connections; she goes a step further by fostering real, in-person connections. She works with many young professionals who crave authentic relationships and a sense of community in a world dominated by screens. “Being a connector is something I naturally bring to the table,” she explains. By blending innovative digital marketing with meaningful face-to-face interactions, Leslie creates a unique and memorable experience for her clients.

Leslie is particularly passionate about educating first-time homebuyers and empowering them to feel confident



“He called me to this career, and I trust that even the tough days are shaping me into the woman He wants me to be.”



“Traveling is our greatest joy. I’ve been to eight countries and 23 states, and I always have our next trip planned.”

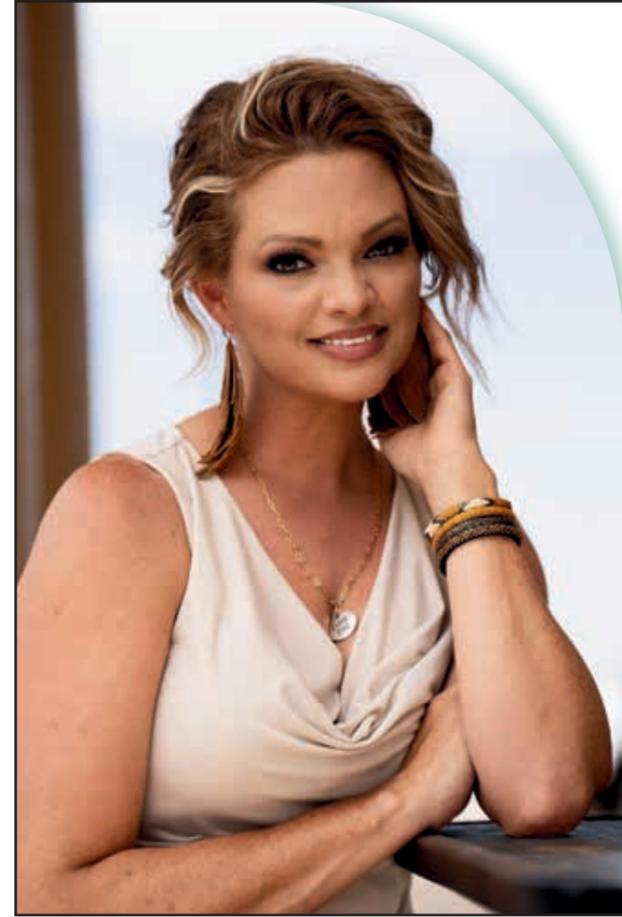


in their decisions. “No one teaches people how to buy a house,” she comments. “I bridge that gap for my clients, which is incredibly fulfilling. There’s something special in helping them understand the market, the process, and how to go about buying in a smart way that will help set them up for long-term success. Seeing their excitement and gratitude on closing day is one of the most rewarding parts of my job.”

When she’s not serving her clients, Leslie enjoys spending time with her family, walking her dogs, or traveling. She and her husband, Cole, have been married for three and a half years and share their home with two beloved dogs: Izzy, a 3-year-old English Cream Golden Retriever, and Ollie, a 6-month-old Australian Labradoodle. The couple loves skiing in the mountains, boating at the lake, and exploring new destinations. “Traveling is our greatest joy,” she notes. “I’ve been to eight countries and 23 states, and I always have our next trip planned.”

Leslie is deeply grateful for her calling as a REALTOR®. “I have a job I love so much that it genuinely doesn’t feel like work,” she says with a smile. “I wake up every morning excited for the day ahead. I’m thankful for a beautiful home, a loving family, and the opportunity to explore this incredible world God created.”

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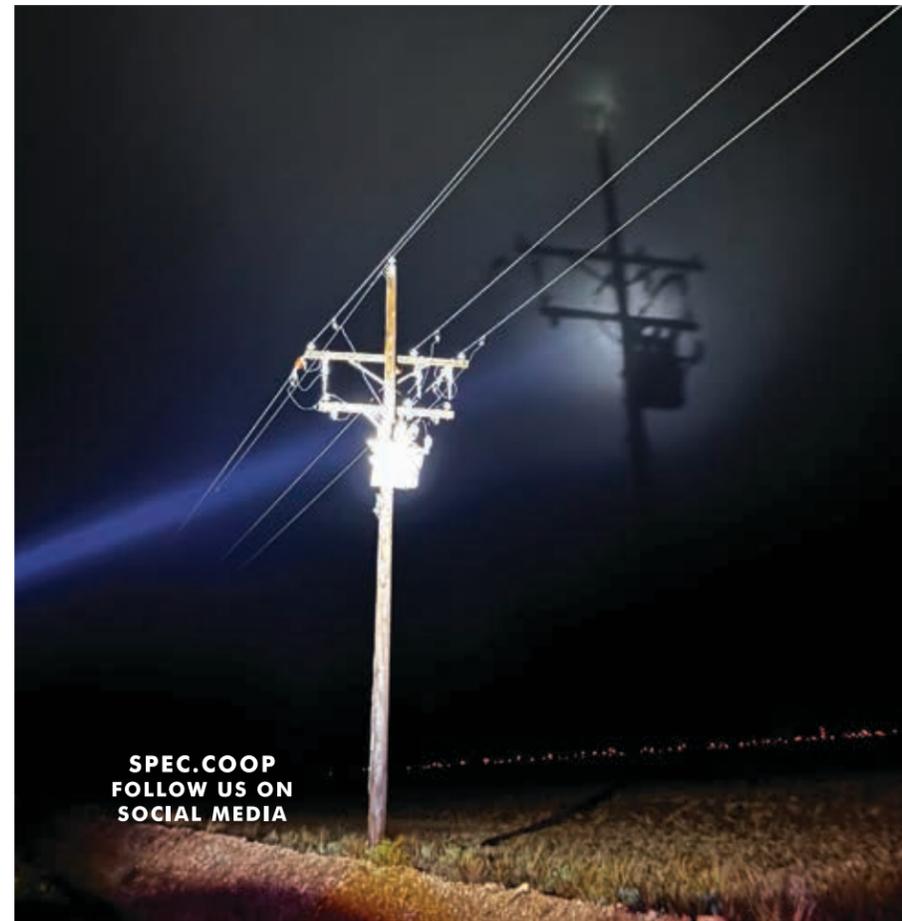
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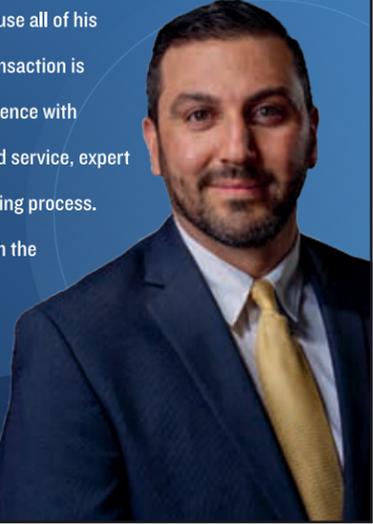
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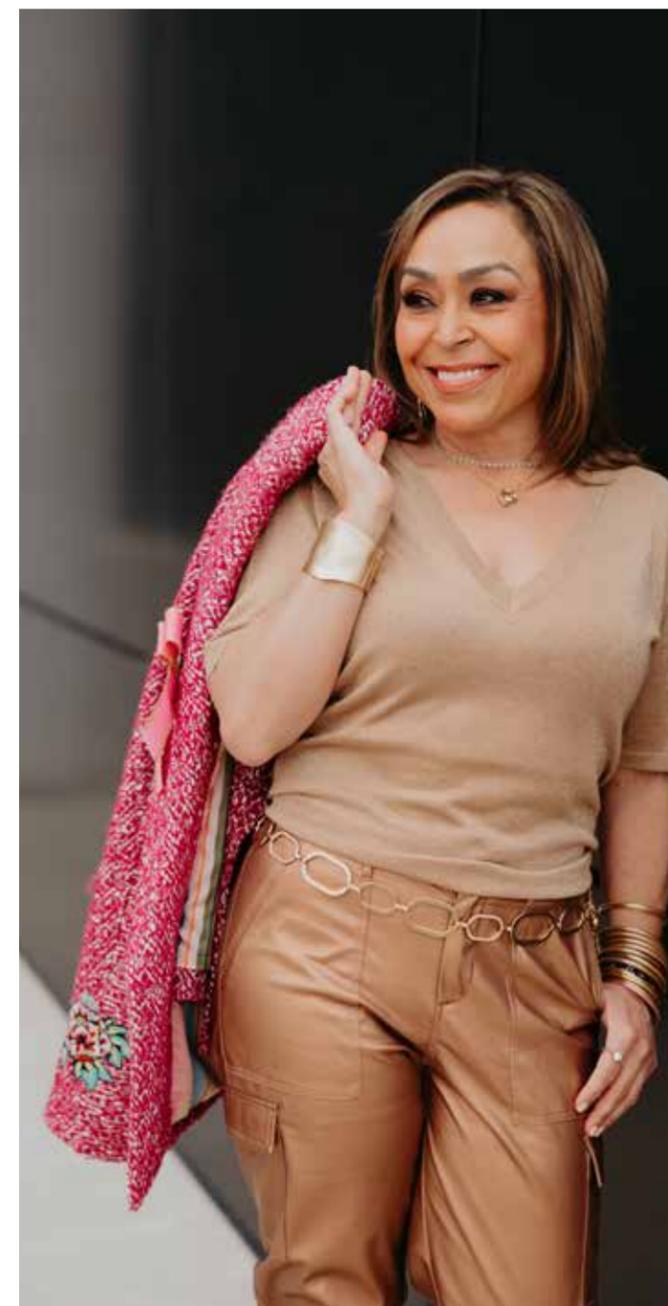


MARIE

Garcia

AMY TAPP REALTY

STORY BY KAELEA PENA PHOTOS BY ROWDIE RICHARDSON, ROWDIE BRIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY • DRESSED BY J. HOFFMAN'S



Taking a courageous leap in 2007, Marie Garcia decided to change career paths and earn her real estate license—a perfect way to combine her knowledge, work ethic, and love for connecting with people to guide them through one of life's most significant milestones.

Marie's journey to real estate began while working for six years with a local builder. This background equipped her with valuable insight into the home-building process and a strong foundation for her current career. "That experience sparked my passion for helping people find the perfect place to call home," Marie reveals.

Finding a brokerage that aligns with her values of integrity, collaboration, and exceptional service was important for Marie. Amy Tapp Realty does just that and more. The brokerage's support, resources, and like-minded professionals empower her to give her clients the best possible experience and allow her to grow and succeed while focusing on what matters most: helping people achieve their real estate dreams.

Becoming a REALTOR® has been a professional triumph for Marie, and the most fulfilling part of her work is helping clients find their first home, upgrade to a new space, or make a wise investment. "Being part of such an important steps in their lives and seeing the joy and relief when they find the perfect place keeps me motivated," Marie discloses. She's also passionate about building lasting relationships, ensuring that her clients feel supported throughout the entire process and beyond.

On tough days, Marie keeps going because she knows she's making a difference. Real estate is more than just transactions; it's about helping clients make life-changing decisions. "Knowing that I'm part of their journey and helping them achieve their dreams gives me the motivation to push through challenges and keep moving forward," Marie relates.

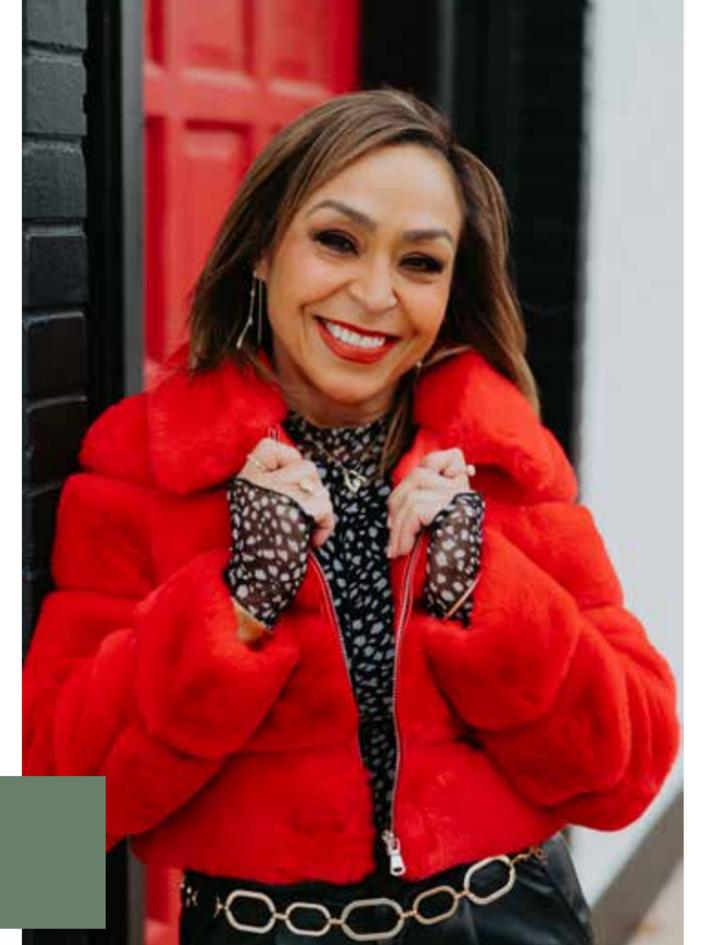
What makes Marie unique is her genuine commitment to putting her clients first. With her background in construction and years of experience in real estate, she offers a different blend

“I take the time to understand my clients’ needs, provide clear guidance, and go above and beyond to make their real estate experience as smooth and stress-free as possible.”



expertise in the market, stay ahead of trends, and further expand her ability to serve her clients with even greater efficiency and care. She’s excited to continue building lasting relationships, helping more people achieve their real estate dreams and growing alongside her community. “Ultimately, I hope to be known not just as a real estate professional, but as a trusted resource for those navigating their home journeys,” Marie says with a smile.

Marie Garcia
 Amy Tapp Realty
 806-544-3530
 mariegarcia.realtor@gmail.com



of practical knowledge and personal dedication. “I take the time to understand my clients’ needs, provide clear guidance, and go above and beyond to make their real estate experience as smooth and stress-free as possible,” Marie notes. She focuses on building long-term relationships, not just completing transactions, which allows her to provide a level of service that stands out.

When Marie is not serving others in real estate, she spends time with the people she cares about most, including her two wonderful

sons—Kolby (26), who lives in Dallas, and Evan (25), who lives in Tulsa—and her wonderful fiancé Dominick. She and Dominick have a fur baby, Bia (9), and two fur grands, Pooch (10) and Bevo (4). While her kids live in different cities, they cherish every chance they get to spend time together. Recently, Marie started practicing jiu-jitsu and enjoys community involvement, volunteering, and exploring new places through travel.

Marie sees continued personal and professional growth in her future, and she plans to deepen her



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Letter From the President



BY 2025 LAR PRESIDENT ANDREA STURDIVANT

As February arrives, with it comes the season to celebrate relationships—a time to reflect on family and friends that truly matter to us. At LAR, I believe we are all one big REALTOR® family. There is power in connection to each other and to the West Texas communities we serve.

As REALTORS®, we are driven by a deep love for our profession and a commitment to our mission: *“To Serve the REALTOR® Profession, Protect Private Property Rights, and Promote the Professional Marketing of Real Estate.”* This mission statement isn’t just a set of words; it’s a passion with which we are called to serve. When clients work with a REALTOR®, they partner with a trusted expert, bound by a code of ethics, who possesses the knowledge and skills to guide them through one of the most significant transactions of their lives. REALTORS® do meaningful, impactful work; our profession is essential, and our Association supports our mission.

Homeownership is the foundation of the American dream, and it’s an honor to help people achieve it. Our communities were founded on small businesses, and assisting so many business owners in commercial ventures is a privilege. A massive 20% of the GNP of our economy comes from real estate, and we take pride in the role we play in keeping America’s economy moving.

This February, I express my heartfelt appreciation for my fellow REALTORS® and your incredible work. Your passion, professionalism, and commitment to excellence make our Association—and our profession—so special. You are the heart of the Lubbock Association of REALTORS®, and together, we’re making a difference in the lives of so many. I’m so proud of the work you do every day, helping our clients find the perfect place where their hearts truly belong.



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Nominate Your Favorite Top Agents!

How do we decide who to feature each month in Real Producers?

BY PUBLISHER KATHY PETTIT

Top real estate agents and the preferred partners who invest in this publication through advertising and sponsoring our events decide who we feature through their nominations. Additionally, we have multiple events throughout the year, and top agents with top numbers are present at these gatherings; we receive many nominations from those who attend. Of those nominated, our team meets with and gets to know each nominee. We collect all the cool facts about the agent and gather nominations for other top agents and businesses we should consider for our vetted preferred partners' list.

Our selection team decides who gets into each issue. We use the "5 C" criteria below as a guide. An agent must meet the first three criteria; the fourth and fifth items are not required; however, we love celebrating successes of a giving or victorious nature.

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

Competition Production Numbers: The publication is REAL Producers, so folks need to be top producers to get into the magazine.

Character: While most in the industry have great character and integrity, we will not feature anyone—agent or business—who has not been recommended or nominated by top agents as a person or business operating with integrity.

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

Compelling Story/Conquering a Life Challenge: Who doesn't love an against-the-odds success story?

We also get to know the agents engaging in our private Facebook group for top REALTORS® and partners. Send me a private message if you would like an invitation to that page, as membership is limited to agents, brokers, and current preferred business partners.

We aim not to feature agents from the same brokerage or firm in the same issue, and we try to cover the territory geographically so we feature agents proportionately. With so many excellent nominated agents, the monthly decision is difficult, so make sure we know who you are.

Remember, real estate agents and brokers do not pay anything for feature stories; everything we do for them is free. While other programs may look similar, we are not a pay-to-play model. We select most articles six to 12 months in advance (sometimes years in advance for cover agents) and notify folks one to two months before their feature appears that we have selected them.

We would love your feedback on how we are doing and what we can do better to help everyone in the industry collaborate, elevate, and inspire each other. Please email, text, or privately message all suggestions and feedback directly to me.

Kathy Pettit | 806-368-1526
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SELL SMARTER: The Hidden Advantage of Clean Air Ducts

When preparing a home for sale, Realtors often focus on aesthetics—clean floors, fresh paint, and clutter-free spaces. But one aspect of a home that's just as important, though less visible, is the quality of its indoor air.

According to the EPA, indoor air pollutants can be 2-5 times higher than outdoor levels, and air ducts play a major role in circulating these contaminants. Jeremy Diaz, a certified Air Systems Cleaning Specialist with Carpet Tech, explains how clean air ducts contribute to a healthier and more appealing home.

"Air ducts accumulate dust, allergens, and even mold over time," Diaz says. "These contaminants can recirculate through the vents, affecting the air quality and contributing to respiratory issues like asthma and allergies."

For homes with pets, smokers, or recent remodeling, the buildup can be even more significant, requiring regular cleaning to maintain optimal air quality. The National Air Duct Cleaners Association (NADCA) recommends cleaning air ducts every 3 to 6 years, but factors like these may necessitate more frequent attention.



HOW AIR DUCTS AFFECT A HOME'S MARKETABILITY

- **Air Quality:** Buyers notice if a home smells fresh or musty, and clean air ducts can prevent lingering odors.

- **Allergen Reduction:** Homes free of dust and allergens are a relief for sensitive buyers or families with children.
- **Efficiency:** Clean ducts improve HVAC performance, a feature buyers value for energy savings.

Diaz notes some common signs of dirty air ducts: mold around vent covers, visible dirt in air returns, or unusually high energy bills compared to previous years. While homeowners may try to clean ducts themselves, Diaz warns that professional cleaning ensures thorough removal of contaminants and proper handling of HVAC systems.

THE PROCESS BEHIND CLEAN AIR DUCTS

Carpet Tech uses advanced equipment to remove buildup from air ducts. Their truck-mounted vacuum system ensures 100% of contaminants are taken outside the home, while specialized air tools clean the entire ductwork from registers to the furnace. A pre- and post-cleaning inspection gives homeowners a clear view of the results.

"Seeing the before-and-after images of the ducts is always eye-opening," says Diaz. "It's rewarding to know the air is cleaner, and the home feels healthier."

For Realtors, understanding the benefits of clean air ducts can add value to the services offered to clients. Whether it's ensuring a home smells fresh for showings or highlighting a recent air duct cleaning as part of the home's appeal, this often-overlooked detail can make a big difference.

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