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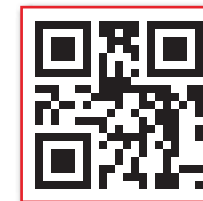
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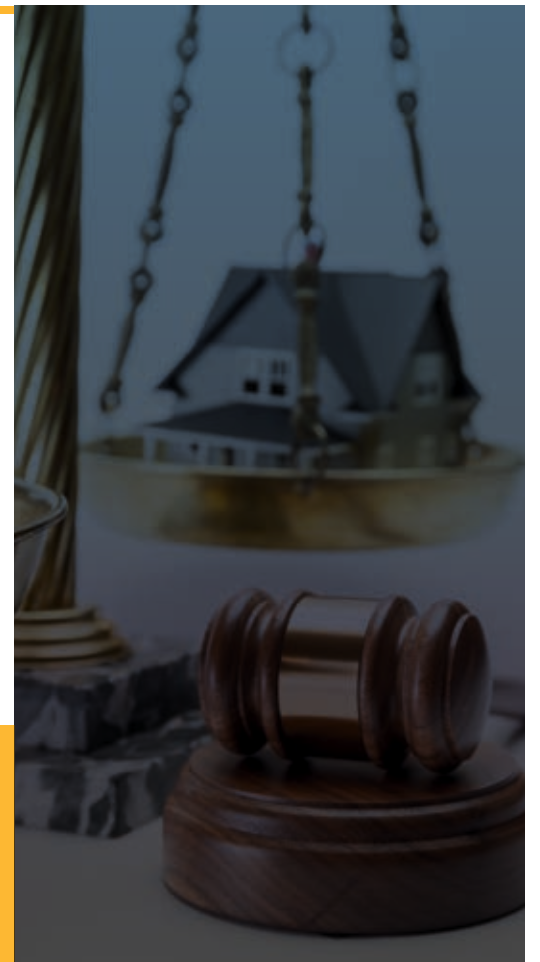
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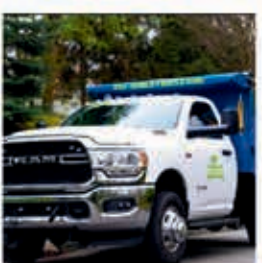
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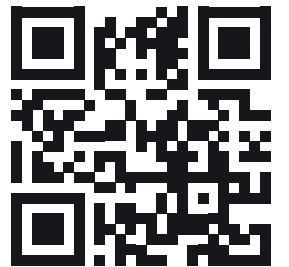
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COLLABORATION OVER COMPETITION: BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

In real estate, success often feels tied to the concept of competition—who has the most sales, the highest volume, the largest team. But what if there's a better way? What if collaboration, rather than competition, is the key to elevating your career, your relationships, and your community?

As a real estate professional, your work is grounded in connections. You build trust with clients, navigate complex transactions, and partner with vendors to achieve results. But some of the most impactful relationships you'll create are with your peers. By embracing collaboration, you have the opportunity to transform competitors into allies, enriching not just your business but the entire real estate community.

Sharing knowledge, strategies, and experiences with others doesn't dilute your success; it amplifies it. Think about the agents you respect most—those who freely offer advice, support, or even a referral when it aligns with your expertise. These acts of collaboration don't

diminish their reputation; they enhance it, creating a ripple effect of trust and mutual benefit.

Your community thrives when you shift your perspective from scarcity to abundance. There's enough opportunity for everyone. By contributing to a culture of teamwork, you're not only helping others succeed, but you're also positioning yourself as a leader—someone others turn to for guidance and inspiration.

This mindset can also help combat one of the biggest challenges in your field: burnout. Real estate is demanding, and it can feel isolating when the focus is solely on competition. But when you support others and allow yourself to be supported, you create a network that lightens the load. Whether it's celebrating wins together or brainstorming solutions to tough problems, collaboration brings new energy to your work.

The truth is, your success isn't diminished by someone

else's. Instead, when you rise together, you achieve more—individually and collectively. By redefining success as a shared journey, you can create a professional life that's not just successful but also fulfilling.

So as you approach your next deal or your next challenge, ask yourself: How can you contribute to a culture of collaboration? How can you make connections that elevate not just yourself but the community around you? The answer might just transform the way you see success.

Stay warm,



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BY GEORGE GROTHEER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS DEVLIN



Moving is a family affair for many who pick up and relocate to a new home.

That sentiment goes double for Mike and Jayden Fulton of Jams Moving Specialists – a powerhouse father-son duo specializing in getting you and your lives into a new space.

The crew at Jams prides itself on its attention to detail for each piece they move. The company had its start in moving antiques – and to this day, the same attention is paid in every scenario. They work with care and keep clean to preserve all items, antique or not. Jams operates a fleet of vehicles that cater to a variety of moving needs – from cargo vans and pickup trucks to smaller trailers and a 26-foot dedicated truck. The Fultons will often adjust their vehicles' suspension to accommodate heavy-duty items. They even go so far as to shrink-wrap possessions to prevent shifting during a move. Each item is treated like an antique - and it's that level of care, they say, that sets them apart from other movers.

Their care goes beyond the work itself – the Fultons love their community. They will help clients with cleanouts, dump runs, and donations on top of general moves. In recent years, they have partnered with an organization based in Orange to connect unwanted pieces with Big Brother, Big Sister and Habitat for Humanity – as well as those who are elderly or less fortunate.

Of course, to operate a successful business, the Fultons have had to bring in help from outside the family. When hiring new crew members, Jams conducts thorough background checks and vets them for physical capabilities to ensure they can perform the duties required in their roles. New hires start with smaller jobs – easier moves – working with realtors and clientele who are familiar with the Jams method of doing business, who operate in good faith with the Fulton family. The Fultons evaluate these recruits for their job performance beyond the lifting and carrying – watching



how they interact with clients and with fellow crew members. They say this helps them maintain the best possible unit for each project they undertake.

With the Fulton family and Jams as a whole, everything comes down to trust. Mike worked in moving for twenty years before venturing out to form his own company with his son. Mike and Jayden say they build relationships with their community through a mutual respect and understanding – emphasizing the local, neighborly nature of their business. Earning respect and trust, they say, leads to more work... and there will always be another family to help.





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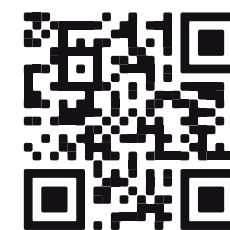
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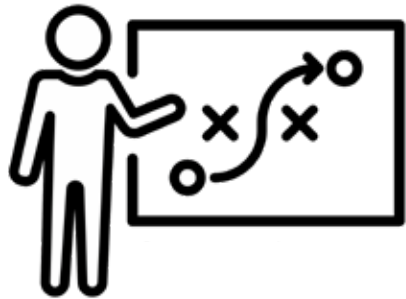
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CONTINUING SUCCESS AS AN ESTABLISHED REAL ESTATE AGENT IN 2025

BY STEVE VOTTO, BRANCH VP/BROKERAGE MANAGER
COLDWELL BANKER, CHESHIRE

As an established real estate agent, maintaining and growing your success in 2025 requires strategic planning and adaptation to the evolving market. Here are some key strategies to help you stay ahead and thrive in the competitive real estate industry.

Reevaluating Your Brokerage

Even as an experienced agent, the right brokerage can significantly impact your success. Ensure your brokerage offers a non-competing manager who is committed to your growth. A supportive manager can provide ongoing coaching and mentorship, helping you stay updated with market trends and new strategies. Choose a brokerage that is innovative and provides the latest tools and resources to keep you competitive.

Enhancing Your Brand Affiliation

Affiliating with a strong brand remains crucial for credibility and trust. A well-recognized real estate company can enhance your professional image, especially during listing appointments. Clients often prefer agents associated with reputable brands, as it gives them confidence in your abilities.

Strengthen your association with a brand that has a strong market presence to continue attracting and retaining clients.

Deepening Community Relationships

Your established network is a valuable asset. Continue to engage with your community and build deeper connections. Attend local events, participate in community groups, and collaborate with other professionals. Being an active and visible member of your community will reinforce your reputation and help you generate more referrals and repeat business.

Maintaining and Expanding Your Database

A clean and well-maintained database is essential for staying organized and efficient. Regularly update contact details, track interactions, and segment your database to personalize your communications. Expanding your database by adding new contacts and nurturing existing relationships will help you stay engaged with your sphere of influence and uncover new opportunities.

Updating Your Online Presence

In today's digital age, your online presence is a critical component of your brand. Conduct a brand builder tune-up by Googling yourself to see what potential clients find when they search for you. Update all your online websites and social media profiles to ensure they reflect your current achievements, listings, and professional image. Consistent and up-to-date online profiles can enhance your credibility and attract more clients.

Staying Engaged in Your Business

Continuous engagement in your business is key to staying relevant. Keep abreast of market trends, attend industry seminars, and seek out new learning opportunities. The more knowledgeable and involved you are, the better you can serve your clients and adapt to changes in the market.

Focusing on Production and Wealth Building

Set ambitious production goals and develop a strategic plan to achieve them. Focus on activities that generate leads and close deals. Additionally, continue to think long-term

about wealth building. Invest in real estate, diversify your income streams, and plan for your financial future. Building lasting wealth is a crucial aspect of a successful real estate career.

Leveraging Coaching and Mentorship

Even as an experienced agent, coaching and mentorship can provide valuable insights and guidance. Seek out experienced professionals who can offer new perspectives and help you refine your strategies. Many brokerages offer advanced coaching programs tailored for seasoned agents, so take advantage of these resources to enhance your skills and stay competitive.

Choosing an Innovative Company

The real estate industry is constantly evolving, and working with an innovative company can give you a competitive edge. Ensure your brokerage embraces technology, offers cutting-edge tools, and provides ongoing training. An innovative company will help you stay ahead of the curve and better serve your clients.

Conclusion

Continuing success as an established real estate agent in 2025 requires ongoing dedication, strategic planning, and the right support system. By re-evaluating your brokerage, enhancing your brand affiliation, deepening community relationships, maintaining a clean database, and updating your online presence, you can sustain and grow your business. Stay engaged, focus on production and wealth building, and leverage coaching and mentorship to refine your skills. With the right approach, you can navigate the challenges of the real estate market and enjoy continued success in your career.



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Rose Robles

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If you want to become a standout agent in Connecticut real estate, appearing on House Hunters is one way to do it.

For Rose Robles, it was just one milestone in her journey to earning name recognition in the industry. A client recommended her for an appearance on the HGTV show, and since then, her career has been on an upward trajectory.

But real estate wasn't always Robles's destination. With a bachelor's degree in English, a career in data analytics, nine years of service in the U.S. Coast Guard, and community work with nonprofits around New Haven, her path to real estate was anything but conventional. Her time with Columbus House, a nonprofit focused on housing security, sparked her interest. At a nonprofit conference, she heard a local broker speak and felt inspired to pursue real estate to make a tangible difference.

Robles began her career by hosting open houses and building an organic network of clients and vendors. Today, she focuses on business-to-business connections, constantly expanding her base and leveraging her network to help as many people as possible. She credits her success to consistent exposure through advertising and marketing, including signage and social media, and making meaningful connections wherever she can.

Her hard work paid off early—she sold her first house just three months into her career and has consistently grown





Photography by
Chris Devlin

her numbers since. Robles aims to sell three properties per month—thirty-six per year—and build a team to expand her reach across Connecticut. She takes pride in her hands-on, fearless approach to challenges. One of her guiding mottos, “I don’t want to know what I’m getting into, I just want to get into it,” reflects her drive and adaptability as a rising star in the industry.

Outside of work, Robles stays grounded by connecting with her community and embracing her passions. Born in New York and raised in Puerto Rico, she has made Connecticut her home. She enjoys exploring new restaurants, participating in a New Haven book club, and pursuing hobbies like rock climbing and gardening. Most recently, she’s developed a passion for basketball, particularly attending women’s UConn Huskies games.

With her relentless drive, community focus, and commitment to growth, Robles continues to make her mark in Connecticut real estate.



“
I don’t want to
know what I’m
getting into, I just
want to get into it.”

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GENE PICA

Re/Max Alliance

BY GEORGE GROTHEER

IF YOU WANT SOMETHING SOLD – CALL GENE.

A lifetime of selling more than just houses has brought Gene Pica to the top of his field in Connecticut real estate. From fast food to shoes and cars to children’s books – the man knows how to get a client to bite on the best offer. While his focus has honed in on Connecticut properties, Pica took a long and winding road to find a home in home sales.



Gene and his fiancé at
Lower Antelope Canyon
in Page, Arizona.



Gene and his family hiking a glacier in Iceland.

Pica describes his childhood self as “the shyest kid you’ll ever meet.” How things have changed, right? He was encouraged by family to pursue work to get out of his shell, and that began with minimum-wage jobs in fast food and at the Connecticut Post Mall. His penchant for hard work and dedication to maximizing service got its start at Endicott Johnson in Milford – working more hours and covering more duties than anyone else... even out-earning his manager. When he got to college, Pica traded running for driving – selling cars instead of shoes. He honed his sales technique by dealing vehicles and selling children’s books over the phone – always looking for that extra gig to help more people find what they were looking for.

After college, Pica looked to settle down in his home state, becoming engaged and buying

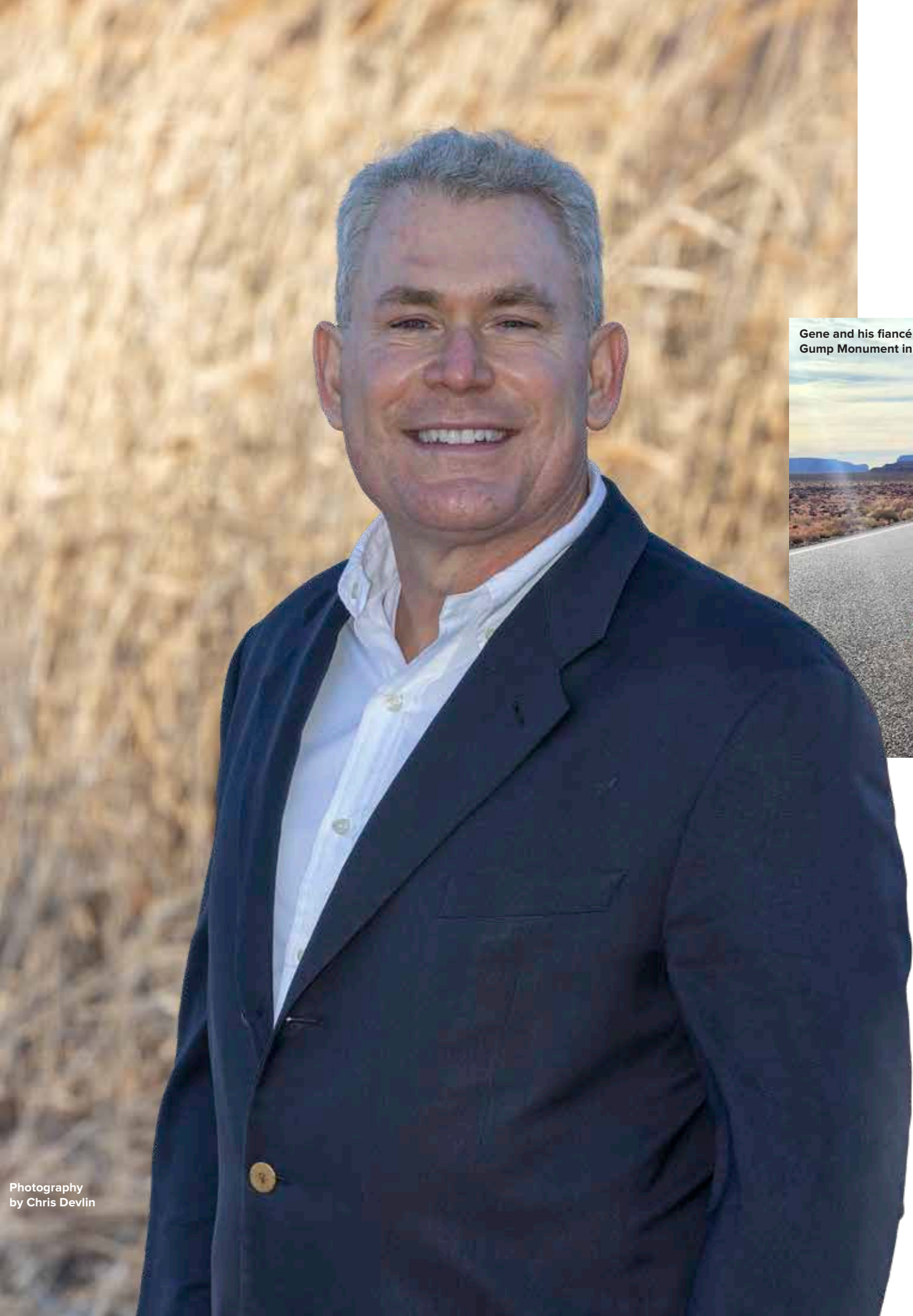
a house. That first home-buying process sparked a fire in Pica, as he fell in love with real estate and secured his license in the mid-1990s. He trained with Century21, becoming a sponge to his fellow realtors and aiming to follow in the footsteps of his mentor, Leslie Darrow – another top agent along the Connecticut shoreline. Pica took inspiration from Brian Buffini’s immigrant realtor story when it came to building and maintaining relationships... and now Pica has found himself as a generational realtor – helping clients, couples, and families for decades each.



Photography
by Chris Devlin



Gene and his family at
Reykjavik, Iceland about to take
off to fly over an active volcano.



Photography
by Chris Devlin

Pica credits his success to his ability to keep up with his clients and local vendors – even off the job. He treats everyone as the sole focus in his work, making sure clients feel like they are the priority in every transaction. He never loses touch and aims to give incredible service to each person with whom he works.



Gene and his fiancé at Forest
Gump Monument in Utah.

He has no plans to call it quits anytime soon, either. Pica has been working in Connecticut real estate for decades – and claims he will do this “til [he’s] dead.” Pica has raised a son in Madison – inspiring him to a career in wealth management – and loves traveling with his fiancé, Tanya. He finds time to spend with his loved ones at each chance he gets. In life – and in work – Pica says he is always looking for balance while avoiding complacency.

With a track record like his, it’s no surprise that that balance has led to impressive success.



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CRUMBLING
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They could be, and it may not be visible or noticeable at the time of purchase!

Upwards of 35,000+ homes throughout the state of Connecticut are facing the potential for a failed concrete foundation due to the possible presence of a naturally occurring iron sulfide, pyrrhotite, in their concrete foundation. The concrete originated from the JJ Mottes Concrete Company in Stafford Springs, Connecticut, and was supplied for residential foundations for properties built during the years 1983 to present, or older homes with additions or detached structures built from 1983-on. The mineral is found in a Willington, Connecticut, quarry that no longer supplies aggregate for residential foundations.

Pyrrhotite causes the slow deterioration of the concrete when exposed to oxygen and water. The cracking starts small and

may take more than 10 years to over 30 years to appear. Horizontal cracks or cracks that splinter out like a web are the most concerning. A rust-colored residue or white powder may appear. As the concrete deteriorates, it often becomes structurally unsound.

The damage is irreversible. The only repair is to fully replace the impacted foundation with a new foundation that does not contain pyrrhotite.

The State of Connecticut has a program set up for owners of properties to help with the process and cost associated with a foundation replacement.

How Does This Help Your Buyers Of New Properties?

It Won't! Unless they have a separate foundation inspection and report before the close of their new property. The CFSIC program has certified just 35 Home Inspectors and Professional Engineers across the state to provide the service of a separate foundation inspection & report to satisfy the requirements of providing a severity class code before the close of their new property. In short: any home in Connecticut that was built from 1983-on, or has had an addition built from 1983-on, should have a separate CFSIC-certified foundation inspection & report before closing as protection in the future if any issues arise related

to crumbling foundations. Once a buyer closes on a property, they forfeit their opportunity for assistance from this program and assume full responsibility and cost associated with a foundation replacement.

How Real Estate Professionals Can Protect Their Clients

As real estate professionals, you play a key role in safeguarding your clients' investments. By advising them to obtain a separate foundation inspection for homes built or renovated during the risk period, you're ensuring they avoid a potentially devastating financial burden.

What to Look for During Showings

Here are a few early warning signs of a potentially crumbling foundation that you can flag for your clients:

- Horizontal cracks or web-like splintering in the concrete.
- Rust-colored residue or white powder on the foundation surface.
- Uneven or bowing basement walls.

If you notice any of these indicators, recommend a foundation inspection immediately. If none of these are observed, a separate foundation report is recommended for future protection.

How we can help

As one of the few certified foundation inspectors in Connecticut, I provide thorough inspections and detailed reports to ensure your clients are protected. For more information about the CFSIC program and its resources, visit their website at www.crumblingfoundations.org.



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STEVEN MILLER: Advocating for Affordable Housing and Community Strength

BY PHYLICIA BOVA

Steven Miller has spent over 45 years in the real estate industry, building meaningful relationships and becoming a trusted advisor to families across generations. Based out of the Coldwell Banker office in North Haven, Connecticut, Steven’s career is marked not only by his dedication to his clients but also by his tireless work in legislative advocacy for property rights and community service both state and nationwide. As the current president of the Connecticut Association of Realtors (CTR), he has become a powerful voice in addressing critical issues such as affordable housing and homelessness. His passion for helping others shines through in every aspect of his work, making him a true leader in his community.



In this interview, Steven shares insights into his legislative efforts, community projects, and what drives him to stay involved.

Q&A WITH STEVEN MILLER

Q: Can you tell us about the legislative work you do to protect homeowners?

Steven Miller: Over time, Realtors have become a strong voice in Connecticut. I can call my state senator or representative to discuss issues impacting the real estate industry. Right now, a major concern is the lack of housing units. Pre-pandemic, there were around 17,000 to 19,000 single-family homes and condos on the market in Connecticut. Today, that number is down to just over 3,000. We’re working to create legislation that reduces regulatory barriers, making it easier for developers to build affordable housing. Rising land and construction costs make it challenging, but we’re committed to finding solutions.

Q: You mentioned that affordable housing is a passion project. Can you elaborate?

Steven Miller: Absolutely. In North Haven, I sit on the Affordable Housing Committee. There’s a significant issue where long-time homeowners have difficulty maintaining their properties or paying taxes, but they have nowhere to downsize to. This

lack of housing options creates a bottleneck in the market. We need to create more affordable housing opportunities so people can move out of large homes they no longer need, opening up those homes for younger families. It’s a community issue that affects everyone.

Q: What other community service projects are you involved in?

Steven Miller: I serve on several committees, including the Wetlands Commission and the Blight Committee. On the Wetlands Commission, we work to balance development with environmental protection. Last year, a proposal for a trash-to-energy plant in North Haven was

rejected because it would have destroyed a wetland on the property. We need development, but not at the cost of our environment. The Blight Committee addresses neglected/blighted properties in town. Often, the homeowners are seniors who can’t maintain their homes. We try to connect them with services to help, whether it’s volunteers or local programs. It’s about building a stronger community.

Q: You’ve also mentioned your work with the homeless population. Can you share more about that?

Steven Miller: CTR partners with the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness. Right now, there are 500 children in Connecticut without a bedroom or toys to play with. This year, we raised close to \$50,000 to help families stay in their homes. It’s more cost-effective to keep people in housing than to rehouse them once they become homeless. The margins are so tight for some families that one illness or unexpected expense can leave them homeless. We take this issue very seriously.

Q: How has your community involvement impacted your real estate career?

Steven Miller: I don’t do community work to impress clients or colleagues—I do it because it’s important. That said, this is a relationship business, and many of my closest friendships have come from both my real estate work and my community activities. It’s all interconnected. Building stronger

communities ultimately benefits everyone, including the real estate market.

Q: What advice would you give to someone wanting to get more involved in their community?

Steven Miller: For Realtors, most local associations have legislative committees you can join. Start by attending meetings to learn how things work. In your town, reach out to your mayor’s office or first selectman and ask about committee openings. There are always opportunities to get involved, whether it’s affordable housing, environmental issues, or other areas. It’s important to bring fresh ideas and new energy to these committees.

Q: Is there a current issue you feel deserves more attention?

Steven Miller: One issue I’m particularly passionate about is the increasing cost of insurance rates. For instance, my homeowner’s insurance recently doubled, despite having

no claims or incidents. These rising costs could impact both homeownership accessibility and residents’ ability to remain in their homes long-term. It’s essential to engage in open discussions with our legislators to address these challenges and work toward solutions that benefit our communities.

Steven Miller’s dedication to his community extends beyond his role as a realtor. Through his legislative advocacy and various community service projects, he addresses critical issues such as affordable housing, environmental protection, and homelessness. His efforts with CTR and local committees have made a tangible impact on the lives of many

Connecticut residents. Steven’s passion for helping others and building stronger communities is the driving force behind his success—both in real estate and in life. His story serves as an inspiring example of how giving back can create lasting positive change.



North Haven Inland Wetlands Commission Vice Chairman Steven Miller makes a motion to deny a permit application for the proposed AB Eco Park development at the March 27, 2024, meeting. Photo by Brian Zahn/Hearst Connecticut Media

FAQ

All About New Haven/ Middlesex Real Producers

The first Real Producers magazine started in Indianapolis in 2015. Real Producers is now in over 130 markets across the nation and is continuing to grow nationwide.

Q: WHO RECEIVES Real Producers MAGAZINES?

A: The top 300 real estate agents across New Haven and Middlesex Counties and our preferred partners.

Q: WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THIS MAGAZINE?

A: We believe that we are better together. When we surround ourselves with other successful, like-minded people, we grow to new heights. Real Producers is a platform that brings together the most accomplished individuals in the Connecticut real estate sector.

By curating an exclusive community comprised of the top 300 real estate agents and RP-vetted businesses in each market, we foster a shared space for sharing stories, celebrating successes, discussing market trends, and highlighting upcoming events. Our monthly publication is dedicated to connecting, informing, and inspiring, encompassing anything that contributes to the enrichment of our community.

Q: DOES Real Producers HAVE EVENTS?

A: Yes! We have specific networking events throughout the year.

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

A: The process for getting featured in our magazine is straightforward. To be eligible, you need to be on the top 300 list, and we value nominations highly. Whether you're a real estate agent, business, broker, owner, or someone who admires the work of others, you can nominate individuals, including



yourself. Even office leaders have the opportunity to nominate outstanding real estate agents. We take every nomination seriously and consider anyone from the top 300 list who is brought to our attention. While we cannot guarantee a feature, we strongly encourage you to connect with one of our team members, show support for Real Producers, and participate in our private events. These steps can enhance your chances of being featured in our publication.

Q: WHAT DOES IT COST A REAL ESTATE AGENT/ TEAM TO BE FEATURED?

A: Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing to agents, so nominate away! We are not a pay-to-play model. We share **REAL** stories of **Real Producers**.

Q: WHO ARE THE RP-VETTED BUSINESSES?

A: The RP-vetted businesses featured in our publication represent the some of best in the business in their respective categories within the Connecticut

Shoreline. You can easily locate them in our index. We do not randomly select businesses, nor do we collaborate with every business that approaches us. We prioritize businesses that have received your stamp of approval through recommendations and each business showcased has been personally recommended by many of the top agents featured in our publication. Before featuring any business, our team conducts additional vetting to ensure they align with our community's values and bring substantial value. Our aim is to build a robust network that not only includes the best real estate agents but also features top-tier businesses, fostering collective growth and strength within our community.

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A BUSINESS?

A: If you want to recommend a business that works with top real estate agents, please email or message us - **Email: sam.kantrow@realproducersmag.com**



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Swing into 2025: REALTOR GOLF SHOWDOWN

January 23, 2025

Thank you to everyone who attended our winter gathering last month and managed to brave the EXTREMELY cold to swing some balls, have some drinks, and hang out with the best of the best.

I do want to give a special shoutout to our sponsors from the event. Thank you to Revolution Mortgage out of Milford for being our platinum sponsor for this event. Be on the lookout for a special article about Evan and his team in our March publication. Another big thank you goes out to **The Miranda Team: Pillar To Post Home Inspectors, Attorney Ryan Corey, and Scranton Financial Group** for being our co-sponsors for the event.

If you missed the event, you truly MISSED. Don't worry, we will be sending out a save the date for our next event in the spring! Until then, click the QR code to see the video and take a look at a few of the photos from all the fun.

Special thanks to Devlin Photography and Alyssa Mucha Photography for the photos at the event.



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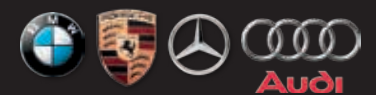
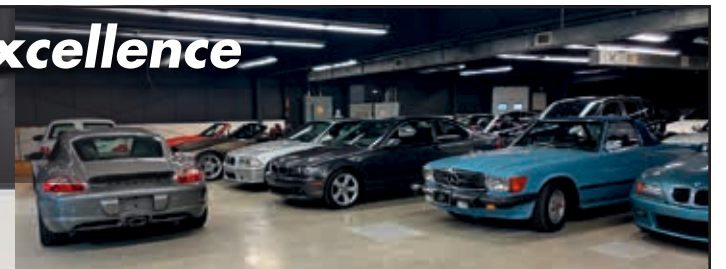
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