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JANUARY 2025

REAL PRODUCERS[®]



Carrie Theard



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A Note From the Publisher

Providing a platform to celebrate and unite the top real estate professionals across Acadiana!

BY DRAKE ABSHIRE

Hello Acadiana Realtors!

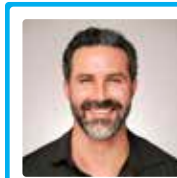
As we prepare to close out another incredible year and welcome 2025, *Acadiana Real Producers* is embracing an exciting transformation! You'll notice a *refreshed look* in the upcoming issues—a modern twist that reflects our ongoing commitment to leveling up while staying true to our mission of celebrating Acadiana's top real estate professionals. This upgrade, inspired by nearly a decade of success under the national Real Producers brand, marks a new chapter in how we honor excellence and elevate our community.

But that's not all—2025 is bringing even bigger things! In January, we're thrilled to host our next exclusive event, where we'll welcome the **Top 300 Agents of 2025**. This is *the event* of the season, and we can't wait to celebrate the hard work and success of Acadiana's real estate leaders. Get ready for an unforgettable evening of networking, recognition, and inspiration. Stay tuned for all the details coming soon!

As the new year approaches, let's set our sights on starting strong. Whether it's building new connections, securing big wins, or chasing bold goals, 2025 is the year to make it happen. We're excited to continue highlighting the incredible stories of Acadiana's top producers in the months ahead. If we haven't had the pleasure of sitting down with you yet, we look forward to getting to know you and sharing your journey with our community.

Thank you for being an essential part of this thriving network of professionals. Let's take a moment to reflect on all we've accomplished this year—and dream even bigger for the next. Cheers to you, your success, and a bright year ahead!

Here's to 2025 and the amazing things to come!



With heartfelt thanks,
DRAKE ABSHIRE
Owner/Publisher
Acadiana Real Producers
Drake.Abshire@
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The graphic features a light blue background with white snowflakes and a faint silhouette of a winter tree at the bottom.

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All About Acadiana Real Producers



Real Producers magazine started in Indianapolis in 2015 and is now in over 130 markets across the nation and continues to spread rapidly.

Q: WHO RECEIVES REAL PRODUCERS MAGAZINES?

A: The top 300+ real estate agents across Acadiana.

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 elite individuals in Acadiana's real estate industry.

We take the top 300 real estate agents and RP-vetted businesses in every market, and we build an exclusive community around that group. We share their stories, successes, market trends, and upcoming events — really, anything that will connect, inform and inspire, we put in our monthly publication.

Q: DOES REAL PRODUCERS HAVE EVENTS?

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

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

A: It's really simple. You have to be on the top 300 list, and we take nominations seriously. You can nominate other real estate agents, businesses, brokers, owners or even yourself! Office leaders can also nominate real estate agents. We will consider anyone brought to our attention who is in the top 300 because we don't know everyone's story, so we need your help to learn about them. We cannot guarantee a feature, but we encourage you to meet with one of our team members, support Real Producers



and attend our private events to increase your chances.

To submit a nomination, please send us an email!

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: They are one of the best businesses in Acadiana in their category, and you can find them listed in our index! We don't just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. Many of the top

agents have recommended every single business you see in this publication. We will not even meet with a business that has not been vetted by one of you and "stamped for approval," in a sense. Our team will further vet every business to make sure they are a good fit and bring value to our community. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best real estate agents in the area but the best businesses so we can grow stronger together.

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!

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SCOTT DOMINGUE



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ACE SYLVESTER

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN A REALTOR?

2 years

WHAT IS YOUR CAREER VOLUME AS A REALTOR?

\$15.3 Million

WHAT WAS YOUR TOTAL VOLUME LAST YEAR?

\$6.6 Million

WHAT AWARDS HAVE YOU ACHIEVED AS A REALTOR?

Keaty Real Estate Rookie of the Year

WHEN DID YOU START YOUR CAREER IN REAL ESTATE?

May of 2022

WHAT DID YOU DO BEFORE YOU BECAME A REALTOR?

Until 2022, my career was fully dedicated to performing and teaching music. I earned a Master's degree in Music Performance with a concentration in percussion from the University of Louisiana in 2008. Soon after, I began teaching full-time as an Assistant Music Director. After five years in this role, I was promoted to Head Music Director. In addition to my full-time role, I also taught part-time at various schools and served as a graduate assistant at the university while completing my studies prior to receiving my masters degree.

WHAT ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT RIGHT NOW IN YOUR BUSINESS?

I am deeply passionate about not only helping my clients acquire their new homes or properties but also doing everything in my power so that they feel confident during and after the entire process unfolds, and that they are genuinely happy with their new purchase. It is always a truly great feeling when you close a deal and all parties involved walk away feeling uplifted and content.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST REWARDING PART OF YOUR BUSINESS?

The most rewarding part of my work is receiving calls from clients who initially ask me to help them find a rental. From that point on, whether it takes a

month, a year, two years, or even five, I am committed to guiding them all the way to the finish line—overcoming any obstacles along the way so that they can one day purchase their very own home. I inadvertently found a passion in the industry that I was not expecting. My mission became, and continues to be, helping people “break the cycle” of renting for life. It’s incredibly fulfilling to be part of such a pivotal moment in peoples’ lives and to hand them the keys

to their very own dream home at the closing table.

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE AS A REALTOR?

Ha, it definitely has to be making dials to people I don’t personally know yet during the work day. I can still hear in the back of my mind “baw you better not be botherin’ dem people at work, no” lol! But I am definitely improving on that!



HOW DOES REAL ESTATE FIT INTO YOUR DREAMS AND GOALS?

I quickly realized how many doors—and dreams—this industry could open and re-open for me beyond just real estate. Since making the career shift, I've been fortunate to marry, start a family, and put the media skills I gained in my undergraduate studies to use. This career has also provided some flexibility in schedule so that I can once again enjoy performing and recording music. To top it off, my wife, Taylor, and I recently launched our own property investment company, WaRiA Properties, LLC, where our 10-month-old daughter, Aria, serves as our CEO and BOSS! We recently closed on our first property! So, be on the lookout Acadiana!

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF BEING A REALTOR?

It's definitely waking up knowing that every day will be an adventure. I genuinely enjoy waking up and going to work knowing that each and every day will be different and interesting.

DEFINE SUCCESS.

Achieving and mastering the goals that you have set for yourself, while not having to set others back or do them wrong along the way.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

I have been blessed with a very diverse family, which has and still does allow me to experience so many different views and approaches on life. Everyone in my family works extremely hard and it is expected of us. My parents and godparents have always instilled in me that you may not always be the most talented at something, but you always have an opportunity to outwork others. It is something that my siblings and I pride ourselves on. One quote that my grandfather used to say always stays true to us *"You don't always have the nicest things in life, but the things you do have you can keep them nice."*

FAVORITE BOOKS? PODCASTS? MOTIVATIONAL QUOTES?

Favorite Book: "Scar Tissue";
Favorite Podcast: "Locked on



“

No matter what type, what size, or value of a property, it is a very important chapter in peoples' lives.

Saints"; Favorite Quote; "That is just a first-world problem"

ARE THERE ANY CHARITIES OR ORGANIZATIONS YOU SUPPORT?

I genuinely enjoy helping support local groups and people who are on a mission to better the community. I have been involved and supporting the local Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Acadiana High Band, Scott KC's, and Lache Pas amongst other organizations in the area.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES AND INTERESTS OUTSIDE OF THE BUSINESS?

Playing and recording music with the likes of Poisson Rouge, The Specklers, Dax Riggs, and Madison Wolfe. I also love cooking, fishing, crabbin' at da Refuuuge and hosting get-togethers with family and friends.

GIVEN YOUR STATUS AND EXPERTISE, WHAT IS SOME ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE THE UP-AND-COMING TOP PRODUCER?

Be your own motivator! Starting out in this field can be overwhelming with so many responsibilities coming at you. Focus on narrowing down your priorities and mastering those key skills first. Then, start adding other avenues to your palette gradually.

IN CLOSING, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO COMMUNICATE USING THIS ACADIANA REAL PRODUCER PLATFORM?

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Carrie THÉARD

ROOTED IN RELATIONSHIPS

WRITTEN BY JESS WELLAR
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ACE SYLVESTER

“I don’t need a pat on the back or accolades from others. I just want to live a peaceful life, be happy, help others, and surround myself with good people.”

Humble by nature, Carrie Théard has built a solid reputation as a top local Realtor through connections and trust rather than flash. With roots deeply embedded in Lafayette, Carrie has cultivated an impressive network of clients, many of whom have been loyal for years.

Local Ties

Carrie grew up surrounded by strong connections. Raised by an entrepreneurial mother and strong father, Carrie credits both parents for influencing her character.

“My mom was a strong woman who ran her own medical billing business and taught me how to be an independent business woman,” Carrie shares. “And my dad was a wonderful example as I witnessed him get through struggles relying on his faith in Christ. As I watched his relationship with Christ

grow, I learned that having that is the source of strength.”

Carrie attended The Academy of the Sacred Heart, an all-girls school founded in 1821. She notes the close friendships she made during those formative years were also crucial in forming her character while further strengthening her relationship with God.

“The Academy was a magical place and my parents made a lot of sacrifices to get me there,” she reflects. “I graduated with 30 classmates and we all share a special sisterhood to this day; my schooling also





reinforced the importance of rooting everything I do in Christ. I get a lot of strength from my faith and from having long-time friends that are like family.”

Working for four years at her family’s pharmacy in the Oil Center, Carrie built relationships that would eventually become the core of her real estate network. The role taught her the value of connecting with people, learning about their lives, and, most importantly, building trust.

After the family’s drug store sold, Carrie needed a new career. A good friend, Jim Keaty, owned a brokerage in Lafayette and encouraged her to obtain her real estate license in 2013 and join his firm.

“Jim was insistent I’d be a natural. He helped me get licensed, mentored me, and really gave me a solid foundation in the industry with the tools and support I needed,” she acknowledges.

Carrie’s superpower for connecting with people soon translated into a thriving real estate career. In 2017, she took things a step further and co-founded District South Real Estate Company with Sean Hettich. Recently, District South

joined Real Broker, LLC, where she and Sean continue their work as proud members of the Real Broker family.

On Her Terms

For Carrie, real estate success is not about the bottom line or awards on the wall — it’s about autonomy to live life the way she wants. Real estate has afforded her that freedom, but she’s also built a business where her clients know they are valued as friends.

“I don’t spend money on marketing myself or on lead generation — everything comes from referrals. I’m there for my clients and their families in whatever way I can be, not just for a sale,” she explains.

“Real estate is my career, but for me it’s really just a vehicle for establishing relationships. The positive side effect of building meaningful connections is being able to provide for myself and my family.”

When asked what else sets her apart, she’s quick to share her strategy: “I treat my clients like family,” Carrie says simply. “And that’s my advice for new agents, too

— meet as many people as you can and maintain the relationship.”

Carrie also emphasizes the importance of good communication, treating clients with honesty, respect, and always having a helping hand ready. She’s a natural mentor, sharing her insights with others and helping guide new agents on their journey.

“I love what I do, and I love the people I get to meet. Being invited into people’s lives during these pivotal moments and making long-lasting connections while seeing new agents thrive — it’s just incredibly fulfilling.”

“I DON’T NEED A PAT ON THE BACK OR ACCOLADES FROM OTHERS. I JUST WANT TO LIVE A PEACEFUL LIFE, BE HAPPY, HELP OTHERS, AND SURROUND MYSELF WITH GOOD PEOPLE.”

Off The Clock

Beyond her busy work day, Carrie treasures every moment with loved ones. She's a proud mother to three grown children: Cecile (24), Cydney (23), and Clay (21). Her world expanded recently with the addition of her grandbaby, Ollie-Mae, who just turned one, and she's loving every moment of being a grandmother even though she refuses to be called one.

"I spend a lot of time with my partner, Carlos, at home cooking, relaxing, just being together," she shares with a smile. "He also loves my kids and as the oldest of five children myself, we have a very close family."

As a Cancer, Carrie loves to be in the sun and by the water. Health and wellness is another one of Carrie's hobbies; she enjoys working on her well-being when she's not globe trotting. She always has a trip planned to have something to look forward to, and is particularly fond of Mexico, South America and Europe, with Asia next on her travel wishlist. Despite her wanderlust, her family and friends keep her grounded in Lafayette.

"Having Ollie in my life means I'm okay with cutting some of those trips short," she chuckles.

Carrie also prioritizes giving back and notes she is always ready to roll up her sleeves when asked.

Embracing the Future

Looking ahead, Carrie is eager to see where life takes her. Now that her children are grown, the possibilities for her next act are endless. One area she's particularly interested in is mentoring agents, sharing her insights and helping others find their way to flourish.

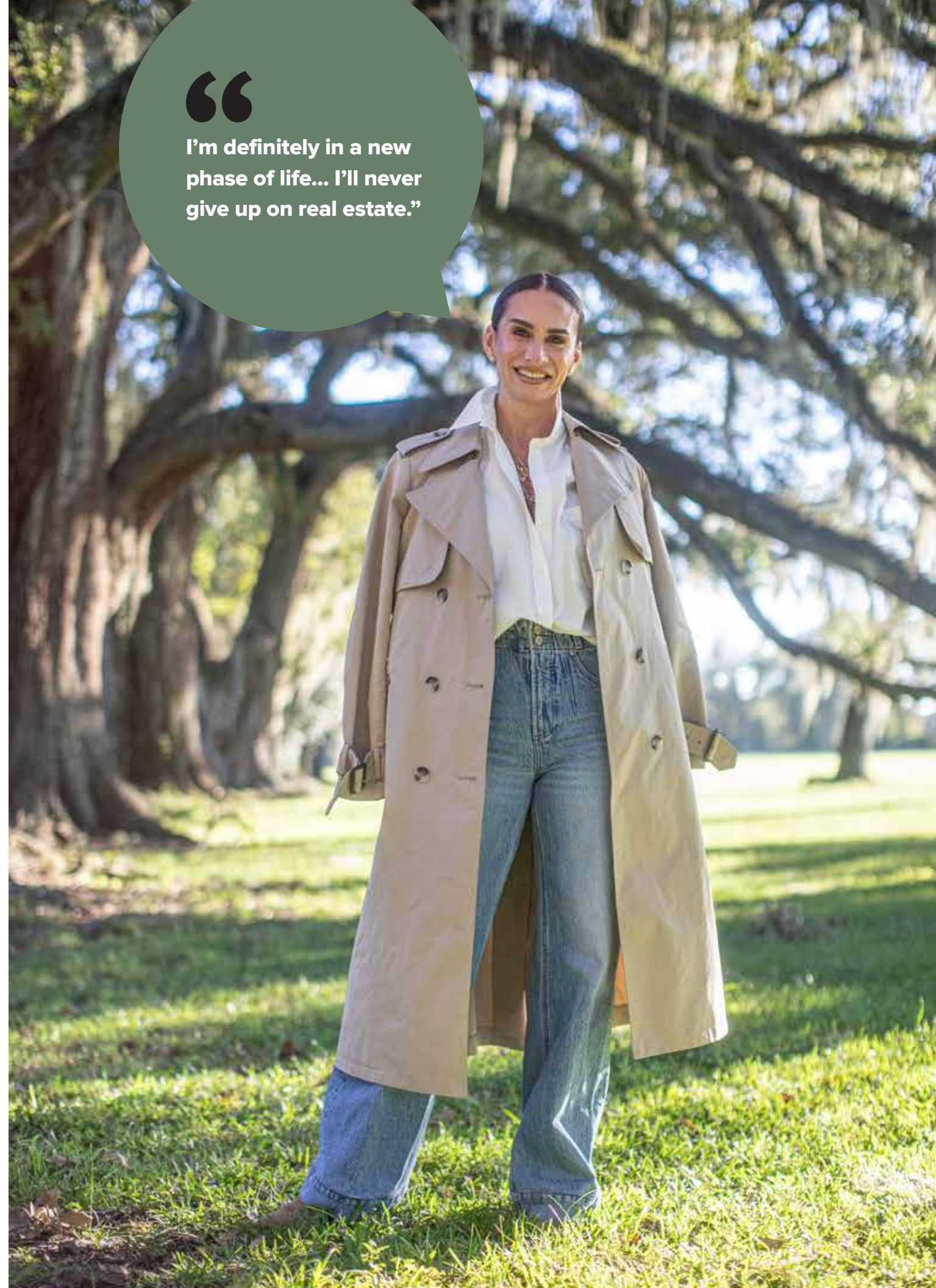
"I'm definitely in a new phase of life," she acknowledges. "I'll never give up real estate, but I'm open to exploring other projects and ventures. I love guiding others, and who knows? The future might hold even more opportunities to make a difference."

As for her goals, she's content to let life unfold naturally: "My business is established, my family is close, and I've got so much to be thankful for," she concludes. "Whatever comes next, I'm excited for it."



“

I'm definitely in a new phase of life... I'll never give up on real estate.”

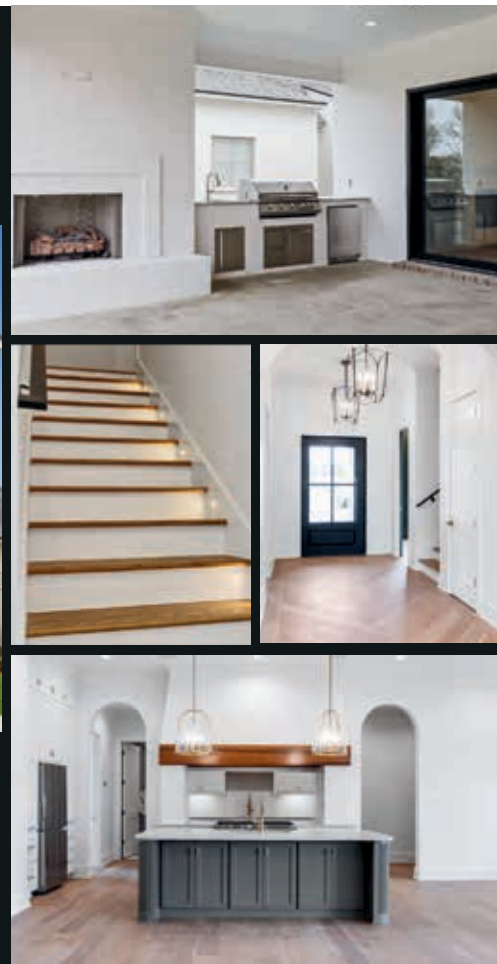




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WRITTEN BY JESS WELLAR
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ACE SYLVESTER

“Real estate is a time-sensitive business, especially pre-approvals just to tour these days,” begins Chris Bienvenu, a mortgage loan originator with Edge Mortgage in Lafayette. “That’s why my clients and Realtors know from the beginning that my cell is always on, after hours and weekends, too.”

Chris’s emphasis on being available isn’t just a tagline; it’s the principle that’s

helped him build a thriving business in the competitive mortgage industry. Over the past decade, Chris has made it his mission to support his clients and Realtor partners through every step of the home-buying process — especially when the clock is ticking.

Switching Gears

Growing up in the small town of Parks, just outside of Breaux Bridge, Chris initially pursued a career in physical therapy after graduating from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette

with a degree in exercise physiology. However, the steep cost of continuing education and a drive to get into the workforce sooner prompted him to rethink his career plans.

“I loved physical therapy, but school was expensive — it was going to cost me over \$300,000 to get certified — and I wanted to start earning a living right away,” Chris explains.

That realization led him to work as a regional sales manager for his brother’s company, Electronic Payment Services, where he honed his people skills for seven years. A true entrepreneur, Chris eventually started his own ATM company, which he ran for three years before selling it.

Through all of those years, a close friend in the mortgage business continued to nudge him toward the industry.

“My buddy kept asking me to lunch, always wanting to talk about joining his mortgage team or at least take a look at it,” Chris recalls with a chuckle. “This went on for a couple of years until one day back in 2014, I sat with him for lunch, entertained the idea — and from that lunch, there was no looking back.”

There was little doubt Chris was a natural fit. A natural salesman, he learned the ropes quickly and enjoyed talking to people.

“Back when I started, 5%-6% rates seemed high, and no one wanted to do the tough deals in flood zones,” Chris recalls. “But I was hungry to learn, and getting through those deals helped me thoroughly understand the business. Now, nothing makes me nervous anymore.”

Over the years, Chris transitioned between companies and ultimately joined Edge Mortgage in 2022 with a group of former colleagues that have decades of industry experience.

All About Service

Edge Mortgage provides clients with multiple loan options as a mortgage broker, offering everything from conventional loans to refinances



“IF ANYONE ASKS US TO
HELP SUPPORT A CHARITY,
WE GLADLY HELP.”



and home equity loans. Chris is personally licensed across Louisiana, Texas, Alabama, and Florida, and with 12 exceptional employees, the company benefits from the combined experience of seasoned professionals who understand the complexities of the mortgage process.

Chris's commitment to service stands out in an industry that can sometimes feel impersonal. His focus on availability and responsiveness sets him apart from many in his field. This level of service has earned Chris the trust of many Realtors, who appreciate his openness, reliability, and understanding of the time-sensitive nature of the business.

“I have friends who won't touch their phones after 5 o'clock, but for me, I know that if I don't take care of my clients, my family won't get fed. Realtors are the same as me — clients call at any hour, so I have to be available for them.”

Unlocking Dreams

Beyond the practical aspects of his work, Chris finds true fulfillment in helping people achieve their dreams of homeownership.

“Nothing is more satisfying than helping a client purchase their first home

at 20 years old or helping a single mom achieve this goal to have a better place to raise her kids,” he shares. “I also love thanking a veteran by putting them in the home of their dreams. It's moments like those that remind me why I'm here.”

In addition to his client-centered approach, Chris and his company are committed to giving back to their local community. Edge Mortgage frequently partners with Realtors to support charities and other initiatives that benefit Lafayette and the surrounding areas.

“We're always participating with Realtors to partner with them in any way,” Chris affirms. “If anyone asks us to help support a charity, we gladly help.”

With a decade of experience in the mortgage industry, Chris has witnessed significant changes over the years, particularly in how interest rates respond to broader economic factors.

“Just because the Fed's cut rates doesn't mean that it trickles down right away,” he explains. “When the 10-year Treasury bond re-prices, our rates keep climbing.”

Despite these challenges, Chris maintains a positive outlook for the future, understanding that the mortgage business is cyclical and

requires adaptability. Staying informed allows Chris to serve his clients with confidence, regardless of market shifts.

Family Man

In a job that requires him to be constantly available, Chris is grateful for the support of his family, particularly his wife, Sheila.

“You have to have an understanding spouse,” he smiles.

Married for 14 years, the couple has two boys, Jax and Finley, who share Chris's passion for sports.

“We're all Cowboys fans; I've brainwashed my kids!” he concludes with a chuckle. “But when we get a break from sports, hanging out by the pool and grilling for them is my perfect day.”

**CONTACT
US!**

To learn more about Edge Mortgage or to speak with Chris directly, visit www.edgemortgageloan.com or call him at 337-230-1538.



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Tax Vs. Sheriff's Sales

SoCo Title



If you've been working in real estate long enough, sooner or later you are bound to run into a client or investor wanting to purchase property at tax sale or sheriff's sale. These usually involve situations wherein homeowners have failed to pay property taxes, make mortgage payments or both. Due to these delinquencies the property is ceded to the judicial system in an effort to help the creditors collect the debt. Many investors see these properties as wonderful opportunity to invest at a price significantly less than fair market value.

Though both types of sales are similar, there is a big difference when it comes to clearing title. Typically, at a tax sale, the purchaser is buying the property for the price of the delinquent property taxes, meaning they can potentially own property for pennies on the dollar. However, the procedure for acquiring clear title after a tax sale is a long and arduous process. In a sheriff's sale, the purchaser is normally buying property for a more significant price and the title is usually cleared via a foreclosure proceeding.

In a tax sale, the purchaser buys property by paying the unpaid property taxes and thereafter the original owner (ie: the delinquent taxpayer) would have three years to redeem the property by paying the purchaser the amount they paid at tax sale plus penalties. At a tax sale, the purchaser does not have full ownership rights because the original owner retains the right of redemption for three years. For example, a tax debtor cannot be evicted prior to the expiration of the redemptive period. In addition, the purchaser is not entitled to charge any rental payments to the owner or occupants and cannot make any improvements to the property during the redemptive period. (LSA R.S. 47:2158.1) Once the redemptive period expires, then the purchaser must file a suit to quiet title to gain full ownership. However, even after the suit to quiet title if the buyer wishes to sell the property this may be a challenge, as title insurance will require a tax sale endorsement which is much more expensive than a typical title insurance policy.

In a sheriff's sale scenario, a lender sues a borrower for failure to make mortgage payments. The lender files a Notice of Seizure and following the foreclosure process, the lender acting as the judgment creditor can have the property sold at a sheriff's sale to the highest bidder to recoup some or all of the money owed to them. In a foreclosure proceeding, creditors are paid by ranking, which is normally based on which lien was filed into the public records first. Furthermore, all liens encumbering the property are normally released through the foreclosure process, allowing the property to be sold free and clear. Purchasing property via sheriff's sale is more expensive than through tax sale, but this is a situation where you get what you pay for, as the title is typically good. There is no extra cost to ensure title to a property acquired through sheriff's sale, so selling the property in the future should not present a problem.

At the time of writing this article, an Amendment to the Louisiana Constitution has been proposed and will be on the ballot for the December 7, 2024 state elections to streamline the tax sale process. Louisiana Act 409, also known as Senate Bill 119, is a proposed constitutional amendment that would simplify how Louisiana handles tax sales. The Amendment would effectively do away with suits to quiet title moving forward. The delinquent taxes would be treated as a lien on the property and an action similar to a foreclosure proceeding would ensue thereby allowing a tax sale purchaser to gain clear title to the property. In my opinion, the amendment would be a great way to get tax sale properties back into commerce and anyone with an interest in real estate should consider supporting the bill.



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Peter Marshall, Mitzi Mayeux & Alex Hebert