

BIRMINGHAM

JUNE 2025

REAL PRODUCERS[®]

**Broker
Spotlight:**
Robert Scott

**Partner
Spotlight:**
The Vail
Agency

Rising Star:
Rodrigo Cisneros

Shun Randolph

LIVING WITH PURPOSE AND PASSION

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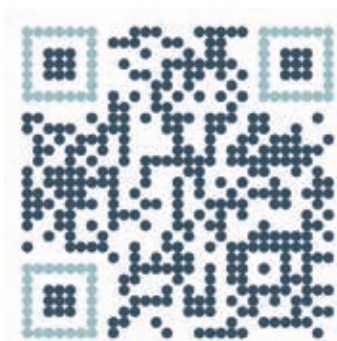
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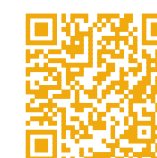
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2025

BY THE NUMBERS

HERE'S WHAT THE TOP AGENTS IN BIRMINGHAM SOLD IN 2024



\$4,013,500,875
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9,348
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AVERAGE TRANSACTIONS PER AGENT

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ADVANTAGE

LEADING WITH SERVICE, SOLUTIONS, AND SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCCABE • PHOTOS BY BRENDON PINOLA PHOTOGRAPHY

At The Vail Agency, simplicity meets service. Insurance might be complicated, but Jacob Vail believes it doesn't have to feel that way. With over 21 years of experience, Jacob has transformed his agency into a top-tier operation known for its personalized care, industry expertise, and commitment to building real relationships—not just writing policies."



Finding His Calling

Jacob's entrance into the insurance world wasn't exactly planned—it was a pivot sparked by necessity. "It was a default—having to move out of state," he recalls. "A friend approached me about getting into insurance so I could stay in Birmingham. I didn't expect to enjoy it like I do now." Two decades later, he's still going strong and loving every minute of it.

What started as a career shift has since evolved into a calling. After spending his first seven years with another insurance company, Jacob joined Alfa Insurance and has now been with them for 14 years. In 2021, Alfa transitioned to a model of independent agents, and The Vail Agency was one of the first in the state to launch under this new opportunity. Today, his agency has six full-time team members and a combined 60+ years of experience.

A Top-Tier Team in a New Space

Jacob and his team have earned a reputation for excellence. The Vail Agency has consistently ranked as the #1 producing insurance agency in all of Jefferson and Shelby Counties for nearly eight years, and frequently lands in the top 1 to 5 Alfa agencies in the entire state of Alabama.

Now, operating from a brand-new, spacious location just off Highway 280 in the Greystone area, The Vail Agency has room to grow and even more ways to serve the community. "It's a beautiful location with a great conference room," Jacob says. "We're opening it up to referral partners, lenders—anyone who wants a professional space to meet." The new space is already making waves—they just hosted the Real Producers Crawfish Boil there!

Every Day's a New Adventure

"What I like about insurance is the opportunity to help people find solutions to problems," Jacob shares. "No two days are the same. A different type of house presents a different type of risk."



"WHAT I LIKE ABOUT INSURANCE IS THE OPPORTUNITY TO HELP PEOPLE FIND SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS. NO TWO DAYS ARE THE SAME. A DIFFERENT TYPE OF HOUSE PRESENTS A DIFFERENT TYPE OF RISK."

That variety is what keeps Jacob energized and engaged. Whether it's determining if a property is in a flood zone or helping a buyer stay within budget, The Vail Agency delivers quick, effective solutions—thanks in part to their access to multiple carriers beyond Alfa Insurance.

Jacob's passion and performance haven't gone unnoticed. He holds the rare distinction of being one of only three independent agents in Alabama ranked in Alfa's prestigious Hall of Fame, a title reserved for the best of the best. It's not just about policies—it's about people. That's why clients and referral partners alike keep coming back—and keep spreading the word.

Rooted in Family

When he's not helping clients, Jacob's all about family, fun, and fresh air. He's been married to his middle-school sweetheart, Chessa, for 23 years—and together for an incredible 32 years. They have three daughters: their oldest, Mattie, now works alongside him at The Vail Agency; their middle daughter, Melah, is finishing up her freshman year at Auburn University, and their youngest, Merin, is a junior in high school.

They also have a love for travel, camping, and Auburn football. "We love concerts and getting outside," says Jacob, who also enjoys a good round of golf. The family stays connected to their community through their church, The Church at Chelsea Westover, and are active members of Greystone Country Club.

Let's Connect

Looking for a local expert who understands your needs and treats you like family? Stop by The Vail Agency's brand-new location off Highway 280 in the Greystone area, or check them out online. Whether you're a homeowner, investor, or lender, Jacob and his team are ready to help you protect what matters most.

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A CAREER ROOTED IN HARD WORK, FAITH, AND DETERMINATION

WRITTEN BY NICK INGRISANI
PHOTOS BY BRENDON PINOLA PHOTOGRAPHY

RODRIGO CISNEROS

Rodrigo's journey into real estate didn't begin in a classroom or with a formal mentor—it began on job sites, covered in dust, laying floorboards for homes he'd one day help others buy. Born and raised in Mexico, Rodrigo lived on his grandparents' farm from the age of five while his mother was living in the U.S. He spent much of his early years helping out with daily chores and responsibilities. He didn't see it as work at the time, but the experience instilled in him the habits that now fuel his long days and hands-on approach.

"I probably work harder than anybody else, and get my work ethic from my grandparents. We have a farm, so I probably started working on the farm when I was 5 or 6 years old. I was always busy as a kid. Had a lot of responsibilities on the farm, always had something to do."

He moved to the United States at 15, settling in Fort Payne, Alabama, where his mother had already established a home. The move wasn't his idea, but once the decision was made, he embraced it with quiet determination, just as he would every chapter of his life from that point forward.

By 18, Rodrigo was working full-time in construction, gaining hands-on experience and nurturing the entrepreneurial mindset that would guide his career. At 22, he launched his own flooring business, working with dozens of real estate investors in the area. It wasn't long before his curiosity took hold. He began asking clients about



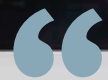
their investment strategies and saw firsthand how real estate could build long-term wealth.

"I asked them questions about how they do it, and I started flipping houses myself, buying and renting, and I just fell in love with real estate. That's when I thought I could totally do this for a living."

By his mid-twenties, Rodrigo and his wife were flipping homes, purchasing rentals,

and managing their own projects—all while still running his flooring business. The more he learned, the more he realized that real estate was his calling. When friends and clients started asking for help buying and selling, Rodrigo decided to take the next step: he got licensed in 2023 and dove into the world of residential real estate headfirst.

"I just figured I should get my license to help more people. If you do well



MY FAMILY STRUGGLED BEFORE, AND REAL ESTATE IS WHAT HELPED ME TO DO BETTER AND GET BETTER. **NOW I'M TEACHING OTHERS TO DO THE SAME AND HELPING THEM THROUGH REAL ESTATE."**

in real estate, you just keep growing because people start referring you. A lot of people already knew me from the flooring business because I'd built up a good name, so people kept referring and calling me."

While many new agents ease into the business, Rodrigo went all in, knowing that success would come from full commitment. It didn't take long to see the payoff. In his first six months, he closed \$5 million in sales—a strong start that reflected not just hustle, but years of groundwork already laid through his reputation in the flooring and investment world.

Rodrigo sees real estate as an extension of the business principles he's lived by for over a decade: work hard, provide exceptional service, and treat every client like they matter. His existing network helped him launch quickly, with referrals

pouring in from people who knew him as a business owner with a reputation for honesty, reliability, and work ethic.

These days, Rodrigo balances a diverse client base of first-time homebuyers, seasoned investors, and families looking for their next chapter. No matter who he's working with, his goal is the same—helping others achieve what he's been able to accomplish through real estate.

Looking ahead, Rodrigo is focused on scaling his investment portfolio, continuing to flip houses, and growing his presence as a trusted agent in Birmingham and beyond. But he's not chasing status—he's motivated by the desire to create a better life for his family and pass on the knowledge he's worked so hard to acquire.

"My family struggled before, and real estate is what helped me to do better

and get better. Now I'm teaching others to do the same and helping them through real estate."

When he's not working with clients or managing investments, Rodrigo keeps life simple. He starts each day at the gym, spends time with his wife and four-year-old daughter, and grounds his life in faith and family. While he once practiced jiu-jitsu, his current routine reflects a more balanced rhythm—work, gym, family, repeat.

"Faith is a big part of my life, so we try to stay connected to God whenever possible."

For Rodrigo, success isn't about flashy accolades—it's about staying true to the values that brought him this far. With a heart for service, a mind for business, and a powerful story behind him, he continues to rise—one house, one client, and one step at a time.

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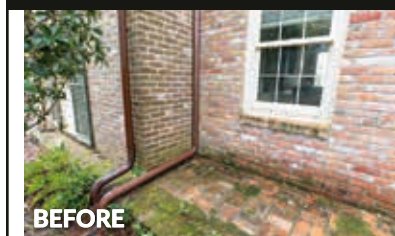
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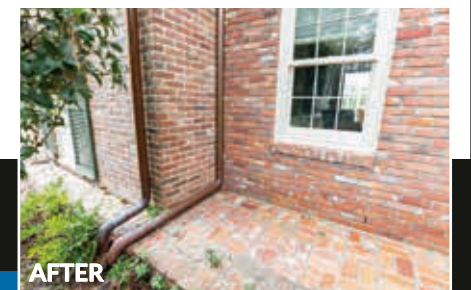
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BOILIN' UP A GOOD TIME:

BHM REAL PRODUCERS 1ST CRAWFISH BOIL

WRITTEN BY ADRIAN LUCAS



We couldn't have asked for better timing—the weather held off just long enough for our May 1st Crawfish Boil to be nothing short of spectacular! Hosted at the stunning Vail Agency office, our partner Jacob Vail and his incredible team truly rolled out the red carpet for an unforgettable evening.

The legendary Robb Williams brought the heat (and the flavor!) with an epic crawfish boil that had everyone going back for seconds. With live music from the talented JD Baker setting the vibe and a sold-out raffle battle keeping things exciting, the energy was electric all evening. We were proud to donate all of the raffle proceeds to our local charity, Children's Village.

Reli Title kept the good times flowing by sponsoring the beer tent, and topping off each delicious plate with

a cold one. We are especially grateful to our headline sponsors—Stockton Mortgage and Driveway Washing—as well as our amazing event table sponsors: NanoRoof, Ally Property Inspections and Priority Pest & Termite. ALL of your support made this event possible!

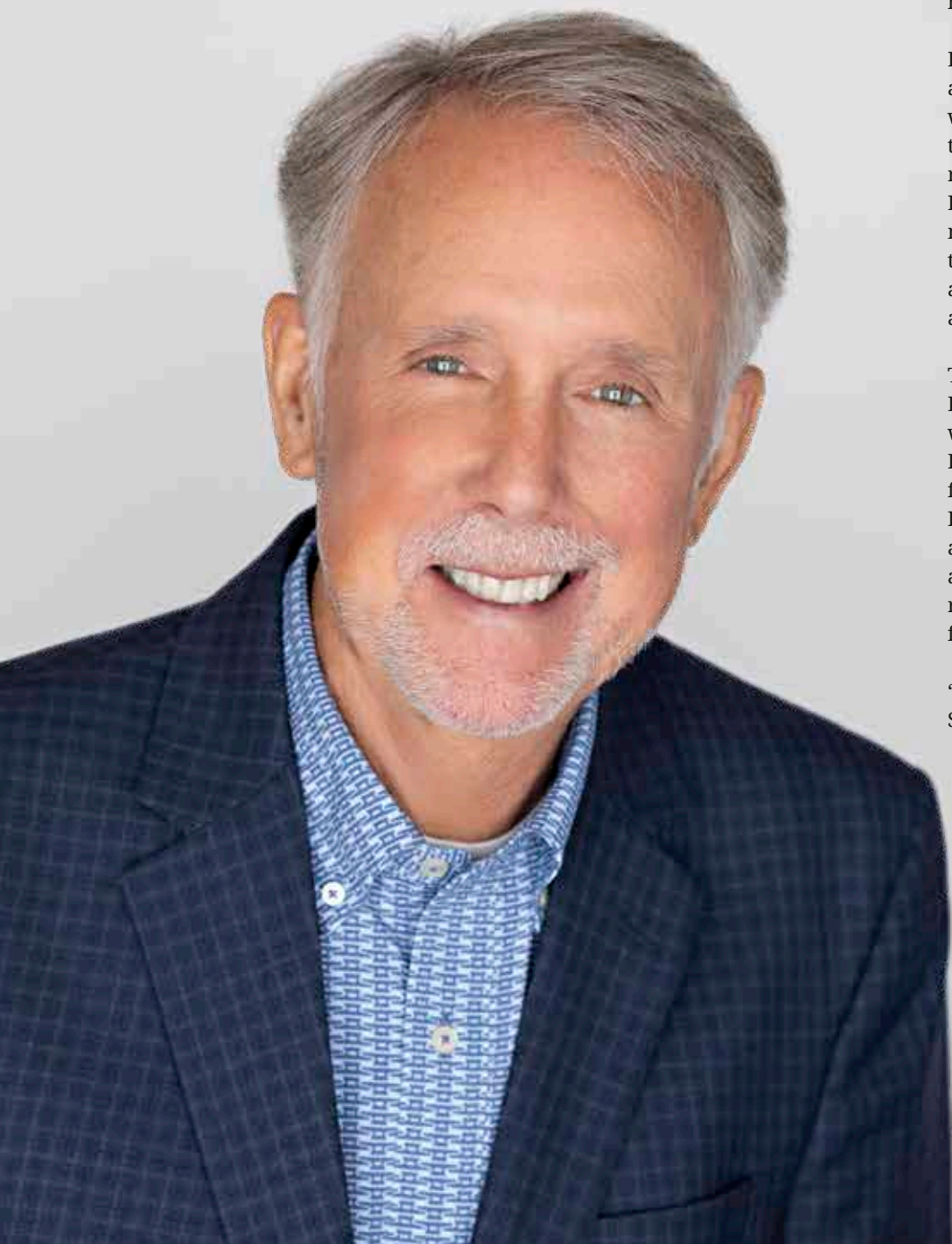
The Crawfish Boil event was unlike anything we've done before—and it was a blast. Not only did we get to celebrate our latest magazine features, but we got to gather, eat, and share stories with the top professionals in the industry. It's a night we'll be talking about for a long time—and one that definitely goes down in the books! Make sure to follow our social media pages where you can watch the recap video that our talented partner Phillip Pritchard created, as well as stay up to date on future events & all things RP!



ROBERT SCOTT

Building a Lasting Legacy in Real Estate

WRITTEN BY NICK INGRISANI • PHOTOS BY CARNAGGIO PHOTOGRAPHY



“We all need to keep our nose to the grindstone. Don’t worry about things you have no control over. Being in this career for nearly 50 years, I’ve seen every recession, and we’ve always worked through it. You find a way.”

Growing up in Opelika, Alabama, Robert comes from a close-knit family and credits his early exposure to the world of real estate to his father, who owned a handful of rental properties. He was also surrounded by relatives working in construction, but knew early on that it wasn’t the path for him.

“I felt if I could make a living running my mouth, I don’t want to do manual labor.”

Robert’s first job out of college was with a respected broker in Birmingham, where he spent three years learning the ropes. He quickly rose through the ranks, earning a branch manager role at First Real Estate, then serving as a sales manager at another major firm. But the turning point came in 1990, when he and his wife, Vicki, decided to purchase a RE/MAX franchise.

Their leap of faith was informed by Robert’s positive experiences working with RE/MAX agents while at First Real Estate. He admired the company’s agent-first philosophy and independent model. It also helped that Vicki was excelling as a top-producing agent at the time, allowing Robert to focus his energy on recruiting and growing the brokerage from the ground up.

“There weren’t any RE/MAX offices South of Birmingham at that time. As a branch manager for First Real Estate, I got to know RE/MAX, how they work, and I really liked it. That experience of working with them was why we decided to look into buying the franchise.”

Over the years, the Scotts expanded to three branches, though the pandemic eventually led them to consolidate into a single, centralized office. Today, RE/MAX Advantage is home to a team of about 70 people—



Robert with his wife, Vicki, and Erika with Robert, Jr.

“I have always enjoyed the role of broker/owner and helping agents. I’m as passionate about real estate today as I’ve ever been.”

including agents and staff—many of whom have been with the company for more than 10 years.

“I have always enjoyed the role of broker/owner and helping agents. I’m as passionate about real estate today as I’ve ever been.”

A big part of that success stems from Robert’s philosophy: Agents work for themselves, but not by themselves. His model empowers agents to develop their own networks and partnerships with lenders, inspectors, and title companies. It’s an environment rooted in independence, but supported by a strong backbone of trust, leadership, and shared values.

“We believe that agents are working for themselves but not by themselves, so it’s their choice to develop their own relationships with lenders, mortgage companies, title companies, etc. We also invite everybody to solicit our agents and build relationships.”

Robert is known among his peers for his calm and fair approach to dispute resolution. Whether settling conflicts or navigating difficult transactions, he believes in giving people the benefit of the doubt and never entering a conversation with preconceived

loyalties. That outlook has helped him foster a culture of collaboration in the Birmingham real estate community.

“I’ve always been a believer in trust, so I never go into a dispute resolution just defending my agent. I don’t take sides. It’s best for buyers and sellers because we’re always looking for the win-win for both sides, and most often, we get something worked out.”

His reputation extends far beyond his office walls—Robert served as president of both the Birmingham Association of REALTORS® and the Alabama Association of REALTORS® and has seen firsthand the benefits of a state-wide spirit of cooperation. That same collaborative energy is something he continues to nurture within his own team.

Robert remains firmly planted in the day-to-day. He works every day with his door open, always ready to catch up with agents face-to-face. At the same time, he’s preparing for the future—laying the groundwork for a thoughtful succession plan that will honor the legacy his team helped build.

“We have great leadership and talent at the office who are interested in sustainability. Some of our agents have

been with us for 35 years, so I need to protect what they’ve worked so hard for. Future plans will be made with folks who want to step in, own part of the company, and are passionate about it.”

Outside of work, Robert and his wife are happiest being outside, near the water—whether at the lake or the Gulf, out walking their dog, or on the road in their motorhome visiting grandchildren in Birmingham and Memphis. Years ago, Robert underwent a kidney transplant, receiving the gift of life from his own son—something he reflects on with deep gratitude daily.

“So every holiday, birthday, Father’s Day, Robert, Jr. reminds me he gave me a kidney. I am eternally grateful for his ‘gift of life’ 12 years ago.”

Despite a very successful career, Robert still feels motivated to get up and contribute to the franchise he and Vicki built and the industry that has offered him so much.

“I am most thankful for the agents who have placed their trust and careers in my hands, which allows me the opportunity to continue to be passionate about the career I have loved for 48 years, especially making such wonderful life-long friends along the way, like Genny Williams.”



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LIVING WITH PURPOSE AND

passion

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCCABE
PHOTOS BY FRANK CARNAGGIO PHOTOGRAPHY

“I am on a mission to get as many people in houses as possible,” says Shun Randolph.

“There is no limit,” she adds. Shun is quick to start conversations with those she meets each day.

You won’t find Shun sitting quietly on the sidelines. Whether she’s in the grocery store checkout line, walking in the park, or at her kids’ favorite jump park, she introduces herself with confidence and enthusiasm. “I introduce myself and tell them I am a REALTOR®,” she smiles. She asks them, “Have you bought a house?” If someone hasn’t bought a house, she helps them to think bigger and see that they could own a home. If the answer is no, Shun flashes a determined smile and replies, “Let’s change that.”

With her signature motto, “If you can rent, you can buy,” Shun is changing lives one conversation—and one closing—at a time.

Walking in Her Purpose

Shun’s real estate journey began with a desire to do something greater, not just for herself but for others. After spending years as a stay-at-home mom, she told her husband, “This is not me. I need a career.” That desire, paired with a deep-seated belief in the power of homeownership, lit the fuse for her career in real estate.

“I’ve always been in sales,” says Shun, who spent 11 years with AT&T before getting her license in January 2018. “Sales is in my blood—and so is serving people.”

But this mission runs even deeper than closing deals. It’s spiritual. “I feel like I am walking in my purpose, and God has His hands all over me,” she reflects. “When I considered becoming a REALTOR®, my cousin Devin told me that she saw my name on billboards and that I was going to be successful. Those visions that she saw for me eight years ago have definitely become true!”

Inspired by Her Mother

Raised in Brighton, Alabama, Shun grew up watching her mother, Tonya Riley, make miracles happen. A single mom of three, Tonya worked two and sometimes three jobs while attending cosmetology school, just to ensure her children never went without.

“We didn’t have a car in the beginning. We didn’t have much. But we always had a roof over our heads,” Shun recalls. “My mom made everything happen.”

Tonya passed away in January 2023, but her strength and sacrifice continue to be the heartbeat of Shun’s drive. “Everything I do, I do it for her.” Before her mother passed away, she saw her three kids succeed—and she was proud of every step Shun took.

Rising Star to Real Estate Powerhouse

Shun’s first six months in real estate were all about soaking it in. She held off on selling right away to learn every nuance

of the business. That patience paid off—by the end of her first year, she was named a Rising Star. Since then, she’s remained the #1 agent in her office. Her secret? A client-first mentality that never quits.

“I take pride in my clients. I make sure they’re happy from the very beginning—and that doesn’t stop at the closing table. I’m still here,” she shares. Long after the sale is done, she stays connected.

That connection fuels her growing referral base, as satisfied homeowners send friends, family, and coworkers her way.

Family is Her Foundation

If you see Shun at a closing, don’t be surprised if her entire family is there cheering her on. Her husband Henry, her 10-year-old son Kash and 3-year-old daughter Henley are part of her real estate rhythm. “They’re with me every step of the way,” she shares. “We’re a unit.”

Before her mother passed, she was also a regular presence at closings, showings, and open houses—her biggest cheerleader. And Shun’s support system doesn’t end there. Her aunt Elwonza, her sister Jaquice, and her brother Derrius (a fellow real estate agent in Alabama, Philadelphia, and Georgia) are always in her corner.

And then there’s Tondra, her transaction coordinator and real estate right-hand. “Without her, I’m lost. She helps me bring everything together. I’m so blessed to have her.”

Shy but Strong

Though she radiates confidence and warmth, Shun lets us in on a secret: “*I’m actually super shy*,” she laughs. “People would never know it, but I hide it well!”

She leans on her sister, Jaquice, to help her prepare for public speaking or big presentations. But once she’s in her element—talking to clients about homeownership—her shyness fades, and her passion takes over.

Shun’s advice for new agents is simple but profound: “Get yourself out there. Let people know who you are and what you do.”

Branding is more than just your face on a billboard. It’s building a reputation so strong that people know your name—

even if they’ve never met you. “If your clients aren’t happy, you won’t get referrals. But if they are? They’ll send everyone your way.”

Family Is Her Foundation

When she’s not showing homes or attending closings, Shun’s favorite place is anywhere with her kids—whether it’s walking in the neighborhood or watching them jump for joy at the local trampoline park.

“I’m very family-oriented,” she says. “My work and my family are intertwined. That balance is everything.”

What drives Shun Randolph is more than just ambition—it’s a powerful blend of faith, family, and unshakable purpose. With people moving from

“
**Get yourself
out there.
Let people
know who you
are and what
you do.”**

renting to buying, Shun is seeing people’s financial trajectory change right before her eyes.

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