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FAQ



WELCOME TO WEST VALLEY REAL PRODUCERS. REMEMBER THIS PUBLICATION IS YOUR VOICE, AND MY DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN TO DISCUSS ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY!

Q: WHO RECEIVES THIS MAGAZINE?

A: The top 500 agents in the West Valley of Arizona area. We pull the numbers each year (by volume). We cut off the list at number 500, and the next year's distribution is born. We did this again in January, based on the new top 500 agents in sales volume for 2024.

Q: WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THIS MAGAZINE?

A: Real Producers is about building a stronger, more connected real estate community. We believe that when we surround ourselves with successful, like-minded individuals, we can grow to new heights. This magazine is a platform designed to bring together the top 500 real estate agents and our trusted preferred partners, fostering an exclusive and collaborative network. Each month, we share inspiring stories, celebrate successes, and promote events that connect, inform, and inspire. Our mission is to build relationships and empower growth within the real estate industry.

Q: DOES REAL PRODUCERS HAVE EVENTS?

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

Q: WHO ARE THE PREFERRED PARTNERS?

A: Anyone listed as a "preferred partner" in the front of the magazine is part of this community. They will have an ad in every magazine issue, attend our events, and be part of our online community. We don't just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. One or many of you have personally referred every single preferred partner you see in this publication. Our partners hold a special piece to this puzzle since their partnership helps support our monthly publication. Without them, we wouldn't be able to feature our top agents or host our social events.

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

A: Being featured is simple and starts with a nomination. REALTORS®, affiliates, brokers, office leaders, and even self-nominations are welcome! If you know someone with an inspiring story, exceptional leadership, top-tier customer service, or a remarkable commitment to giving back, we'd love to hear about them. To nominate, send an email to laura.robinson@realproducersmag.com and share why you believe they should be featured. Your insights help us uncover stories we may not know about. Once a nomination is submitted, we'll reach out for an interview to ensure the feature is a great fit. If selected, our team will take it from there, coordinating an article write-up and scheduling a professional photo shoot.

Q: WHAT DOES IT COST A REALTOR/TEAM TO BE FEATURED?

A: Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. It costs nothing, my friends, so nominate away!

Q: HOW CAN I REFER A PREFERRED PARTNER?

A: If you know of any reputable business that wants to work with high performing agents and grow in the west valley, please let us know.



Laura Robinson

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Joe & Courtney

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARAH MEDINA

BOURLAND

A Real Estate POWER COUPLE with Heart & Drive

In the competitive world of real estate, it's rare to come across a duo whose success story is as captivating as their results. Joe and Courtney Bourland are just that—a husband-and-wife team whose dedication to their craft, their clients, and their community has made them stand out in Arizona's real estate scene.

A Love Story with a Strong Foundation

Joe and Courtney's journey together began in their childhoods. Courtney, a Seattle native, was born into a real estate family, so it's no surprise that the industry always felt like her calling. Joe, on the other hand, grew up in Yuba, California, and while real estate wasn't always part of his plan, his connection to Courtney was destined from the start. Their parents were friends, and though they lived in different cities, their paths would cross in unexpected ways. As teenagers, their families came together for a visit, and it was there that Joe laid eyes on Courtney again. Joe laughs as he recalls his nervous reaction: "I saw her and immediately ran away! But the next day, I got up the courage to talk to her, and from then on, we were inseparable." It didn't take long before Joe boldly told Courtney that he was going to marry her. Three weeks later, they did just that. Fast forward 26 years, and their love story is still going strong.

Building a Legacy Together

From the beginning, it was clear that Joe and Courtney were a perfect match. Joe's laid-back, easygoing attitude



balances perfectly with Courtney's unrelenting drive and ambition. These traits would serve them well as they transitioned into their real estate careers.

Courtney got her real estate license straight out of high school, but when she moved to San Francisco with Joe, she briefly worked at a title company to get a broader view of the industry. Joe obtained his real estate license in 2002, with the goal of building a business that could provide a limitless future for their growing family. It wasn't long before they realized that working for others wasn't their ideal path—they wanted to create their own brand and do things their own way. Their motto, "Do the right thing" quickly became the cornerstone of their

business philosophy. And it worked. In their first five years, the Bourlands sold over 100 homes per year, an impressive feat for any team, let alone one just getting started.

A Team Built on Loyalty and Accountability

While the industry is known for high turnover and ever-changing staff, Joe and Courtney have maintained the same transaction team for seven years—a rarity in real estate. Courtney is the mastermind behind the operations, ensuring that the behind-the-scenes processes run smoothly, while Joe is the face of the business, working directly with clients and helping them find their dream homes.

Together, they've built a team of 20 agents, and Joe



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“

You have two lives, and you start the second when you realize you only have one.”

Driftwood Coffee Co in Peoria, Joe and Courtney's favorite coffee place



Axiom Church in Peoria where the couple attend.

is deeply committed to coaching and mentoring them. “I instill the same values that have driven my own success: accountability, goal-setting, and a constant drive for improvement” says Joe. They encourage every team member to push themselves toward their personal and professional goals. For Joe, it’s all about developing a team that holds themselves accountable and takes ownership.

Giving Back: More Than Just Business

While the Bourlands have built a successful real estate empire, they never lose sight of the bigger picture. They believe in the importance of giving back and making a difference in their community. One of their most recent projects was a coat drive for a local



school in Peoria, Arizona. Through their efforts, they were able to raise 175 coats for children in need during their second annual coat drive, ensuring that no child went without warmth during the winter months. But their philanthropic efforts don’t stop there.

They are also involved with the Ronald McDonald House



Charities, which provides housing for families whose children are undergoing medical treatment. This cause is close to their hearts, as they personally benefitted from the charity when their son, Jackson, had to undergo multiple heart surgeries. The Bourlands understand firsthand how crucial it is to have a support system during times of hardship,

and they are committed to ensuring other families have that same support.

A Vision for the Future
Looking ahead, Joe and Courtney have set their sights on even bigger goals. Their first priority is to continue growing their philanthropic efforts, with plans to expand their coat drives and support more



“
They’ve created a legacy built on trust, dedication, and doing the right thing.”

charitable organizations in the future. In addition, they have a vision to broaden their reach by launching their own podcast. They recognize that the world of marketing is constantly evolving, and a podcast will allow them to connect with their clients in a fresh, engaging way.

As for business, their goal for 2025 is to close 225 transactions, a bold but achievable target for this dynamic duo.

Family First
Despite their business success, the Bourlands remain deeply connected to their family. Their two children, Levi (24), a college graduate currently working as a Real Estate wholesaler and Jackson (21), who is attending Florida State



Axiom Church in Peoria

University, are a constant source of inspiration. The Bourlands have instilled in their children the same values that have guided their own careers: accountability, hard work, and the importance of setting and achieving goals.

As a family, they share a love for sports, from cheering on the Seattle Seahawks

to watching NBA and MLB races. Joe is also an avid kickboxer, joking that he keeps up with his son’s friends, while Courtney starts her day with a moment of quiet reflection over coffee. Both of them believe in setting the tone for the day, and they start each morning with a huddle, reviewing their goals and celebrating their wins.

A Simple Philosophy: Win the Day

Joe and Courtney live by a powerful mantra: “You have two lives, and you start the second when you realize you only have one.” It’s a reminder to live each day with purpose, to seize every opportunity, and to never take a moment for granted. For them, success isn’t just about closing deals—it’s about building meaningful relationships and always striving to be the best versions of themselves. Joe and Courtney Bourland aren’t just a real estate team; they’re a testament to what happens when love, ambition, and hard work come together. They’ve created a legacy built on trust, dedication, and doing the right thing. And for them, the best is yet to come.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAUNE FARRAR
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Theresa Smith is more than just your average agent - she's a woman on a mission of turning houses into homes and clients into lifelong friends. With a heart as big as her hometown of Phoenix and a tagline that says it all - "Serving You With Love" - Theresa brings a refreshing, people-first approach to this crazy industry. Whether she's handing over keys, rallying fellow female entrepreneurs, or hopping on a plane to enjoy some time at her favorite place...Disneyland, Theresa's passion for connection and service fuels everything she does.

Growing up in Phoenix, specifically in Glendale's west valley, Theresa was deeply inspired by her parents' unwavering work ethic and faith in God. As the oldest of five children, she watched her mother dedicate herself as a stay-at-home mom, while her father worked tirelessly as the sole provider, often taking on extra shifts during his long career with Southwest Airlines. Witnessing his dedication and adaptability left a lasting impression on Theresa, inspiring her to join the company at just 19 years old.

Starting in customer service, Theresa dreamed of becoming a flight attendant, immersing herself in a career that emphasized connection, communication, and care. These foundational values shaped her perspective and later became the cornerstone of her approach to real estate, where building meaningful relationships and serving others remains her top priority.

As it was, it seemed as though the universe had a different plan for Theresa and after getting married, the idea of extensive travel no longer appealed to her...despite joking that she



may return to it as her retirement plan. Instead, she continued to find herself drawn to customer service and administrative roles, and transitioned into a career in property management where she discovered her passion for helping people find a place to call home while leasing apartments. "I always loved handing people keys, helping them move in, and watching them light up when they viewed model apartments," Theresa recalls.

Realizing her newfound passion for real estate, Theresa began working for Shea Homes in 2017. While she spent the majority of her days helping clients register and connect with other agents, the company was preparing Theresa to become an agent herself by sponsoring her real estate classes.

But like many journeys, Theresa's path wasn't without challenges as the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic brought furloughs, including five members of her team. After months of uncertainty and being told they would be in touch, Theresa made the decision to move on and hung her license with My Home Group, where she would ultimately discover new opportunities to grow and thrive.

"I just really genuinely love helping other people," Theresa prides. "This is an avenue to do that. I have a love for people and getting them into their homes." This genuine enthusiasm has been a driving force in Theresa's career thus far. She views real estate as a service and as a chance to build relationships and make a lasting impact in her clients' lives. "It makes me happy that they're happy," a sentiment that truly sets her apart from other agents.

While seeking mentorship and guidance early on in her real estate career, Theresa's team-oriented mentality

would be the key to her success. Joking, she admits, “Being a solo agent was never the plan.” Understanding the power a team would have on a growing agent, Theresa leaned into a team early on at the encouragement of a church-friend. This experience gave her a solid foundation to start with. Despite stepping away in 2023 to pursue her own vision, the values of support and teamwork remained central to her approach.

Throughout her journey within the male-dominated industry that is real estate, Theresa recognized the isolation that can sometimes come with being a solo agent. This realization prompted her to set a new goal as she branched out on her own - to create a women-focused real estate community... outside of the office. And what once began as a small idea, ultimately blossomed into a group of 14 like-minded women who meet regularly for coffee, collaboration, and camaraderie.

With the mindset to, “Always keep moving forward and surround yourself with people who will uplift you, support you, and be there for you,” Theresa’s group does just that - fostering a space for connection, idea-sharing, and mutual encouragement. Often touring model homes together, collaborating on social media projects, and serving their community, the female-forward group enjoys volunteering their time to serve.

At home, Theresa and her husband, Darren, a retired police officer of 20 years, enjoy spending time with their two children, Caden and Ella, and their beloved dogs, Snow (a Boxer) and Oliver (a French Bulldog). Life revolves around family activities, Ella’s competitive cheer practices and performances, and frequent trips to Disneyland. As season passholders and Disney Club members, Theresa and Ella are obsessed with the park and have made as many as nine trips in one year!

Beyond her personal and professional commitments, Theresa also has a heart for giving back and has participated in mission trips to Honduras, Colombia, and Mexico with her church. Volunteering in the church’s two-year-old classroom and at the church coffee shop has been another way for Theresa to give back to her community, further solidifying her dedication to service

Looking ahead, Theresa is focused on empowering others and more specifically, expanding her pro-female advocacy within the real estate industry by offering support and encouragement to women navigating the field. Whether she’s handing over keys to a new homeowner, mentoring fellow agents, or volunteering in her community, Theresa embodies the spirit of “Serving You With Love.”



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Isaiah Melendez

From Soldier to Real Estate Coach

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From Soldier to Real Estate Coach: The Journey of Isaiah Melendez

In the fast-paced world of real estate, few professionals bring the level of discipline, resilience, and leadership that Isaiah Melendez embodies. His journey from serving in the U.S. Army to becoming a premier real estate coach is a testament to the power of strategy, adaptability, and an unwavering commitment to helping others succeed.

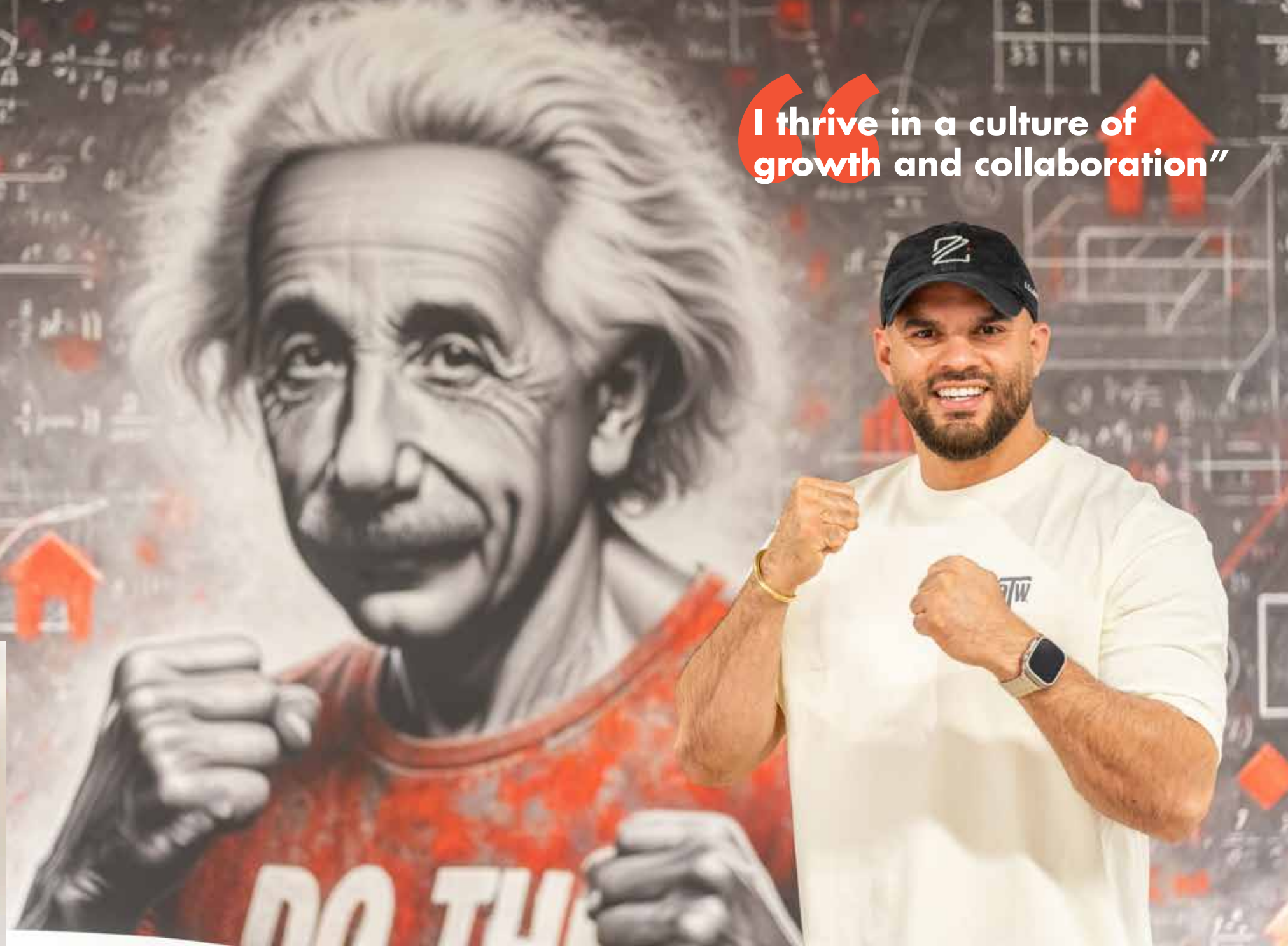
A Military Foundation for Success

Isaiah's story begins in New York, where he was raised before making the life-altering decision to serve his country. Joining the Army at a young age, he dedicated eight years of his life to military service, completing three combat tours—two in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. These experiences instilled in him the values of discipline, strategic thinking, and perseverance, qualities that would later become the cornerstone of his success in real estate.

Upon completing his military service, Isaiah faced a crucial decision about where to begin the next chapter of his life. After years of researching market trends and investment opportunities, he chose Arizona as his new home. More than just a change of scenery, Arizona represented a place of potential—one where he could build something meaningful and help others do the same.

Breaking Into Real Estate

With a sharp analytical mind and a deep understanding of commitment and execution, Isaiah wasted no time diving into the real estate industry. His early years in the business were



“I thrive in a culture of growth and collaboration”

marked by relentless self-education and an eagerness to master every aspect of the field. He initially joined a local brokerage, a move that, in retrospect, served more as a stepping stone than a transformational experience. “At the time, I didn’t realize there were better options out there,” Isaiah reflects. “Most of what I learned, I had to figure out on my own.”

It wasn’t until he transitioned to AZ & Associates that he found a brokerage

that aligned with his values, provided real mentorship, and fostered an environment of true collaboration. It was here that Isaiah’s career took a pivotal turn—not only as an agent but as a leader dedicated to guiding others toward success.

The Evolution into Coaching

Isaiah’s transition into coaching was a natural extension of his leadership experience in the military, where he trained and mentored soldiers to adapt

under pressure. When he entered real estate, he saw many new agents struggling to navigate an unfamiliar career. Recognizing his ability to guide others, he knew he could help agents develop the skills and mindset needed to succeed.

He began coaching and training agents at A.Z. & Associates, collaborating on lessons and programs designed to accelerate their growth. He officially began in 2016, provided agents with skill development, hands-on training, and

a 16-week intensive council with 24-hour support for higher producing agents.

Today, A.Z. & Associates helps agents at all levels build confidence and grow their businesses. For Isaiah, coaching isn't just about sales—it's about ensuring no agent has to navigate the learning curve alone.

A Commitment to Growth

In 2018, Isaiah expanded his coaching abilities beyond real estate agents to include lenders, tradespeople, and even professionals in unrelated industries. However, he quickly realized that his true passion lay in working exclusively with residential real estate agents. "I thrive in a culture of growth and collaboration," he says. "AZ & Associates is a place where people genuinely support each other, and that's the kind of environment I want to invest my energy into."

Isaiah's ability to inspire others stems not just from his knowledge of real estate but from his firsthand experience in overcoming challenges. The discipline and problem-solving skills he honed in the military have translated seamlessly into his coaching approach. His students don't just learn how to sell homes—they learn how to navigate obstacles, remain disciplined, and build sustainable careers.

Beyond Real Estate

Outside of coaching, Isaiah is a dedicated father to six children—three boys and three girls. Whether playing sports, going to the gym, or spending time at trampoline parks, he



cherishes every moment with his kids. "I love watching them grow and develop their own strengths," he says. "It reminds me why I push so hard every day."

At AZ & Associates, Isaiah Melendez is more than just a coach—he's a leader, a mentor, and a driving force behind the success of countless agents. His journey from the battlefield to the real estate industry has been anything but conventional, but every step along the way has shaped him into the powerhouse he is today.

For those looking to elevate their careers, Isaiah's story serves as a powerful reminder: success isn't just about talent—it's about mindset, strategy, and the willingness to outwork the competition. And under his guidance, the next generation of top-producing agents is already on the rise.



SARAH MEDINA
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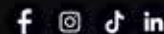


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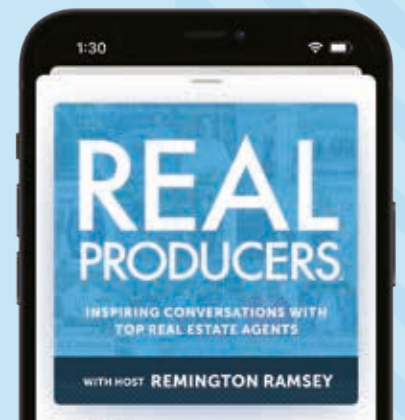
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Amber Ruiz:

A True Lending Professional with Heart & Passion

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY SARAH
MEDINA

“Passionate, Experienced, and Committed to Building Lifelong Relationships with Her Clients”

When you meet Amber Ruiz, you quickly realize that she’s found the perfect job for herself. Not just because she’s been in the lending business for over 20 years, but because she genuinely loves what she does. As Producing Branch Manager at Bison Ventures, Amber’s story is one of passion, dedication, and a commitment to her clients that goes far beyond the usual business transaction.

Amber joined Bison Ventures recently, and it didn’t take long for her to fall in love with the company’s culture, energy, and values. “It just felt like home!” she says, reflecting on her decision to make the switch. She’s excited to be working with three incredible owners—Stuart, Ryan, and Jeremy—who share her passion and aspirations for both the business and its clients. Amber appreciates the close-knit, family-oriented feel of Bison Ventures, even though the company is smaller than some of the bigger names in lending. The difference? The ability to provide a personal touch while

still offering the full power and service that clients need.

Previously, Amber had spent three years at Prime Lending, following a rewarding eleven-year stint at loanDepot, where she built up significant experience. But it was with Bison Ventures that she felt truly at home. “This is where I plan to spend the rest of my career,” she shares.

As a native of the area and a second-generation lending professional, Amber’s background in the business runs deep. Her

mother, Penny Davis, was a beloved figure in the industry, spending an impressive 42 years in lending before retiring last year. Amber followed in her mother’s footsteps, entering the business herself at the age of 19. She admits, “At first, I didn’t know I wanted to be in lending, but I needed a stable job after having my son, and it was my mom who suggested I give it a try. I immediately fell in love with it—and I’m good at it!”

With a career spanning two decades, Amber has a



2023 PLEA Charity Gala





“
Lending isn’t just a
business transaction for
me. It’s a relationship.”

wealth of experience and a deep understanding of the business. But what truly sets her apart from others in the field is her commitment to building relationships with her clients. “Lending isn’t just a business transaction for me. It’s a relationship,” she says, emphasizing the importance of being there for her clients through what is often the biggest financial decision of their lives. Amber prides herself on taking the time to explain the process, answer questions, and guide clients every step of the way.

Her clients often return for more than just home loans. Amber is there to help with refinancing, home equity lines of credit (HELOCs), second mortgages, and more. “Life can throw unexpected challenges at you,” she notes. “Sometimes you need to access equity, and I’m here to help.” It’s this level of care and dedication that has led to Amber forming lifelong connections with families, often helping multiple generations. She loves the feeling of being able to help a client buy their home and then return years later assist their children and or other family members in doing the same.

Amber isn’t just about business, though—her personal life is just as full of passion. Married to her high school sweetheart, Alex, Amber has two sons: Dominick, a sophomore studying business and finance at Grand Canyon University, and Jacob, a high school junior. Amber loves to spend time with her family, but she’s also incredibly involved in her community. She’s a big fan of event planning and, for Amber, it’s a hobby that feels just as rewarding as work. She loves organizing events for



Amber and Alex in Greece.



Amber and family.

the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association, including charity galas and golf tournaments, and often helps realtors with client appreciation events and her friends/family with celebrations. “That’s my happy place,” she says with a smile.

Amber’s love for travel also plays a significant role in her life. Whether it’s a trip to South Africa or a cruise around Greece, Amber embraces the chance to explore new places. Her upcoming birthday wish is to travel to Ireland—one more destination to add to her growing list of adventures.

With an impressive career that includes receiving various awards from Scotsman Guide every year since 2015, Amber’s reputation in the lending world speaks for itself. Her future at Bison Ventures looks bright, and

her goals for 2025 are clear: grow the West Valley branch, continue building lasting relationships with real estate agents and clients, and create a place where every loan officer wants to work. The company’s motto—“We Believe Expertise Without Empathy Is Failure”—is something that Amber stands by, and it’s exactly why she knows she’s made the right move. Senior Loan Officers Jill Donovan and Andrea Trocki have already joined the team and look forward to a fantastic 2025!

For Amber Ruiz, lending isn’t just a career—it’s a passion, a relationship, and a calling. And with her expertise, compassion, and commitment, there’s no doubt that she’ll continue to make a positive impact on every client she serves.



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