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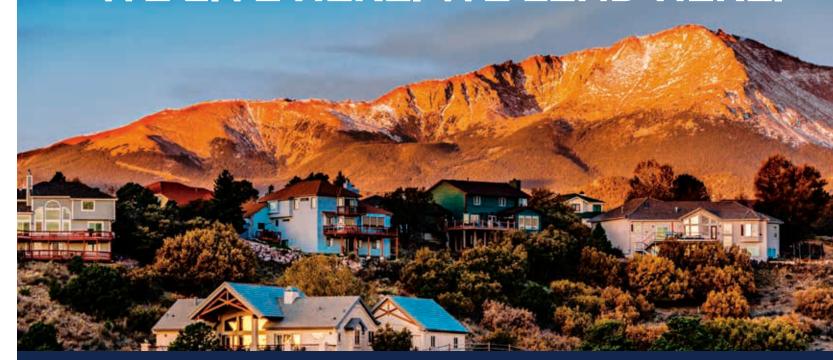
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#### **PUBLISHER'S NOTE**



Brian Gowdy and his cousin Jacob Twenhafel AKA EnderJacket at Colorado Cosmic Con. Jacob is an artist and had a booth at the event. Look for him at Colorado Springs Comic Con in August this year!

## WELCOME TO OUR MAY EDITION OF COLORADO SPRINGS REAL PRODUCERS!

In my last publisher's note, I had shared the importance of asking others for help. A few weeks ago, I made the first post promoting the first round of voting for the 2025 RP Awards and, fortunately, I took my own advice. I texted about 30 friends in the industry asking them to like, comment, and share the post. As a result, the post got traction and wound up being shared over 50 times! While I wish I could have gotten it there without asking for assistance, I know I couldn't have. Thank you all for answering my call when I needed help!

As of writing this, it's March 19th and we are about to finalize the nominees for the 2025 RP Awards. By the time you're reading this, the final round of voting will likely be over, the winners will have been decided, and the event will be approaching quickly! I hope to see you all at the 2025 RP Awards held from 6-10pm on Friday, April 25th at the Colorado Springs Marriott. If tickets are still available, you can buy them using the QR code on this page.

As always, the best way to support *Colorado Springs Real Producers* is to support our advertising vendors.

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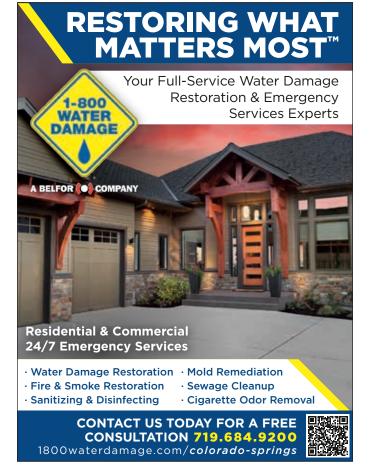
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## Reflections from The Editor

I was inspired by this month's featured agents, who are all grounded in their purpose and a sense of what it is that pulls them forward. They each serve as role models for staying true to what's most important in their lives and integrating their deepest values - not only in their work, but more broadly in their lives.

As we approach the middle of the year, it might be prime time for us all to do a little soul searching to reconnect with our own driving purposes. This kind of deep reflection invites us to

pay attention to the goings-on of our life in a whole new way, and perhaps to respond in new ways, too. We might explore deeper values and priorities, rethink outdated beliefs, confront fears, or create a deeper level of awareness about our self.



Tabby Halsrud
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She started meeting people who needed to make renovations in order to sell their homes, so she and Max, who is now a General Contractor, started investing and helping those clients get top dollar when they sold. She still works with a lot of investors and a bulk of her clientele are members of

the military. Maggie now believes that getting laid off has been a blessing.

Maggie feels especially proud when she helps a first time home buyer who didn't think it was possible for them to own a home. "I'm passionate about fighting for the underdogs," she added. As a Colorado native, she knows the area well and watches market trends, which enables her to guide clients to their best decision. This, along with her investment savvy, empowers her to recommend good investment opportunities and help her clients decide how much to put into a home. Maggie

prioritizes communication and listening to her clients' needs and she intuitively knows when to push them out of their comfort zone to consider unique properties that may not have been their first choice. For Maggie, it all comes down to doing the right thing. "These are people with feelings and I advocate for them. God has blessed me for this. I have done deals and made no money - I just do the right thing for the right reason."

Maggie has built strong relationships with fellow agents and is grateful to those who were willing to take her under their wing when she was just starting out. She surrounds herself with people who are willing to help, bounce ideas around, and want to see each other succeed. Her own willingness to learn along the way helped her find her own niche and her edge. She learns from her mistakes, even the small ones, and puts in effort to double check her work to ensure what she puts out is accurate. She's built VA and FHA expertise, which she happily shares with colleagues who have questions about VA Assumables.

Maggie and Max have a six-year old son, Maddox, who loves Minecraft and YouTube. Maddox has grown up in the real estate industry and sometimes joins Maggie at showings. The couple is expecting their second child this fall. Maggie confided that she "works to travel," which is a family pastime. They have a camper and paddle boards and enjoy camping, hiking, trying new places, and just being outdoors when it's nice. In



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the summer, they spend most weekends boating or jet skiing with friends.

Even though she is naturally competitive, Maggie has learned the importance of collaborating with other agents to get to the closing table. Her competitive spirit shows up strongest when she's pushing herself to do better year over year rather than competing with other agents. She has grown her transactions each year, received many referrals, and has gotten five-star reviews for her exemplary service. Maggie has also received industry accolades and awards, including being named one of the Top 100 Keller Williams agents in Colorado the past two years. When asked what it meant to her to be featured in Real Producers, Maggie expressed, "It is an honor. I've only been an agent for a few years but I've made a lot of progress in that time. This career isn't about me, though. I have gotten here by genuinely being a nice person and trying to help people."



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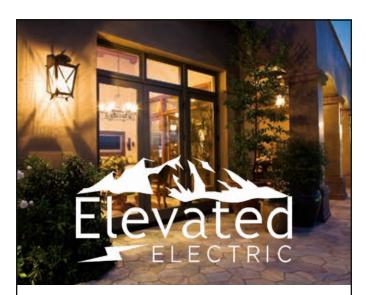
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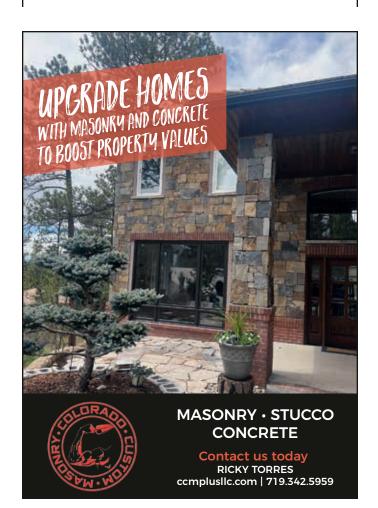
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earn a BFA in narrative film production. From a young age, he had a camera in hand, filming high school football highlights, outdoor adventures, and ultimately, stories that blended his love for nature and storytelling.

Nick's passion for the outdoors led him to a unique endeavor—Semester at Sea, where he produced a film about fly fishing around the world. The goal? To catch a fish on a fly rod in every location they visited. This deep connection to the outdoors would later play a key role in his real estate philosophy, one that emphasizes sustainability, healthy living, and the integration of nature into the home.

#### A Return to Real Estate

After years working in film and conservation, Nick found himself drawn back to Colorado Springs in 2018. His father made him an offer he couldn't refuse, presenting an opportunity to step into the family business. But rather than simply joining the ranks, Nick brought a fresh perspective one that merged his love for storytelling, design, and environmental consciousness with real estate.

Nick's approach to real estate goes beyond transactions; it's about honoring the land, the community, and the legacy of the places people call home. His passion for sustainable building practices and innovative home design has become a defining aspect of his career. From bio-lights that adjust to circadian rhythms to advanced air filtration systems, Nick is dedicated to creating living spaces that promote well-being and sustainability.

#### Honoring a Legacy While Forging a New Path

Joe Clement's passing was a profound moment for Nick. His father had built more than just a business—he had built a reputation for treating clients with unwavering honesty, integrity, and respect. That reputation is something Nick carries with him every day. "No matter what the situation is, you always have to treat the client right," he says. "That's something my dad



instilled in me, and it's something I strive to honor in everything I do." But Nick also brings his mother's influence into his work. She was passionate about the environment. conservation, and local parks—values that have shaped his approach to real estate. Whether it's incorporating green building materials, advocating for regenerative real estate practices, or educating clients on creating healthier home environments, Nick is committed to leaving a positive impact on the community.

#### **Beyond Real Estate: A Passion** for Coaching and the Outdoors

Outside of real estate. Nick is an active coach and mentor. Drawing from his background in athletics—having played football at the University of Colorado—he now dedicates time to coaching youth sports, including lacrosse, basketball, and soccer. He also runs the Pikes Peak Ascent annually, a testament to his commitment to staying active and pushing his limits. His love for hunting and fishing remains a central part of his life, with one of his most prized memories being an elk he harvested at 15 yards near Wilson Peak. The connection between nature and home is ever-present in his philosophy, reinforcing the idea that the places we live should inspire and sustain us.

#### Innovating for a Better Future

Nick's entrepreneurial spirit has led him to explore innovations beyond

traditional real estate. From developing an app that helps outdoor enthusiasts find the best locations for humanpowered activities to launching Endure Survival Kits—a company dedicated to providing high-quality survival gear—Nick is constantly looking for ways to solve meaningful problems. His work with Colorado Parks and Wildlife reinforced the importance of preparation and sustainability, which translates into his approach to real estate. Whether it's helping clients find homes that align with their health and wellness goals or designing spaces that are net-positive for the environment, Nick is committed to redefining what it means to build and live responsibly.

#### The Future of Nick **Clement Real Estate**

As Nick continues to build on his father's legacy, he is focused on more than just sales numbers—he's focused on impact. His goal is to help people create homes that not only serve as places of comfort but also contribute to their well-being and the greater good of the community.

With a deep appreciation for nature, a commitment to sustainability, and a client-first philosophy, Nick Clement is not just following in his father's footsteps—he's blazing a trail of his own, one that honors the past while embracing the future of real estate in Colorado Springs.





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that trust naturally extends, which makes initiating the move process easier and empowers Melysa's staff to do their job even better. Most of 5 Star's business comes from repeat clients and referrals. They have a soft spot for helping locals and appreciate the referrals that come later to help a prior customer's family members. Melysa reflected, "When you do a great job, you'll get referred to their family members and friends, too."

Referrals also come from real estate partners, who send clients desiring a high level of service. 5 Star has carved out a niche in serving customers who value their time and are willing to invest in a moving company. These clients, often age 55+, desire a hands-free experience. Whether their company is paying for a relocation, their move is happening quickly, or they have a lot of higher end furniture or antiques, these clients don't want to deal with the details of a move. They want help packing and want everything else to be done for them. Melysa shared, "5 Star is quality over quantity. We purposely only have five trucks and only leverage highly trained staff. Our passion and specialty is helping the customer who cherishes the things they have worked so hard for."

Melysa has gotten creative with different ways to work the transaction to help the REALTOR® better support the client. They occasionally work directly with title companies to write the cost of the move into the closing, so the customer doesn't have to pay for the move with separate funds. Melysa elaborated, "It's a nice option for customers who can't use a credit card while they are in the middle of their transaction or for customers who need storage for personal belongings before they close on a house. When the title company pays us directly, you don't have to worry about it affecting the closing or affecting the customer's credit. For

the client, it feels like less money out of their pocket and they know their move is taken care of before they even get their check."

5 Star also works with agents who want to cover part of the client's move as a gift. "The REALTOR® chooses how much they want to gift the client and pays us directly; the client then pays any remaining balance. This can be a great option for first time home buyers or younger buyers who may not yet understand the value of investing in a mover or who may be closely managing expenses."

The mover-REALTOR® partnership also comes

# 5 STAR MOVING & STORAGE

#### **Melysa Benedict**

WRITTEN BY TABBY HALSRUD CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY

Star Moving & Storage, a member of the Wheaton Van Lines family, is a fullservice company that offers packing, local and long-distance moves for private residential, storage, and commercial moves. Melysa Benedict, 5 Star President, values the partnerships she has created with local real estate professionals and prides herself on helping agents be the "hero" for their clients. "Real estate transactions are supported by four main legs - the REALTOR®, the lender, the title rep, and - the mover. With those four things in place, it sets up the customer experience and we are an essential part of that experience. When clients are moving, especially from out of state, they need recommendations for everything."

Like the real estate transaction itself, hiring a moving company is an emotional, personal and stressful part of the experience. Clients trust their REALTOR® and appreciate recommendations from that source. When the client is referred to 5 Star



into play when clients need storage during a move process. This may be important in new builds or homes that sell quickly and the client needs to store their belongings while they search for a new home. 5 Star is not a self-storage facility; instead they offer full service storage and full liability in their 20,000 square-foot warehouse. Another trend that Melysa has observed in home sales is staging and bringing in allnew furniture to replace the customer's. 5 Star initiates a two-part move, packing, removing, and storing the customer's belongings to make space for the staged furniture. When the house is sold, they return to pick up the remaining personal belongings, delivering everything to the new home.

Like many other service industries, 5 Star experiences labor issues and turnover, but Melysa is proud to share that they don't use temporary help or day labor. Movers are trained with a five-step process which is followed by written, oral, and performance testing. 5 Star pays well, provides incentives and benefits, offers an Employee of the Month program, and hosts team barbecues, which all contributes to a strong company culture and supports retention. Additionally, 5 Star is familyoriented and provides emotional comfort which motivates staff members to work harder. Melysa is proud to invest in her employees and has seen the payoff from doing so.

Other ways that 5 Star distinguishes themselves

from other companies include providing moving prep videos and pointers for out of state clients, offering binding quotes ("What you are quoted is what you pay, unless you change or add services," said Melysa), and being a one-stop-shop. Melysa elaborated on this last point, sharing that 5 Star Moving & Storage is not a broker. Phone calls go directly to them, and the customer is with the same driver and truck for the duration of the move.

Melysa hopes to educate real estate professionals and clients on a few key points. First, she encourages REALTORS® to check the American Trucking Association website (Trucking.org) before hiring a mover. All reputable movers are registered with them and here, you can check for any prior complaints about the moving company. 5 Star is a certified ProMover through the American Trucking Association and upholds the ethical and professional standards of the organization, which provides customer service agents to help resolve any disputes involving ProMovers. Whether you choose to move with Wheaton or not, Melysa wants you to work with a trusted professional.

Second, even with skilled labor and great care, sometimes damage occurs during a move. Which takes us to the third point: Colorado, as well as the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for all interstate moves (FMCSA - www.fmcsa.dot. gov/protect-your-move),

requires movers to offer free minimal reimbursement against damage and an optional upgrade to full repair/replacement valuation against loss or damage. Unfortunately, not all movers will offer these, so Melysa encourages buyers to beware, and walk away if it is not offered up front!

In addition to residential, 5 Star provides commercial and office moves and helps out with other commercial logistics work such as receiving mattresses in bulk for local sellers, and receiving furniture from wholesale companies for designers and stagers.
Melysa elaborated, "These wholesale companies only deliver to a dock, so we receive it and then later deliver it to the home and help assemble and place it. We've done this for Parade of Homes and in other similar situations and would love to scale this part of the business over the next year."

Having been in business for 17 years now, Melysa is confident that they have been doing the right things and she's eager to see where the business goes next.





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DIRECTED BY SHIREKA STRANGE CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY

orn and raised in North Carolina, Shireka spent over six years serving in the Air Force—a chapter that instilled discipline, resilience, and a deep appreciation for service. In 2009, she and her husband Robert relocated to Colorado Springs, choosing to plant roots and raise their family in this vibrant community.

Family is at the heart of Shireka's life. Their 14-year-old daughter is deeply involved in gymnastics, dedicating countless hours to training and competitions. Their 10-year-old and 8-year-old sons bring boundless energy and joy to the household. Notably, Robert and all three children share a March birthday—truly embodying the essence of "March Madness" in their home.

The Strange family cherishes quality time together, often engaging in activities that strengthen their bond. They enjoy working on puzzles, which not only provide entertainment but also foster collaboration and connection. Additionally, they prioritize one or two significant trips each year, creating lasting memories and exploring new destinations.

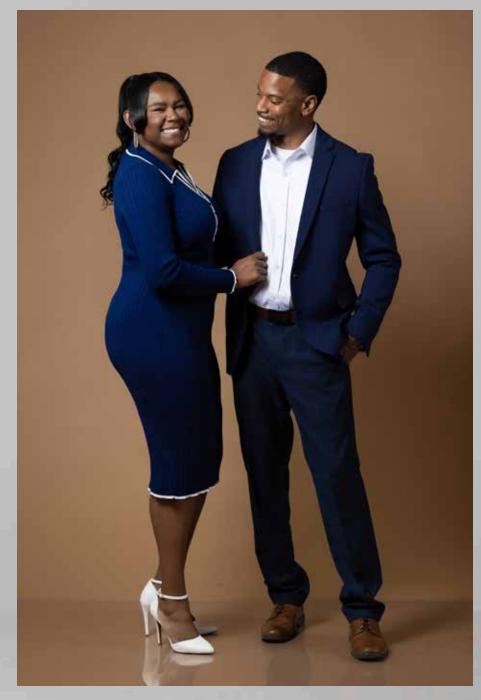
Shireka's parents, Fred and Shirley Richardson, have been pillars of unwavering love and support throughout her life. Their constant encouragement has motivated Shireka to strive for excellence, and her parents' belief in her potential drives her to make them proud in all her endeavors.

After the birth of their first child,
Shireka and Robert faced the heartwrenching experience of two
miscarriages in consecutive years.
These challenging times deeply affected
them, yet they found solace in enduring
the pain together. This journey taught
them how to support and encourage
others navigating similar losses. Shireka
now feels called to be "a mouthpiece
for God," sharing her story to offer
comfort and hope to those in need.

Transitioning from military service,
Shireka sought a career that would
provide flexibility to be present for
her family. Real estate was the answer,
allowing her to serve others while
prioritizing her loved ones. She earned
her real estate license in October 2017
and has embraced the role of "The
Preferred REALTOR®," specializing in
assisting military families. With 90% of
her family having served or currently

serving, she feels a profound connection to those who have dedicated their lives to service. Helping military personnel relocate to and from Colorado is more than a profession—it's a calling.

Shireka is deeply grateful for the unwavering support of her husband, Robert, and their pastors, Ronald and Stacy Woodson. Robert's 20+ years in sales have been a guiding light for



her, encouraging her to step beyond her comfort zones and reminding her that her voice and services are valuable. Pastors Ronald and Stacy have been steadfast presences throughout her journey—from her transition out of the military to her real estate career—always offering belief and support. Their leadership by example has profoundly influenced her approach to both personal and professional life, inspiring her to lead with integrity and compassion. Reflecting on her path—from military service to real estate—Shireka is reminded of the core values that guide her: integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all that she does. Each chapter has prepared her to better serve her clients, ensuring they find not just a house, but a place to call home.





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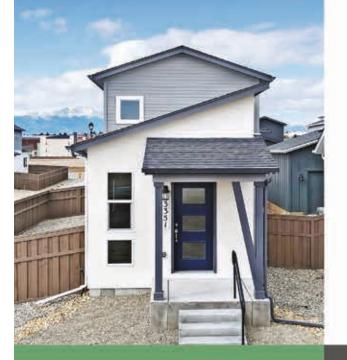






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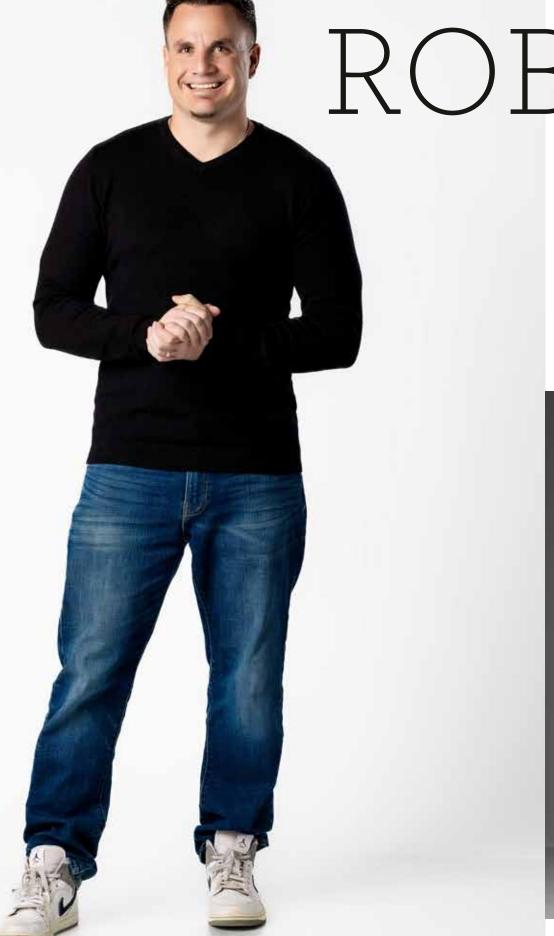
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## HOBEN

DIRECTED BY ROB HOBEN CASA BAY PHOTOGRAPHY

#### A BUSINESS BUILT ON FAITH & RELATIONSHIPS

Taking a leap of faith has been a defining theme in Rob Hoben's journey. With his first child on the way, he made the bold decision to move from Denver to Colorado Springs, not knowing anyone in the city, to pursue a career in real estate. At the time, he was managing a Texas Roadhouse but returned to serving at the Colorado Springs location, where a simple

conversation changed his path. A fellow server connected him with Lauren Collier, who was looking for a real estate partner. That introduction would shape the course of his career.

Rob first worked with Lauren at Epic Real Estate Group and later followed her when she established Live Dream Colorado. As her buyer's agent, he immersed himself in contracts, inspection objections, and resolutions. Lauren's meticulous attention to detail taught him the importance of precision in every aspect of real estate. Looking back, Rob is incredibly grateful for the invaluable mentorship she provided, which helped lay the foundation for his future success.

When he was introduced to The Cutting Edge, REALTORS®, Rob embraced another opportunity for growth. He became a team lead for Gary Martinez and Amy Kunce-Martinez, learning from their experience and leadership. Eventually, he took another step forward, transitioning to an independent agent and leading his own team. Although he no longer works with The Cutting Edge, he remains deeply appreciative of the knowledge, support, and mentorship he received. He continues to recommend the brokerage to agents seeking a strong, collaborative environment.

Another leap of faith led to the creation of The Hoben Group Brokerage. Having earned his employing broker's license, Rob partnered with Kelly Bergendahl to build something new. The brokerage is a true family endeavor—his wife, Amy, plays a vital role in client outreach and marketing, while Kelley's husband, Evan, provides mentorship in faith, health, and financial management. "I love what we have right now. We are truly a family on both a personal and business level, following God & our Faith in everything we do."



Over the past decade, Rob has learned that patience and trust in God's timing are crucial. "Through the ups and downs, in seasons of uncertainty, and during slow periods early in his career as he was building & learning, it's vital to stay focused on the fundamentals. It's not just about transactions—it's about relationships. Even when business is booming, we make time for personal connections with clients, because they aren't just clients, they are family to us."

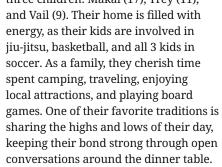
Rob's wife Amy, who works in oral surgery, were recently married in Mexico and share a blended family of three children: Makai (17), Trey (11),

of Rob's life and business. A key mentor from his restaurant days, Mike Murphy, by today: put God first, prioritize family, and build meaningful relationships. "Mike was a Christian and big on self-development. He introduced me to Zig Ziglar and Jim Rohn, but more importantly, he taught me to lean on my faith and to genuinely care for people. He was my first anchor."

"I DON'T CHASE LEADS OR MAKE COLD CALLS—I FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS, NOT REAL ESTATE, AND GOD TAKES CARE OF THE REST."

That lesson remains at the heart of The Hoben Group Brokerage. "I don't chase leads or make cold calls—I focus on relationships, not real estate, and God takes care of the rest." Rob is especially passionate about the negotiation process of a real estate transaction, making sure to get his clients what they want & need in the process, & not settling for less. "It's all in what questions you ask, not being afraid to push for whats right, & nothing less."He approaches every deal with respect and professionalism, yet he is relentless in ensuring his clients are in the best position, both financially and strategically. "You can be tough in negotiations while still being kind. You don't have to be cutthroat to succeed. Both sides can win & come out on top!"

At the end of the day, Rob's motivation comes from his faith. "If you treat people well and keep the faith, God will take care of the rest. Everything falls into place according to His plan." For Rob, real estate isn't just about buying and selling homes—it's about serving others, building lasting relationships, most importantly, doing his best to find & live out his purpose God had planned for his life. Real estate is just part of the picture, relationships are everything.



Faith has always been the cornerstone instilled in him the values he still lives





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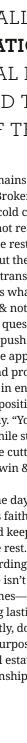
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**38** • May 2025 Colorado Springs Real Producers • **39** 



Originally from California, Johnny Allen was working as an account manager for a lab that did testing for technical products. He was starting to feel unfulfilled and became curious about what possibilities might exist for a new career path. He had never considered a real estate career until Kasey, a friend of his living in Colorado Springs, invited him as her "plus one" on a trip with her real estate team. Johnny met all of Kasey's teammates, who included him in their conversations about real estate. He made an instant connection with a few of them, including Justin Black, and he knew without a doubt he had just discovered his new career! Within the next two months, Johnny sold his California home, got his license in Colorado, bought a house in Colorado Springs, and joined the team he had met on that trip.

He loved working with the people on this high producing team. Doing a lot of deals in a short period of time, Johnny quickly learned how to be a good REALTOR®. Taryn Simental and Leighanne Potts taught him everything he knows. He recalled, "They were both so busy, doing a lot of business, but they were still incredibly available to me and willing to sit down with me." Justin Black, who he had connected with during the trip, also served as a

source of inspiration. "I was impressed by how driven and organized Justin was. I learned so much from him, too. I was watching his results and knew that he was what I wanted to emulate." Johnny recalls fondly how many friends he made during his time there.

But the next chapter in Johnny's real estate journey was an exciting one, bringing him to an incredible new brokerage as a solo agent. While he was a little nervous about making a change, he was confident that he knew what he was doing and found the courage to go out on his own. He had learned a lot about how he wanted to do business and was eager to do business under his own name. Gary and Amy, the managing

brokers at The Cutting Edge, were very supportive and patient with him during his transition. They have been great to work with and he knows that his continued success as a solo agent is due in part to them and their support. Johnny was excited to apply everything he had learned as he ventured out as an independent agent. He still gets to enjoy the team vibe that he loves and appreciates the collaborative environment at The Cutting Edge. All of his early real estate experiences have shaped Johnny into the agent he is today.

Now, Johnny enjoys the perks that his real estate career provides. He appreciates that every day is different and he loves creating his own life and



cultivating a sense of balance that works for him. He works with a lot of first time homebuyers and feels fulfilled knowing that he's helping them and throughout the whole process. He loves seeing firsthand their excitement at closing.

Outside of work, Johnny loves spending time with his friends. He regularly attends concerts and still prefers to watch movies at the theater. Lately, he's been enjoying trying new things like golf and all the outdoorsy things that he never did in California.

Being featured in Real Producers means a lot to Johnny. He shared, "I've seen my peers and mentors be featured so it feels like a high honor. It's not something I expected, but is something I definitely wanted!" Johnny enjoys attending the Real Producers Awards and in 2024, he won the People's Choice Award.

Johnny with Freddy, Chucky, and Franky (left to right)





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When Brittany Duncan and her husband Donald purchased their first house in 2019, she loved the process of touring homes. She had been working in the front office at a doctor's office and when the COVID pandemic was in its early stages, she decided to leave and work on getting her real estate license. She was expecting her second child at the time and their babysitter was immuno-compromised and couldn't risk the exposure while Brittany worked in the doctor's office and decided to quit. **Staying home with her** two children was the best decision for their family. She used that time to study and when she took her real estate test, the proctor told her it was one of the highest scores she had seen; Brittany earned her license in 2021.

She had been following The Top Notch Home Team for a year and loved what they were putting out. She admits to being a little "star-struck" and shied away from interviewing with them at first. Brittany spent several months working for other brokerages but hadn't found her best fit yet. She later decided to interview with Stone Gable and the Top Notch Home Team and has been with them for three years now. Through this experience, Brittany learned the importance of finding the right fit and aligning with others whose beliefs are aligned with hers, whose approach to working with leads plays to her strengths, who practice an open-door policy, and where she feels supported and valued.

Brittany is proud that she sold five homes during her first year, basically on her own, and is forever grateful for the friends and clients who trusted her in those early days. She learned an early lesson: not to be a "secret agent." She wishes she would have been more willing to share with her sphere that she was venturing into real

estate. Now, Brittany still enjoys touring homes, but is even more passionate about seeing the look in her clients' eyes when they find "the one." She loves being there for such a huge milestone and guiding people through the process, whether her clients are buying or selling.

Brittany met her husband Donald, an Army vet, online and it was truly love at first sight. They were married within three weeks of dating and recently celebrated their 11th anniversary. The Duncans have two daughters: Payton, age 9, and Rylee, age 4. Being a movie buff, Brittany chose her daughter's names from movies. The Duncans love spending time together and with their closest friends who are like family. They enjoy playing games, barbecuing (even in the snow!), fishing, and watching movies. Brittany's favorite genre is Fantasy/Super Hero Fiction and she is currently obsessed with Wicked, Marvel, and especially Harry Potter. Rylee is in preschool half-days and frequently accompanies Mom at work. When she was an infant, Rylee wore a shirt that said "REALTOR® IN TRAINING."

Their eldest daughter Payton was born with two disabilities, one being a bone disease. Payton has two limbs that are shorter than the others and wears a shoe lift. Brittany is her daughter's parent CNA and they are hoping that beginning next year, Payton will undergo lengthening surgeries, which will require her to be in a wheelchair for several months. When they purchased their home, they didn't take her future medical needs into consideration, which in turn has made Brittany have buyer's remorse. The bedrooms and bathrooms of their home are all on the second floor, which will make it difficult to assist her daughter on a daily basis.



Her family's experience with this has inspired Brittany to approach her clients' needs differently. She looks beyond their current needs to consider potential future needs. If clients mention that there is a potential for a future life-changing event, like a parent moving in or a family member anticipating a medical procedure, Brittany keeps that in mind throughout the search process. As they tour homes, she asks them, "If the possibility becomes a reality, will this house work for you?" Rather than rushing them to choose a home, it's more important to Brittany to be patient and work on the client's time, so they find a home they love and that will meet their needs. She doesn't want her clients to regret

a purchase later and really makes an effort to help them circumvent any potential issues. She desires a quality of life for the whole family that allows for potential future changes. Brittany hopes to expand this specialization in the future and help people with disabilities find Accessible homes.

Brittany is very empathetic and patient with her clients and believes that everyone deserves to be treated well, regardless of their price point. She is proud that she has won awards acknowledging her for being a great team player because she truly embodies this. She won the Team Player award at Stone Gable after her second year there and was nominated for the Real

Producers Team Player award, the same year. She is honored that these accolades affirm that others see the goodness in her heart and experience her as she strives to be. Brittany feels honored to be featured in Real Producers, and sees it as a reflection of her amazing clients and supportive team. She's grateful for the opportunity to do what she loves every day. As one who has sometimes been hard on herself, these acknowledgments help her know that she is doing better than she sometimes admits and that her self-belief and self-confidence have grown. Brittany truly has the heart to help others in any way she can; she knows that this is part of her life purpose.



## **Meet Your Inspector**

Inspections Over Coffee
Inspector Jerry Forsythe

### What brought you to this field?

For many years, I ran a large home appraisal branch. I was ready for a change and knew I wanted to do something where I could stay connected with the client relationships I'd built over the years, which brought me to my job as a home inspector.

### What do you love about your work?

I love being out in the field (not at a desk), meeting and working with great people and seeing interesting properties.

#### **Fun facts:**

My wife and I have been married for 19 years, and we have three sons who play many sports throughout the year. I enjoy hunting, fishing, skiing, being outdoors, and spending time with my family. I also coach football and lacrosse.



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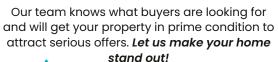
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Sumer Liebold followed the footsteps of her grandmother into a real estate career. She grew up in the small town of Gunnison, CO then accepted a full-ride scholarship to play basketball at Mesa State University. After three years at Mesa, she relocated to UCCS where she graduated with a Business and Marketing degree. During her time at UCCS she worked at the Broadmoor Golf Club, where she met her husband Eric, a then golf pro for the hotel. After getting married in 2005, the two embarked on a year-long honeymoon. They lived in the Florida Keys for nine months, working at an upscale private island boutique hotel, then traveled the east coast and Northern Michigan for the rest of the year. When they returned to Colorado, Sumer's older brother encouraged her to launch a corporate housing business, which she did in 2007. Noticing that many of her clients were fully relocating to Colorado Springs she decided to get her real estate license to better serve them as they transitioned from renting to buying their new home. She decided to make real estate her full-time career in 2010 and ultimately joined 8z Real Estate. She still manages a few of her own furnished rentals.



Rachel M Sullivan Photography

In its early days, 8z was an online leads company which was pivotal in launching her real estate career. Sumer quickly learned that she preferred building a personal sphere over working online leads and is grateful that the company has since shifted its focus. Having grown up in a small town, building a community with quality connections has always been important to her. She loves investing in deeper connections and building relationships to build her business. She shared that the best part of this business is the lifelong friends she has been able to make.

Real estate is a family business for Sumer. Her grandmother sold real estate on the western slope until she passed last year, and was named REALTOR® of the Year when she was 84. Her brother, aunt and cousin all sell as well. In fact, it was with her cousin Candice Graham that she started the Colorado Springs branch of 8z in 2010. Both have since become partners in the company. Sumer added, "I love that 8z has a small family culture but is also a collaborative, high producing environment that is full of professional, full-time agents."

Sumer's true passion is selling the old historic homes in the Old North End and on the West side. She admits that it can be

challenging for these old homes to pass inspections, but Sumer loves that every home has a story with multiple chapters. She shared, "Many of these homes have been in families for years; I recently encountered one home whose owner had celebrated over 90 Christmases there!" Sumer enjoys telling the story to help the buyer connect to the home. "These buyers are into that historic charm, so sharing the story is an important part of the sales process." Sometimes, Sumer includes tidbits about the home's history by placing plaques throughout the house, pointing out an interesting historical fact or what's original to the house. Sumer and her family have lived in the Old North End since 2010 and can't imagine living anywhere else. "The kids can play with all the neighborhood kids, riding their bikes and playing basketball in the street. It's the ideal place to raise our kids." Sumer ran the Old North End events committee for a few years and is still an integral part of community events.

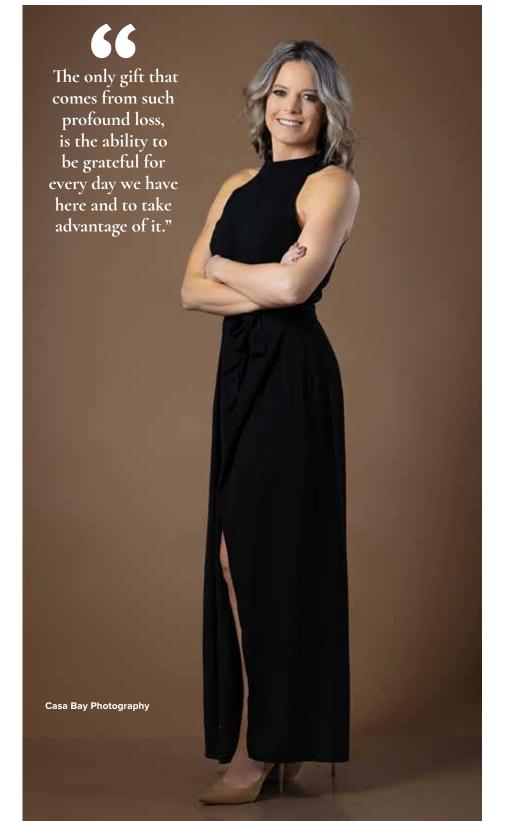
Sumer and Eric currently have three children. Their oldest Claire is a freshman in high school, and they have two sons - Jack is in middle school and Bennett is a second grader. In 2015, the Liebolds suffered a full term stillbirth of their daughter, Emilie

Hope. Shortly after, Sumer's dad passed away from cancer at the age of 54. These losses have shaped their family life and how they choose to live - putting family and living life to its fullest as their top priorities. "The only gift that comes from such profound loss, is the ability to be grateful for every day we have here and to take advantage of it. We want our kids to see the world and are spending ten weeks in Europe this summer. We only have a small window of time to spend with them, so we are doing it!!" The Liebolds' other family member is their Goldendoodle Leland, named after a small town in Northern Michigan they love to visit in the summer. When they are not busy with the kids' sports, this family enjoys time at their home in Breckenridge to ski, hike, and mountain bike. Sumer also loves coaching the kids' recreational basketball teams.

Giving back to the community has always been a priority for Sumer and Eric. In 2013, they launched Couples who Care, a quarterly giving circle that raises money for various nonprofits. They were inspired to start this initiative after Sumer was involved in several silent auctions that took a lot of time and money but ended up having little financial impact. Sumer heard of Women who Care from a friend, and she and Eric were inspired to create something that they could do together and that would provide an avenue for connection and philanthropy amongst other couples. At the quarterly happy hours, three charities get to speak to the group and the "winner" receives that night's proceeds. Members are requested to commit to giving at least \$100 per quarter and the group is currently giving \$10,000 per quarter to the charity. Sumer elaborated, "Magical connections

happen in that hour. Sometimes, the charities will decide to collaborate on something and other times, couples may choose to give to one of the other charities that didn't win that night. It's an incredible group; we have given about \$250,000 to local charities since its inception."

Sumer is grateful to be featured in Real Producers. "I love reading these stories! This is a small village we are part of and because it can be really transactional, we may never come to know about the agent behind the scenes. This is really incredible and I'm honored to be part of it!"



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SANDI, THIS GIRL ROCKS IT! SHE CAN SHIFT WITH US DURING A TRANSACTION AND KEEP UP LIKE NO ESCROW OFFICER I'VE WORKED WITH. WE ALL KNOW REAL ESTATE ISN'T ALWAYS A STRAIGHT SHOT TO THE FINISH LINE, LOTS OF TWISTS AND CURVES BUT SHE KEEPS UP EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

SO GRATEFUL FOR BEN GOSZ AND JERAD LARKIN FOR INTRODUCING US. WE ACCOMPLISH MORE IN OUR FIELD WHEN OUR TITLE TEAM IS KILLING IT IN THEIRS! THANKS AGAIN GUYS... FOR ALWAYS CHECKING IN, PROVIDING US TOOLS TO INCREASE OUR BUSINESS, AND INTRODUCING US TO THIS AWESOME TITLE COMPANY.

I HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH SANDI FOR MOST OF MY TRANSACTIONS; HOWEVER, WHEN I GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH MEGAN, IT IS ALWAYS A PLEASURE. I RECOMMEND CHICAGO TITLE, 10 OUT OF 10!



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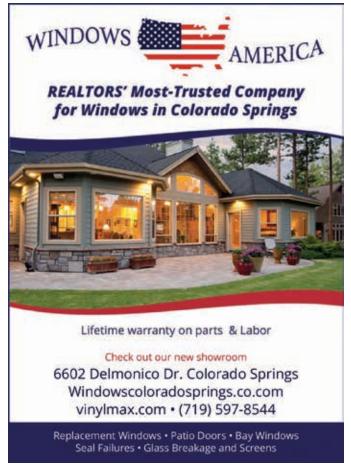
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