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OCTOBER 2025

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**Whether in the kitchen or in real estate, it all comes down to creating space for connection.**

## This Week's Menu

**Sunday Dinner** - Hickory-Smoked Italian Beef Sandwiches on Fresh-Baked Rolls, Crisp Broccoli Salad with Sunflower Seeds & Tangy Dressing

**Monday** - Oven-Baked Bell Peppers stuffed with Seasoned Turkey & Garden Herbs

Tender Roasted Asparagus with Olive Oil & Sea Salt

**Tuesday** - Taco Tuesday - Hand-Pressed Tortillas filled with Seasoned Meat, Fresh Salsa, & Lime Crema

**Wednesday** - Smoked Roast Beef & Provolone on Rustic Sourdough

Served Warm & Melty, Straight from the Skillet

**Thursday** - Leftover Night

**Friday** - PIZZA!

**Lunches** - Creamy Egg Salad with Farm-Fresh Eggs & Dill

You know how sharing a meal with family or friends just makes everything feel easier and more connected? That's what I love most, those little moments around the table where conversation flows and relationships grow.

Honestly, real estate isn't all that different. When I sit down with clients, it's the same kind of connection. It's about listening, laughing, and building trust. So whether it's over tacos on Tuesday or talking through a new home search, it's all about creating those real, lasting connections.

# Lara A. Locke

Senior Loan Officer - Branch Manager

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# MODERN DWELLINGS

*More than Real Estate Agents*

One of the best parts of my job is getting to partner with people who bring both heart and talent to the table, and Christian and Molly Gurrola are exactly that. As a mother-son team, they've built something special at Modern Dwelling in Riverside. Molly has this calm, steady way of guiding clients that instantly puts people at ease, while Christian brings the energy and fresh ideas that keep everything moving forward.

What I admire most is how they treat every client like family. Whether it's celebrating a small milestone or handing over keys on closing day, they make the process feel personal and meaningful. You don't just work with them, you feel supported every step of the way. Their mix of experience and innovation makes them a team that can meet clients exactly where they are. And the way they genuinely care shines through in every conversation.

I'm grateful to partner with them, not only because they're great at real estate, but because they remind me of what this business is really about and that is trust, connection, and walking through life's biggest moments together.



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LOCAL PERKS	•	•	•
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND MATERIALS	•	•	•
EXCLUSIVE EARLY ACCESS	•	•	•
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A PLACE IN THE AGENT FINDER	•	•	•
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12 COVER STORY Sparks Realty Partners

If you are interested in nominating people for certain stories, please email us at: marissa@n2co.com



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TITLE



# 2024

## BY THE NUMBERS

Here's What The Top 500  
Agents In INLAND EMPIRE  
Sold In 2024

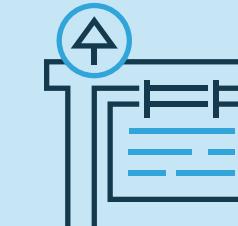


23

AVERAGE TRANSACTIONS  
PER AGENT



TOTAL  
TRANSACTIONS  
**11,066**



SALES  
VOLUME  
**\$7,723,255,059**



**\$15.45 Million**  
AVERAGE SALES VOLUME  
PER AGENT



# SPARKS

## REALTY PARTNERS

AT TOWER  
AGENCY

### Jason Sparks & Ashley Adkins-Kleine

WRITTEN  
BY TERRINA  
RUSSELL  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY MARISSA  
MCCUTCHAN  
AND SUBMITTED  
BY SPARKS  
REALTY  
PARTNERS

Jason Sparks and Ashley Adkins-Kleine built their real estate partnership on something deeper than shared listings, they built it on community, consistency, and trust. Today, as Sparks Realty Partners under Tower Realty, they operate with a rare balance: equal parts professionalism and friendship, bringing nearly four decades of combined experience to every client they serve.

Jason had already established himself as a seasoned realtor with decades in the business when he first met Ashley. She was working in a local restaurant where Jason often networked, and she was in the process of earning her real estate license. Jason recognized her drive, energy, and natural ability to connect with people. At first, she came on as a buyer's agent, but over the years her role expanded into something much bigger - a partnership. What began as Jason mentoring Ashley has since evolved into a dynamic team that operates side by side, each bringing strengths that complement the other.

Their foundation is rooted in the Orange Crest, Woodcrest, and Mission Grove neighborhoods of Riverside, where both Jason and Ashley live and raise their families. The community isn't just where they work, it's where they've grown up, raised children, and built relationships that often extend beyond a closing table. Their clients are frequently friends before a deal, and nearly always friends afterward. That authenticity, where transactions turn into lifelong relationships, sets them apart in an industry where repeat business and referrals are the true markers of success.

This year they also added Jayde King to the Sparks Realty Partners family. While this wasn't initially in the cards, Jayde's passion to learn along with her infectious personality led Jason and Ashley to snatch her up, knowing instinctively that she's going to be a natural. They also couldn't do what they do without their Transaction Coordinator, Kristina Perez, who is a licensed agent herself but prefers the paperwork/behind the scenes work. She also keeps the team in line and able to go out and get the business.

Their local knowledge gives them an edge few can replicate. After years of working in Riverside, they know the details of the homes and neighborhoods intimately, down to the quirks of different builders and the strengths of each subdivision. Clients lean on them not just for market expertise but also for real-world insight about schools, sports programs, and the lifestyle of the community. For families moving into the area, Jason and Ashley aren't just finding a house, they're welcoming new neighbors into the fabric of the community they themselves live in.

Outside of sales, their commitment to Riverside is evident in the ways they give

back. Jason took it upon himself to replace the weathered military service banners lining Orange Crest's main road, first in 2020, and again in 2024, covering the cost so families wouldn't have to. Together, they've supported local youth sports, funded police department needs, and stepped in where they saw opportunities to make a difference. None of it was done for recognition, but rather from a genuine sense of responsibility to the place they call home.

At the core of Sparks Realty Partners is a philosophy that real estate is more than a career, it's a lifestyle. Jason often says he hasn't "worked a day" in 26 years because he loves what he does. Ashley echoes that same sentiment, noting that her first open house convinced her she was in the right place. For both, success has never been about chasing transactions. It's about consistency, relationships, and treating clients like family.

Family is important to both Jason and Ashley. Both are quick to point out that none of their success would be possible without the support of their families. Jason's partner Christine has been a steady source of encouragement, understanding the business while cheering him on every step of the way. His three children, Trevor, Travis and Terri, have grown up alongside his career, giving meaning and motivation to the long hours invested in real estate. Ashley shares that same foundation of support at home, with her husband Johnathan, and their two young children, Walker and Wyatt, who inspire her to balance family life with her dedication to clients. Together, these loved ones form the anchor that allows Jason and Ashley to give so much of themselves to their business and their community.

Looking ahead, neither Jason nor Ashley sees their team dynamics changing. Their shared vision is to keep growing, serving, and building relationships in the community that shaped them. Whether it's welcoming new families, helping longtime neighbors move into their next chapter, or showing up for local causes, they bring the same mindset: sparks of energy, commitment, and care that keep getting stronger year after year.



“

THEIR

# LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

GIVES THEM AN EDGE FEW CAN  
REPLICATE. AFTER YEARS OF WORKING  
IN RIVERSIDE, THEY KNOW THE DETAILS  
OF THE HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS  
INTIMATELY, DOWN TO THE QUIRKS  
OF DIFFERENT BUILDERS AND THE  
STRENGTHS OF EACH SUBDIVISION.”



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# ARBOR ONE ESCROW



WRITTEN  
BY TERRINA  
RUSSELL  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY MARISSA  
MCCUTCHAN

## Arbor One Escrow's story begins with a simple but powerful vision:

to create an independent escrow company that operates with full transparency and genuine care for its clients. From the very start, the mission was clear: set aside hidden agendas and focus entirely on the people they serve. That client-first philosophy didn't just shape the foundation of the company; it became the heartbeat of its culture and reputation.

Today, that vision extends across California, with a particularly strong presence in the Inland Empire, Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley, San Diego, and Orange County. Thanks to digital tools and mobile-friendly processes, Arbor One Escrow seamlessly supports agents and clients throughout the state, proving that location is no barrier to delivering exceptional service.

Innovation has been another cornerstone of Arbor One Escrow's journey. The team is committed to staying ahead of industry shifts through continuous training and the adoption of cutting-edge technology. Their recently launched Net Sheet App is a prime example. By allowing agents to generate accurate, branded net sheets instantly, it helps them respond quickly to clients and build trust. This focus on efficiency and communication ensures every transaction flows as smoothly as possible.

That commitment also shows up in the advice they share with agents and clients. Encouraging pre-escrow on listings gives everyone involved a head start. By opening title, ordering reports, and addressing potential issues early, Arbor One Escrow sets the tone for open communication and smoother negotiations. It's a proactive approach that minimizes surprises and maximizes confidence.

Behind the company's success is a team culture that thrives on accountability, collaboration, and celebration. Escrow officers are not just colleagues; they are trusted professionals who bring unique strengths and life experiences to the table. Madison Kanning channels her background as a national champion athlete into precision and drive. Felicia Galarze offers decades of expertise with a personal, relationship-first touch. Amanda Taniguchi excels in managing complex, multi-state transactions while still making time for family. Gladys Romero bridges language and accessibility barriers with her bilingual skills and notary expertise. Claudia Rodriguez leads with mentorship and education, supporting both

agents and her team. Jasmin Barrera embodies growth, rising from receptionist to escrow officer with calm confidence. Diana Castro, as Director of Operations & Compliance, streamlines processes and ensures compliance across all branches. And Lucy Encarnacion brings two decades of leadership in business development, forging connections that expand Arbor One's reach. Not to be left out are the Office Admins and Escrow Assistants. They are the backbone of Arbor One Escrow. They provide the essential support that allows our Escrow Officers to focus on clients, ensuring every detail behind the scenes is handled with care and precision.

Together, these professionals create more than just a smooth closing; they create trusted relationships. They educate, anticipate, and adapt to every challenge, standing out as reliable partners in a demanding industry.

Their success rests on four guiding principles: communication, compliance, consistency, and care. Each transaction is handled as though it were their own, ensuring clients feel the difference of a personal touch. That approach has shaped Arbor One Escrow's brand as professional yet approachable, always solution-oriented, and willing to go the extra mile, no matter how complex the transaction.

It was the loyalty of returning clients and referrals that confirmed Arbor One Escrow was on the right path. Trust, transparency, and care aren't just promises, they're qualities that keep people coming back. Looking forward, the company envisions expanding into new Southern California markets, growing specialized teams, and continuing to invest in training and technology while staying rooted in their core values.

Outside the office, connection remains just as important. The team makes it a priority to celebrate life milestones, support one another, and maintain balance with family-friendly hours. They also extend their commitment to the broader community, contributing to relief efforts for disaster victims and stepping up whenever their neighbors are in need.

In the end, Arbor One Escrow is more than an escrow company. It is a group of people dedicated to making one of life's most significant transactions as seamless and stress-free as possible. By combining professional expertise with genuine human connection, they've built a reputation that proves success in real estate isn't just about closing deals, it's about opening the door to lasting trust.

“

Together, these professionals create more than just a smooth closing; they create trusted relationships. They educate, anticipate, and adapt to every challenge, standing out as reliable partners in a demanding industry.”



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- Claudia Macias  
REALTOR®

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# Wafaa BARAJAS

**W**afaa Barajas never set out to build a career in real estate, but the path found her anyway. In 2010 she earned her license, though family life took priority at the time. Nearly a decade later, her best friend Shishana, an agent with a growing business, needed help and asked Wafaa to step in as an assistant. What began as a lighthearted joke quickly became the start of something more. Wafaa assumed she'd be fetching coffee and keeping a calendar. Instead, she was asked to make calls, meet clients, and eventually handle an appointment on her own. That first appointment turned into her first offer, and with her friend's encouragement, Wafaa discovered she wasn't meant to be an assistant at all, she was meant to be an agent.

Her background as a stay-at-home mom may not look like traditional training for real estate, but it gave her the qualities she leans on most: patience, empathy,

and unwavering dedication. Wafaa credits motherhood with shaping her ability to listen deeply, understand people's needs, and give her clients the same care and attention she gives her family. That mindset has become the foundation of her career.

For Wafaa, real estate is never just about transactions. Every buyer and seller she works with is welcomed as if they were extended family. She believes that confidence comes from education and support, so she makes sure her clients feel informed and secure at every step. Her relationships don't end at the closing table, she stays in touch, celebrates milestones, and often becomes a trusted friend long after the sale. It's a model of business that other agents could learn from: put people first, and the rest will follow.

The turning point that confirmed she was on the right path was the joy of watching her clients start new chapters in their lives. Being part of their

story, helping them open a new door, is what gives her work meaning. The fulfillment she finds in those moments has kept her passionate and inspired through every challenge.

Her definition of success is refreshingly simple: consistency, transparency, and positivity. She believes showing up every day with the right mindset and putting clients' needs above everything else is what sets her apart. She advises new agents to do the same, to focus on relationships, to stay coachable, and to understand that trust is the real currency in real estate.

Even with her busy schedule, Wafaa makes time to give back. She sponsors local sports teams and supports families in need, always looking for ways to extend her care beyond her business. And while she does some social media, most of her business comes from word-of-mouth. For her, saying yes to opportunities and nurturing relationships has been the most powerful form of advertising.

Outside of real estate, Wafaa finds happiness in the simple things: workouts that recharge her, family time with her husband Alex and daughters Alexa and Abigail, and the everyday moments that remind her why she works so hard. In the future, she hopes to keep growing her business while mentoring new agents. And while she laughs about the idea of taking more vacations, her husband would probably welcome a little more travel in their lives.

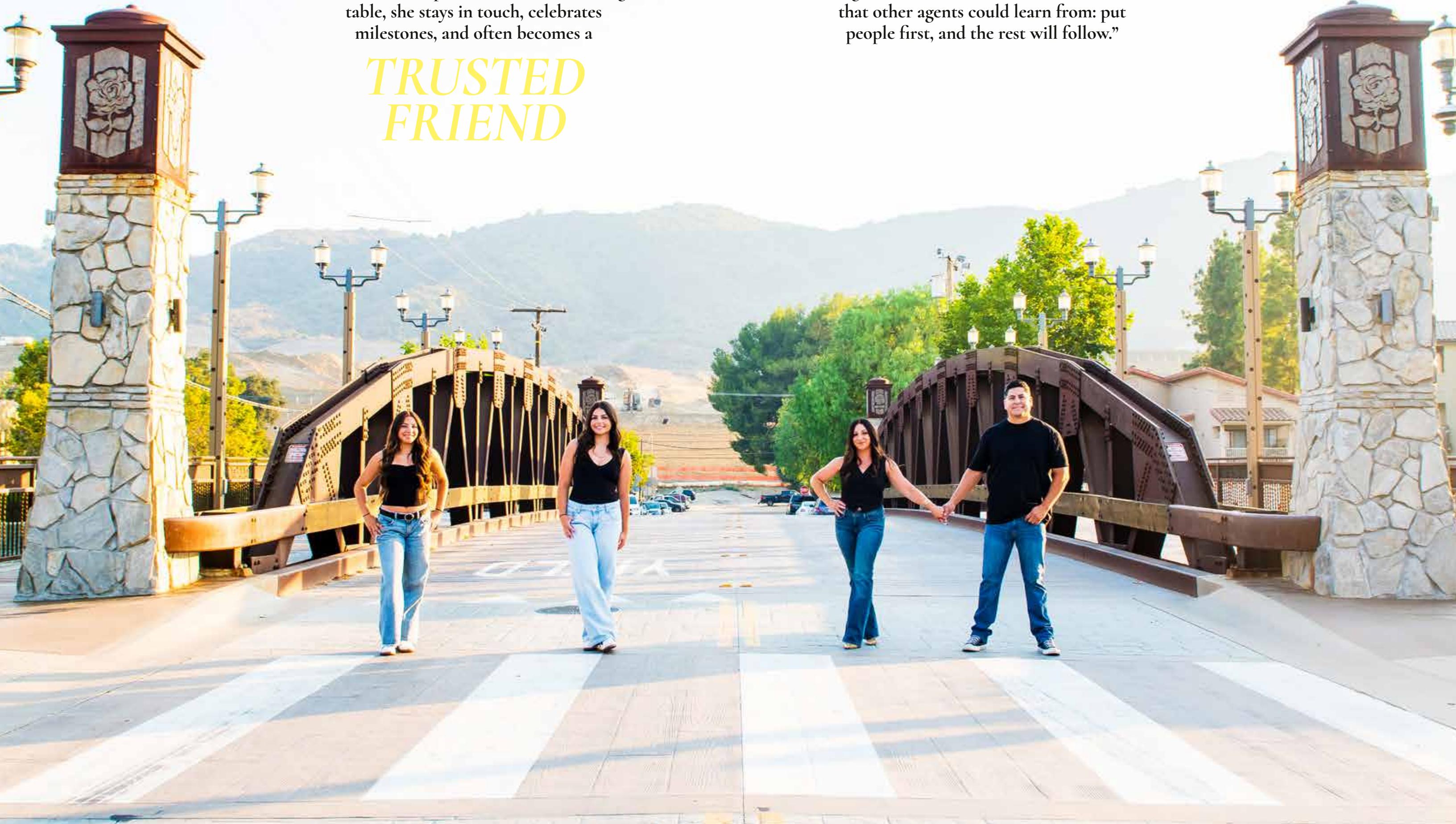
Through it all, Wafaa remains deeply grateful, to her clients for their trust, to her family for their support, and to the friends who helped her discover her potential. What started as an offhand joke about being someone's assistant has become a thriving career built on heart, hard work, and relationships. Real estate has been a blessing in her life, and for everyone fortunate enough to work with her, it's clear that blessing is mutual.

“

Her relationships don't end at the closing table, she stays in touch, celebrates milestones, and often becomes a

## TRUSTED FRIEND

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