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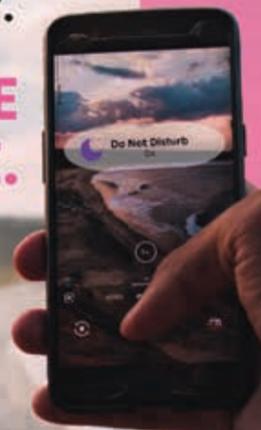
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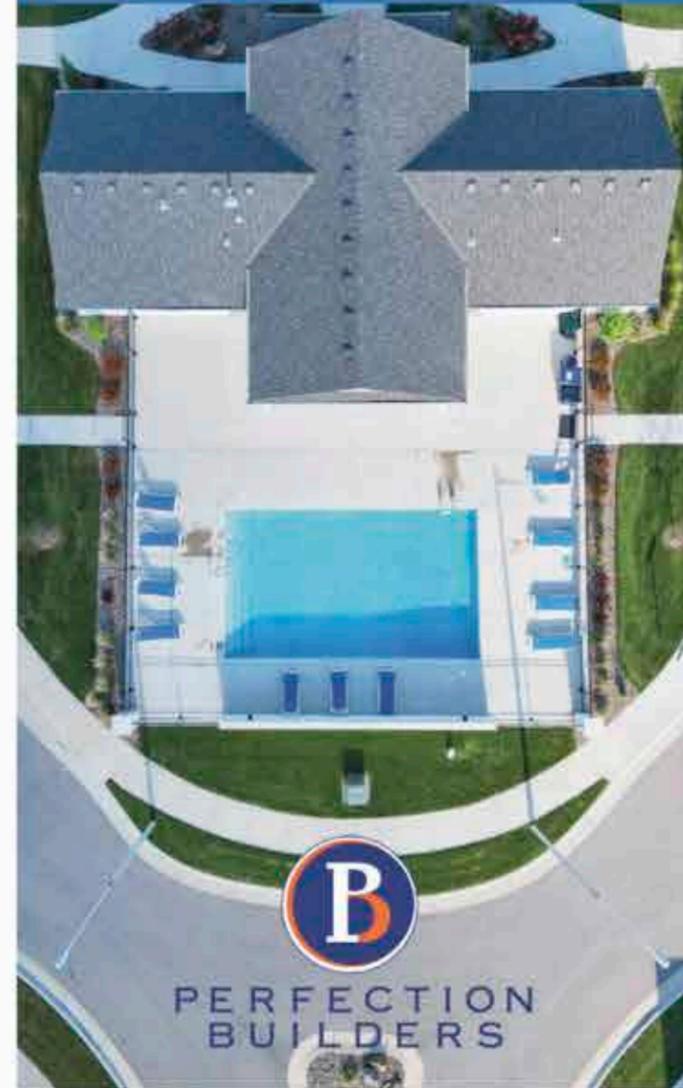


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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Hello, Q2!

Well friends... we made it. Spring has arrived, we've officially entered the second quarter of 2026, and the real estate world is waking up from its winter nap. The market is heating up, interest rates are finally cooling down (THANK GOODNESS), and if your calendar isn't starting to look a little wild... it probably will soon.

Intentional networking and relationship-building are important in every profession, but in real estate? It's basically oxygen. This business runs on trust, collaboration, and good people doing business with good people.

Which brings me to our **Real Producers monthly events**.

First and foremost: **the more real estate agents, the merrier!** All agents are welcome. Always. Real Producers exists to **CONNECT, ELEVATE, and INSPIRE** the Wichita real estate community, and agents are the engine that keeps this whole thing running.

Now let's talk vendors for a moment. We love our business partners dearly (truly—we couldn't do this without you), but to protect the integrity of the community, **only our Advertising Partners attend the exclusive vendor networking portion of our monthly events.**

So if you have a favorite vendor who keeps saving your deals, fixing your last-minute disasters, or generally being your real estate superhero... send them my way! I'm always happy to visit and see if they're a great fit for the Real Producers community.

And speaking of fun... **2026 is bringing some new adventures.**

We're planning an educational panel featuring the **WPD SWAT Commander** who will share valuable public safety insights that could literally save lives. We're also launching the **first-ever Real Producers 5K** (don't worry—running is optional, socializing is mandatory). In July, we'll gather at a fabulous local Medical Spa, Glow 365, and attempt to fill all three floors with our beautiful real estate people. And by popular demand, our **Cybersecurity Workshop** will return in October—because protecting your business online is just as important as protecting your listings.

So keep an eye on your calendars, emails, and texts... because you won't want to miss these events.

And as always—thank you for being the incredible community that makes Wichita real estate so special.

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Steve Farmer

It is with deep sadness that we bid Steve Farmer of Heartland Credit Union a final farewell.

Steve has been part of the *Wichita Real Producers* family since the very beginning, nearly seven years ago. Anyone who knew him, even briefly, felt his love, generosity, positivity, and kind spirit.

He was the kind of person who would stop to help a stranger on the side of the road, show up to your property to lend a hand with small repairs, or arrive

early to our events just to help set up. He never let you pay for anything. He cared deeply about every real estate professional and their clients. Steve had a true servant's heart and embodied generosity in a way that was rare and unforgettable.

While he was passionate about his work and incredibly successful, his heart was also at home on his farm just outside of Cheney. He truly lived up to his last name. Horses, cattle, even a donkey, brought him so much joy. He was

immensely proud of his sons and held a deep love and respect for his wife. You could often find him at The Sandbox in Goddard, where he even started a weekly real estate pickleball group.

While we are devastated by the loss of such a good man, we find peace in knowing he is with his Maker, watching over us and cheering on his Wichita real estate family.

We love you, Steve, and we will miss you dearly. Until we meet again.





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Results with Integrity

PHOTOS BY KIM STIFFLER
WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

As the owner of Kihle Roofing & Construction in Kansas, Daniel has built his company on something more enduring than shingles and nails. His foundation is integrity.

Daniel didn't enter the roofing business with grand fanfare. Instead, his path developed steadily, learning the trade alongside a family member and gaining firsthand experience in both craftsmanship and customer care. Over time, he saw not only how roofs were installed, but how homeowners were treated—sometimes well, sometimes not. That distinction would eventually shape his future.

About four and a half years ago, Daniel launched Kihle Roofing & Construction with a deliberate, measured approach. "I started slow," he says. "It was just me at first. Then I added one guy, then another. I've always believed in hiring the right people—not just warm bodies."

That patience paid off. Today, Daniel leads a tight-knit team of men and women who share his commitment to professionalism and personal connection.

Recognized for Excellence

The company's reputation is backed by meaningful credentials. Kihle Roofing & Construction has earned the highest rating with GAF and holds the prestigious TAMKO Diamond

Contractor classification. These distinctions allow the company to offer the highest warranties available through those manufacturers—an added layer of protection and peace of mind for homeowners.

For Daniel, however, awards are meaningful only because of what they represent: accountability, consistency, and excellence. Certifications aren't just logos on a website; they're a promise that the job will be done right.

Changing the Roofing Experience

When storms sweep through Kansas—as they inevitably do—Daniel's team is often among the first calls homeowners make. In those moments, fear and uncertainty can overshadow everything else. Daniel understands that roofing isn't just construction; it's protection, security, and peace of mind.

“We try to take the scary, unsure part out of the process,” he explains. “It doesn't have to be overwhelming. With the right communication and transparency, it can actually be a



“

DON'T PANIC, AND DON'T SIGN WITH THE FIRST PERSON WHO SHOWS UP. **FIND A LOCAL ROOFER YOU TRUST**—SOMEONE WHO WILL STILL BE HERE LONG AFTER THE WORK IS DONE.”

smooth experience. We want people to feel comfortable—even share some smiles with us along the way.”

One of the biggest misconceptions he encounters is the belief that replacing or repairing a roof is destined to be miserable. Many homeowners have heard stories—or lived through them—of contractors who disappear mid-project, cut corners, or leave behind messes and unanswered phone calls. Daniel is quick to say

that while those experiences are real, they are not inevitable.

Clear communication, realistic expectations, and consistent follow-through make all the difference. From the first inspection to the final cleanup, Daniel prioritizes clarity. Homeowners know what's happening, why it's happening, and what comes next.

After the Storm

That transparency becomes especially critical after severe weather. Door-knocking contractors often flood neighborhoods, pressuring residents to sign contracts on the spot. Daniel advises homeowners to pause.

“Don't panic, and don't sign with the first person who shows up,” he says. “Find a local roofer you trust—someone who will still be here long after the work is done.”

He also notes that the insurance process has changed significantly in recent years. Gone are the days when homeowners simply collected a few bids and handed them over to their insurance adjuster. Today, reputable roofing contractors work directly with insurance companies to reach an agreed-upon scope and pricing. That means the focus should be less on who offers the cheapest quote and more on who offers reliability and integrity.

An Ounce of Prevention

Daniel's proactive approach extends beyond storm damage. He strongly encourages roof inspections during real estate transactions—whether buying or selling. Even newly built homes, he notes, can have critical components missing, such as proper flashing. One heavy rainstorm can quickly expose those oversights, leading to costly damage. Since his company offers free inspections, Daniel sees no reason to leave something so important unchecked.

Maintenance between replacements is equally vital. In Kansas weather, pipe jacks—the rubber seals around plumbing vents—can crack



and deteriorate over time. Left unattended, they can become entry points for leaks. Daniel recommends inspections every one to three years and encourages homeowners to watch for visible clues like dents in gutters, which may indicate hail damage.

“If you see something that doesn't look right, call us,” he says. “We're happy to swing by.”

More Than Just Roofing

At the heart of Kihle Roofing & Construction is a culture Daniel is deeply proud of. He describes his team as a group of Christian men and women who believe their work is about more than profit margins. While mistakes can happen—as they do in any

human endeavor—Daniel insists that accountability is non-negotiable.

“If something isn't right, we'll do everything in our power to make it right,” he says simply.

For Daniel, roofing is never just about shingles. It's about safeguarding families, protecting investments, and building relationships that last long after the final nail is driven. Honors from manufacturers matter. High ratings matter. But what matters most is the trust earned project by project.

In a business where reputations are built one home at a time, Daniel Kihle is proving that integrity isn't just a slogan. It's the structure that holds everything together.

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PHOTOS BY JENNIFER RUGGLES
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BUILDING OPPORTUNITY FROM THE GROUND UP

For Nela Bayouth, real estate has never been just about buying and selling property. It's about solving problems, creating opportunity, and helping people move forward—sometimes literally, sometimes financially, and often both. As a real estate agent with Reece Nichols of South Central Kansas, the president of Cedar Mills Property Management, and an active investor and developer, Nela has built a multifaceted career rooted in service, strategy, and long-term vision.



An Unexpected Beginning

Nela often says her path into real estate happened “by accident.” Early in her career, she worked for the Realty Corporation, selling real estate franchises and assisting broker-owners with mergers, acquisitions, and brand affiliations. The role exposed her to the inner workings of real estate companies across the country, sparking a deeper interest in the industry—but the extensive travel wasn’t sustainable.

When her mother was diagnosed with cancer in late 2007, Nela returned to Wichita to be closer to family. That move

changed everything. She began working with local developers, including Mark Farha, who owned Cedar Mills Property Management at the time. After several years learning the business, Nela purchased Cedar Mills herself, later earning her real estate license in 2009 and joining Coldwell Banker Plaza in Wichita.

What started as sales soon evolved into something broader. Helping clients buy properties naturally led to managing them. Managing properties led to remodeling and investing. And eventually, those experiences laid the groundwork for development.

A Passion for Problem Solving

Ask Nela what she loves most about her work, and her answer is immediate: problem solving. Analytical by nature, she thrives on navigating complexity—whether that means helping an investor deploy capital wisely, resolving tenant and landlord challenges, or refining internal systems to improve efficiency.

Development, which she leaned into about two years ago, has become a favorite focus. Currently, Nela has three multifamily projects underway, each a 36-unit apartment development designed to reinvigorate core



areas of Wichita, with more projects planned in the coming years. Development allows her to combine every skill she's built—from financial analysis and planning to construction, leasing, and eventual asset disposition. She is quick to credit her partners on the projects, including Sam Jones, Jerry Jones, Erik Leschuk, and construction by ICS construction Chris Riley and Design by Brad Haedt.

Still, she says the most rewarding aspect remains the human element. Housing is deeply personal, and each client's needs reflect where they are in life. Being able to guide people through those decisions—and see the impact firsthand—is what keeps her energized.

The Strength of a Team
None of this happens alone. Nela leads **Nela & Associates**, a close-knit team of professionals who play a critical role in both the real estate and property management sides of the business.

Megan Palacios, Nela's first team member, has been with her for eight years. A licensed agent with a marketing degree from Wichita State University, Megan serves as transaction coordinator, works with buyers and



sellers, oversees staging, and supports marketing efforts.

Heather Lora has been part of the organization for more than a decade and licensed for three years. As owner liaison at Cedar Mills, she specializes in working with investor clients, analyzing returns, assessing renovation needs, and determining rental rates. Fluent in Spanish and holding degrees from Friends University in Spanish and biology, Heather brings both technical insight and cultural fluency to the team.

Elizabeth Soto, licensed for three years and with Cedar Mills for six, is also bilingual and deeply passionate about serving the Hispanic community. In addition to representing buyers and sellers, she manages several multifamily and downtown loft properties, ensuring tenants and owners alike are well supported. Liz is the leading producer on

Nela's team and is very dedicated to her clients.

Driven by Heritage and Hope

Nela's work ethic is inseparable from her story. Born in Belgrade, Serbia, she immigrated to the United States with her family in 1989, just before war broke out in the former Yugoslavia. Her parents arrived with six suitcases and \$2,000, taking a leap of faith in pursuit of a better future.

Her father, Bronko Gorechan, an aerospace engineer, brought the family to Wichita, while her late mother, Gordana Gorechan, helped instill resilience and determination that still

guide Nela today. Nela's mother went back and got her accounting degree in the U.S., got her CPA and her masters degree. As Nela says, "She was an amazing person, intelligent, hard-working and the best mom anyone could wish for. I work so hard to make her proud and for her legacy."

That immigrant experience fuels her drive to build generational opportunity for her own children—David, 12, and Gianna, 11—and to fully embrace the possibilities of the American dream.

Life Beyond Real Estate

Outside of work, Nela prioritizes family, travel, and personal growth. She



Photo by Kacy Meinecke



“

She believes trust is built over time, through effort, integrity, and a genuine commitment to helping others move forward—one solution at a time.

”

loves exploring the world with her children, believing travel offers some of life's most powerful lessons. She's also an accomplished salsa dancer, an avid cook, and happiest near water—whether that's a pool, a beach, or simply time to unwind.

Equally important to her is mentoring and helping others find structure, clarity, and confidence during difficult seasons.

Advice for the Next Generation

For those entering real estate, Nela emphasizes discipline and consistency. She encourages new agents to create clear business plans, set measurable goals, and work backward to determine daily and monthly actions. Education, community involvement, and authentic relationships—not pushy sales tactics—are the foundation of long-term success.

How She Hopes to Be Remembered

Nela hopes clients and colleagues describe her as hardworking, loyal, and thoughtful. Her relationships don't end at closing, and her workdays don't stop at five. She believes trust is built over time, through effort, integrity, and a genuine commitment to helping others move forward—one solution at a time.

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ExpressIt Messaging

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When Mark McGuigan talks about mail, he isn't referring to the stack of political postcards that pile up on the kitchen counter every election season. He's talking about something far more targeted and intentional—something personal, strategic, and surprisingly powerful in a world obsessed with digital noise.

As owner of ExpressIt Messaging, Mark has built his Wichita-based business around a simple but often neglected truth: relationships drive success. And relationships require consistent, thoughtful contact.

For Mark, this isn't just a service offering. It's a philosophy.

A Seed Planted at a Dining Room Table

Mark still remembers walking into his family's home after they had relocated for his father's job. Sitting on the table was a "Happy Anniversary" card. For a brief moment, he panicked, thinking he had forgotten his parents' wedding anniversary. But the date didn't match.

It was a "home anniversary" card—from the Realtor who had sold them the house.

"I still remember her name," Mark says. "Twyla of John Hausem's Gallery of Homes."

It was a small gesture, but it stuck. His father, a salesman by trade, modeled similar habits—delivering personalized Christmas gifts tailored specifically to clients. Those early examples quietly shaped Mark's understanding of thoughtful follow-up.

Years later, after working in other ventures and gaining experience with systems that combined software, printing, and fulfillment services, he began to see the opportunity clearly. Eventually, he decided to build a business around it himself.

Automation Meets Authenticity

ExpressIt Messaging operates at the intersection of technology and human connection. Through a software platform tied to a fulfillment center, business owners can send personalized cards, postcards, gifts, and printed materials without managing the inventory and logistics themselves.

But Mark is quick to distance his approach from traditional mass mail campaigns.

"This is not your daddy's direct mail," he says with a grin. Instead of blasting generic messages to thousands of strangers, he works with professionals—often those with long sales cycles or high client lifetime value—to build a strategic communication plan.

Q: What's the biggest mistake people make with direct mail?

Mark: "They try it once. I hear it all the time—I sent a mailer and it didn't work.' One touch rarely changes anything. Consistency is what makes the difference. At any given time, only about three percent of people are actively looking for your service. If you show up once, you're gambling on perfect timing. If you show up consistently, you dramatically increase the odds."

Q: Why does print still matter in a digital world?

Mark: "Face-to-face is best. Phone calls are great. Email and text scale well. But print lives in a different space. While inboxes are crowded and notifications disappear within seconds, a personalized card sits on a counter. It gets picked up. It gets noticed."

Q: Who benefits most from this approach?

Mark: "Professionals with long sales cycles—Realtors, financial advisors, insurance agents. Anyone whose business depends on repeat and referral relationships."

More Than One Lane

While ExpressIt Messaging is central to his work, Mark's interests stretch beyond direct

mail. He collaborates on marketing and helps individuals tell their stories through a Relationship Marketing Strategy customized for each client.

Storytelling connects all of it. He helps his clients be the hero to their own clients - by using technology to send a simple anniversary card, happy birthday, and the occasional unexpected gift. Mark believes in staying present in people's lives.

In a world racing toward the next notification, his message is refreshingly steady: slow down, be consistent, and show up with intention.

Because sometimes, the most memorable message isn't the one that pops up on a screen—but the one waiting in the mailbox.



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Amber CALLENDER

 FULFILLING PURPOSE

PHOTOS BY
ALLIE HENWOOD
WRITTEN BY
DAVE DANIELSON

For Amber Callender, real estate isn't just a career change—it's a lifestyle that finally fits who she is. A real estate agent with **Real Broker**, Amber brings energy, transparency, and genuine care to every client relationship, guided by a belief that work should feel meaningful, personal, and yes—even fun.

A Career Pivot Years in the Making

Amber spent two decades in the corporate world, building a successful career with Cox Cable. Her role involved managing out-of-state call centers and sales teams, a fast-paced environment that required leadership and adaptability. But when COVID hit, the job shifted into nonstop conference calls—hours each day behind a screen. For someone wired to be active, mobile, and engaged with people face to face, it was a breaking point.

Rather than settling, Amber took a leap. She left corporate life and launched an online T-shirt business, selling to customers locally and across the country. Through a Facebook group she built from scratch—growing it to more than 1,000 members—she was soon selling

hundreds of shirts each week. It was creative, profitable, and exciting... for a while.

Eventually, though, the isolation of working alone in a backyard shop set in. Amber realized she missed people, movement, and variety. That realization opened the door to what came next.

A Mentor and a New Direction

Scrolling through social media, Amber kept noticing a familiar name: Lesley Perreault, a longtime acquaintance from childhood Girl Scout days. Lesley's posts about real estate showed a life that looked busy, social, and dynamic—everything Amber felt she was missing.

On a whim, Amber reached out and asked if they could meet for lunch. That conversation changed everything. Lesley was honest about the realities of real estate—the highs, the lows, the work—but she also shared her passion for it. More importantly, when Amber asked if she would help mentor her if she pursued it, Lesley didn't hesitate.

What followed was a true apprenticeship. Amber shadowed Lesley at every

opportunity—attending showings, listings, inspections, and client appointments—absorbing knowledge and learning the business from the ground up. With Lesley's mentorship, encouragement, and support, along with Amber's strong faith in God, she stepped confidently into her career after becoming licensed in May 2024 and never looked back.

Why Real Estate Works for Her

Ask Amber what she loves most about her job, and the answer is simple: no two days are the same. She thrives on variety—new houses, new clients, new stories. Real estate keeps her moving, thinking, and connecting, which is exactly where she feels most alive.

More than anything, she loves people. Buying or selling a home is one of the biggest decisions most people ever make, and Amber takes that responsibility seriously. Walking alongside clients during such a pivotal moment fills her cup, especially when those professional relationships turn into real friendships.

Seeing clients send photos of renovations after closing

or hearing how much they love their new home is the kind of reward that keeps her motivated. For Amber, it never feels like “just a transaction.”

A True Team Effort at Home

Behind the scenes, Amber has a constant partner in both life and work: her husband, Herb. Married with grown children and now grandparents, the two have found a rhythm that blends real estate and quality time seamlessly.

Herb, who has owned a liquor store for more than 20 years, is semi-retired—and proudly plays the role of Amber’s “driver,” assistant, and safety partner. He goes with her to open houses, helps put out signs, raises flags in yards, and even manages sign-in sheets when needed. Clients know him well, often joking when Amber has to drive herself because Herb is busy.

In an industry that runs evenings, weekends, and last-minute showings, this partnership allows Amber to give her all to her clients while still spending meaningful time with her husband. Their shared hours in the car, heading from one appointment to



the next, have become their version of quality time.

Life Beyond the Closing Table

When they’re not working, Amber and Herb are self-proclaimed foodies. They love exploring new restaurants, traveling, and planning trips around great meals. One of their favorite local spots—and one of the backdrops for Amber’s photo shoot—is **Lotté**, a trendy Wichita restaurant they frequent often.



They also spend time with their grandchildren, swim during the summers, and enjoy staying connected with friends. For Amber, life and work are intertwined in the best possible way.

How She Wants to Be Known

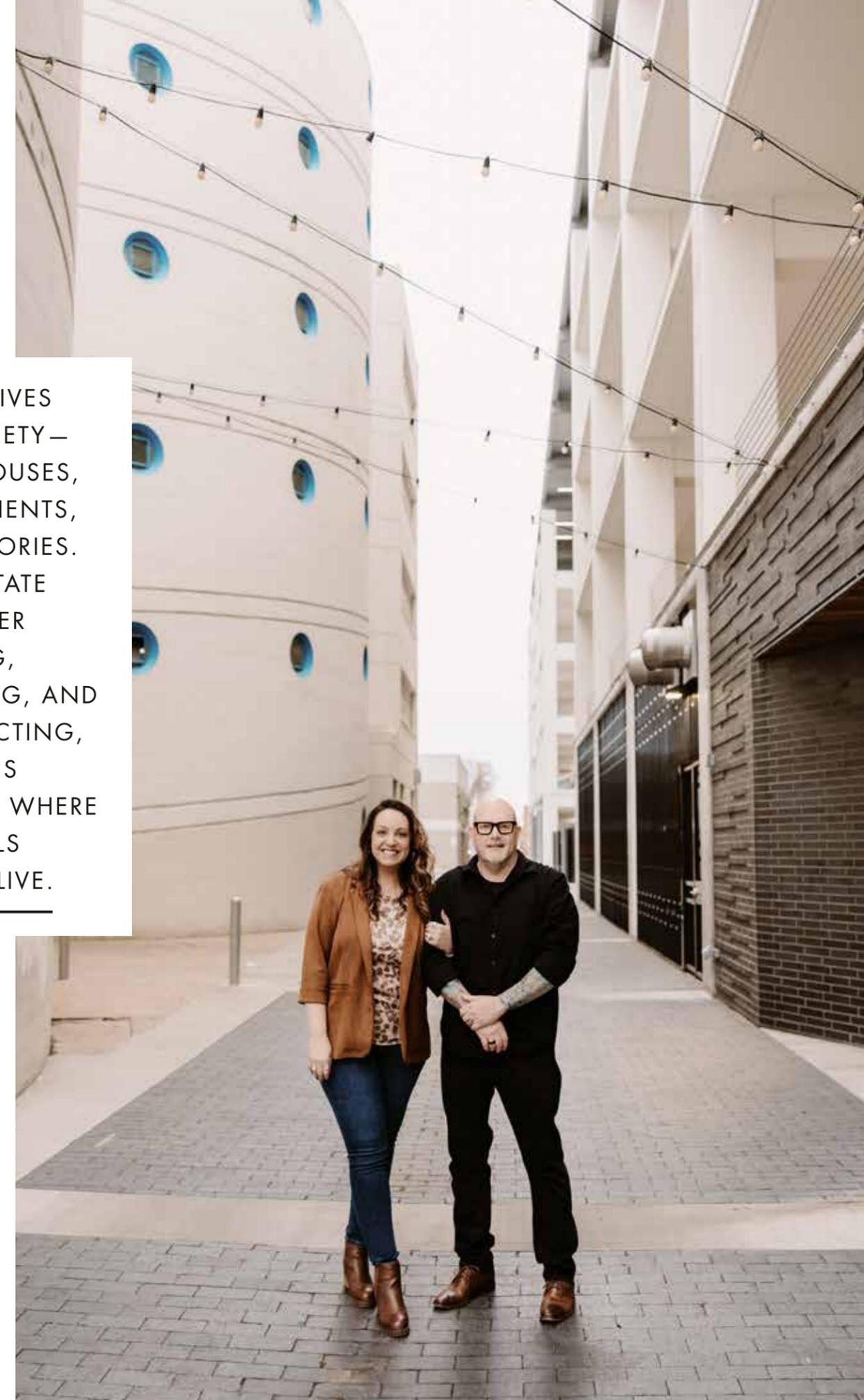
Transparency and integrity are non-negotiables for Amber. She prides herself on being down to earth, honest, and straightforward—someone who says what she means and does what’s right, even when it’s not the easiest path.

She’s not interested in chasing quick sales. Instead, she’s intentional and selective, helping

clients choose homes that not only fit their needs today but will also make sense years down the road. If something doesn’t feel right, she speaks up. If a client needs help after closing—whether it’s a stuck garage door or a small problem—Amber and Herb show up.

At the end of the day, Amber hopes people describe her simply: someone who genuinely cares. Because for her, real estate isn’t about the sale—it’s about the relationship that lasts long after the keys change hands.

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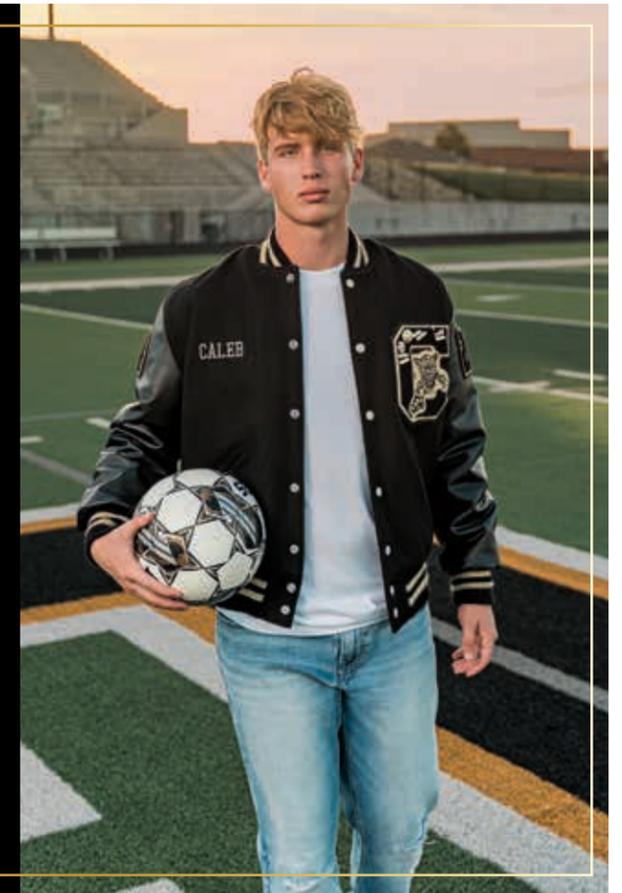


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Old Castle *Title*

CLOSING WITH CONFIDENCE

In every real estate transaction, there comes a moment when the details must come together perfectly. Contracts are signed, documents are verified, and the path to ownership becomes official. Behind that moment of certainty is often a team working carefully behind the scenes to ensure everything is exactly as it should be.

For Ashley Coffman, Title and Closing Services Manager at Old Castle Title, that responsibility is both a profession and a passion. Based in Wichita, Kansas, Ashley helps guide real estate transactions through the complex process of title examination and closing, ensuring every deal begins with clarity and ends with confidence.

“Old Castle Title examines property records, resolves title issues, and guides transactions through the closing process,” Ashley explains. “Our goal is to make sure everyone involved—from buyers and sellers to agents and lenders—can move forward with confidence.”

Finding the Right Fit in the Title Industry

Like many professionals in the title business, Ashley’s path into the industry wasn’t carefully planned. Her introduction came through family and friends who were already working in the field. She began as a title processor, learning the fundamentals of how transactions move from contract to closing.

It didn’t take long for her to discover the part of the business that truly captured her interest: title examining.

“I’ve always loved a good puzzle,” Ashley says. “Examining title gives me that challenge—digging into records, piecing together the history of a property, and solving problems so the transaction can move forward.”

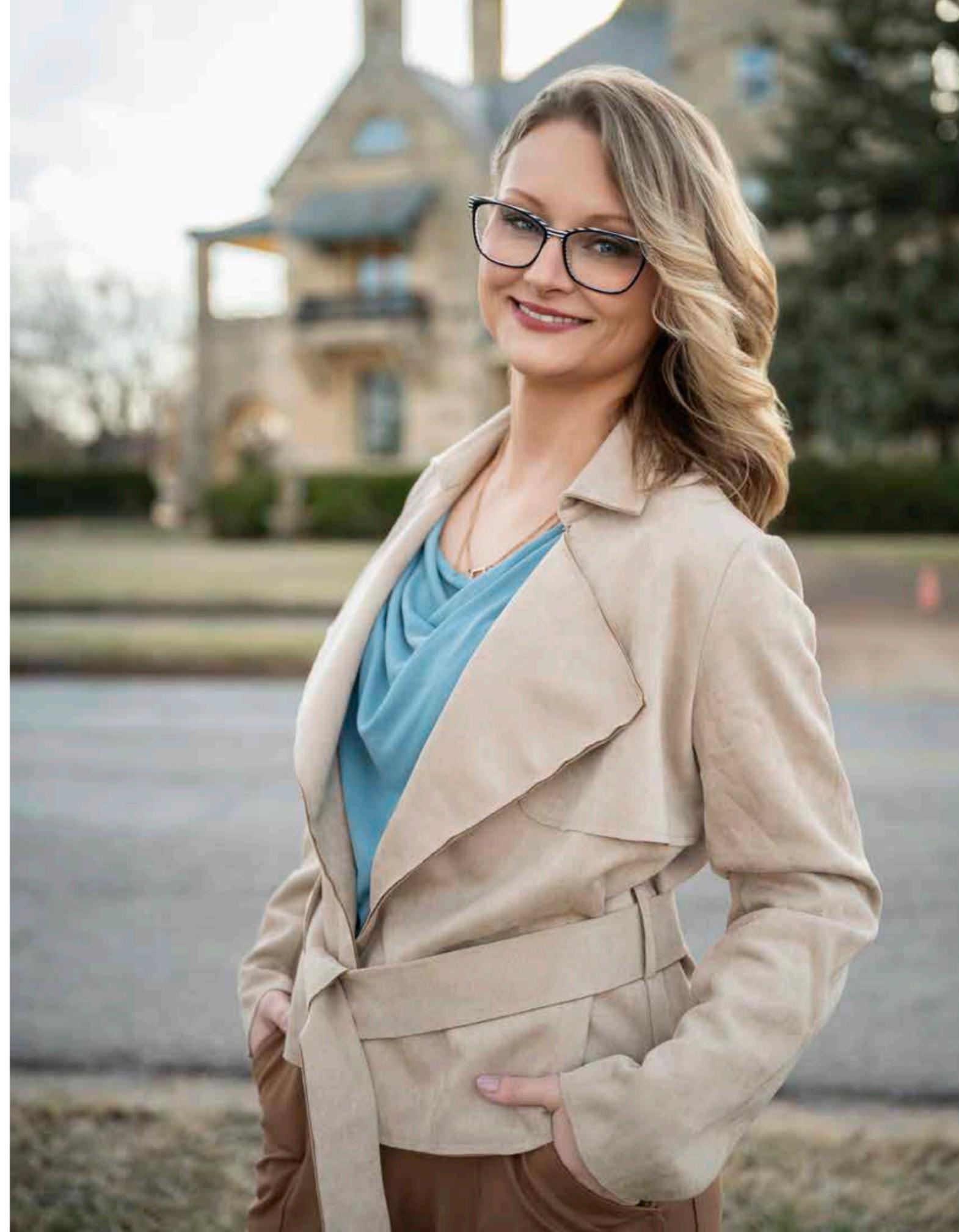


The work requires patience, curiosity, and attention to detail. Property records can stretch back decades, sometimes even longer, and each document can reveal important information about ownership history, liens, or easements that must be addressed before a sale can be completed.

An Unexpected Chapter on the Road

Ashley’s career journey also includes an unexpected chapter. Seven years ago, she stepped away from the title industry to become an over-the-road truck driver.

PHOTOS BY
KIM STIFFLER
WRITTEN
BY DAVE
DANIELSON





Carey Leonard
Vice President

The experience allowed her and her husband, Colby, to travel across the country together and see parts of the United States they might never have otherwise experienced.

Eventually, however, she found herself missing the intellectual challenges that had drawn her to title work in the first place. Returning to the industry allowed her to reconnect with the puzzle-solving side of the business while continuing to expand her knowledge.



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Turning Complexity Into Clarity

At the heart of Ashley’s work is a simple but powerful goal: bringing clarity to complexity. Title research can appear overwhelming at first, but careful examination can transform a confusing collection of documents into a clear and reliable history.

“There’s something really satisfying about taking what feels chaotic and organizing it into a complete picture,” Ashley says. “It’s like placing the final piece into a puzzle.”

But beyond the records and research, Ashley believes the real purpose of her work lies in the people behind each transaction.

“Aren’t we all just puzzle pieces trying to find our place in the bigger picture?” she says with a smile.

A Personal Approach to Service

One of the things Ashley appreciates most about working at Old Castle Title is the company’s small-business culture. That environment allows the team to combine technical expertise with a more personal, client-focused approach.

“At Old Castle Title, we’re not just processing transactions,” Ashley explains. “We’re helping people feel confident throughout the entire process. We handle the details so agents can focus on their clients,” Ashley says. “From start to finish, we see ourselves as a collaborative partner who values teamwork and communication.”

Life Beyond the Closing Table

Outside of work, Ashley enjoys spending time with the people who keep her grounded. She and her husband, Colby, share their home with Smokestack—affectionately known as Smokie—their dog and favorite snuggle companion after a long day.



Ashley also enjoys traveling and expressing her creativity through hobbies such as painting, woodworking, embroidery, gardening, and reading. These activities allow her to relax, recharge, and explore another side of her personality.

Looking ahead, Ashley hopes to be remembered for something simple but meaningful.

“Kindness, creativity, and hard work,” she says thoughtfully. “And doing what I can to make the world a little brighter.”

For the real estate professionals she works alongside, her message is simple. “At the end of the day,” Ashley says, “the people are the main point.”

Old Castle Title is always looking to welcome detail-oriented and curious minds to the team. For more information, contact Ashley.



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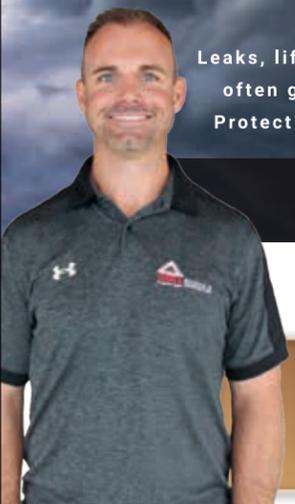
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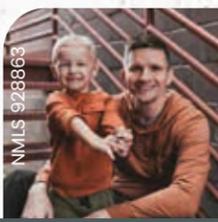
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Working with True Purpose



Lucy Alfaro

PHOTOS BY KIM STIFFLER
WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

For Lucy Alfaro, real estate has never been just about property. It's about people, purpose, and the opportunity to change lives.

Today, Lucy is brokered at Heritage 1st Realty in Wichita, Kansas, where she has built a thriving business fueled largely by referrals and repeat clients. That kind of organic growth speaks volumes about the relationships she creates with buyers, sellers, and fellow professionals throughout the industry.

“When people trust you enough to refer their friends and family, that’s the biggest compliment,” Lucy says. “It tells me the connections I’m making really matter.”

In addition to former clients, other industry professionals regularly refer Spanish-speaking clients to Lucy—something she considers a tremendous honor.

“It means they trust me to take care of people who matter to them,” she says. “That responsibility means a lot.”

Early in her real estate career, Lucy earned “Rising Star” recognition, but today she measures success differently. For her, the true reward lies in the relationships she builds and the impact she has on people’s lives—whether helping a family purchase their first home or guiding a seller through a smooth and successful transition.

When Real Estate Found Her
Lucy didn’t originally set out to become a real estate professional. The opportunity found her in an unexpected way.

Years ago, while living in an apartment complex, the maintenance supervisor knocked on her door with a suggestion: the leasing office had an opening and thought she might be a good fit.

Lucy accepted the position and quickly discovered she had a natural talent for the business. What began as a leasing role soon grew into a management position, and she eventually became the property manager of the same apartments where she had once lived.

“I’m so thankful for that experience,” Lucy says. “It helped grow me and taught me lessons I still use today.”

Working closely with residents and navigating

the complexities of property management sparked her interest in the broader real estate world and ultimately led her to pursue a career helping people buy and sell homes.

Lessons From an Earlier Career

Before entering real estate, Lucy built her first career as a cosmetologist. While the two professions might seem worlds apart, she says the experience shaped how she approaches her work today.

“Being a cosmetologist taught me the art of working closely with people,” Lucy explains. “You listen, you build trust, and you create experiences where clients feel seen and cared for.”

Those same skills translate naturally into real estate, where understanding a client’s goals, concerns, and dreams is essential.

At the same time, Lucy was drawn to learning more about business, finances, and long-term wealth building. Real estate offered the perfect opportunity to combine those interests while making a meaningful impact.

A Defining Moment of Purpose

Even after establishing herself in the industry, Lucy experienced a period of burnout that led her to reflect more deeply on why she was doing the work.

That reflection reshaped her approach to business.

“My career has evolved from proving myself to aligning myself,” Lucy says. “Early



on I focused on doing more and pushing harder. Now I’m focused on building something meaningful with strong foundations, the right systems, and a client experience that truly reflects my values.”

Two powerful client experiences during that time helped clarify her sense of purpose.

One involved a woman who never believed she could become a homeowner. Shortly after her offer was accepted, her husband was deported. Despite the hardship, she remained determined and ultimately made it to closing.

When Lucy handed her the keys, the client broke down in tears.

“That moment stayed with me,” Lucy says.

Another client admitted that when he first reached out, he had no intention of buying a home because he didn’t believe it was possible. With Lucy’s guidance, he became the first person in his family to purchase a home.

“In those moments, I realized your work can be your ministry,” she says.

Serving Wichita With Purpose

Lucy grew up in Wichita and learned resilience early in life. As a child, she often translated and helped solve problems for her family—experiences that helped shape the professional she would become.

Today, Lucy proudly serves families, investors, buyers, and sellers across the Wichita area. Fluent in both English and Spanish, she helps bridge communication

gaps so more clients can confidently navigate the housing market.

While many people know her for helping first-time buyers, Lucy is equally passionate about working with sellers.

“Helping sellers maximize their equity and move confidently into their next chapter is incredibly rewarding,” she says. “Every transaction represents someone’s next step in life.”

Through her brand Dream Homes ICT, Lucy continues building a business centered on service, strong systems, and meaningful relationships.

“We’re on a mission to elevate and serve through real estate,” she says.

Life Beyond Real Estate
Outside of work, Lucy’s greatest joy is her family.

Her son Adan, nearly 19, is currently learning construction, while her daughter Naya, age seven, already reads, writes, and speaks both English and Spanish.

Naya has even begun talking about her future career.

“She tells me she wants to become a Realtor someday,” Lucy says with a smile. “That inspires me to keep building something meaningful that she might want to take over one day.”

The family also includes Hera, their mini goldendoodle, who quickly became the heart of the household.

Sunday dinners are a cherished tradition. Adan often comes home, Lucy cooks for the family, and the evening usually includes board games, movies, or workouts together in their home gym.

“There’s always a lot of laughter,” she says.

Defining Success

As Lucy continues building Dream Homes ICT, her definition of success remains rooted in balance and purpose.

For her, success means building a life that is healthy physically, spiritually, financially, and mentally. “I want it all,” she says.

And if she could be remembered for just one thing?

Lucy doesn’t hesitate.

“I take care of my people.”

“I take care of my people.”



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Rhonda Kelly

LEADING WITH DEDICATION

PHOTOS BY KIM STIFFLER WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

When you ask **Rhonda Kelly** how her story began, she laughs softly. “I don’t know if you’ll be able to tell my story in ten minutes,” she says. And she’s probably right. After more than two decades in real estate, countless transactions, and nearly 200 agents under her leadership, her story is one of resilience, leadership, and service.

Today, Rhonda serves as managing broker for LPT Realty, a role that blends leadership, problem-solving, and mentorship for nearly 200 agents. But her path into real estate was anything but planned.

An Unexpected Beginning

Like many in the industry, Rhonda didn’t grow up dreaming of open houses and listing agreements. In fact, her early ambitions were headed in entirely different directions. She once considered becoming a geriatric nurse, drawn to caring for the elderly. At the same time, she was intrigued by the intellectual rigor of law and the courtroom.

Life, however, had other plans.

After getting married, Rhonda moved to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Living in a military community meant a fast-paced lifestyle during a season when

her focus was raising her children. With children at home, pursuing law school wasn’t feasible at the time. Nursing school presented its own obstacle as well—a waiting list that didn’t align with the unpredictability of military life.

Eventually, the family settled in Webster Groves, Missouri. It was there—through a frustrating experience selling their first home—that Rhonda found her calling. The real estate agent handling the transaction fell short in ways that left a lasting impression.

“I knew I never wanted anyone to have to deal with a situation like we did,” she recalls.

That experience, combined with her natural affinity for contracts and her desire to help people, nudged her toward real estate school. What began as curiosity quickly became a calling.

Thriving in the Chaos

Licensed in 2003, Rhonda discovered something surprising—she thrived in the real estate chaos. Early in her career, she was recognized with a *Rookie of the Year* award, and over time she built a successful career that included multi-million-dollar production and leadership roles across both residential sales and property management.

Where others might see stress in a complicated transaction, Rhonda sees a puzzle waiting to be solved. She thrives on untangling complex issues, smoothing out disputes, and finding the path that leads everyone to the closing table with a win.

While many agents spend their days in front-facing roles with buyers and sellers, Rhonda now works largely behind the scenes. As managing broker for both Kansas and Missouri, her greatest joy comes from supporting her agents.

“My absolute favorite part is helping them figure out complex issues and how to get to the goal of closing,” she says.

That guidance matters. With nearly 200 agents at her brokerage, Rhonda plays a pivotal role in shaping both culture and outcomes.

A Culture of Agent Choice

Ask Rhonda to describe the culture she fosters, and one phrase stands out: agent choice.

She believes deeply that real estate agents are independent contractors running their own businesses. Rather than imposing a rigid model, she prioritizes honoring each agent's vision and structure.

"It's their business," she explains. "I want to support that and honor the business structure they develop for themselves."

This philosophy has helped create an environment where agents feel empowered rather than managed. Rhonda's leadership is steady and knowledgeable, but not controlling. She provides guidance, resources, and experience—then trusts her agents to build in ways that align with their goals.

A Broader View of Housing

Rhonda's real estate experience extends far beyond traditional sales. Over the

years, she has worked in multiple areas of property management, gaining insight into rental markets, investor needs, and long-term asset strategy. Her dedication to residents and the communities she served even earned her a *Compassionate Award* during her time in property management.

One project in particular remains close to her heart: participating in a local initiative to help individuals transition out of homelessness into their first apartments. The work centered on providing stable housing and support for those rebuilding their lives.

"Housing is very important to me," she says. "Whether they are renting or buying."

Her passion for homeownership runs deep. She sees it as more than a transaction—it's a stepping stone toward stability, generational wealth, and personal dignity. Whether she's helping an agent navigate a first-time buyer's financing hurdles or supporting someone

moving from renting into ownership, Rhonda views the work as transformative.

Helping someone reach the point where they can purchase a home isn't just good business—it's meaningful service.

Family as the 'Why'

Despite her professional accomplishments, Rhonda is quick to name her true motivation: family ... her two children and grandchildren.

She describes herself as extremely close with her family, so much so that it's the reason she lives where she does. At the center of her world are her four grandchildren.

"That is my why for everything," she says without hesitation.

Time with family grounds her. It reminds her why she works hard and why housing matters. A home is where life unfolds—where grandchildren visit, holidays are celebrated, and everyday moments become lifelong memories.

CC housing

is very important to me. Whether they are renting or buying."

When she does carve out free time, Rhonda gravitates toward the outdoors. On warm, sunny days, you're likely to find her on a paddleboard gliding across a river or lake, or hiking wooded trails. Travel also feeds her spirit, offering both rest and inspiration.

Leading With Love

If you ask Rhonda how she hopes people describe her, her answer is simple: kind, compassionate, knowledgeable—and leading with love.

In an industry often defined by numbers and negotiations, she chooses to lead with heart. That doesn't mean she lacks toughness or expertise. On the contrary, her decades of experience have made her deeply knowledgeable. But she believes strength and compassion are not opposites—they are partners.

From her early years navigating the uncertainty of military life to becoming a managing broker guiding agents, Rhonda Kelly's story is one of resilience, growth, and service. She may not have become a nurse or an attorney. Instead, she found a profession where she could advocate, solve complex problems, and care for people—all at once.

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For the Real Estate Agents, Ben understands the "Allowance" process, they offer a Real Estate Agents rate, and he knows how to keep your clients happy! If you want to impress your clients, send Ben with Designer's Home Gallery!"

-Janiece Erbert, Real Estate Agent
Keller Williams Signature Partners



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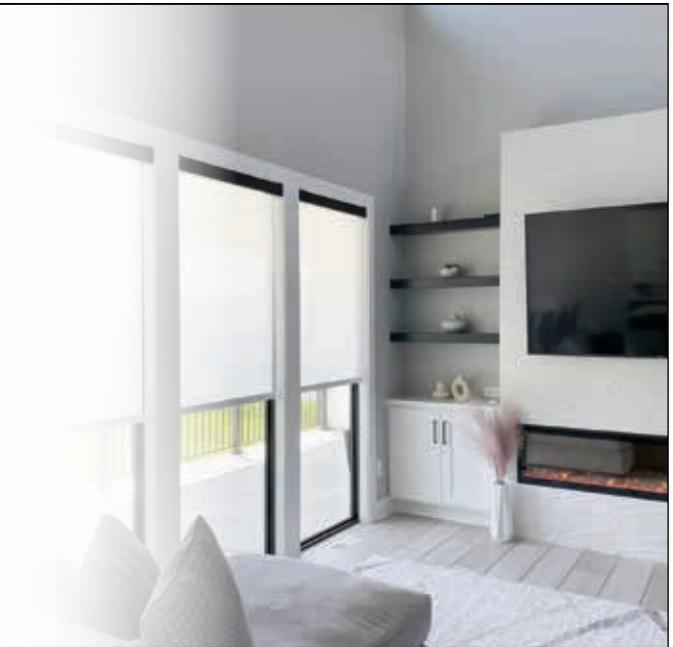
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