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A man with short, light-colored hair, smiling, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and a striped tie. He is standing in a modern kitchen with dark wood cabinets and a white countertop. His hands are resting on the countertop.

David
Bendernagel

Partner Spotlight

SANDI FRITH

with Alliant Credit Union

Rising Star

ASHLEY REWOLD

ALEXANDER

Behind-the-Scenes All-Star

TINA KALAJ-MICAKOVIC

Agent on the Rise

TAKORRAH CHASE

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HOMES MODEL AT KINSLEY
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Oakland County Real Producers • 5

Contents



David Bendernagel **38**
TOP PRODUCER

PROFILES



16 Sandi Frith



20 Ashley Rewold Alexander



26
Tina Kalaj-Micakovic



32
Takorrah Chase

IN THIS ISSUE

- 8 Preferred Partners**
- 12 Meet the Team**
- 14 Bingo for a Cause**
- 16 Partner Spotlight:** Sandi Frith with Alliant Credit Union
- 20 Rising Star:** Ashley Rewold Alexander
- 26 Behind-the-Scenes All-Star:** Tina Kalaj-Micakovic
- 32 Agent on the Rise:** Takorrah Chase
- 36 By the Numbers**
- 38 Top Producer:** David Bendernagel

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Sandi FRITH

with Alliant Credit Union

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Redefining Mortgage Excellence

In the fast-paced world of real estate finance, Sandi Frith stands out for her expertise and dedication. A loan officer — as well as a physician and luxury specialist — at Alliant Credit Union, she brings over three decades of experience to the table, offering a unique blend of industry knowledge and personalized service.

Prior to mortgages, Sandi had a successful stint in automotive dealership finance. In 1992, she was seeking a new challenge and found her calling in the mortgage industry — a place where her problem-solving and relationship-building skills could truly shine. “I love challenges and thinking outside the box,” Sandi explained.

Not deterred by obstacles, Sandi utilized her innovative mindset and became one of the pioneers in physician loan programs 18 years ago. Her expertise in this niche naturally expanded to luxury properties and construction lending, broadening her client base to include high-net-worth individuals and corporate clients.

As one of the largest credit unions in the country, Alliant offers a full range of financial services — from everyday banking to mortgages and commercial



loans. Its digital-first approach, backed by responsive human support, aligns seamlessly with Sandi’s commitment to delivering personalized service in a modern financial landscape. With a diverse selection of mortgage products, Alliant is a valuable resource for both real estate agents and their clients. Sandi highlights two standout options: a construction loan with just 10% down on amounts up to \$1.25 million with no private mortgage insurance (PMI), and a zero-down, no-PMI program for first-time homebuyers on loans up to \$650,000.

Sandi’s dedication to providing white-glove service has not gone unnoticed. She has been named one of Scotsman Guide’s Top Female Originators for four consecutive years, ranking sixth in the country from 2020 to 2023. She has also consistently



placed in the top 50 among all originators nationwide.

For Sandi, trust and long-term relationships have built the foundation for her success in the industry. “It takes time to earn trust, and I am always in for the long haul,” she said. Beyond the closing table, Sandi even assists clients with escrow accounts, principal pay downs, and payoffs long after the initial transaction.

Sandi has kept a close eye on industry changes over the years and has noticed a shift toward more financially savvy consumers

— a trend she welcomes. “It means that consumers are just more aware of the importance of having good credit and savings, and have a broader understanding of financing one of the biggest purchases they will ever make in their lifetime,” she explained. To meet these evolving needs, Sandi equips her clients with comprehensive scenarios that empower them to make informed decisions aligned with their financial goals.

Beyond her professional achievements, Sandi finds fulfillment in her personal life. She and her husband, Simon, make annual trips to Australia to visit family, including their young grandson, Lenny. At home, Sandi dedicates her free time to Koi rescue, providing a retirement haven for the fish in her ponds.

When she looks to the future, Sandi remains committed to education and collaboration within the real estate community. She offers to conduct Mortgage Financing 101 seminars for REALTOR® groups, sharing her expertise on available programs, updates, and guidelines.

As the real estate landscape continues to evolve, Alliant Credit Union stands ready to guide clients and partners through the intricacies of mortgage financing. With her wealth of experience and commitment to service, Sandi embodies the ideal of a true mortgage professional in today’s dynamic market.

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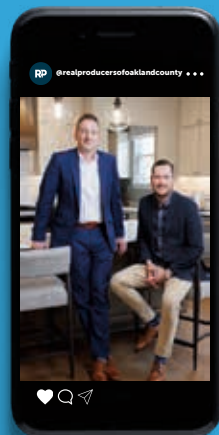
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PHOTOS TAKEN AT LOMBARDO HOMES MODEL AT STILLWATER CROSSING IN MACOMB TOWNSHIP

Ashley Rewold Alexander didn't follow a typical path into real estate. After spending years as a registered nurse and working leadership roles at her family's hotel business, she brought a unique blend of care, discipline, and real-world experience to her next chapter. Now an agent at @properties Christie's International Real Estate, Ashley has established herself as someone who prioritizes trust and meaningful relationships with clients.

Prior to entering real estate, Ashley spent a decade as a registered nurse, developing a strong foundation of care and attention to detail. She then joined her family's business at Royal Park Hotel, where she completed an intensive 18-month internship, working in every department — from housekeeping to front desk operations. This ground-up experience gave Ashley a deep understanding of how businesses function at every level. She later advanced to proprietor, where she assisted the general manager by overseeing daily operations and leading the team before transitioning to director of human resources after the hotel was sold in 2022.



In July of 2024, Ashley launched her real estate career and quickly began creating a name for herself. In her first full year as an agent, she achieved \$6.5 million in sales, contributing

to an impressive \$8 million in total career volume. An active member of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), Ashley has also been recognized as a Rising Star by her brokerage and named among the Top 1,000 by Real Producers.

Despite her achievements in less than two years in the industry, Ashley is more focused on building meaningful relationships that extend far beyond a single deal. "I lead with relationships and let everything else follow," she explained. "I believe trust is earned, not assumed, and I've built my business by showing up consistently, doing the right thing, and putting people first — every single time."

In her early days as an agent, Ashley faced the challenge of building a brand that felt true to who she is while distinguishing herself in a competitive market. She relied on the strong work ethic instilled in her by her family and focused on earning trust and prioritizing clear communication rather than taking shortcuts.

Real estate provides Ashley with the flexibility to be present for her family while pursuing a career that both challenges and fulfills her. As a mother to 5-year-old Dawson and 2-year-old

Sloane, she strives to lead by example, showing her children what passion, dedication, and hard work look like each day. Her commitment to service is deeply rooted — her grandfather proudly served as the first mayor of Rochester — and Ashley continues to honor that legacy by finding meaningful ways to give back to the community she loves.

As she looks to the future, Ashley is focused on building something that lasts. Her goal is to continue developing a trusted, relationship-driven business that grows with intention. She also wants to be known for integrity, consistency, and the care she brings to every client experience.

For real estate professionals who are beginning their careers, Ashley reminds them to focus on relationships before results. “The business will come if you commit to earning trust, showing up consistently, and doing the right thing — even when no one is watching,” she said. Ashley also encourages new agents to be patient with themselves, reminding them that success isn’t overnight and that consistency always beats intensity. “Surround yourself with people who support you, challenge you, and genuinely want to see you win. Finding the right brokerage, mentors, and community make all the difference,” she added.

From healthcare to hospitality to real estate, Ashley’s journey has been defined by a steadfast commitment to serving others. As she continues to grow her business, Ashley remains committed to building a career defined not just by success, but by the impact she leaves behind. 🏡

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Tina

KALAJ-MICAKOVIC



Position/Title: Director of Operations

Office/Company: Thrive Realty Co.

How long have you been working for/with the person who nominated you?: Just celebrated my 2-year anniversary!

How long have you been working in the real estate industry?: 22 years

1. What did you do before you began working in your current position?
Before stepping into my current role, I spent 19 years working as the right hand and director of operations for a broker I deeply respected and loved working alongside. In that role, I oversaw the daily operations of the business, including systems, compliance, agent support, and office management, while helping build and maintain the operational foundation that allowed the brokerage to grow and function at a high level.

When he sadly passed away, it marked a turning point in my career. His leadership, knowledge, and vision for real estate set a very high standard for me, and it led me on a thoughtful search for a brokerage that shared the same level of integrity, operational excellence, and commitment to doing real estate the right way. That journey ultimately brought me to Thrive, where I found a culture and leadership aligned with the values and standards I had built my career around.

2. What does your typical workday look like?
My day is a mix of strategic planning and hands-on execution. I oversee transaction management, operational systems, agent support workflows, compliance, and internal processes. I collaborate closely with leadership, lenders, and title partners to make sure deals move smoothly while also building systems that improve efficiency, consistency, and the overall experience for both agents and clients.

3. How would you describe your job in one word?
Impactful



4. Why do you think you excel at your job?
I lead with loyalty, accountability, and a strong sense of responsibility to both the company and the agents I support. I take great pride in protecting the integrity of the business, the standards we operate by, and the people who trust me to have their backs. I'm proactive by nature, focused on building systems and safeguards that support agents, protect their time and deals, and ensure the company operates with consistency and care.

5. What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?
Seeing agents succeed because they're supported. Knowing that my work behind the scenes helps reduce stress, protect deals, and create a better experience for clients is incredibly rewarding.

6. What is the most challenging aspect of your job?
The most challenging aspect of my job is managing my own sense of urgency in an industry where not everything moves as quickly as I'd like. I'm naturally driven to get things done immediately and thoroughly, so balancing that pace with external timelines, multiple parties, and shifting priorities requires constant adjustment and patience.

7. What is one thing about you that others might find surprising or interesting?
People might be surprised to know that my given name is Valentina and that I speak fluent

Albanian. It's a strong connection to my cultural background and has shaped how I communicate, build trust, and connect with people. That same sense of connection carries into my work.

8. When you're not working, what do you like to do for fun?
When I'm not working, I'm a homebody at heart. I enjoy spending quality time with my husband and kids, being present at home, and recharging with my family. Family is my foundation and the most important part of my life.

9. How do you feel about being nominated as a Behind-the-Scenes All-Star?
I'm truly honored and grateful. Being recognized for behind-the-scenes work means a lot, especially because this role is often about supporting others quietly and consistently.

10. Is there anything else you'd like to share about yourself, your job, or your relationship with the person who nominated you?
Trust, consistency, and loyalty are the foundation of how I work. Being nominated by Justin and Jessica Woodbeck is especially meaningful to me, as it reflects the journey that brought me here — finding a broker whose vision, values, and commitment to real estate align with the standards I built my career on. I'm grateful to work alongside leadership that values both people and process, and to be part of a company where that alignment truly exists.

Jessica "Jess" Woodbeck, founder and CEO of Thrive Realty Co., believes Tina is the engine behind so much of the brokerage's success over the past two years. "Whether it's onboarding, retention, or daily operations, Tina doesn't just manage tasks — she builds systems that allow our people to win consistently. That impact touches every agent, every client, and every part of our business," Jess explained.

Jess credits Tina's mindset and management as a major force within the organization. "Tina is a team player and is willing to jump in wherever she can to improve the outcome," Jess said. "She sees what needs to happen, takes responsibility for it, and follows it through to completion."

"There's also a quiet strength in Tina's leadership," Jess added. "She doesn't need to be the loudest voice in the room to create impact. She represents what leadership looks like behind the scenes, and I'm incredibly proud to have her in that role."



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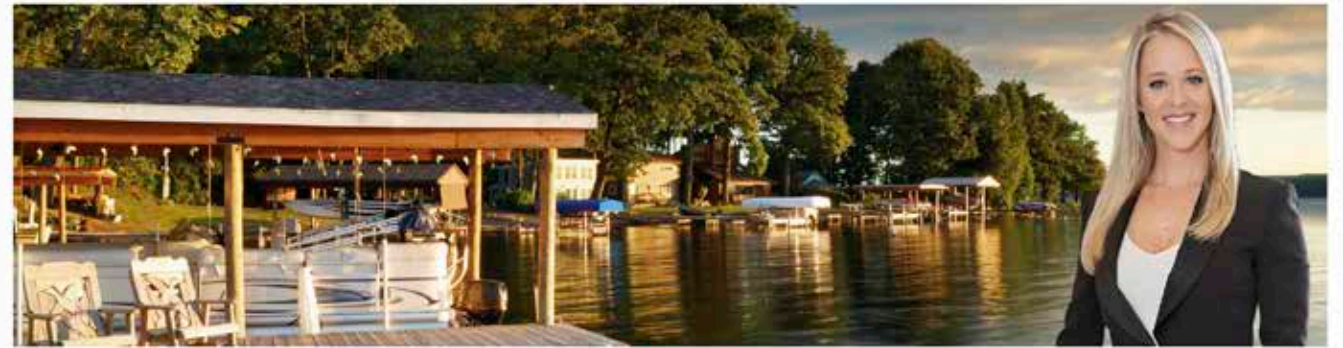
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Takorrah Chase



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PHOTOS TAKEN AT TOLL BROTHERS AT THE RESERVE AT CRYSTAL LAKE

As a luxury living specialist with Icon Realty Experts, Takorrah Chase has built a reputation for delivering a client-first experience. Known for her strategic approach and commitment to excellence, she continues to raise the standard for what clients can expect in today’s market. Her work consistently reflects not just strong results, but a higher level of service.

Takorrah’s foundation in real estate was built long before she entered sales. Her journey began in 2012 in the property management sector, where she spent five years learning the fundamental elements of the industry and immersing herself in the operational side of the industry — mastering leasing, navigating complex delinquency, handling acquisitions, and managing the full life cycle of tenant relations. She specialized in leasing and delinquency management, overseeing everything from tenant applications and income verification to account recording and court evictions.

Takorrah also consistently leased between 10 and 20 homes per month while maintaining high occupancy rates and ensuring operational efficiency. Her deep understanding of contracts, tenant screening, property operations, and financial oversight gave her an advantage, and that behind-the-scenes expertise now provides her clients with a distinct edge in today’s competitive market.

By 2017, Takorrah knew she was capable of more. Driven by a desire for growth, impact, and ownership over her future, she made the transition into real estate sales — a decision that would redefine her path and unlock her full potential.

Since her pivot into sales, Takorrah has continued to rise, earning recognition from several respected platforms. She has been honored by Hour Detroit



magazine, named a Best of Zillow top agent, and recognized as a Top 500 agent by Real Producers. In the past year alone, she closed \$8.3 million in sales — an achievement that reflects not only her work ethic, but also the trust she builds with every client she serves.

What truly sets Takorrah apart is her philosophy. She believes real estate is not just about buying or selling but about positioning, presentation, and protecting her clients' best interests at every turn. Her approach is both strategic and personal, blending sharp negotiation skills with a concierge-level experience that is tailored to each client's unique goals. "Real estate doesn't stop when you reach the closing table — it's a relationship that continues to evolve," she said.

Like many in the industry, Takorrah has faced the challenges of an ever-changing market. What defines her, however, is how she responds. Grounded in resilience and fueled by purpose, she meets obstacles with clarity, adaptability, and a refusal to settle for anything less than growth. Each experience has shaped her into a professional who leads with confidence and executes with precision.

While her business continues to flourish, Takorrah considers her greatest personal accomplishment to be beyond real estate. As a mother of five children — ages 11 to 20 — she carries her role with the same passion, discipline, and heart that she brings to her career. It is this balance — of strength and softness, ambition and purpose — that truly defines who she is.

For those looking to follow in her footsteps, Takorrah offers a simple truth: Success in real estate is built on consistency, strategy, and the willingness to keep going — especially when the results aren't immediate. According to her, these qualities are key to growing and sustaining a successful real estate business.

With a clear vision for her future and an unwavering commitment to excellence, Takorrah continues to elevate both her business and her life. As she grows her presence in the luxury market, she remains focused on creating opportunities — not only for herself, but also for the clients and agents who are to follow her lead. With her journey still unfolding, one thing remains certain: Takorrah is only getting started! 🏡

“Real estate doesn’t stop when you reach the closing table — it’s a relationship that continues to evolve.”



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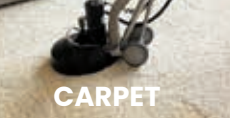
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TOP PRODUCER

David

BENDER NAGEL



Grounded in Gratitude

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LYNN CREATIVE

David Bendor Nagel has built a real estate career grounded in relationships and gratitude. “For me, real estate isn’t just about selling homes: It’s about building relationships, strengthening the community around me, and knowing I’ve helped people move forward in a positive way,” he said.

Before entering the real estate industry in 2012, David earned a bachelor’s degree in criminology from Eastern Michigan University and went on to work in home security sales and at his father-in-law’s steel fabrication company. “My wife and father-in-law were my biggest supporters,” David said. “They encouraged me to pursue a career in sales because they saw how naturally I connected with people.”

Now an associate broker with @properties Christie’s International Real Estate and owner of Sold by DB, he has since accumulated an impressive \$150 million in career sales, closed nearly 500 homes, and received over 200 Zillow reviews. He also has earned recognition as an Hour Detroit Top 5% REALTOR® and obtained multiple honors from his previous brokerages, including the Top Block Service



Award, Top Producer Award, and the prestigious President's Award.

Even with his achievements, David admits that real estate comes with its fair share of challenges. "The emotional ups and downs can be tough," he said. "Clients are making huge life decisions, and things like market changes or inspection issues can throw everyone into a tailspin."

When it comes to dealing with client uncertainties, David is all about communication, composure, and collaboration. "When a deal's on the verge of falling apart, we jump on a call with all parties, spell out the options, and work through it step by step," he explained. "That teamwork has saved more deals than I can count."

For David, the reward always outweighs the stress. "The most rewarding part of my business is the moment I hand over the keys and see the client's genuine smile," he said. Whether it's a first-time buyer or a family moving into their forever home, those moments of joy are what fuel him. "Knowing we made a big life transition smooth and successful is what truly drives me," David added.

Recently, David transitioned his business to @properties Christie's International Real Estate. While he is excited about this new chapter, he carries forward a deep appreciation for the relationships that helped

shape his career. "I truly value the time I had at the Glover Agency, what I learned there, and the great people I met," he shared. Now part of the @properties Christie's International Real Estate network, David continues his commitment to growth, investing heavily in ongoing education to ensure he stays sharp and ahead of industry trends.

Despite his career success, David remains focused on what truly matters: his family. "My family is my 'why,'" he said. "They remind me every day what really matters and keep me grounded in relationships and community."

According to David, his world revolves around his family. He and his wife, Allie, have been together for 24 years and were high school sweethearts who have built a life filled with laughter and adventure. Together, they have four children — twin daughters Kate and Hayden, and sons Henrik and Finn. "Our kids' travel sports keep us busy, but we love every second of it," David said. "We're always at the rink, on the field, or planning our next family trip. No matter where we are, we always make it a priority to slow down, have fun, and enjoy time together."

When he isn't helping clients or traveling with family, David gives back to the community that shaped him. "I believe

in helping others and creating opportunities for people to thrive," he said. From participating in local charity drives to organizing community initiatives like his winter clothing drive, his philanthropy comes from a place of deep appreciation. "I'm motivated by the chance to make a difference and show gratitude for the life and opportunities my family and I have been given," David added.

In his free time, David enjoys reading true crime, listening to country music, and watching his favorite films. "I love a good story — whether it's in a book, a song, or a movie," he said. "It's all about connection and emotion — just like real estate."

For aspiring agents, David wants to remind them to never give up. "You'll face objections and tough days, but persistence wins in this business," he said. David also believes that being sincere is the key to success. "I treat every client like family and always do the right thing — even when no one's watching," he shared.

At the end of the day, David measures success not by the number of homes sold but by the lives he has touched. "I genuinely care about people," he said. "My approach is rooted in service, trust, and integrity — and that's what I hope people remember most." ❏



“You’ll face objections and tough days, but persistence wins in this business.”

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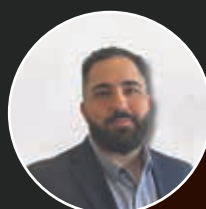
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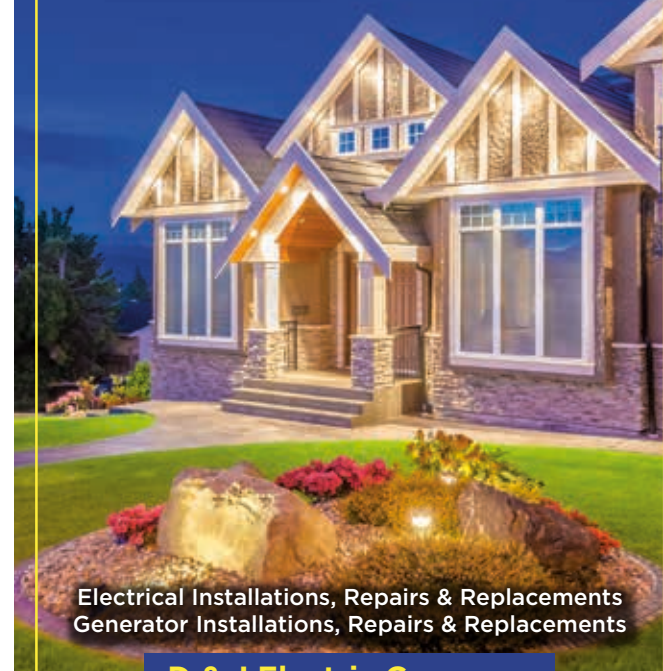
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