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Cover Release Party

Thank you to all our Real Producers who came out and helped to make our Cover Release Party a great success!

A huge thank you to Tarrytown Roofing, The Medrano Team at Fifth Third Bank, The Paul Guerrero Agency at Allstate, and Inhabit Photography for making this event one to remember!

Additional support from the Off Duty Pro himself, Bobby Ortiz, is much appreciated









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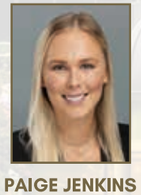
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Alina GIBBS

FROM KAZAKHSTAN TO AUSTIN

BUILDING A BUSINESS WITHOUT BORDERS

With an international perspective shaped across four countries, Alina Gibbs has built a career where strategy, cultural intelligence and highly personal service come together.

Born in Kazakhstan and educated in International Economics, Alina Gibbs began developing her professional perspective long before arriving in the United States. Her career later took her to South Korea, where she learned the language and built international business experience across South Korea, Kazakhstan and Russia. Working across cultures sharpened her instincts for negotiation, communication and relationship-building while reinforcing a lesson that would remain central throughout her career: successful business begins with understanding people.

Her next chapter in Thailand added a humanitarian dimension. Alina Gibbs became involved in initiatives connected with the U.S. Embassy in Thailand and the International Rescue Committee, supporting special-caseload refugees preparing for resettlement in the United States. The experience gave her a close view of the uncertainty families can face when preparing to rebuild their lives in another country.

Years later, that combination of business experience and empathy would become especially relevant in real estate.

CONTINUED ▶



"Building businesses and taking care of people are two things I genuinely love," Alina Gibbs says. "Real estate became the place where I realized I could do both."

FINDING HER PLACE IN A GLOBAL AUSTIN

After immigrating to the United States, Alina Gibbs experienced international relocation from the other side, navigating a new professional environment and establishing herself in a new country. She later earned an MBA in the United States, adding another layer of analytical and strategic training to the international business foundation she had already built.

When Alina entered the Austin real estate market in 2014, Central Texas was beginning an extraordinary period of transformation.

That evolution was particularly well suited to Alina's background. Her experience across Kazakhstan, South Korea, Thailand and the United States gave her an understanding of both cultural differences and the personal realities of starting over somewhere new. It also reinforced her belief that major real estate decisions are rarely about the property alone. They are connected to careers, families, finances, lifestyle and the next chapter of a client's life.

Today, Alina works across luxury residential real estate, relocation and commercial transactions, advising local buyers and sellers as well as executives, corporate transferees, immigrants and international families establishing themselves in Central Texas.

Fluent in English, Russian, Korean and Kazakh, she brings cultural fluency to a market that becomes more internationally connected every year. She understands that expectations around communication, negotiation, service and decision-making can vary significantly between cultures.

Her approach begins by understanding the person before focusing on the property.

"I always want to understand what is really driving the decision," she says. "A client may tell me they need four bedrooms, but I want to know why they are moving, how they want to live, what matters to their family and what they want this decision to accomplish."

STRATEGY WITH A HUMAN SIDE

Although Alina's relationships with clients are highly personal, her approach to real estate is analytical and business-minded. Her education in international economics and business trained her to think beyond the immediate transaction and evaluate positioning, leverage, marketability, risk and long-term value.

For buyers, that can mean looking beyond beautiful finishes to consider construction quality, location, future marketability and resale. For sellers, it means identifying what truly differentiates a property and building a strategy around the audience most likely to recognize that value.

Those considerations become even more important in luxury real estate. Alina believes luxury is not simply a price point; it is an expectation of preparation, discretion, responsiveness, sophisticated marketing, negotiation and judgment. The level of service should reflect both the significance of the asset and the expectations of the people involved.

"My clients are not hiring me simply to open a door or write a contract," she says. "They are hiring me to protect their interests, understand the market and help them make a decision they will still feel good about years later."

Sometimes that requires aggressive negotiation or recognizing an opportunity others have overlooked. At other times, it means advising a client not to move forward when the property or terms do not serve the client's long-term interests. For Alina, taking care of people includes being willing to give honest advice, even when the easiest answer would be yes.

MORE THAN $150 MILLION IN EXPERIENCE

Over more than a decade in Austin real estate, that philosophy has produced a substantial track record. Alina has completed more than $150 million in real estate transactions and has earned numerous professional awards and recognitions reflecting both production and industry reputation.

This year, she was recognized as a Top Producer by *Austin Real Producers*, adding another distinction to a career that has also included recognition among America's Top 100 Real Estate Agents and advanced professional education and designations.

Yet Alina does not view production as the entire definition of success. To her, the importance of $150 million in transactions is the experience behind the number: negotiations requiring unconventional strategies, luxury properties demanding distinctive positioning, relocation clients learning Austin for the first time, buyers evaluating long-term value and commercial transactions involving entirely different financial considerations.

"I'm proud of the numbers because they represent experience," she says. "But what matters most to me is whether clients felt taken care of and whether they trust me enough to call again."

Some of the most meaningful signs of success are the relationships that continue after closing: returning clients, family referrals and people who continue to seek her advice years later.

"A transaction has an ending," Alina says. "A relationship doesn't have to."

HELPING PEOPLE MAKE AUSTIN HOME

Relocation is one of the areas where Alina's international past and Austin real estate career intersect most naturally. Today, she works with executives, corporate transferees, immigrants and international families moving to Central Texas, including assignments through global relocation organizations.

The work often extends well beyond finding a property. A family arriving in Austin may need to understand neighborhoods, schools, childcare, commuting patterns, leasing practices and the everyday systems longtime residents rarely have to think about. International families may also be navigating a new culture while trying to establish stability and a sense of community.

Alina understands why those details matter because she has experienced major international transitions herself.

"When everything is new, even a small question can feel like a big question," she says. "I want my clients to know they have someone they can call."

Her goal is therefore not simply to help newcomers secure a home, but to help them understand Austin, establish their footing and begin to feel connected to their new community. She believes clients may eventually forget some of the details of a transaction, but they remember whether they felt informed, protected and supported when the process became complicated.

REAL ESTATE BEYOND THE LISTING

As Alina's real estate business has grown, so has her platform in Austin. As a host and real estate expert on the Emmy-nominated American Dream TV, she interviews entrepreneurs, builders, business owners and community leaders while showcasing the lifestyles, businesses and people shaping Central Texas.

The platform fits naturally with the way she views real estate. Austin is shaped by far more than its housing inventory, and those businesses, people and communities influence why people choose to live and invest here.

Her media work also reflects her belief that today's real estate professional must think beyond traditional sales, using marketing, technology, storytelling and relationships to create visibility and value.

For Alina, media is not separate from the business she has built. It is another extension of the same philosophy: understand the market deeply, connect with people authentically and communicate value effectively.

FAMILY BEHIND THE AMBITION

Behind Alina's international career, professional achievements and entrepreneurial ambition is the part of her life that gives those accomplishments deeper meaning: her family.

Her mother, Klara, her daughter, Malika, and her brother, Max have remained important throughout the different chapters of her international journey and professional growth. More recently, that family grew when Alina married Dmytro, a supportive partner who shares qualities she values deeply in both life and business, including integrity, honesty, loyalty, hard work and an entrepreneurial spirit.

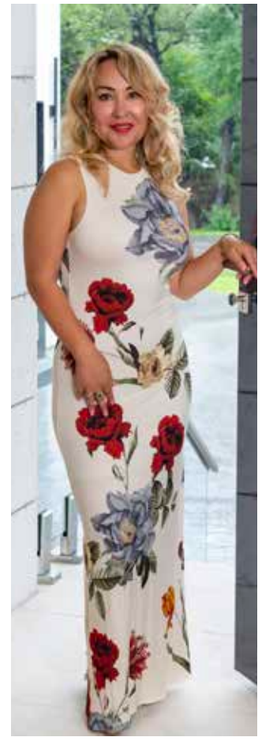
For Alina, having a partner who understands both her ambition and the purpose behind it has been especially meaningful. Their shared interest in entrepreneurship gives Alina and Dmytro another connection, as both enjoy developing ideas and creating opportunities.

"Dmytro understands me very well," she says. "He understands that I love building businesses, but he also understands why taking care of people matters so much to me."

Family has also shaped the way Alina defines success. A real estate transaction may be one of many contracts in a professional's year, but for the client it can determine where children grow up, where families gather, where memories are created or where an entirely new chapter begins. Alina never wants the scale of her business to make her lose sight of the importance of that individual decision.

BUILDING THE GIBBS AGENCY

After more than a decade in Austin real estate, Alina Gibbs is now expanding her vision beyond individual production with the launch of The Gibbs Agency.





Brokerage ownership gives her the opportunity to bring together the strengths that have defined her career: luxury real estate, relocation, international relationships, negotiation, marketing, media and entrepreneurship. But the goal is not growth for the sake of growth.

Alina wants the company to be defined by high professional standards, strategic thinking and personal responsibility to the client. She envisions a brokerage where agents understand contracts, markets and negotiation while also recognizing the importance of communication, integrity and relationships.

She also believes successful agents increasingly need to understand branding, technology, marketing and changing consumer expectations without losing the personal connection at the center of the business.

"Building a successful business is one of my passions," Alina says. "I love creating something, improving it and watching it grow. But taking care of people is just as important. For me, the best business is one where those two things strengthen each other."

That philosophy reflects almost every chapter that came before The Gibbs Agency. International business taught Alina how to recognize opportunity, humanitarian work deepened her understanding of people, relocation gave her perspective on major life transitions, and real estate became the place where those experiences could work together.

WHAT COMES NEXT

Alina remains actively involved in representing buyers, sellers, luxury clients, relocation clients and commercial opportunities throughout Central Texas. Brokerage ownership, however, has changed the scale of what she is building.

The future is no longer measured only in individual production, but also in the reputation of the company, the professionals she develops and the clients they serve.

Her international background remains central to that vision because Austin itself continues to become more globally connected. Alina believes the professionals who thrive in the city's next chapter will need to understand both sides of that equation: real estate remains intensely local, while the people buying, selling, investing and relocating here are increasingly global.

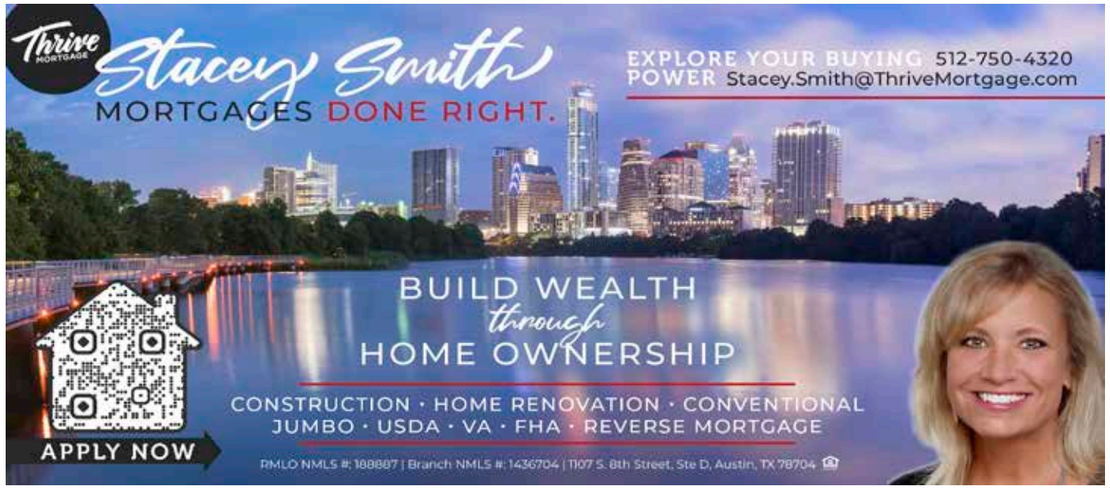
It is a perspective she has spent much of her life developing across Kazakhstan, South Korea, Thailand and the United States, with Austin becoming the market where those experiences could finally converge.

Today, the story is no longer simply about how far Alina has traveled. It is about what she intends to build from everything she has learned along the way.

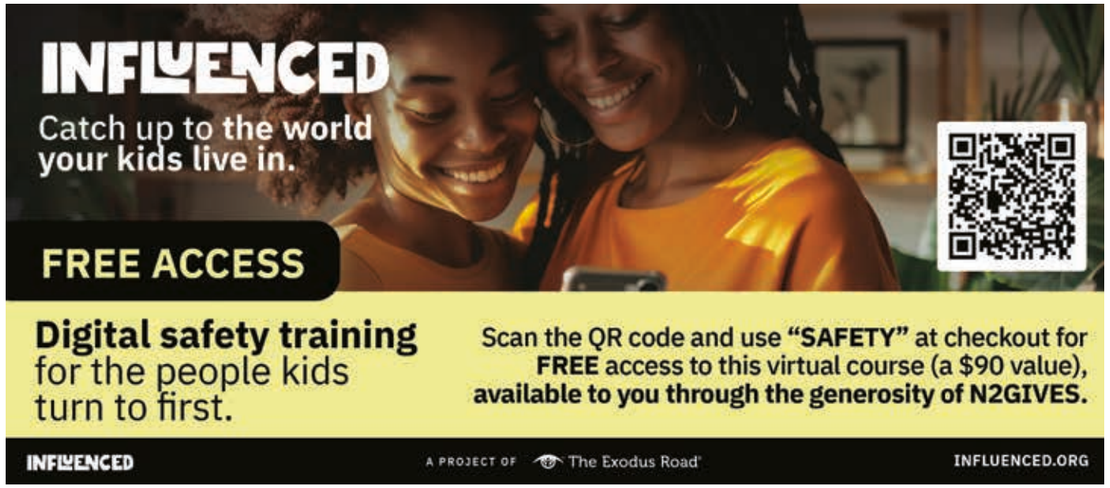
With more than a decade of Austin real estate experience, an expanding media platform and a brokerage of her own, Alina is approaching the next stage of her career with the same combination of business ambition and personal responsibility that has shaped the years before it.

For her, building something meaningful and taking care of people have never been competing ambitions. The goal is to create a business in which one continually strengthens the other.









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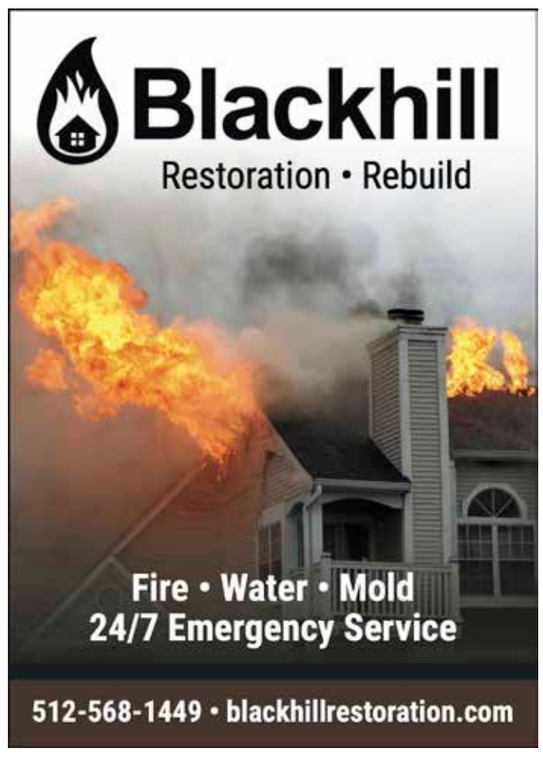
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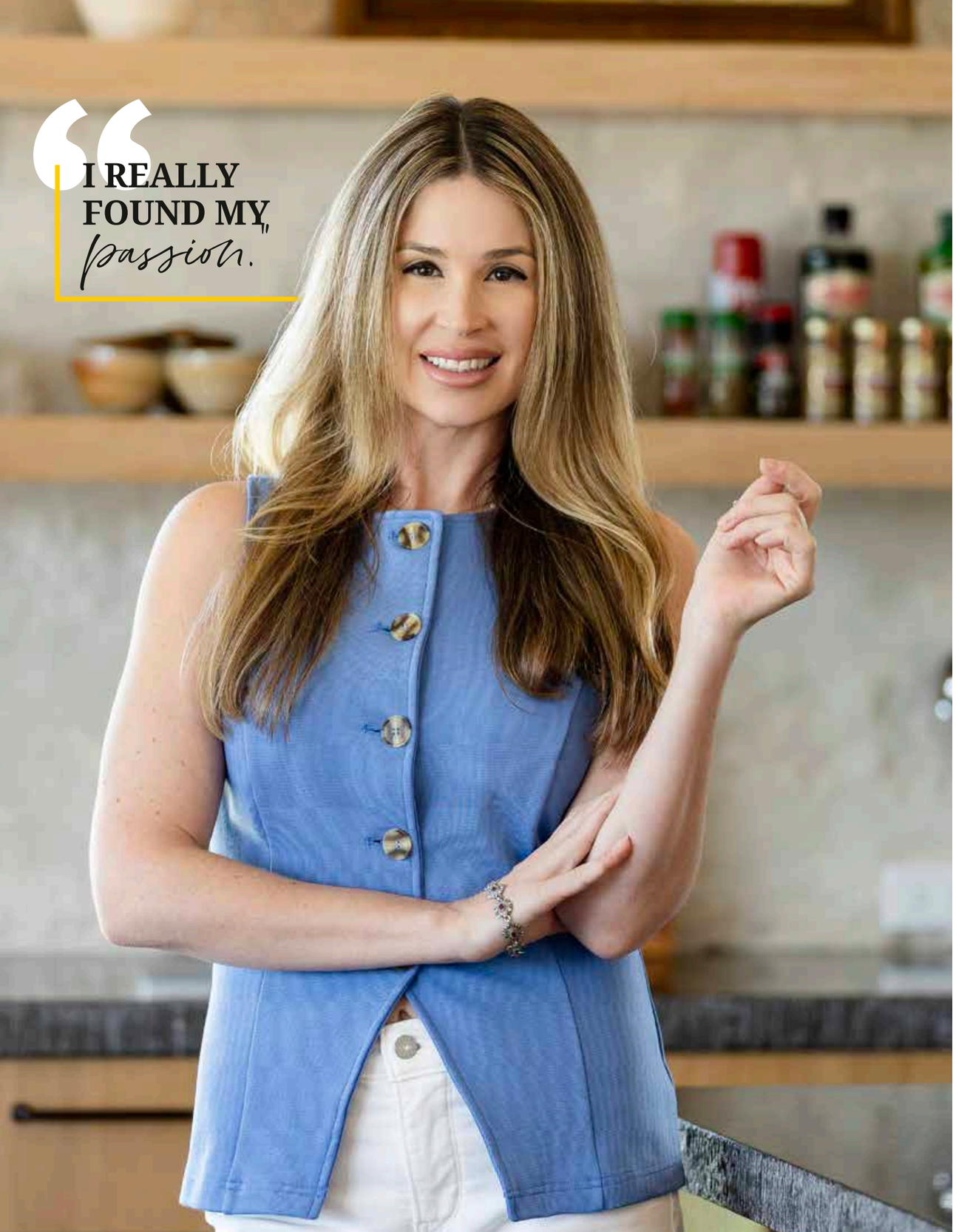
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Went From Putting Out Signs to Selling Out Communities

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCCABE

Lauren Swanner

CONTINUED ▶



Long before Lauren Swanner began selling new lifestyle communities, she was the teenager getting coffee for real estate agents, stuffing mailers and putting out signs. And she loved every minute of it.

"I just fell in love with the home tours and the whole process," she says.

Lauren was only 16 when she started plotting an early exit from high school, taking summer classes so she could graduate sooner. By her senior year, she was working part time in a real estate office and soaking up everything around her.

Real estate fascinated her. Her father, a professor at the University of Houston, had envisioned other possibilities for her future. Lauren, however, kept coming back to houses.

She earned her license in three weeks while raising two little girls.

"It was a whirlwind," she says.

Finding Her Place

Lauren began her career in Victoria, Texas, working for one of the state's top brokers as they launched a new brokerage. The office quickly rose into the top three, and Lauren earned Rookie of the Year honors.

"I really found my passion," she says.

She also discovered that her favorite part of real estate was helping people.

Relationships eventually brought Lauren to Austin. In 2017, she moved to the city without knowing a single person. Through the connection of Kathy Tullis on the TX coast, she was introduced to Philip Jalufka and his wife Chris, who recruited her to help sell a Lakeway development that needed a sellout.

The community was about halfway sold when Lauren came aboard. The question became: What could they do differently?

Lauren dug into the details, not just how to sell a house, but why a house wasn't selling.

"Some days you walk in and think, how do we make the refrigerator door not hit the island every time we open it?" she says.

Lauren helped sell the next 15 homes in approximately 14 months. The developer eventually added another 10, taking the community from 30 to 40 homes. She had found her niche.

Building Communities

While Lauren has continued working in general real estate, new construction and development became a major focus of her career.

She has been involved with projects including Lake Ridge on Rough Hollow, custom section Las Colinas in Serene Hills, Gravity on the East side. Etc. She also sold The Isabella, a community that went on to receive neighborhood recognition through the HBA's MAX Awards.

Then came the frenzy of 2021.

Lauren was working alongside her team on The Station at St. Elmo when 132 residences sold in approximately five hours.

"It was a wild time to be in real estate," she says.





> **I AM VERY HONORED AND FEEL GRATEFUL TO DO *what I love.*"**

Lauren personally contracted the project's two penthouses.

"That was pretty awesome."

The market eventually changed, as real estate always does. Some development opportunities moved forward. Others fell through. Lauren considered different projects but knew she had reached a point in her career where she could be selective.

Back to Lake Travis

Now Lauren's career has brought her full circle.

She was asked to work on Canyon Club, practically in her own backyard, returning her to the South Shore at Lake Travis, an area where she has already sold numerous homes. The development includes distinctive offerings such as 3D-printed ICON homes, and Lauren expects to be involved with the project for the next couple of years.

For someone who arrived in Austin in 2017 knowing nobody, life looks very different today.

Friends now joke, "You know everybody."

After nearly a decade in Austin, Lauren has built the relationships that once seemed impossible when she first arrived.

"I am very honored and feel grateful to do what I love," she says.

Texas Through and Through

Lauren grew up in Victoria. Her mother was from Houston, while her father was from Austin. An avid fisherman, her dad raised the family along the Texas coast, and Lauren remains a Texas girl at heart.

Her home life is changing, too. Lauren and her partner of eight years have a blended family with three daughters. Their oldest is transferring to Georgia University. Lauren's 18-year-old daughter has graduated from Lake Travis High School and plans to pursue nursing, while their youngest will turn 16 in May and plays volleyball.

After years filled with soccer, basketball, volleyball and the demands of raising three girls, Lauren suddenly sees something on the horizon she hasn't had much of before: free time.

She fills it with golf, Orangetheory, friends and, whenever possible, water. Snorkeling and wake surfing are much more her speed than cold-weather adventures.

"We go to warm places," she says. "I'm not a snow bunny."

Some things never change.

She is a Texas girl through and through. And that 16-year-old who fell in love with houses all those years ago ultimately knew exactly where she belonged.

LESSON MEDRANO PHOTOGRAPHY







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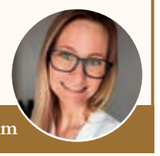
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CHRIS & KRISTI MITCHELL

THE LIFE BEHIND THE SUCCESS

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCCABE



From the outside, people may feel like they know Chris and Kristi Mitchell. They're husband and wife, parents, real estate professionals, and familiar faces throughout the communities where they live and work. Their business has grown tremendously over the years, and today a large part of their focus is working with developers and new-construction projects.

But real estate is only a small part of who they are.

Chris and Kristi both had their own lives and their own challenges long before they met. They had each spent years as single parents, so when they came together, they weren't just building a relationship—they were learning how to blend two families and two very independent ways of doing life.

It wasn't always easy, but those early years taught them a lot about each other, family, and what they wanted their life together to look like. Today, they are best friends, and the family they worked so hard to blend has become incredibly close. And since their last Real Producers feature, the family has grown in a whole new way—Chris and Kristi became grandparents.





There are pretty much zero secrets in the Mitchell family. Their group text is a free-for-all of embarrassing pictures, jokes, and everyone making fun of everyone else. No one is safe, andthat's basically their love language.

Chris is the person who keeps everyone connected. He brings the family together, and if someone texts him, there's a very good chance they won't be getting a text back—he'll simply pick up the phone and call.

Different by Design

Chris and Kristi are very different, and that's a huge part of why they work so well together.

Chris has the gift of gab. He can talk to absolutely anyone. He's naturally social, extremely business-minded, and great at bringing people together.

Kristi is different.

She's much more comfortable connecting with someone one-on-one. She's the detail and contract person, but she's also usually thinking about the person behind the transaction. Chris isoften all business, while Kristi tends to bring the human side back into the conversation.

Chris can work a room. Kristi tends to build deeper individual connections.

What surprises a lot of people is that Kristi actually has social anxiety and is terrified of public speaking. Hand her a microphone and put her in front of a room full of people, and she would rather be almost anywhere else.

For Kristi, being good with people and wanting to be the center of attention are two completely different things.

A Move That Changed More Than Their Address

Since their last Real Producers feature, a lot has changed professionally.

Chris and Kristi moved to Georgetown because they wanted to be closer to their kids, and in turn, their business thrived.

As Georgetown became home, their relationships throughout the area grew. They became increasingly connected to the community and to the incredible amount of growth happening throughout Georgetown and the surrounding areas.

They also made the decision to move their business to eXp Realty.

Over time, their business naturally began evolving beyond traditional residential real estate. Today, much of their focus is on working with developers and new-construction projects.



Chris can work a room. Kristi tends to build deeper individual connections…

The scope of what they do has changed, but the things that got them here haven't. Chris's ability to connect with people and bring them together complements Kristi's strengths in contracts, organization, marketing, details, and building genuine relationships.

They're doing it on a larger scale today, but the foundation is still the same.

Success has a funny way of hiding where someone started.

Chris and Kristi each have their own stories from before they ever met. Those experiences shaped them and continue to affect the way they look at the life they have today.

Off the Clock

Their lives outside of real estate probably aren't quite what people would expect.

Despite having a large social media presence, Kristi barely looks at social media herself—sometimes opening it only once a week.

Chris is the complete opposite. He's on it every day.

Kristi would much rather spend her free time reading, abstract painting, or leather crafting. She'salso fascinated by anatomy, stem cells, and regenerative medicine and can happily disappear down a good conspiracy-theory rabbit hole.

Chris has his own interests. He loves golfing, shoes, and collecting baseball cards. He's also the cook in their house.



And despite what people might assume, Chris is absolutely the shopper in the relationship. He even has the bigger closet.

Together, they're huge UFC fans, and there's plenty of '90s rap and Post Malone playing in theMitchell household.

Then there's Mia.

Mia isn't really treated like their dog. She's their best friend and basically another member of the family. Chris and Kristi have entire conversations with her, and it's completely normal for one of them to look at the other and ask, "What did she say?" as though Mia just contributed something important to the conversation.

And somehow, they both know the answer.

Life First

Looking at Chris and Kristi's life today, some of the decisions that ultimately had the biggest impact weren't made because they thought those decisions would make them more successful.

They built their life around the things that mattered most. They moved to Georgetown because they wanted to be closer to their kids, and their business flourished along the way. They'vewatched their family grow closer while their careers have taken them in directions they never could have predicted.

Their business has changed. The opportunities in front of them today are different from the ones they had when they started. But the things that matter most really haven't changed.

God. Family. Gratitude. Loyalty. Relationships.

Their first Real Producers story was about building a new life together and finding their place in Texas.

This chapter feels different. They've found their place.

Now they're building on it.

LESSON MEDRANO PHOTOGRAPHY

This chapter feels different. They've found their place. Now they're building on it.

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