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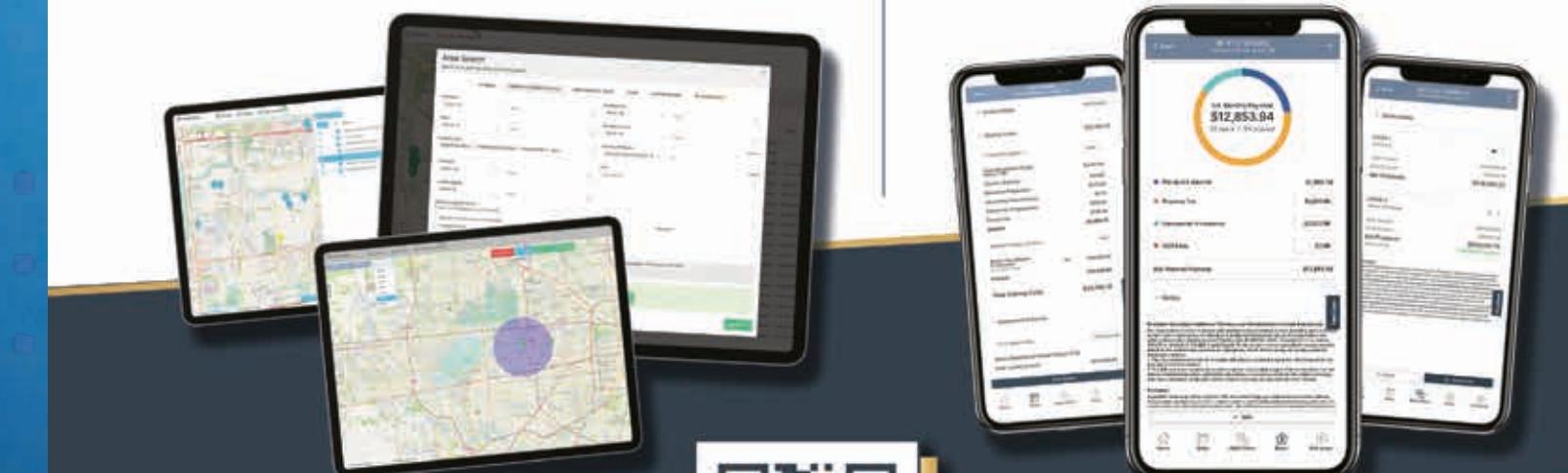
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COVER STORY

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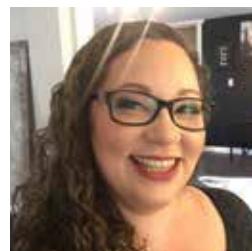
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Jay has continually been recognized for his achievements, including the following distinctions and honors:

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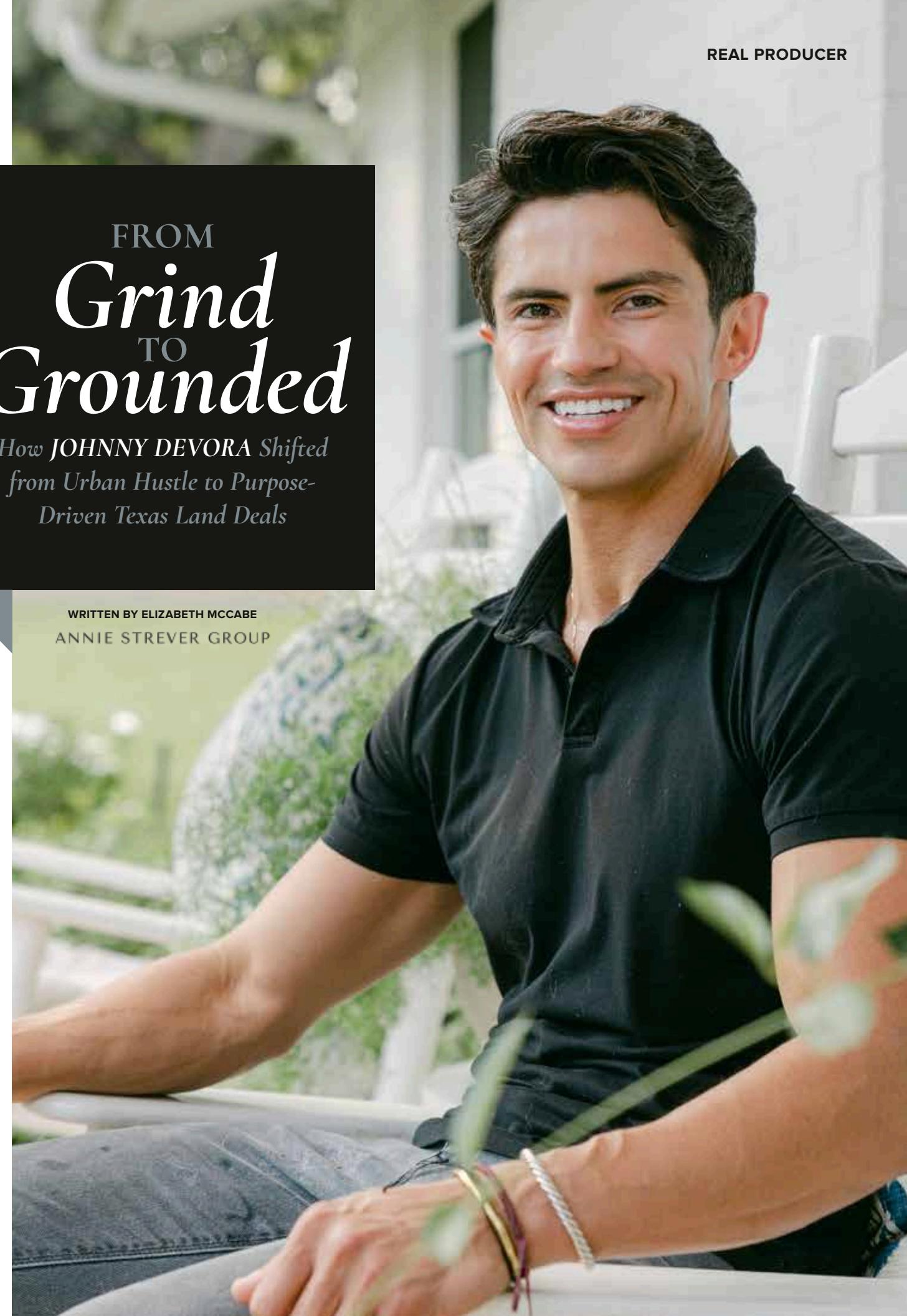
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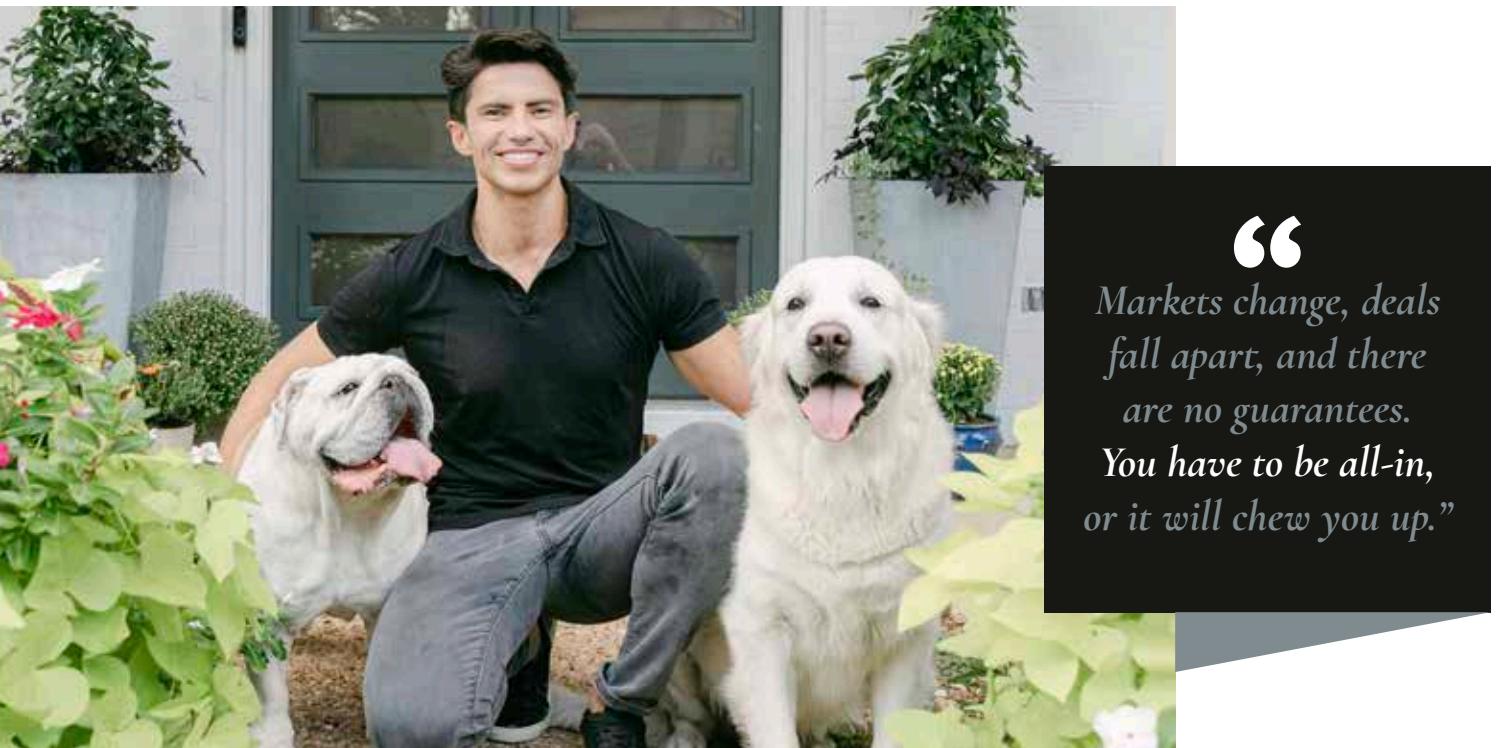
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TO
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*How JOHNNY DEVORA Shifted
from Urban Hustle to Purpose-
Driven Texas Land Deals*

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCCABE
ANNIE STREVER GROUP





“
Markets change, deals fall apart, and there are no guarantees. You have to be all-in, or it will chew you up.”

“I’ve been hustling for 16 years straight. Now I’m ready to build something slower, something that feels like home again,” says Johnny Devora, Broker/CEO of Devora Realty.

Some people stumble into real estate. Others chase it. Johnny’s story sits in the middle: a small-town kid from Poth, Texas, who started out leasing distressed condos in the middle of a recession, built a boutique brokerage from the ground up, and is now intentionally shifting his focus toward land, legacy, and the people behind the properties.

“It’s a difficult industry,” he says. “Markets change, deals fall apart, and there are no guarantees. You have to be all-in, or it will chew you up.”

Small-Town Roots, Big-Life Imagination
Johnny grew up in Poth, Texas—a farming town of about 2,300 people, one school system, and the same

classmates from kindergarten to graduation.

“My dad commuted an hour each way to Kelly Air Force Base. He wanted us in a bubble,” Johnny remembers. “At the time, I couldn’t wait to get out.”

Rural life, however, quietly shaped him. With two older sisters—Lisa and Sandra—he spent plenty of time on his own on the farm. He ran track, played sports, made art, and loved music. The quiet gave him room to imagine a bigger life, even before he knew what that meant.

His passion for service also started early. An aunt, forced into early retirement due to health issues, threw herself into community work.

“She was an incredible role model and constantly pushed me to do things I wasn’t sure I was capable of,” he says.

In high school, Johnny tagged along as she worked

with nonprofits—writing grant proposals and helping organizations secure funding. Board members jokingly called some of them “miracle grants,” the ones they doubted would ever get approved.

“They’d say, ‘It’s going to take a miracle to get that one approved,’ ” Johnny recalls. “And somehow, we saw a few miracles happen.”

Those experiences laid the foundation for a lifelong commitment to community. Later, Johnny would serve on the boards of Waterloo Counseling, Texas Health Action, and Austin Rainbow Theatre, and volunteer as a Big Brother with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Texas.

Finding His Lane
Leaving a graduating class of 62 for a large university was a shock. Eventually, Johnny transferred to Texas State University, where he found his footing in campus leadership, coordinating

major events and interning for a Congressman before graduating in 2006.

“It taught me how to listen, how to read a room, and how to serve people with very different needs,” he says. “Those skills still drive how I work today.”

After college, his dad encouraged a traditional path. “He wanted me to have a stable job—with retirement, health insurance, and a salary,” Johnny explains.

So Johnny took a position with the State of Texas at the Statewide Intake Center in Austin, answering calls about abuse and neglect. It was supposed to be a short stop while he studied for the LSAT. Three years later, he still hadn’t taken the test—and he hadn’t gone to law school.

Real estate was always nearby. Friends and family were in the business, but the feedback was blunt: it was risky, there was no

guaranteed income, and people might not trust someone young with their biggest financial decisions.

Then the recession hit, and with it came the opportunity that would change everything.

The Recession That Changed Everything

A friend introduced Johnny to a developer with several multi-phase condo projects in San Antonio and Austin, with a multi-family portfolio of nearly 16,000 units. On paper, they looked promising. In reality, the recession had them stuck.

The projects hadn’t met their pre-sale requirements, so banks refused to release remaining construction funds. Agents walked away. Occupancy fell from around 90% to 40%. Maintenance lagged. Construction crews disappeared.

“He was in a tough spot,” Johnny says. “He didn’t have support, and he barely used technology.”

Where others saw a dead end, Johnny saw another angle.

“I told him, ‘If you can’t sell them, then let’s lease them.’ ”

These weren’t just leftover units—they were entire phases. Johnny helped craft a plan and pitch to the bank: if they could lease the units and hit specific rent targets, would the bank release funds to finish the projects? The bank agreed.

What followed was not glamorous. Weekends in

became Craigslist posts, calls to locators, handwritten signs, balloons, and on-site events. He even hired a DJ and threw pool parties just to get traffic.

The result: thirty-two leases in 45 days.

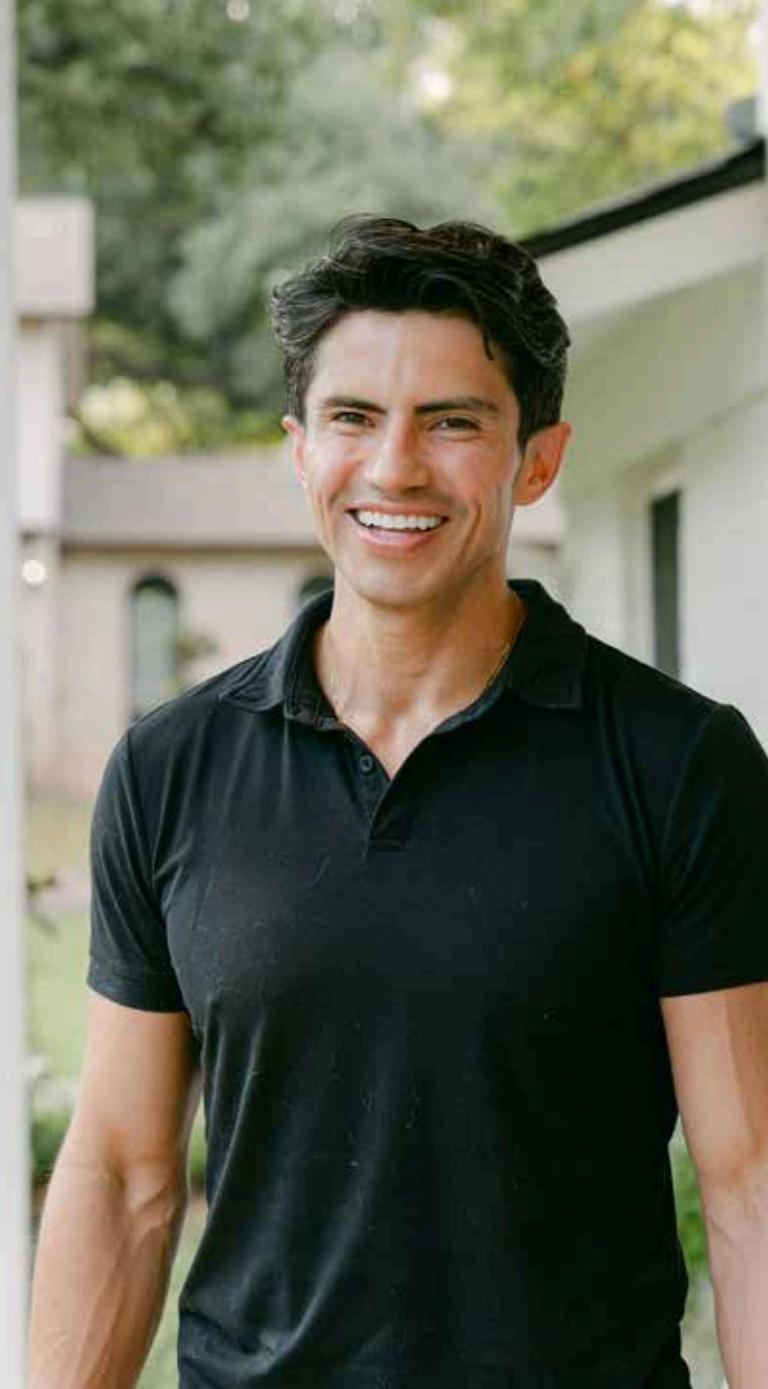
It was more income in six weeks than he’d earned in a year with the state—and proof that the projects could be saved. One 200-unit project led to another. More in Austin. More in San Antonio.

Johnny rolled his commissions back into learning and doing more—construction management, clubhouse renovations, landscaping upgrades, and full-scale repositioning.

“I started in the trenches—leasing and stabilizing distressed multifamily in one of the toughest markets we’ve seen,” he says. “That’s where I learned how much creativity, grit, and collaboration this business really takes.”

As financing returned, those stabilized properties became sellable assets. Johnny expanded his services into residential sales, multifamily acquisitions and dispositions, condo conversion and deconversion projects, and land entitlement work—eventually earning his CCIM designation with a development-focused specialty track along the way.

One of his latest projects, The Andy, a mixed-use destination on the East Side of San Antonio across from the Frost Bank Center—an example of Johnny’s belief in



adaptive reuse and breathing new life into existing structures rather than defaulting to demolition.

Building Devora Realty: Low Tech, High Touch

Devora Realty grew from a necessity into a boutique, advisory-focused brokerage serving Austin, San Antonio, and the surrounding Central Texas markets. The team works across residential, multifamily, land, and commercial projects,

investment, entitlement, and repositioning.

“Real estate is all about marketing and positioning—pricing it right and telling an honest story,” Johnny says. “You can apply that to any property if you really understand the people involved.”

As Devora Realty’s work grew more complex, Johnny kept sharpening the tools behind the scenes. In addition to his CCIM, he is actively working



“
We're here to advise. Sometimes the best answer isn't the most obvious or the quickest one.”

through the Accredited Land Consultant coursework and pursuing an AI certification—tying together development, land, and technology so he can give clients clearer options and better advice, without ever replacing the human connection at the center of the business.

As the industry flooded with new platforms and “disruptive” models, Johnny found himself battling what he calls shiny-object syndrome.

“It's so easy to get distracted by the latest tech tool or brokerage model,” he says. “I had to step back and refocus on what matters most: the clients we serve and the service we actually deliver.”

That reset gave Devora Realty its identity.

“We tell people we're a 'low-tech, high-touch' brokerage,” he explains. “We probably use more tech than most, but we don't hide behind it. Tech should support relationships, not replace them.”

The firm also leans into responsible development—helping owners explore options that create value without automatically defaulting to displacement or overbuilding. “We're here to advise,” Johnny says. “Sometimes the best answer isn't the most obvious or the quickest one.”

The Next Chapter: Land, Lifestyle, and Legacy

“I probably think about plants more than I should,” he laughs. “But it all ties together: land, stewardship, and how people actually live on their property.”

Beyond the Business

Outside of real estate, service and movement keep Johnny grounded. Alongside his board work and nonprofit involvement, he's a dedicated fitness enthusiast and a former Ironman triathlete.

“That hyper-growth mode is exciting, but it's not the only definition of success,” he says. “Now I'm asking where I can add the most value and still feel aligned with my life.”

Texas is in the middle of one of the largest intergenerational transitions of land in its history. Longtime landowners are deciding what happens to properties that have been in families for decades. Johnny sees that as a calling.

“Not every piece of land needs to become a massive master-planned community,” he says. “My goal is to

use my development and entitlement experience to help landowners understand their options—sell, partner, subdivide, conserve, or some combination. There's a lot of room for creative solutions.”

“This business is hard,” he says. “You have to care enough about your clients to keep going when things look impossible—and to be honest with them, even when it's not the easy conversation.”

He's now gradually taking over stewardship of the family ranch, as his parents are in their eighties and maintaining it has become more challenging. He's begun laying the infrastructure for a nursery, and the bigger vision is a lifestyle brand that weaves together land, design, gardening, regenerative practices—and, eventually, a few miniature cows.

He's someone who understands exactly how demanding this industry can be—and still chooses to show up, collaborate, and build a future with both feet firmly planted on the Texas ground he calls home.



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From Finance to Frontlines:

How
**ISAAC
QUINTANILLA**
Became One
of Austin's
Rising Real
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Isaac Quintanilla didn't start out aiming to conquer Austin's real estate market. In fact, he walked off the graduation stage at Texas State University in 2017 with a finance degree and a vision of becoming, as he put it, "the Wolf of Austin." Real estate wasn't even on his radar; his early ambition was all about managing portfolios and guiding clients through financial jungles.

For the first three years, that's exactly what he did. Isaac cut his teeth as a financial advisor, honing his skills at New York Life. After he transitioned into Bond Finance for the State, but even a stable stint in Bond Finance at the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs couldn't shake a nagging feeling: he missed the thrill of the sale and speaking to clients.

Isaac realized that while he had the comfort of a nine-to-five and a steady paycheck, he'd left something essential behind: his passion for connecting with people and the entrepreneurial spark that had always driven him.

It was in the middle of the pandemic, as he tracked plummeting mortgage rates for government-backed loans, that Isaac had his real estate epiphany. He ran the numbers on a home at a historically low interest rate and jumped in, purchasing his first property with a USDA loan and almost no money down. That moment lit a fire. If he could do it, he thought, he could help others do it too.



That moment lit a fire.

If he could do it, he thought, he could help others do it too.



Isaac's story isn't just about numbers;

it's about rediscovering a passion, embracing the feast-and-famine thrill of a commission-based career, and helping others find their own way home.

From there, the pivot was clear. Isaac got his real estate license and plunged into the world of residential realty with the same dedication he once applied to finance. The first couple of years were a balancing act—part realtor, part entrepreneur building a bar in West Campus. But by 2024, he committed fully to real estate, setting a goal to hit \$100,000 in commissions and surpassing it with over \$4 million in volume.

Now, he's on track to hit even bigger milestones, just hitting \$6 million for this year and dreams of cracking the top 500 agents in Austin for 2026. Isaac's story isn't just about numbers; it's about rediscovering a passion, embracing the feast-and-famine thrill of a commission-based career, and helping others find their own way home.

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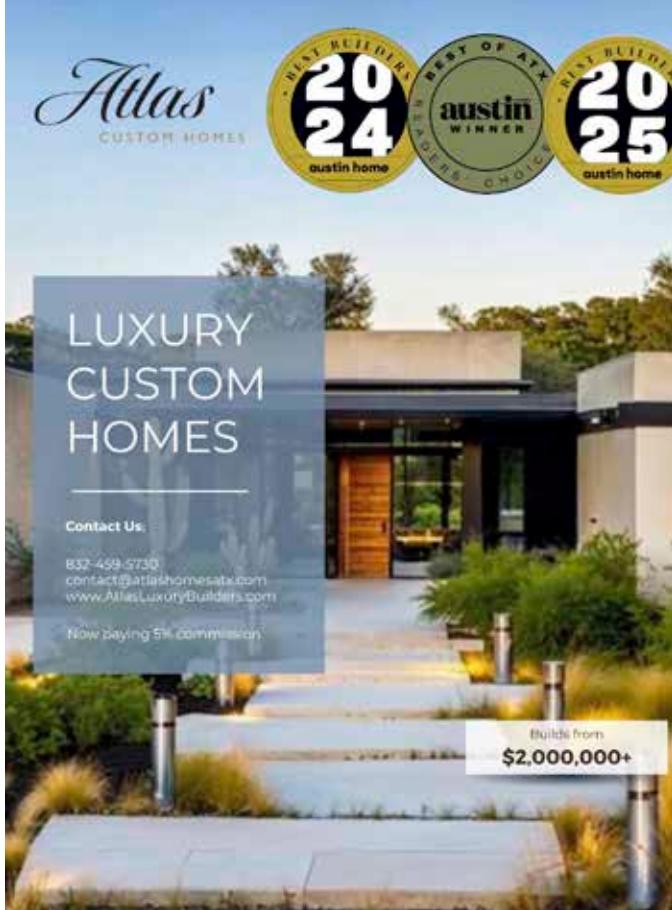
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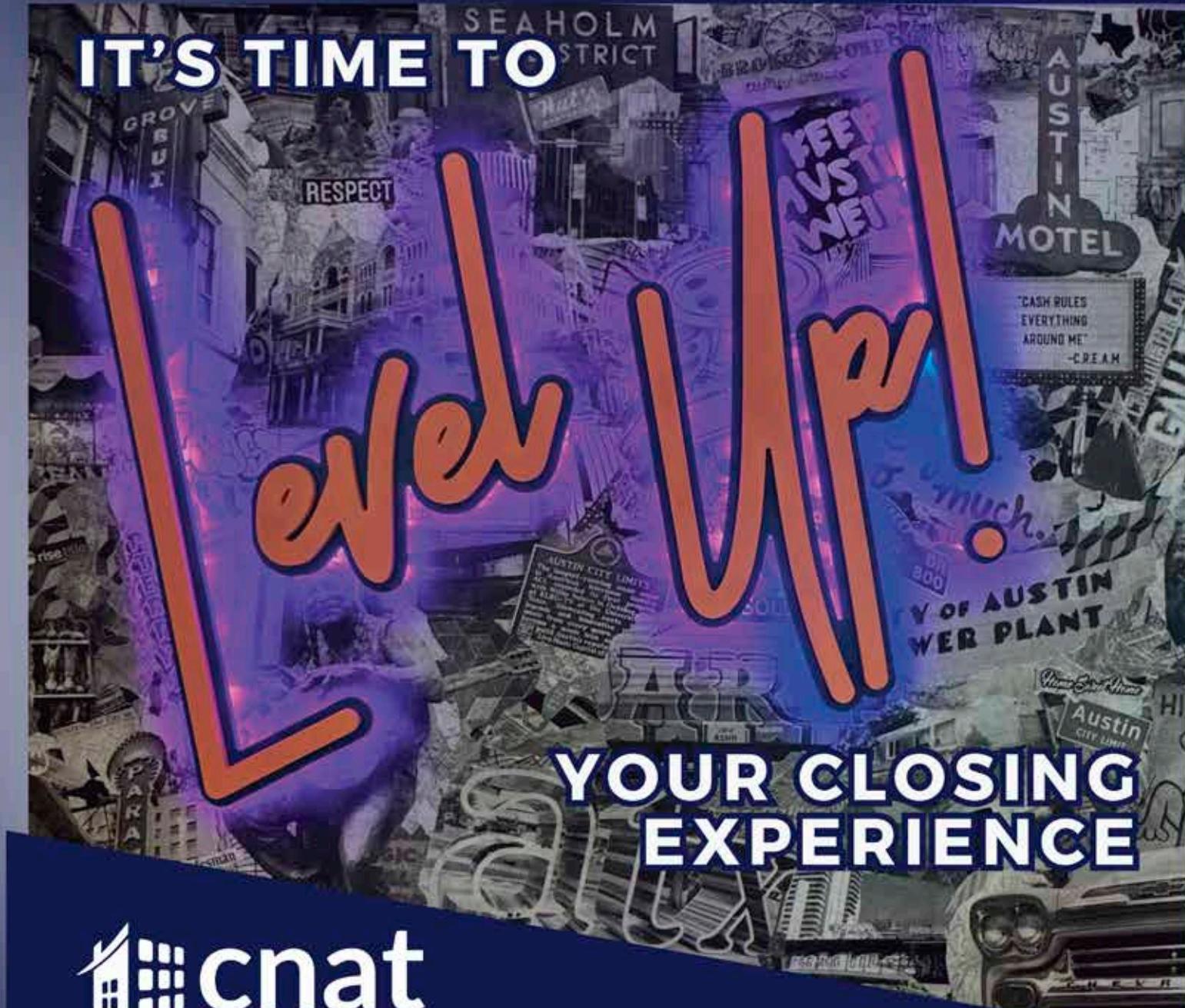
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BRIDGETTE

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PLAYBOOK FOR ATHLETES

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCCABE

In football, the great ones don't just play the game. They see the field. They anticipate the pressure, read the defense, and calmly execute the winning play. In Austin real estate, that player is Bridgette Hager. She's a powerhouse who's spent more than three decades turning complex moves, high-pressure decisions, and cross-country transitions into seamless victories for her clients.

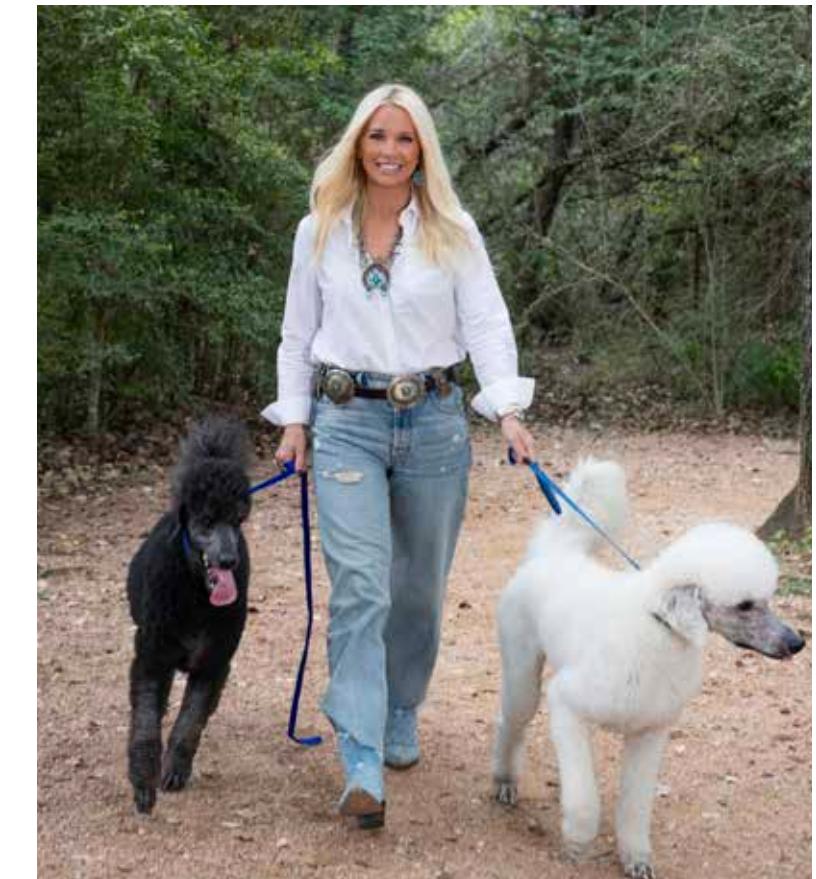
Her secret? She's lived the game.

Bridgette grew up in West Texas, in the football-obsessed town of Odessa. She met her future husband, Britt, long before the bright lights of the NFL. They both attended the University of Texas, where her path veered toward property management while Britt's headed straight for the field. "I loved helping people find a home even back then," she says. "Even though I was working with college students, it was just fun for me."

While finishing school, she juggled full-time property management, eventually running a 360-unit complex on West Campus and quickly realized she had a knack for guiding people toward the right place to live.

Then life sent her straight into the big leagues.

A Decade in the NFL... and 15 Moves Later
Britt was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles, launching a 10-year NFL career that took the family to Philadelphia, Denver, and St. Louis, often with Austin as their off-season home base. What followed was a whirlwind of constant relocations, babies on the hip, boxes everywhere, and major life decisions happening at lightning speed.





"It ended up being 15 moves over 10 years," she recalls. "Four boys, constant moving, my husband traveling, and me handling all the relocations. I didn't want anyone else to go through that alone."

After all, every client deserves to feel confident, supported, and secure, whether it's their first move or their twentieth.

When Britt retired and the family returned to Austin, Bridgette took a deep dive into the title world, working for a friend and gaining expertise on the closing side of the business. She knew then it was time: she needed her real estate license.

Building a Division for Professional Athletes

Bridgette joined Engel & Völkers with a mission, create a dedicated division specifically for professional athletes. Not "someday." Not "maybe." A real, structured support system.

"It took four years, but I made it happen," she says proudly.

She became the leader and founder of the Professional Athlete Advisory group, now connected to Engel & Völkers offices in every city with major sports teams: NFL, MLB, NBA, NHL, MLS, and even soccer clubs across Europe.

Why are athletes different?

Because their lives are different.

They can be traded, relocated, or released in a single practice. Their families often move separately. Their needs are urgent, specialized, atypical, and Bridgette understands every part of it.

"We travel with them if we need to. Sometimes it's just the wife moving while the husband is already training," she explains. Bridgette helps with movers, unpacking, organizing, schools, pediatricians, restaurants, chefs, trainers, and more. It's full concierge service. Clients can receive everything they need to fit into the lifestyle they're used to for seamless moving from start to finish.

Her personal experience is the system.

Her empathy is the playbook.

Her clients feel the difference.

"This takes me back to when I first started when we needed someone to guide us. I built what I wish I had."



**"IT TOOK
FOUR
YEARS, BUT
I MADE IT "
*Happen.***



LEAH FAYE
PHOTOGRAPHY

Bridgette and Britt are now empty nesters, deeply rooted in the Austin community they've loved since the mid-1980s.

She still helps clients buy and sell luxury properties and ranches, often with her son Bryce jumping in to assist. And she isn't slowing down. Not even close.

Beyond Real Estate: Giving Back, Riding Hard, and Loving Big

Outside of work, Bridgette loves fitness, family time, and traveling, especially to France, where she was a French minor at UT. "Any chance I get to go to Europe, I take it," she laughs.

She is also one of the founding members of **Diamonds & Spurs**, a women's group supporting young girls in the rodeo community. Last year, they purchased every lamb shown by the girls at the Youth Auction, providing college scholarships and changing futures.

Supporting children, uplifting families, strengthening community — it's simply who she is.

Bridgette and Britt have also served on committees for the Austin Rodeo, American Cancer Society, Canine Companions, Texas Exes, the NFL Players' Association, and more. Giving back isn't an item on their to-do list. It's a lifestyle.

The MVP of Relocation

Today, Bridgette Hager stands as one of Texas's most accomplished REALTORS®, consistently ranking in the **top 1% statewide**, with accolades including Elite 25, Luxury League, Million Dollar Guild, Platinum Top 50, and Best in Residential Real Estate by *Austin Business Journal*.

Her expertise, her leadership, and her lived experience make her the ultimate advocate for clients in transition, especially athletes balancing high-stakes careers with family life.

If real estate is a game of inches, Bridgette is the one who sees the whole field.

A strategist.

A steady hand.

A seasoned guide who has run this play a hundred times and always knows the next move.

Because she's lived it.

And now, she uses every chapter of her story to help others find home, no matter where the season takes them.

A Family of Athletes

The Hagers are, in every sense, a football family.

Their oldest son lives in Los Angeles and co-owns a restaurant and bar in Austin. Their second son played six years in the NFL for the Rams — the last team Britt played for. Watching her son run onto the same field where his dad once stood was, in her words, "a surreal full-circle moment." Their third and fourth sons are thriving as well, with one working with Britt in Houston, and the youngest, a former Longhorn who even wore his father's jersey his senior year, now a filmmaker in Austin.

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