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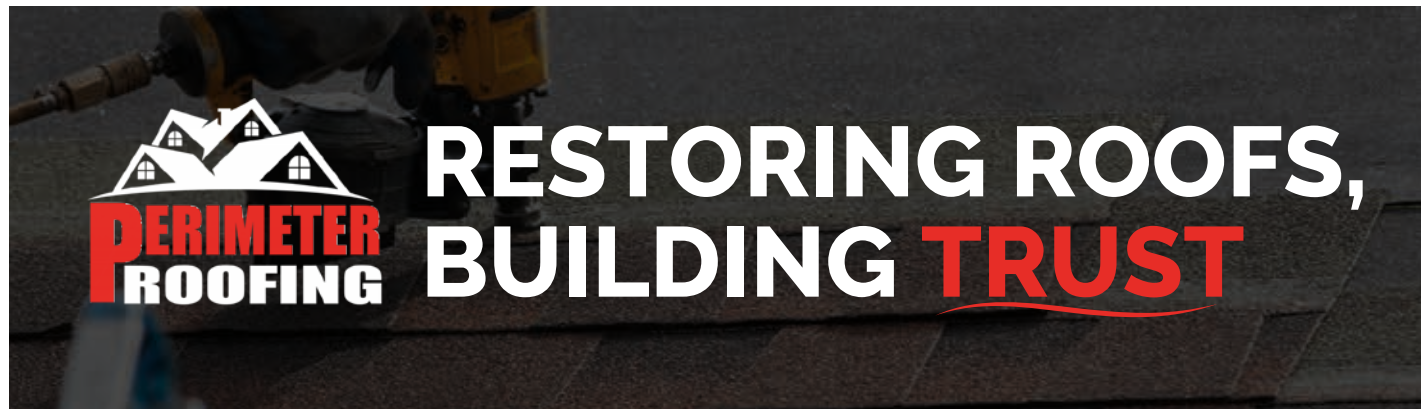


Agent on Fire
NIYI ADEWOLE

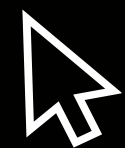
Partner Spotlight
HOMESTRETCH

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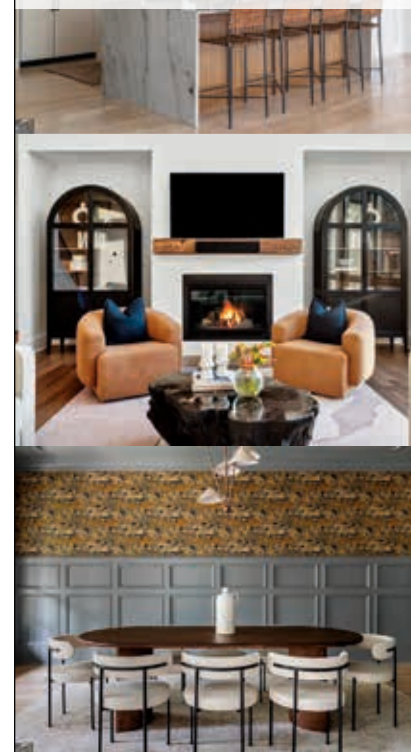
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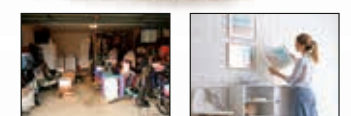
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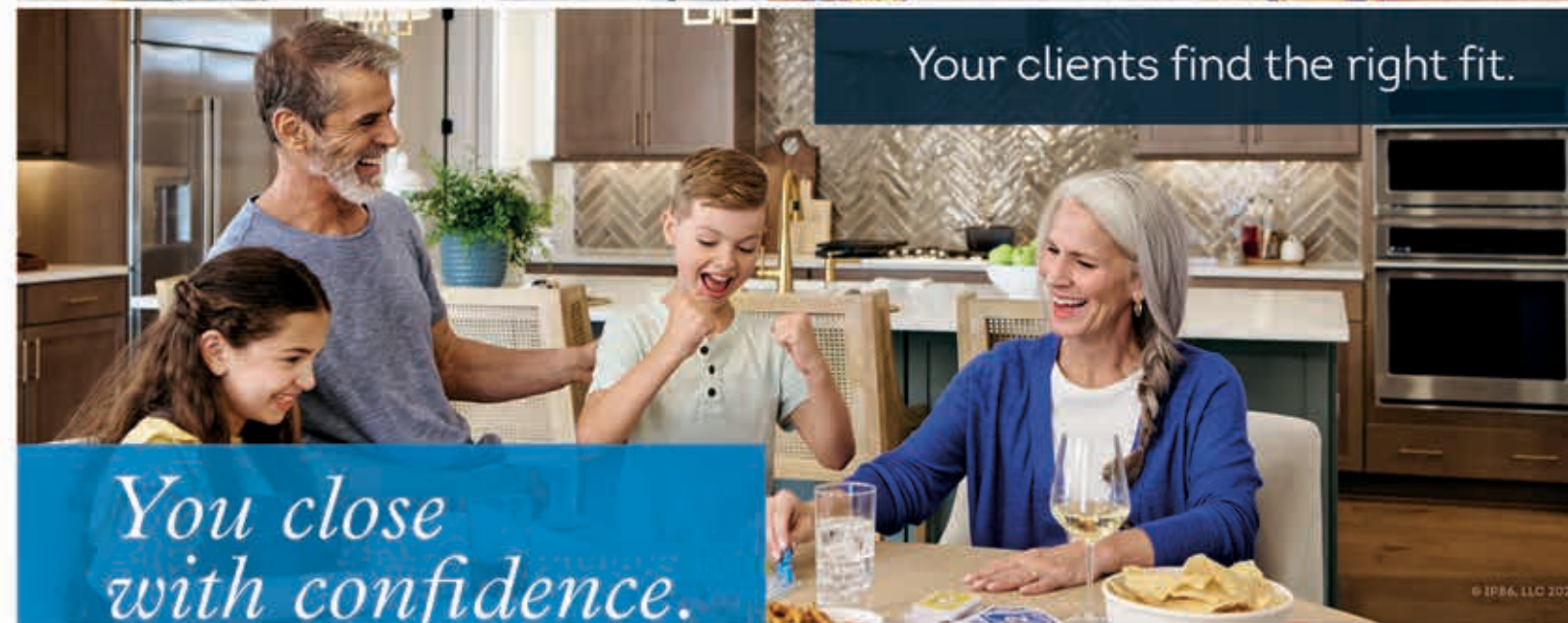
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Lara Dolan



Left to Right: Catherine Marshall, Brian Dolan, Lara Dolan, Jenny McAllister

Calm & Clarity in the Midst of Chaos

BY ELIZABETH MCCABE

PHOTOS BY ALLIE SANTOS

“Never give up on something that you can’t go a single day without thinking about.”

– WINSTON CHURCHILL

“I’m a bit of an accidental agent,” laughs Lara Dolan. But there’s nothing accidental about the success she’s built, the trust she’s earned, or the reputation she carries today with Ansley Real Estate. Her career wasn’t launched in glossy open houses. Instead, it was forged collecting late rent, filing eviction notices, and navigating high-crime neighborhoods with two small daughters in tow during one of the most volatile housing markets in recent history.

“It was not fun,” she says plainly. But it was essential, making her into the go-getter she is today.

Calm in the Storm

Before real estate, Lara and her husband Brian were buy-and-hold investors, quietly building a residential portfolio long before it was trendy. When the market downturn hit between 2006 and 2008, a REALTOR® friend asked Lara to help manage single-family rental properties intended for future development, projects the market simply couldn’t support at the time.

An expert problem-solver, Lara learned leaps and bounds from that experience. She also became quite adept at helping people with their property concerns.

“There is almost always a solution,” she explains. “We just

have to find it and make sure all parties are comfortable. If we can keep both sides calm and focused on the outcome, we can find a way through. That’s our number one job. We must be the calm in the storm, the voice of reason.”

Fearlessness, Learned Early

“I grew up in Minnesota,” says Lara, “home of Prince. And yes, we were at the very last concert at the Fox Theater.” Later, she headed to Southern California to attend Claremont McKenna College, where she earned a double major in Psychology and Literature. “It was an outstanding education that really developed how I think, analyze problems and develop outcomes.”

Graduating into the early 1990s dot-com boom, Lara was recruited into a startup tech and multimedia company where she ran marketing and PR in her twenties. It was an all-hands-on-deck environment: changing copier toner one minute, presenting technology to Fortune 100 CEOs the next. She traveled nonstop, pitching cutting-edge multimedia kiosks to local governments, Congress, and even Oprah!

One product, a touchscreen “mini courthouse” designed to guide users through uncontested divorce filings, caught national attention. Lara found herself flown out, picked up in a limo, and



“

One day you might be scooping excrement in the backyard.

The next, you’re closing on a \$2 million house.”



standing just offstage while Oprah demonstrated the technology, ready to jump in and fix it if anything broke. “I was a little techy as head of marketing,” she laughs. “That’s what happens when you are in your 20s and work with a company of 10 people.”

Being flexible and fearless translated perfectly to real estate. She does everything to get the job done. “One day you might be scooping excrement in the backyard. The next, you’re closing on a \$2 million house.” Now she is passionate about helping the newer agents on her team figure out how to build success.

Passionate about People

Lara rose in real estate by being her authentic self. A self-described “open book,” she is always out and about. She’s passionate about people. “My husband calls me ‘the Lego piece’ because I love to connect people,” she smiles.

In 2024, Lara rebranded her business as The Dolan Group, bringing husband Brian fully into the fold after his retirement from corporate leadership. Brian thrives working with buyers, especially first-time homeowners, where he focuses on education, trust, and, as he puts it, “working toward great outcomes.”

Together, they’ve become what Lara calls the “family REALTOR®” for their clients, serving multiple generations, friends, cousins, and referrals. It’s all about deepening relationships with existing clients. “We’re in maintenance mode,” Lara says. “We want to continue serving our clients at the highest level and welcoming new relationships in a way that feels right.”

A Family That Shows Up

Lara beams when talking about her family. Olivia, 25, lives in Chicago and works as a Public

Defender for Cook County. Although it’s an emotionally demanding role, she finds grounding through her tight relationships and solid friendships. Carly, 23, lives in Buckhead and runs events and banquets for the Ritz-Carlton downtown, where, according to Lara, “there is never a dull moment.”

What makes her proudest? It’s their work ethic. They got that from their parents.

“People love to talk about this generation not working hard or not showing up on time,” she says. “That is not true of the Dolan girls. They will outwork you, but they still know how to have fun.”

Now that their daughters are adults, the Dolans prioritize a big family trip every year. “We actually like each other and love spending time together,” Lara says. That’s priceless.

Golf, Florida, and Recharging

Outside of real estate, Lara’s dream of a perfect morning starts with 18 holes of golf. At their home on 30A, as members of Watersound Club, she and Brian tee off at 7:30 a.m. and are back online working before noon. “We try to be in Florida one week a month, but it doesn’t always work that way,” she laughs. By adding team members, she can get some time away from the office to unplug.

“People think this business is just about opening doors and walking through houses,” she says. As Lara points out, “There’s so much work that must be done on the phone and computer; we research, analyze data, work through contract solutions, send trusted vendors to solve problems. That’s the stuff nobody sees.”

To relax on a rainy day with unexpected downtime, you can

find her on her couch with a marathon of Law & Order SVU. “That’s my guilty pleasure,” she laughs, “or sitting in my front room with a good book.” In real estate, there is always something to do. “But we need to recharge and not feel guilty about relaxing into something entirely unproductive.” Why? “That is, in fact, productive but something I still need to work on!” Downtime is essential with the hustle and bustle of real estate.

Advice That Actually Matters

When asked what advice she’d give to up-and-coming producers, Lara doesn’t sugarcoat it: “Get involved and stay involved,” she urges. “For me, getting deeply involved in some charity events and community organizations has been instrumental in building my business.”

You name it – she’s done it. “I’ve chaired huge events for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Milton First Responders Foundation, and now I’m doing more work to support research to cure ALS, as a dear friend is struggling with this diagnosis.” Lara has sat on non-profit boards, been involved with the Chamber of Commerce, and is a past president of the fantastic Alpharetta Business Association.

“It is not enough to join, pay your dues, and occasionally attend. Join the committee, work the event, chair the subcommittee,” she encourages others. When you can show your hard work, intelligence, and dedication through activities that aren’t necessarily real estate related, that is powerful. “People see who you are and how you show up.”

She’s quick to note, “That isn’t for everyone ... some people build a business calling FSBOs. God bless you. That’s not me.” Others blog, vlog, and create nonstop content. What does matter? “Building your

business has to be authentically you. Otherwise, you won’t stick with it.”

Lara Dolan is unapologetically herself. She’s transparent, authentic, and shows up fully, both in business and at home. That clarity is her competitive edge. And people are taking notice.

“

People see who you are and how you **show up.”**





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Niyi ADEWOLE

Deals, Dedication & a Dash of *Chess Strategy*

PHOTOS BY REGIS LAWSON

Long before he was guiding clients toward generational wealth, Niyi Adewole was a kid growing up in Music City, unaware that his life would eventually take him from football stadiums to real estate closings. “I grew up in Nashville, Tennessee, where I was born and raised,” he said. But life had bigger plans. His family later relocated to Philadelphia, where he spent about a decade, attended Temple University, and played football for the Owls.

College life didn’t unfold quite how he initially pictured it. “I originally started in Engineering,” he said, laughing, “but switched when I realized I had a knack for sales.” He graduated with a degree in Business Administration—something that would prove more useful than he ever imagined.

His first job out of college vaulted him into the corporate world. “My first job was in medical device sales with Baxter Healthcare, which moved me from Philadelphia to Chicago,” he said. And he was good at it...very good. Good enough

that leaving wasn’t because of burnout or failure. “I didn’t move into full-time real estate because I failed elsewhere,” Adewole said firmly. “I was very successful in medical device sales, but I had a deep passion for real estate and the financial freedom it gave me.”

That passion kicked off around 2015 when he discovered a podcast that changed everything. “I first started listening to the *BiggerPockets* podcast,” he said. Inspired, he tackled his first house hack in 2016 after moving to Louisville,

Kentucky. It was a spark that grew into a calling.

When it came time to choose a brokerage, the decision was rooted in mentorship and direction. “I chose eXp because my mentor, someone who made the journey from W-2 to full-time real estate, was with eXp,” he said. The flexibility, stock benefits, and ability to build a downline didn’t hurt either.

Today, Adewole is part of the thriving Ekabo Home Team, serving Georgia and Florida with a hyper-focused passion: helping investors win. “We

specialize in the investor-friendly niche: short-term rentals, long-term rentals, and small multifamily house hacks,” he said. “I love helping people buy their first property and taking advantage of opportunities like 100% bonus depreciation to build wealth.”

As the market shifts, Adewole sees opportunities everywhere. “We’ve shifted into a full buyer’s market,” he said. “Unlike 2020–2022 when sellers held the power, buyers now have leverage. We’re helping investor clients scoop up great deals across the board.”

And when he says: “great deals,” he means it. Ask about one of his favorite client victories, and he lights up. He described a recent long-distance closing: “We secured enough credits to cover closing costs. During due diligence we identified about \$20K of work and negotiated \$15K in credits.” Then came the curveball, which was a low appraisal just a week before closing. Most agents would groan. Adewole strategized. “We used a strategic approach and got the seller to match the appraised value while letting us keep



“
***I originally started
in Engineering,
but switched when I realized
I had a knack for sales.***
”

all credits,” he said. “The client was thrilled.”

Real estate may be his profession, but Adewole’s life is full of motion and connection. “I love playing chess and games in general,” he said. He picked up tennis and pickleball during the pandemic, stays active in the gym, loves traveling, and openly admits: “Anything active and I’m in.”

His personal life is full of new beginnings, too. “My wife and I married in 2023 and welcomed our first son, Abraham, in summer 2025,” he said. His family now spans multiple states, but their connection is tight. “Family time has been amazing.”

He’s also an avid learner and loyal podcast listener. “I listen to BiggerPockets, Dan Martell’s podcast, Alex Hormozi, and Morning Brew,” he said. His go-to bookshelf includes *Rich Dad Poor Dad*, *The Richest Man in Babylon*, and works by Dennis Kimbrough, which is hardly surprising for someone devoted to building wealth and teaching others to do the same.

If he weren’t in real estate? Adewole didn’t hesitate to answer. Though his response says more about him than the hypothetical job. “If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at chatgpt.com,” he joked, slyly dodging the fantasy career scenario like a seasoned football player slipping a tackle.

His advice to other real estate agents is grounded in

experience and conviction. “Invest in real estate yourself,” he said. “As a real estate agent, you see deals daily and have relationships with every vendor. You have an unfair advantage. Use your skills to build your own portfolio.”

Giving back is also woven into his story. “Anything involving kids,” he said when asked about his favorite charitable focus. “When I lived in Philadelphia, I taught kids chess every Wednesday, and I still love any opportunity to help and mentor young people.”

And if he could choose a superpower? “Super speed,” he said without blinking. “Both for fun and because it would let me do everything faster, including playing football again.”

At the heart of it all, Adewole wants readers to know one thing: he’s here to help others chase the same freedom that changed his life. “The Ekabo Home Team are the investor-friendly real estate agents for Georgia and Florida, and we’re continuing to expand,” he said. “We partner with clients beyond closing to ensure they’re on a path toward generational wealth.”

From Nashville roots to national vision, Niyi Adewole’s story is still being written...one smart investment at a time.

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HOMEstretch

*Prep Smarter,
Not Harder*

PHOTOS BY REGIS LAWSON

Selling a home can feel like running a marathon in flip-flops. There is the pressure of timing, the stress of prep, and the constant question of whether the home will show well enough to get top dollar. That is exactly the problem HOMEstretch was built to solve, and in Metro Atlanta, three franchise owners are leading the charge with experience, heart and a whole lot of hustle.

Mike Lundy, Adam Melnyk and Jen Boston are individual HOMEstretch franchise owners who together cover the entire Metro Atlanta area. Mike serves Northeast Atlanta, including Alpharetta, Cumming, Duluth and Lawrenceville. Adam covers Northwest Atlanta, including Marietta, Woodstock and Canton. Jen oversees Atlanta Metro, including Dunwoody, Atlanta, Brookhaven and Decatur. While their backgrounds differ, their mission is the same: remove stress from selling a home for both agents and homeowners.

At its core, HOMEstretch is about preparation. The company partners with real estate professionals to handle cosmetic updates and repairs before a home hits the market, helping homes get to market faster and earn more ROI. Real estate agent partnerships are not just part of the business model, they are the foundation.

“Real estate agent partnerships are the key to our business,” Lundy said. “Working together we can offer home sellers a fast and easy path to home prep that can help achieve top dollar and a fast sale.”

Lundy’s path to HOMEstretch was anything but typical. Born in New York and raised in Dunwoody, Georgia, he earned a degree in electrical engineering technology from Southern Tech in 1991. He then spent three decades in the IT industry, working everywhere from Anixter and Cisco Systems to Dimension Data and Byteworks, holding roles that ranged from presales engineer to vice president of sales.

“I loved the emerging world of IT and the Internet,” he said.

After 30 years in tech, Lundy shifted gears and launched HOMEstretch alongside his wife and business partner, Tanya, whom he married in 1993. Today, he brings the same precision and performance mindset into home prep, fueled by a lifetime of being underestimated.

“People have always underestimated me and my abilities,” Lundy said. “I love overproducing to show them what I am capable of.”

For Lundy, the payoff comes at the end of a project. “Seeing my clients excitement when we are done and what their home now looks like” is what keeps him motivated, he said. Integrity, he added, is nonnegotiable. “We strive to do the absolute best for our customers and make the process as easy on them as possible.”



Adam Melnyk brings a sales-driven, relationship-first approach to Northwest Atlanta. Born in Houston and raised in Holland, Michigan, Melnyk earned a business management degree from Ferris State University in 2007. Since then, he has built a career in sales across logistics and software, including running a logistics branch with 30 direct reports and working for a globally recognized real estate software company.

“I chose this path because I have always wanted to own my own business,” Melnyk said. “I also saw a large need in the market and the ability to help real estate agents and clients in a major way.”

Now one year into his role with HOMEstretch, Melnyk is focused on building deep roots in the Atlanta real estate community. “I have the vision on what this business can be in the Atlanta community so building those relationships is what I am passionate about,” he said.

The most rewarding moments come when preparation pays off. “Seeing a home that needs some cosmetic changes, developing a scope through collaboration, doing the work, and ultimately watching the home sell for much more money than it would have before,” he said.



Melnyk and his wife, Courtney, have two children, Maddox and Kate, and when he is not working, he can usually be found at the gym, on the golf course or at the beach. His advice to others building something new is simple and honest: “Everyday is not sunshine and rainbows so keep going!”

Jen Boston’s story is deeply rooted in Atlanta. Born and raised in the city, she graduated from the University of Georgia in 1993 with a management degree and spent decades in technology sales with companies like Cisco, IBM, LG, Belkin and Samsung. In 2024, after selling two homes herself, she experienced firsthand just how overwhelming home prep can be.

“If only we’d had HOMEstretch,” Boston said. When she learned about the business, she knew it was the perfect fit. “From my first conversations I could see it wasn’t just a business—it was people who genuinely care, and I wanted to help carry that forward.”

Boston has been in her role for one year and is passionate about great results. “Helping real estate agents get homes market-ready and reduce the stress of preparation,” she said. The reward is in the reaction. “Seeing people’s faces when a



home is transformed—and hearing how confident clients feel heading into listing day.”

Outside of work, Boston is actively involved in the community. She serves as board chair for the Elaine Clark Center and is a board member for the American Hydrangea Society. She and her husband, Richard, enjoy traveling, hiking and spending time with their blended family and five animals, most of them rescues.

Across all three territories, the message is consistent. HOMEstretch exists to make life easier. Communication, responsiveness and follow-through are not optional. Speed and quality are expected. And integrity drives everything.

“Working with HOMEstretch makes the experience easier for both the real estate agent and the homeowner,” Boston said.

Or, as Lundy put it more plainly, “HOMEstretch should be your go to partner for home preparation services.”



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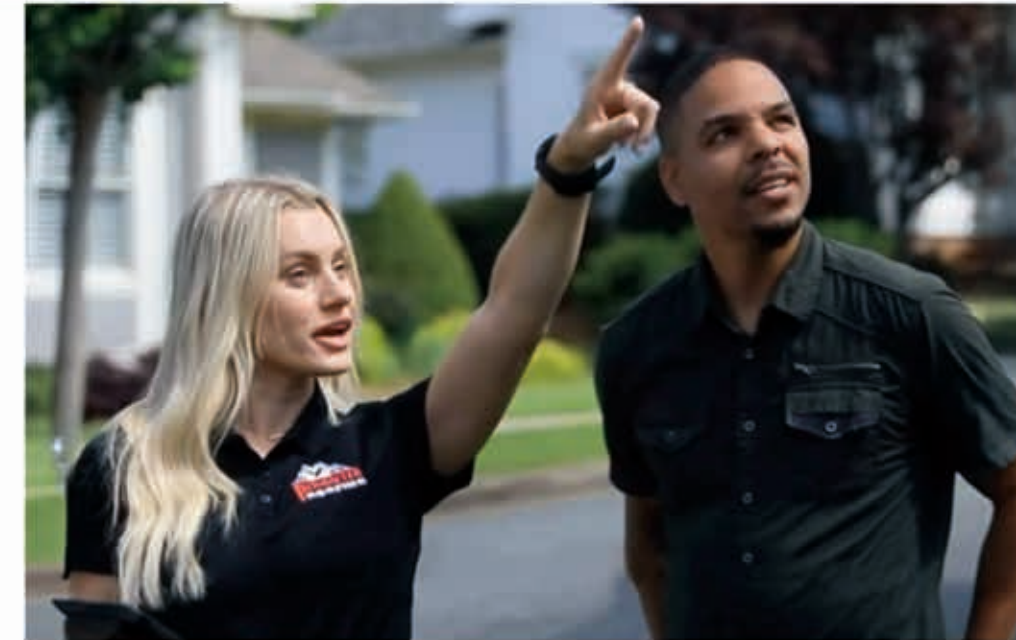
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