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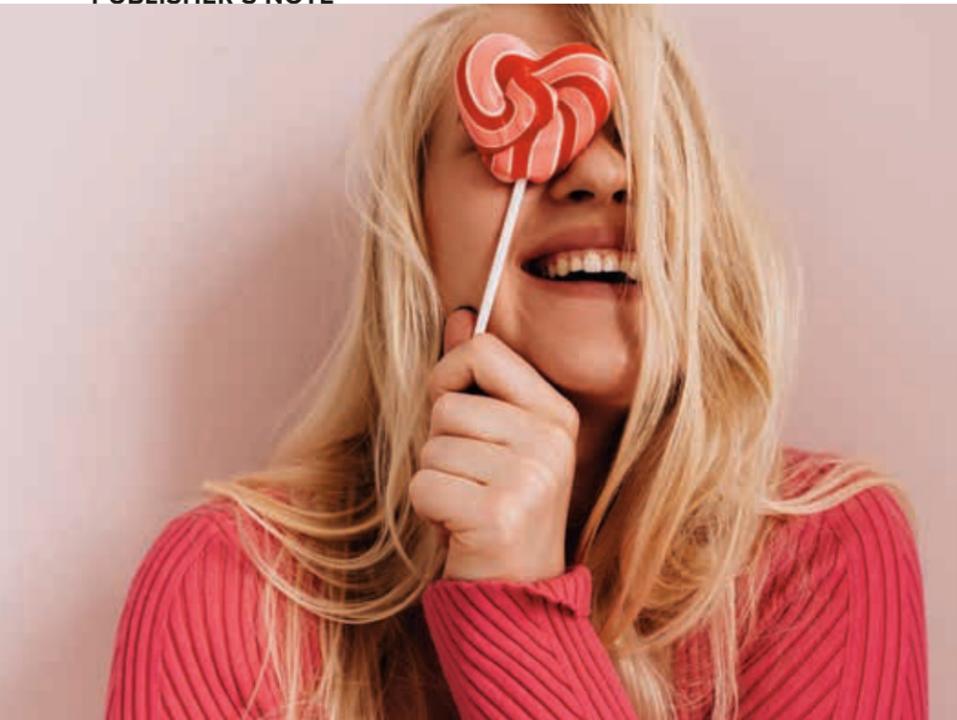
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Happy Valentines Day!

CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIPS

Greetings!

In the spirit of February's Valentine's Day, this issue of our magazine celebrates not just the love for real estate but also the heartwarming tales of real estate partners who not only share their professional expertise but

also a personal journey of love. Our "In Love and Business" issue in the last few years has been so popular that we decided to find more couples who are In Love & Business!

As Valentine's Day graces us with its presence, we take a moment to spotlight

the unique camaraderie and dedication of these couples who are partners in both business and life. Their combined efforts not only shape the landscape of our communities but also exemplify the beauty of collaboration and harmony.

This month, join us in exploring the stories of these dynamic duos, their shared passion for the real estate industry, and the seamless synergy that makes them a force in the real estate realm. Discover how their teamwork, built on trust and mutual respect, brings an added dimension to the world of buying, selling, and creating spaces that resonate with the essence of love. We also look at one of our preferred partners, Foundation Escrow. A longtime partner of the Real Producers magazines, we are taking a closer look at the newest member of the team, Ian Melendez. Ian will be focusing on the Southbay area, while being part of the Foundation team with Raquel Contreras & Alton Hall.

Wishing you all a Valentine's season filled with the joy of partnership, unity, and the appreciation of the bonds that enrich our lives.

Cheers!

Cathy Ginder-Publisher
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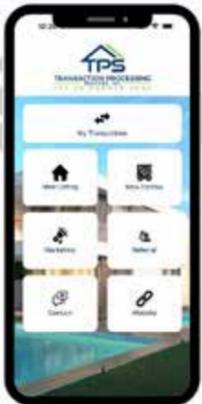
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The Disclosure Report for
REAL PRODUCERS

INFUSE INSIGHTS:

Leading with Intentionality and Purpose



BY MARYAM HABASHI-
TRANSFORMATIONAL BUSINESS COACH

In the fast-paced world of business and real estate, effective leaders face the constant challenge of managing themselves and others while striving for consistent results. Leadership is more than just a title—it's a responsibility that extends beyond managing tasks to driving success through intentional actions and clear SYSTEMS.

As we enter a new year, it's an ideal time to reflect on the type of leader we want to be and the impact we want to make on ourselves, our teams, and our organizations. The foundation of this reflection should start with one key truth: motivation may spark action, but SYSTEMS keep us growing and thriving.

Leadership is not just about guiding others—it's about inspiring them. It's about setting a tone for how you and your team operate, creating a culture of excellence, and establishing standards that will drive long-term success. When you lead with intentionality, you create CLARITY and CONSISTENCY, which are essential for sustaining growth and separating yourself from the competition.

Here are three key principles that will help you lead with intentionality and purpose:

1 / Vision Alignment: Effective leaders ensure that not only their personal goals are clear but also that



Maryam Habashi, M.Ed.
Certified Behavior Profiling Coach

their teams and networking partners align with a shared vision. This vision acts as a beacon, guiding the collective effort towards success. Whether you're leading yourself, a sales team, or a group of real estate professionals, your vision will be the driving force behind your growth.

2 / Empathy and Communication: Strong leadership is built on relationships. Empathy and open communication foster trust and respect within your team. Taking the time to listen—whether it's to your own inner voice or to your team members—helps you understand challenges and offer solution-based guidance. Leading with empathy empowers your team to perform at their best.

3 / Resilience and Adaptability: The business world is constantly evolving, and effective leaders must embrace change. Resilience in the face of setbacks and adaptability to new circumstances transform challenges into opportunities. Leaders who encourage innovation and embrace change inspire their teams to think outside the box and achieve greater success.

As you reflect on your leadership journey, consider this: Are you leading with intention? Are your actions aligned with your vision? The answers to these questions will shape the trajectory of your business and leadership growth.

Take Action Now: Ready to take your leadership and sales practices to the next level? Book a complimentary business strategy session with me today to explore how SYSTEMS can drive your success and ensure you achieve your long-term goals. Let's make this year one of growth and transformation!

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“IT’S BEEN A GREAT COMPANY. THE CULTURE OF THE PEOPLE, THE SUPPORT THAT I HAVE TO DO MY JOB, AND THE VALUE THAT WE ADD TO EVERY AGENT.”



His first real exposure to the industry came almost by accident. Ian was working as a marketing coordinator for one of the largest pawn shop companies in Mexico when he realized he wanted something more. “It was a mistake, man,” he says of how he found real estate. “I didn’t plan for it.” While applying for new marketing roles, he interviewed with a company that flipped large portfolios of foreclosed homes across Mexico. What started as a marketing position quickly expanded. “They just gave me my laptop, my desk, and it was like, ‘Okay, let’s build the marketing department,’” Ian recalls.

That role evolved rapidly. Ian moved from marketing into training sales teams, analyzing markets, helping with expansion, and eventually stepping into a commercial director position. When COVID hit, those years of experience became the foundation for his next chapter. After salary cuts and a shifting market, he pivoted into sales, working as an independent agent with Keller Williams and later opening his own brokerage.

At the same time, Ian was increasingly working with American clients looking to invest in Mexico, traveling frequently between Tijuana and San Diego. But with big life changes on the horizon, that back-and-forth lifestyle no longer made sense. “I was about to have a kid,” he says. “So that’s why we moved full-time to San Diego.” His plan was to get licensed and continue in real estate, but instead, Foundation Escrow found him. “It’s been a great company. The culture of the people, the support that I have to do my job, and the value that we add to every agent.” That value is what motivates him most. Drawing on his experience as an agent, Ian understands the pressure real estate professionals face. “The agent is in the top of the food chain,” he says. “They’re dealing with lenders, escrow, title, inspections—there’s a lot going on during the transaction.”



IAN

MAKING THE PROCESS EASIER FOR AGENTS

MELLENDEZ

BY JOSEPH COTTLE
PHOTOS BY
BRANDON PEASE-
LINKED PREVIEW, LLC

This month we meet Ian Melendez, who is new to Foundation Escrow, having recently joined the team with Alton Hall and Raquel Contreras. Ian will be representing primarily in the South Bay area. Stay tuned to hear more about Alton & Raquel soon.

Ian Melendez didn’t set out to work in escrow. In fact, he didn’t even plan on a career in real estate. What he has always been drawn to, though, is building something meaningful, understanding how systems work, and finding ways to add value to the people around him.

That throughline runs clearly from his upbringing in Mexico to his work today as a business development manager with Foundation Escrow.

Born in Mexicali and raised in Tijuana, Ian grew up immersed in a culture built around family, relationships, and resilience. “Mexico and its people are amazing,” he says. “The food is great, and I think that’s the best part of Mexico—the people and food.” Those values stayed with him as he entered the professional world, starting not in real estate, but in marketing.



At Foundation Escrow, Ian focuses on making that process easier. From seller protection plans that cover disclosure errors and legal fees to wire fraud protection and robust agent education, he sees his role as one of service. “I just try to be available for them and help them,” he says. “Whatever they need, and it fits in my hands to support their business, that’s what I like to do.”

That mindset is reinforced by the company’s culture. “I love my team,” Ian says. “We have a lot of fun doing what we do.” He describes Foundation as a place that constantly asks how it can do better. “The directors are always like, ‘What can we offer? How can we provide more value?’ That dynamic makes you grow.”

Outside of work, Ian’s world revolves around family and staying active. He loves cooking, hiking, watching football, and spending time outdoors. A father to a one-and-a-half-year-old, his priorities have shifted in ways he didn’t expect. “I wasn’t sure about having

“
IT’S BEEN A
LIFE-CHANGING
EXPERIENCE
FOR ME.”

kids before him,” Ian says with a laugh, “but now I want the whole pack, man.” Whether he’s snowboarding near Big Bear, playing pickleball, or just cooking something new at home, Ian brings the same intentionality to his personal life that he brings to his work.

Looking back, the path makes sense, even if it wasn’t planned. Real estate, escrow, marketing, and leadership all intersect in a role that allows Ian to build relationships, solve problems, and help others succeed. “It’s been a life-changing experience for me,” he says.

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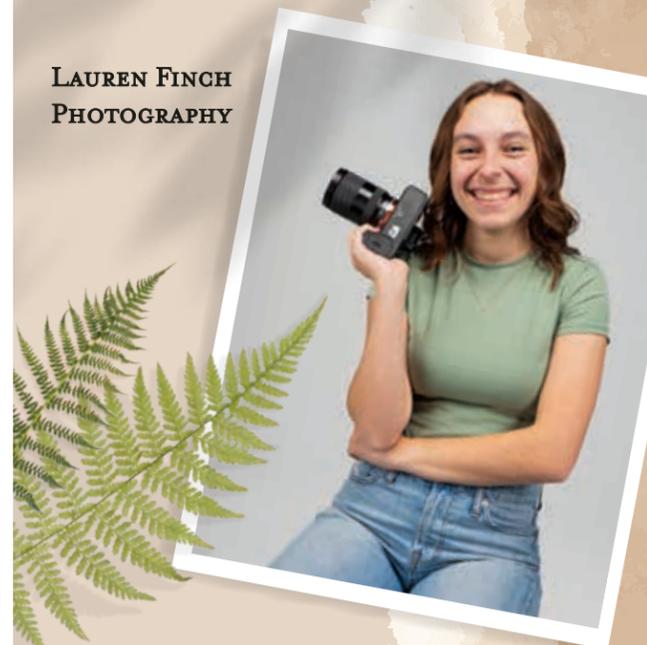
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In Love & Business

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Shaylie Gilliland & Ray Fraser

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Rose & Chris Tausaga

Our February issue of In Love & Business has been a popular one! Everyone loved getting to know local agents who were in a relationship with someone who also worked within the real estate industry. Many couples in real estate are In Love and Business. This year, we decided to meet at the beautiful new venue of one of our preferred partners, Bess Kelley-Yellow Rose Home Staging. Bess recently opened The Yellow Rose Inn, an Airbnb as well as an exciting new event venue, perfect for weddings, quinceaneras, really any kind of party, with a gothic western flair. Many thanks to the Yellow Rose Inn and Bess Kelley for letting us to this beautiful vacation house and event venue. Let's meet this year's couples who are both In Love and Business!



Shaylie & Ray

Gilliland
Fraser

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Shaylie & Ray are agents with the REAL Brokerage. They are also owners of Coastline Vacation Rentals with their business partner, Ariel Smith.

How did you first meet?

Shaylie: We actually met at our last real estate brokerage. I barely knew Ray, but I brought the buyer to one of his listings, AND it was my first deal ever! We still argue about who negotiated better, that deal was a train wreck, but it started an amazing friendship. From there, we really became best friends and started spending so much time together, laughing our tails off and going on real estate adventures. We ended up falling in love, I followed him down to San Diego, and we started Coastline Real Estate Group, had a couple babies, a couple more businesses, and the rest is history!

Ray: Shaylie was a mentor in my coaching program at her first brokerage! I trained her when she was a new agent and her very first deal was a buyer she brought to my listing! We still debate to this day over who negotiated best in that deal! We started as colleagues and quickly became friends who would hang out and laugh together. Overtime, our friendship became romantic, and we became a couple in the middle of the pandemic in 2020! Now we have 2 beautiful kids and multiple businesses we own together!

When did you know your partner was “the one”?

Shaylie: I knew Ray was the one when I realized how much brighter my life felt with him in it. He brought energy, light, and fire into everything making even the small moments feel bigger and better. One day I just couldn't picture my life without him and knew that I wanted him forever.

Ray: From day 1, Shaylie and I bonded over our ability to laugh together. Through all the ups and downs in life, we've always kept each other's spirits high and found ways to see the good in every situation. I realized early on that a life without her wouldn't be as joyful or funny, and now we have forever to look forward to as partners in life, and in business.

What is the greatest thing about working together in the same business?

Shaylie: The greatest thing about working together is that no one cares more about our success than we do for each other. We share the same why, the same goals, and the same long-term vision and that is incredibly powerful. We're constantly brainstorming, pushing ideas forward, and challenging each other to grow faster and stronger. That synergy has been a huge driver of our success.

Ray: The best thing about working together is that we both understand how difficult it is to build a business. The understanding from one another helps us stay focused on not only our jobs, but on our priorities to our family. We know that there are nights when we will work late and mornings we will have to be up and ready to go. And we support each other in that. But we also both honor family time and know when it's time to turn off from work.

What would you say is the biggest challenge in working together in the same business?

Shaylie: There are so many pros and also lots of challenges! The biggest challenge we have is knowing when to turn work off. It is so easy to want to mastermind and talk work 24/7, it is hard to unplug especially when there aren't enough hours in the day to get everything done. But the thing we value most is time with our two little ones, which makes unplugging both essential and really hard. We're always working to protect that time and stay present where it matters most.

Ray: We are both very strong willed and opinionated! So, coming to a consensus is not always easy with two people who are so passionate (and often stubborn) about the vision and direction of our businesses.

What's your favorite kind of date?

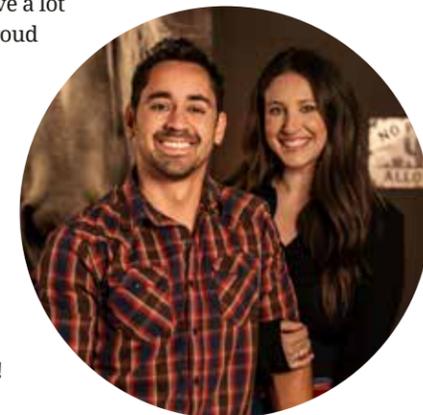
Shaylie: My favorite kind of date is going to really good food and then a dive bar with live music afterward. Laughing our tails off is what we do best.

Ray: A nice dinner!

Anything else you'd like to share about yourselves?

Shaylie: We are really proud of having a family owned and operated business and carrying those values into everything we do. Our kids were born into this crazy real estate life, they are realtor babies through and through, they come to the office, and they get to see firsthand what we are building for them. We work very hard, but we have a lot of fun, and I am so proud of this life we are creating together.

Ray: The best part about working together and doing life together is knowing that we are each other's biggest cheerleaders and support systems!



Joana & David Olivera

PHOTOS BY
CLOSING PHOTOS-
MEG BOGART

David and Joana are married, successful agents with Shopping SD Homes who initially met while working at a school. David will be leading the Pacific Southwest Association of Realtors YPN group in 2026.

How did you first meet?

Joana: We met about 15 years ago at Southwest Middle. I was an avid tutor, and he was the after-school program coordinator.

David: I was an after-school program coordinator at Southwest Middle School. She was an AVID tutor.

When did you know your partner was “the one”?

Joana: I knew it since the moment I first met him. I remember saying I wish I could find someone “like” David. He was always very positive.

David: During our tenure working together it was strictly professional, but we reconnected 5 years after we initially meeting. we kept rescheduling our hang

outs due to busy schedules. When we finally made time to meet, she almost cancelled due to her mom, grandma and godmother visiting her to see her new condo that she had just purchased. I responded with “I’m

great with grandmothers” and she didn’t cancel. When she opened the door, I knew she was the one, she looked so beautiful and every second I spent with her seemed perfect.

What is the greatest thing about working together in the same business?

Joana: The greatest thing about working together it’s that we are a team and we have the flexibility to help each other out.

David: The greatest thing about working together is having the similar vision and aspirations for something better not only for our family but our community. We both grew up with amazing parents who supported us with whatever endeavor or goal we had in mind. Now we hope to do the same to our daughter and set her up for economic success moving forward.

What is the most challenging aspect of working in the same industry?

Joana: The challenge can be separating work from personal life, but we’ve learned the importance of communication, boundaries, and being intentional with our time together.

David: I find myself being on 24/7 and hard to separate personal family time and work. I have always been in the business of helping people and take it personal to ensure helping every one of our clients reach their home ownership goals. Clients become family and I think that has been a big reason why we have been successful in this market.

What’s your favorite kind of date?

Joana: We are foodies, and love checking out new restaurants and speakeasy’s

David: Whenever we travel, we like to check out new restaurants and speakeasy’s as well as going to concerts. We love food and music, and it seems like our daughter Juju loves the same as well. This is a big reason why I have gained so much weight since we started dating! LOL!

What else would you like to share about yourselves?

Joana: Family is the foundation of everything we do. Becoming parents to our daughter Juju changed our lives in the most beautiful way and gave us a deeper sense of purpose. She is our greatest motivation and reminds us every day why we strive to build a life filled with love, intention, and presence. Together, we took a leap of faith and bet on ourselves by walking away from the security of our teaching careers to pursue real estate, trusting God, our partnership, and the vision we had for our family. That decision required courage, sacrifice, and unwavering belief in one another, but it strengthened our bond and reaffirmed that when we move together, anything is possible. We are grateful for the journey, the lessons, and the memories we continue to build as a family.

David: We both used be teachers and made the switch to real estate full time. We left masters degrees to pursue our all-time goal of developing, building and helping others create wealth through real estate like we have. We have been blessed in this industry and that is a big reason why we continue to do a lot of work in our community because without our community we would not be where we are at. We are truly blessed to call all our client’s family and we genuinely embody our CEO’s motto of “We want to change the way you view real estate”. We do things different, we celebrate our clients like no one else does, we invest into our clients and show them how they can also change their family’s trajectory. We miss teaching in the schools, but we are still teaching in our community how to build, flip and create wealth through real estate. Excited what the new year has in store for us and our community.



Sam & Yany

Villavicencio

PHOTOS BY BRANDON PEASE-
LINKED PREVIEW, LLC

Sam & Yany are high school sweethearts, married 25 years. They both work at Keller Williams in Mission Valley.

How did you first meet?

Yany: “High school sweethearts” is the term often used to describe how our story began. We met in high school during summer school, when I first noticed Sam talking with a friend I shared a class with. The next time I saw him was on the very first day of the school year. Having recently arrived in the United States, I didn’t speak English and was struggling to figure out where to get my class schedule. I was looking for someone who spoke Spanish and could help me navigate this new environment. When I saw Sam, I knew he spoke Spanish because I remember that my new friend was from Mexico, and he was her cousin—so I approached him and asked for help. He was incredibly kind, patient, and friendly, and he made me feel supported in a moment when everything felt unfamiliar. That simple act of kindness became the beginning of a lifelong journey together.

Sam: We met in high school; she was new to the area and the school she approached me to ask for directions and from there we started talking

How did you know your spouse was the one?

Yany: When I was 16 years old—before I ever met Sam—I prayed to God about the kind of man I hoped to one day marry. I asked that he love God first and love me second, that he be faithful, hardworking, kind,



humble, and honest. Faithfulness was especially important to me, as was having someone with strong values and no harmful habits such as drinking or drugs. As I began to get to know Sam, I saw every one of those qualities I had prayed for reflected in him. After just a few weeks of talking, he asked me to be his girlfriend. Before I even said yes, I already knew—deep in my heart—that he would one day be my husband.

Sam: I knew she was the one since the moment I met her because I felt like I knew her for a long time and I could see myself growing old with her

What is the greatest thing about working together in the same business?

Yany: The greatest thing about working together is that we truly function as a team. We complement each other’s strengths and balance one another’s weaknesses, which allows us to serve our clients at a higher level. Sam often tells our clients—playfully—that they get “2-for-1,” and while it’s said with a smile, it’s absolutely true. We both make it a priority to meet our clients, and if one of us is ever unavailable, the other is always there to step in seamlessly. We genuinely enjoy growing our client relationships into lasting friendships. Sam excels at building and nurturing those connections, while I focus on the administrative side to ensure everything runs smoothly. Together, we create a well-rounded, supportive experience for every client we serve.

Sam: The greatest thing about working together is that we know each other’s strengths and weaknesses and we can complement each other and help in the areas we need help with, we push each other even when sometimes we don’t have energy to do so

What’s your favorite kind of date?

Yany: My favorite kind of date is traveling together—exploring new cities and cultures, enjoying dinners, and trying new foods. We often find ourselves talking about how much we wish the kids were with us and making

plans to return someday so we can experience it all together as a family.

Sam: Movies with a dinner

Is there anything else you would like to share about yourselves?

Sam and I have been together for 26 years, and we are incredibly grateful that God placed us on this path together. Along the way, He blessed us with our four sons—Dany (25), Yony (20), Miguel (18), and our youngest, Sammy Jr. (15)—who are the heart of everything we do. We are proud to be top-producing agents in our office, recognized for our consistent results, strong relationships, and client-first approach. Sam currently serves as President of Keller Williams CHISPA (Coalition of Hispanic Progressive Action) for the California Region, where he helps lead, mentor, and advocate for real estate professionals across the state. In 2026, we will also serve as ALC (Agent Leader Council) members for our Market Center—an opportunity that allows us to contribute at a leadership level and help shape the direction and culture of our brokerage. Family is at the core of both our lives and our business. As a family-oriented real estate team serving San Diego and surrounding communities, we take pride in guiding our clients with honesty, education, and care. Whether we are mentoring fellow agents, helping a first-time buyer, supporting a growing family, or advising clients on long-term wealth-building strategies, our goal is always the same: to build trust, create opportunity, and deliver an experience that feels personal, professional, and lasting. “For us, real estate is never just about buying or selling a home—it’s about building trust, guiding families with care, and creating relationships that last well beyond the transaction.”



Rose & Chris Tausaga

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRANDON PEASE- LINKED PREVIEW



Rose Tausaga is a highly successful agent; her husband Chris is a local property inspector and owner of Pro Property Inspections.

How did you first meet?

Rose: We met in college the first week Chris came to San Diego from Utah as a transfer. We had all of our classes near each other. Chris reached out on Myspace, and the rest was history.

Chris: We met in college. I was on my way to Hawaii from Utah, and San Diego was supposed to be just a one-semester stop on my way home to Oahu. That one semester turned into 20 years and counting.

When did you know your spouse was “the one”?

Rose: Chris is such a family centered person, and I knew at that moment I wanted to build a family with him. He is so thoughtful and caring. He always listened to what I would say and believed in me in everything I do.

Chris: I knew she was the one when all I had to offer was a smile, empty pockets, and a broken English accent (what we call a “pidgin accent” from the islands) if you’ve never heard it before, trust me it isn’t attractive if you’re not from the islands lol. Anyways, she responded to my MySpace message!

What is the greatest thing about working together in the same business?

Rose: I first got into real estate over 10 years ago and after a couple of years in, Chris and I talked about him getting into the real estate industry and getting his license to inspect residential and commercial property. I just knew that becoming a business owner, especially with his previous work background working extremely long hours, would allow us to be able to be more flexible especially as we are raising our 4 children of ages 17, 15, 12 and 9. (3 girls and our baby boy). We are a team and always prioritize being present for the kids and all of the activities they are in (travel volleyball, soccer, baseball, jiu-jitsu, flag football, beach volleyball). Life is busy to say the least, and we enjoy every single moment building memories with our family.

Chris: I feel that working in the same industry benefits us because we both understand that this industry is 24/7. We know when it’s time to turn “it” on and when to turn it off. When I can’t be there because of work, she can be—and vice versa.

What would you say is a challenge working together?

Rose: Initially, releasing control and agreeing to accept help with scheduling and administrative tasks was a challenge.

Chris: The challenge with working in the same industry, in my opinion, is that we’re both very passionate about what we do, and at times it can make it difficult to take the time off needed to focus on each other. Our lives are busy, and there are moments when we get home, look at each other, and agree that we need to go on a date or plan a weekend getaway to give time to what really matters—that’s me and her, us, our marriage.

What’s your favorite kind of date?

Rose: Going to get a massage and then going out for dinner.

Chris: Sometimes all we need is a drive, just the two of us, some good music, grabbing ice cream and talking about life.

Is there anything else you would like to share about yourselves?

Rose: With Chris’ support, I also launched EPIC Real Estate Systems, the plug and play systems for real estate agents to gain back their time and provide their customers with exceptional service every single time while gaining referrals from every transaction. Chris has built an incredible business with over 450 5-star reviews and counting. We work together on building the relationship with our agents while Chris and his team are able to focus out in the field. I assist in the back end with scheduling. We are a team, and we do not make any moves without being on the same page. That works for us and our family. One of the biggest priorities for us and why it’s awesome is that we enjoy working together. When its work time we are locked in and working but when its family time, its family time... we separate the two. We are pretty chill, love to be home and hang out and travel with our kids.

Chris: There are some close friends and family who may be reading this and can agree with me when I say our journey has never been perfect—but it’s ours. We did everything backwards: we had kids before most of our friends, left careers we thought we’d be in for the rest of our lives, and started from scratch to build something we believed in. Thank you to those who stayed by our side and stuck around while we were figuring life out. Here’s to the journey—past, present, and everything ahead.





METRO SOUTH SAN DIEGO REAL PRODUCERS BEST OF 2025 AWARDS

PHOTOS BY DON ANDERSON INSIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY

We met up on Jan 8, 2026, at The Local PB to celebrate our covers and features for 2025! What an amazing group! Congratulations to:

- Peter Mendiola** - Leader of the Year
- Genie Irish** - Association President of the year
- Monica Vasquez and Dan Guerrero** - Couple of the Year
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