

UPSTATE

# REAL PRODUCERS®

FEBRUARY 2026

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Realtor on the Rise:  
**REBECCA KIRKWOOD**

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Event Recap

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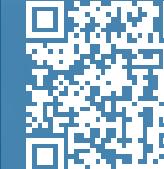
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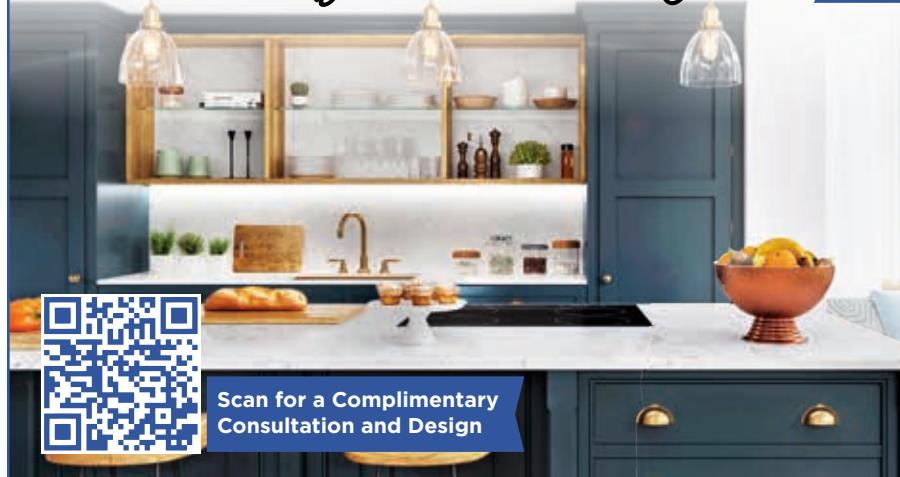
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# FEBRUARY 2026

Happy Valentine's Day from *Upstate Real Producers!*

As we step into February—the month of love—it's the perfect time to express our heartfelt appreciation to each of you. We are truly grateful for our loyal readers, our incredible REALTORS®, and our trusted partners who make *Upstate Real Producers* what it is today. Your continued support and engagement allow us to share the inspiring stories, accomplishments, and journeys that define the Upstate real estate community.

This month, we're thrilled to celebrate several exceptional professionals who exemplify passion, dedication, and leadership in all they do:

#### Cover Feature: Talia Gila

Talia's story embodies what it means to lead with both heart and drive. Her unwavering dedication to excellence and her ability to connect with clients and colleagues alike make her a standout in our industry.

#### Celebrating Leaders Feature:

##### Tanesha Duckett

Tanesha leads by example—empowering others through her vision, strength, and commitment to service. Her leadership reflects the very best of what our real estate community represents.

#### Realtor on the Rise Feature:

##### Rebecca Kirkwood

Rebecca is a shining example of the next generation of real estate professionals—ambitious, driven, and full of heart. Her enthusiasm and dedication remind us all that the future of real estate is bright.

#### Preferred Partner Spotlight: Jodi Poore, Prime Lending

Jodi's partnership and professionalism continue to elevate the experience for clients and REALTORS® alike. Her trusted guidance and collaborative spirit make her an invaluable part of our network.

As we celebrate Valentine's Day, we're reminded that love isn't just about romance—it's about passion, purpose, and people. And that's exactly what this community is built on. Thank you for being part of our *Upstate Real Producers* family and for continuing to make this publication a source of connection and inspiration each month.

Wishing you a February filled with love, success, and gratitude.

Warm regards,



Robert and Sierra Smith  
Publisher, *Upstate Real Producers*

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## Meet Tanesha Duckett

WRITTEN BY: AMY PORTER  
PHOTOS BY: TRES DABNEY  
(TRUE NORTH PRODUCTIONS)

# Turning Vision into REALITY in Real Estate

Tanesha Duckett's path to becoming a celebrated real estate leader is a story of courage, resilience, and unwavering commitment to helping others achieve their dreams. Licensed in 2007—right at the cusp of the housing market crash—Tanesha stepped into an industry fraught with challenges, yet she approached it with a quiet determination that would define her career. Leaving behind the security of corporate America wasn't easy, but deep within, Tanesha knew she was destined for more. Growing up, she witnessed homeownership as a source of stability and pride in the lives of her friends and neighbors, yet it was absent in her immediate family. That contrast ignited a passion in her—a desire to ensure that others could experience the joy, security, and legacy that come with having a place to truly call home.

Her early years in real estate were a period of learning and perseverance. Tanesha began as an independent agent with Weichert Realtors, navigating the complexities of the market while honing her skills and understanding of client needs. In 2016, she made the bold decision to launch her own boutique brokerage, a move that underscored her entrepreneurial spirit and desire to create something uniquely her own.



Today, as the owner and broker of The Property Bar in Greenville, Tanesha has not only built a thriving local business but has expanded her reach into Georgia and North Carolina, demonstrating her vision and ambition. Under her leadership, The Property Bar has grown into a trusted name, recognized for its client-centered approach and commitment to excellence.

Tanesha's philosophy is simple but powerful: real estate is about people first. Her approach with clients is rooted in attentive listening and detailed conversations to understand what they truly need in a home. She helps clients identify their must-haves, their areas of flexibility, and guides them toward options that balance their dreams with practical considerations. Much of her work centers on first-time homebuyers—single parents, newlyweds, and individuals who might feel that homeownership is out of reach. Tanesha finds profound fulfillment in helping them achieve what once seemed impossible, celebrating alongside them when they hold the keys to their first home. These moments, marked by tears of joy and triumphant smiles, reinforce her belief that success is measured not in transactions, but in the lives transformed along the way.

Throughout her career, Tanesha has consistently demonstrated an ability to grow and adapt. Since committing full-time to real estate in 2017, she has achieved a career volume of \$60 million, including an impressive \$14 million in a single year. But beyond the numbers, her true strength lies in her ability to connect with people, build trust, and provide guidance with authenticity and integrity. She continually seeks to innovate within her business, implementing systems that streamline operations, enhance client experiences, and allow her and her agents to focus on what truly matters: delivering results.

Tanesha's ambition extends to breaking new ground in the luxury market, a space where she hopes to create recognition for diverse representation. Collaborating with her husband, Rod, a residential builder with Rockpointe Builders, she explores opportunities not only in buying and selling but in residential development and strategic investment, envisioning passive income streams that align with her long-term goals. This vision of growth and expansion reflects her forward-thinking mindset and her relentless drive to elevate both her business and her community.

Giving back is a cornerstone of Tanesha's values. She actively supports organizations such as Harvest Hope, Habitat for Humanity, and the Children's Hospital, encouraging her team to engage in service projects that uplift the community. For Tanesha, success is most meaningful when shared, and she ensures that The Property Bar's growth goes hand-in-hand with community impact.

Beyond her professional achievements, Tanesha is deeply devoted to her family. At home, she enjoys the company of her sons, Tamahz and Marquis, her husband Rod, and their little toy poodle, Harlem. Together, they cherish simple moments, whether sharing laughter at home, exploring new travel destinations, dining out, or enjoying the great outdoors through hiking adventures. Tanesha's love of life and adventure extends to her personal pursuits as an adrenaline enthusiast, embracing skydiving, whitewater rafting, and cliff jumping—activities that reflect the same boldness and fearlessness she brings to her business.

Even with her impressive accomplishments, Tanesha remains grounded, continually striving to overcome personal and professional challenges. She has had to confront self-doubt, build confidence in her abilities, and carve a path into markets where she hopes to establish new representation. She credits the lessons of mentors—both direct and observational—for shaping her approach, with figures like Ryan Serhant inspiring her to harness the power of social media and personal branding. For rising real estate professionals, Tanesha emphasizes the importance of consistency, prospecting, marketing, and follow-up, alongside authenticity and integrity: principles she believes are non-negotiable for lasting success.

Above all, Tanesha Duckett is a Realtor whose heart drives her business. She wants to be remembered as caring, genuine, and encouraging, someone who relentlessly supports others in achieving their dreams. Her mantra, inspired by



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# Paddles & Producers

## UPSTATE REAL PRODUCERS CELEBRATE A WINNING YEAR

The Upstate real estate community wrapped up 2025 in style at “Paddles & Producers: The End-of-Year Social” on November 12th at PKL Park in Greenville. Top REALTORS® and preferred partners gathered for an afternoon filled with pickleball, delicious food, drinks, and elite networking, celebrating a year of success and connection.

Hosted by Robert and Sierra Smith, the event offered a unique mix of friendly competition and relationship-building, giving attendees the chance to rally on the courts while strengthening bonds with fellow industry leaders. Attendees enjoyed the perfect balance of fun, conversation, and celebration, making it clear that this gathering has become a highlight of the Upstate real estate calendar.

The exclusive event welcomed only the Top 500 real estate agents in the region, ensuring a high-quality, focused networking environment. To maintain this intimate setting, no outside vendors were allowed, allowing agents and partners to connect meaningfully without distractions.

The afternoon was full of laughter, excitement, and memorable moments on the pickleball courts, but the real highlight was the sense of community and collaboration among the Upstate’s most trusted professionals. Many left the event not just with new contacts, but with strengthened relationships and inspiration for the year ahead.

A special thank you to PKL Park for hosting this amazing event and



creating the perfect setting for the day's festivities. We also want to give a shout-out to our sponsors, Swamp Rabbit Moving and Atlantic Bay Mortgage Group for their support in making the day a success.

At the close of the event, publisher Robert Smith shared heartfelt gratitude on behalf of both himself and Sierra, who was unable to attend as she spent the afternoon at home with their new baby, Caden — *Upstate Real Producers*' newest and cutest team member.

Their growing family remains deeply appreciative of the agents and partners who make this community so special.

As the event wrapped up, one message resonated clearly: the Upstate real estate community continues to thrive — together.

**Cheers to a successful 2025, and an even stronger 2026.**





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# Leading With Heart, Hustle, & Vision

*In a market defined by rapid growth, shifting expectations, and rising competition, few agents have carved out a trajectory as remarkable as Talia Gila, team leader of Talia & Associates at Real Broker, LLC. Motivated, community-minded, and fiercely driven, Talia has spent the past eight years transforming her passion for people, design, and real estate into a thriving, high-impact career. Today, she stands among the Upstate's most productive and respected real estate professionals—an achievement built not only on numbers, but on resilience, authenticity, and heart.*

WRITTEN BY:  
AMY PORTER  
PHOTOS BY: PPS  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
(AMY PORTER)

Born and raised in Israel, Talia's journey to becoming one of Greenville's top agents was anything but conventional. When she arrived in the United States, she stepped into a new country with no established network, no roadmap, and every reason to feel uncertain. Instead, she relied on the discipline, strength, and adaptability she gained from her military service. Those formative years taught her how to learn quickly, work under pressure, and see challenges not as roadblocks, but as opportunities to grow. With that mindset, she began building her business from the ground up—studying the market, committing to personal development, and pouring her energy into connecting with people in her new community.

Talia entered the real estate world in 2018, starting at Keller Williams, where she immersed herself in training, networking events, and every chance to gain knowledge. She specialized early in residential sales, investment properties, and land, steadily expanding her



expertise while sharpening her instincts. Over time, her relentless drive translated into a fast-growing business, and by 2024, she had already closed more than 450 homes—104 of them in that year alone. Today, her career totals exceed 550 homes sold with a 2025 volume of approximately \$37 million across 136 transactions, positioning her firmly among the leading producers in the Upstate.

In 2024, Talia reached a defining milestone: launching Talia & Associates, her own real estate team built on collaboration, service, and innovation. She aligned her brand with Real Broker, LLC,

a brokerage whose model, technology, and culture matched her entrepreneurial spirit. With four partners, she also helped open the first Real Broker market center in Greenville, located in Mauldin—a thriving hub now home to more than 20 agents. The freedom to build her brand while benefiting from a forward-thinking national platform was exactly the environment she was looking for. “The culture of collaboration and growth at Real Broker, LLC truly aligns with how I want to serve my clients and lead my team,” she says.

Talia's approach to real estate goes far beyond transactions.

She is known for deeply understanding her clients' lifestyles, goals, and long-term plans before ever sending a home their way. She analyzes neighborhood trends, school zones, commute patterns, rental potential, and market timing to help buyers uncover homes they might otherwise miss. Her strong relationships in the industry allow her to find off-market opportunities—an advantage her clients value tremendously. And when it comes to negotiation, she is strategic, steady, and fiercely protective of the people she represents, securing favorable terms, concessions, repairs, and timelines with confidence and clarity.

One of the qualities that sets Talia apart is the blend of creativity and vision she brings to every transaction.

“Every door I open isn’t just a property; it’s a new beginning”, she states. Talia has always been drawn to design—colors, finishes, layouts, and the art of imagining what a space could become. She frequently assists clients with staging ideas or renovation concepts, helping them see potential where others may only see limitations. “Design is truly my happy place,” she shares. That passion has grown into something even bigger: a love for investing, building, and creating something tangible. Today, Talia and her husband Moshe own rental properties, analyze flips, and are actively building spec homes.

*“Every door I open isn’t just a property; it’s a new beginning.”*



The combination of investor mindset and agent expertise gives her clients a level of insight that elevates their entire experience.

Her personal life reflects the same balance of ambition and joy. Talia and her husband, Moshe Adz, love traveling together—whether near or far—and exploring new restaurants throughout the Upstate and beyond. Talia often blends her travels into her design inspiration, bringing a global perspective to local homes. “Every house has a story, just like every city I’ve explored,” she remarks. At home, her two dogs keep her grounded and remind her to enjoy the small moments. She loves staying active, meeting new people, and recharging through creativity and adventure. Most people don’t know that she’s a

serious shopper at heart and surprisingly sentimental—quick to keep mementos and memories close. And despite her warm and friendly demeanor, she’s refreshingly straightforward, believing that honesty, clarity, and transparency are essential in both life and business.

For Talia, the most rewarding part of her work is seeing all the elements she loves—people, design, marketing, investing, and problem-solving—come together to create real impact. Every closing represents more than a sale; it represents trust, growth, and a new chapter for the families and individuals she serves. And as her team expands, she is equally passionate about helping her agents grow, just as she once built her own foundation from nothing. “I run my business with my heart,” she says.

“Relationships matter to me. I feel fulfilled when people trust me, and I love knowing that the work we do truly makes a difference.” For Talia, true success isn’t reflected in the number of homes sold, but in the smiles she creates and the lives she touches.

Looking ahead, Talia envisions a future where she continues to scale her real estate business, build more homes, expand her investment portfolio, and create a lifestyle rooted in purpose, freedom, and passion. She hopes to be remembered not simply for her achievements, but for the way she lifted others along the way—through inspiration, care, leadership, and genuine connection. “Success,” she says, “is waking up proud of the person I’m becoming. It’s growing, helping others grow, and creating a life filled with purpose and joy.”

Her advice to up-and-coming top producers is simple but powerful: focus on service, not sales. When you lead with sincerity, honesty, and commitment, business grows naturally, and the relationships you build become lifelong. “Your reputation is your most valuable asset,” she says. “Protect it. Nurture it. And always put your clients first.”

Driven by vision, grounded in heart, and fueled by purpose, Talia Gila continues to shape not only her own future, but the future of the Upstate real estate community. Her story is a testament to courage, persistence, and the beauty of believing in one’s dreams—echoing one of her favorite quotes by Eleanor Roosevelt: “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”



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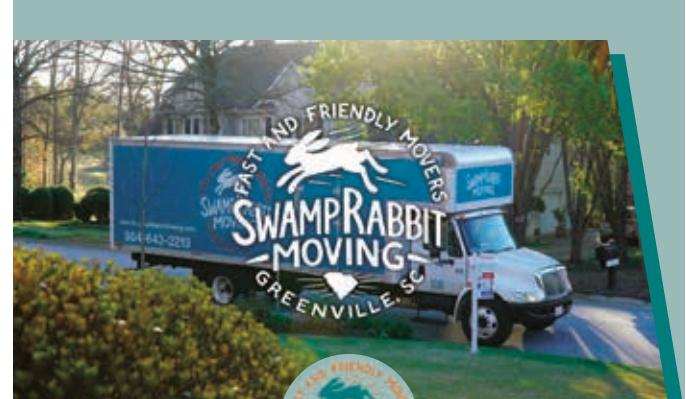
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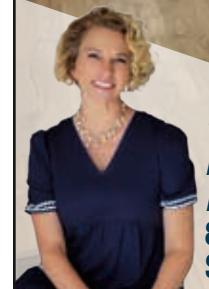
  
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# JODI POORE

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With 25 years of experience and a passion for numbers, Jodi Poore has become a cornerstone in the Upstate South Carolina real estate community. As production manager at PrimeLending, Jodi has a deep understanding of the housing market to help clients achieve their homeownership goals. Her dedication to excellence and personalized service has made her a trusted name in the industry.

Jodi says, "Homeownership is the American way," PrimeLending offers a wide array of mortgage solutions, from FHA and VA loans to construction and renovation financing. This comprehensive approach ensures clients have access to the right tools for their unique situations. It's no surprise that PrimeLending has earned recognition as "Best of the Upstate" in both 2024 and 2025, a testament to their commitment to quality and customer satisfaction.

Jodi's journey into the mortgage industry was almost predestined. While she initially pursued a degree in mathematics with aspirations of becoming a professor, her family's background in real estate and construction nudged her toward a different path. "My mother was an agent and builder, as was my brother," she explains. "With my love of homes and numbers, what other industry would I want to be in? There is something special about seeing a family in a new home. Makes your heart smile." This blend of personal passion and family influence laid the foundation for a career that has spanned decades.

Starting her career in Easley, S.C., Jodi quickly rose through the ranks, managing new branches and seeking innovative ways to better serve her clients. In 2009, her brokerage merged with Dallas-based PrimeLending, where she has remained ever since. "Stability, confidence, knowledge, availability, and ethics have sustained my career," Jodi reflects. These values have not only guided her professional journey but have also earned her the trust and respect of her clients and colleagues.



What sets Jodi apart is her unwavering commitment to personalized service. "Every buyer is different; you've got to be able to think outside the box to get things done," she emphasizes. This tailored approach has earned her a loyal following of repeat customers who value her expertise, dedication, and ability to navigate even the most complex financial situations. For Jodi, each client represents a unique story, and she takes pride in helping them turn their dreams of homeownership into reality.

Adapting to industry changes has been crucial throughout Jodi's career. She's witnessed the evolution from stated income loans to today's stringent regulations, and she has consistently risen to the challenge. "We work with what we're given, follow current

government regulations, and find the best way to service our clients," she says. Jodi stresses the importance of continuous education, always seeking new knowledge to share with borrowers. This commitment to staying informed ensures her clients receive the best possible guidance in an ever-changing market.

Outside of work, Jodi is a devoted family woman and lake enthusiast. She and her husband, Lewis, who owns a landscaping company, have raised three children. Their daughter Kinsley is an RN and married with 4 children. Their daughter Kara is also an RN with 1 child, and their youngest son Chance is now in TN. He just finished a long football career with UK. He is a financial Advisor with Edward Jones and recently



"IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT NUMBERS; IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE."



got engaged! Family is at the heart of everything she does, and she cherishes the time she spends with her loved ones. When not helping clients, you'll likely find Jodi on Lake Hartwell, where she's lived for 27 years. "Water skiing, knee boarding, and nature watching is my zen," she shares. The lake provides her with a sense of peace and balance, allowing her to recharge and return to her work with renewed energy.

Jodi's definition of success extends beyond professional achievements.



"I am already successful. I have a wonderful husband and family, the best friends, and I get to work in an industry that not only do I love, but I'm really good at!" For her, success is about finding joy and fulfillment in all aspects of life, and her positive outlook is evident in everything she does.

Looking to the future, Jodi aims to leave a legacy of honesty, approachability, and faith. "I want to be remembered as an honest, loving person with God as my center," she says. Her infectious personality and genuine care for others have made her a trusted partner for REALTORS® and clients alike. Her faith and values are the guiding principles behind her work, and she strives to make a positive impact on everyone she meets.

For those considering a career in mortgage lending, Jodi offers this advice: "Working with the public takes a special personality. You've got to be able to handle all types of people." She emphasizes the importance of drive, knowledge, and genuine care in building a successful career. "It's not just about numbers; it's about people," she adds.

As Jodi continues to serve the Upstate community, her commitment to excellence and client satisfaction remains unwavering. "Each client is

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# A STORY OF Faith, Fearlessness, & Finding Purpose in Real Estate



## MEET REBECCA LYNN KIRKWOOD

WRITTEN BY: AMY PORTER  
PHOTOS BY: TRES  
DABNEY (TRUE NORTH  
PRODUCTIONS)

**W**hen it comes to perseverance, faith, and finding joy in every season, few embody those qualities as fully as Rebecca Lynn Kirkwood, Realtor with Epique Realty. Known for her fun-loving personality, warm laughter, and unwavering loyalty, Rebecca's journey in real estate is one of courage, resilience, and purpose. In just five short years, she has transformed her life, built a thriving business, and discovered the fulfillment that comes from helping others achieve their dreams of homeownership.

Rebecca's story begins not in the hustle of sales meetings or open houses, but in the quiet strength of reinvention. For years, she was a dedicated stay-at-home mom, raising her three children and building a home full of love and faith. But life took an unexpected turn when she faced divorce, and with it came the daunting question of what to do next. She found herself working at an eye doctor's office, helping customers select eyeglass frames — a role that would unexpectedly spark something greater within her.

"I realized quickly that I could connect with people easily," she recalls. "I loved making them feel confident in their choices. That experience showed me that sales didn't have to be pushy — it could be about truly helping people." Still, Rebecca knew she wanted more. She wanted something that challenged her and offered the chance to build something lasting for herself and her family. Real estate had always intrigued her, and with encouragement from her own inner voice — and her faith — she took the leap, enrolling in real estate classes and earning her license in 2020.

The timing couldn't have been more uncertain — launching a new career during a time when the world itself was shifting.

Yet, that uncertainty became a proving ground for Rebecca's perseverance. "I was scared," she admits. "There were moments when I wondered if I had made the right choice. But I knew this was where I was supposed to be. I told myself, 'If God brought me to this, He'll bring me through it.'"

Rebecca began her career with Keller Williams Drive, followed by a short time at Modern Realty. Each experience taught her valuable lessons about persistence and self-confidence. In 2022, she joined Great Homes of South Carolina, drawn by the company's promise of mentorship and training for new agents. "They offered the kind of hands-on support I needed to really grow," she says. "The team was genuine, encouraging, and cared about their agents' success." That decision would lead her to where she is today — Epique Realty, a dynamic national agency based in Houston, Texas, after Great Homes joined the brokerage in 2024.

Now, just a few years later, Rebecca has built a career marked by consistency, integrity, and measurable success — with over \$24 million in career volume and 79 closed transactions, including more than \$12 million and 35 closings in 2024 alone. But beyond the numbers, Rebecca's approach is rooted in connection. She sees her role as part guide, part educator, and part trusted friend. "Real estate isn't just about houses — it's about people," she explains. "Every client has a story, and my job is to listen to it."

Her process is both personal and strategic. She begins every relationship with a detailed consultation to understand her clients' needs, lifestyle, and goals. "It's not just about what kind of house they want," she says. "It's about how they live — do they

work from home, do they need walkability, do they entertain? Those details help me match them to the right home."

From there, Rebecca creates a customized search plan, sets up automated listings, and guides clients through every stage of the buying or selling process. She makes it her mission to educate clients on market trends, pricing, and negotiation strategies, ensuring they feel empowered throughout. "I balance their excitement with practical advice," she says. "Sometimes my job is to be their voice of reason while still helping them dream."

One story that reflects her approach perfectly involved a family from Los Angeles, CA. Rebecca met them by chance while showing another client a home. They were driving by and seemed interested, so she offered to show them the property when she finished. After touring several older homes, she realized they truly wanted something fresh and move-in ready. "I suggested new construction," she recalls. "When I showed them a home in Eastwood's Harrington Community, they were thrilled. They couldn't believe they could own a brand-new home with a yard that size. They told me they never imagined having that in California." The gratitude in their voices and joy on their faces left an impression that has stayed with her ever since. "It reminded me why I do this — to make dreams like that possible."

But success didn't come without struggle. Rebecca admits that her early years were filled with self-doubt and fear of failure. "There were many times I thought about quitting," she says. "But I just kept praying and pushing forward. Every day, I had to trust that if I put in the work, God would bless my efforts. And He did — over and over again."



Her perseverance and faith have become the foundation of her business philosophy. Today, she's passionate about building a sustainable business rooted in long-term relationships. She has partnered with Fusion Growth Partners, a business development company that provides marketing, coaching, and accountability support. "They've completely changed how I run my business," she says. "They've helped me shift from relying on paid leads to cultivating referrals from my past clients and sphere of influence."

With Fusion Growth's guidance, Rebecca has launched her own YouTube channel, created creative mailer campaigns, and implemented digital marketing strategies that keep her top of mind. They've also encouraged her to plan client appreciation events and make consistent personal connections — phone calls, visits, and check-ins that build lasting



and love," she smiles. "Those are the moments that matter most."

She also enjoys Jazzercise, biking along the Swamp Rabbit Trail, cooking for her family, and connecting with fellow agents for encouragement and community. Soon, she plans to try pickleball — something she's sure will combine fun and fitness perfectly.

For Rebecca, the rewards of her career go far beyond transactions and titles. "I feel accomplished for the first time in my life," she says. "This business has given me a sense of purpose and confidence I didn't know I was missing. I love that what I do matters — that I get to help people start new chapters of their lives."

Her advice for other agents, especially those just beginning their journey, is simple but profound: "Don't give up when it's hard. Sometimes you have to do it scared for a while, but keep going. Success comes from consistency, preparation, and faith. There are no shortcuts — only daily decisions to show up and do the work."

Rebecca's story is one of reinvention, resilience, and faith in action — proof that when you trust your calling and work with purpose, the results can be extraordinary. With her warm personality, deep faith, and commitment to excellence, Rebecca Lynn Kirkwood continues to rise in the Upstate market — a shining example of what it means to serve with both heart and purpose.

Outside of real estate, Rebecca finds joy in the simple things: family, faith, and fun. She's a proud mom to three — Abby (31), Zach (27), and Ansley (17) — and now a grandmother who treasures every moment with her grandchildren. The Kirkwood family loves beach trips, board games, card nights, and downtown dinners in Greenville. "When we're all together, it's just laughter

trust. "It's all about consistency," she says. "That's what sets the great agents apart — doing the right things every day, even when it's hard."

Rebecca's definition of success is both heartfelt and deeply thoughtful. "Albert Einstein said, 'Try not to become a man of success but rather a man of value,' and that's exactly how I see it," she says. "If I can continue to bring value to my clients — through knowledge, integrity, and care — then I'm succeeding." She believes success is built through what author Darren Hardy calls the "Compound Effect": small smart choices + consistency + time = radical difference. It's a principle Rebecca applies not only in business but in every aspect of life.

## Favorite Quote

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." —Jeremiah 29:11

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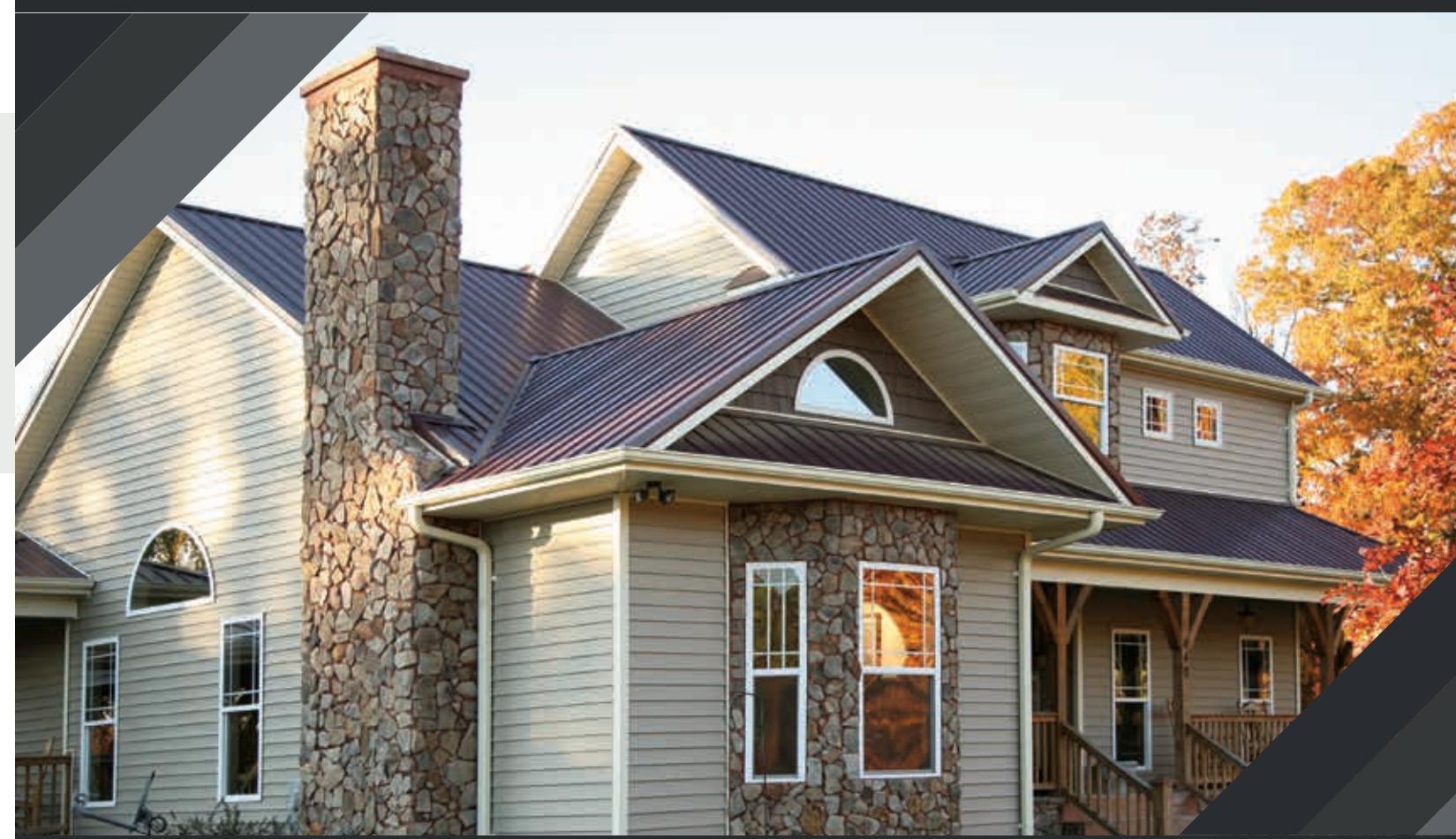
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