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If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email cathy.ginder@realproducersmag.com.

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This month, we celebrate the power of family connections—those we're born into and those we build through our work. Every home you help buy or sell becomes part of someone's story: a first step, a fresh start, a place where memories will grow. As agents, you are uniquely positioned to strengthen these bonds, guiding clients through moments that matter most. Our cover feature showcases mother/son team, Silvia Tirado & Omar Carreno and mother/daughter Victoria Sandoval & Isabel Chavez. These two powerhouse real estate moms have embraced their children into the industry, and their kids are answered- through hard work and multiple sales! Our Rising Star, Elena Betancourt shares how her family have been her biggest supporters and her biggest "why" for reaching her goals.

May is also a time to reflect on our own support systems. The long hours, the negotiations, the constant movement—none of it happens in isolation. Whether it's your family at home, your colleagues, or your professional network, these connections sustain and inspire us. Our partner spotlight, Meg Bogart of Closing Photos is part of our support system here at Metro South. As one of our premiere photographers, she has made an incredible impact, having garnered top covers picks nationally for our Dec. '25 & Jan & Feb '26 issues.

As you move through this busy season, take a moment to appreciate the relationships that fuel your work. In an industry driven by numbers, it's the human connections that truly define success.

Here's to building stronger communities, one home—and one family—at a time.

Cheers!

CATHY GINDER
Publisher
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ALL in the FAMILY

Greetings!

As May unfolds, we're reminded that success in real estate—like in life—is deeply rooted in connection. Beyond transactions and market trends, our work is ultimately about people, relationships, and the sense of home that binds families together.

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INFUSE INSIGHTS: PART 4

What Effective Time Management Actually Looks Like at a Higher Level

BY MARYAM HABASHI- TRANSFORMATIONAL BUSINESS COACH

Time management advice is everywhere — yet burnout persists. Why? Because most strategies focus on hours instead of energy.

At a scaled level, success isn't about squeezing more into your day. It's about protecting when and how you work. Not all hours are equal. And treating them as such is a costly mistake.

High-performing leaders manage time by design, not habit. Mornings are reserved for high-value, revenue-producing, and strategic work. Afternoons support meetings, follow-ups, collaboration, and administration. Weeks are structured intentionally — beginning with creation and planning, ending with review, reflection, and optimization.



Maryam Habashi, M.Ed. Certified Behavior Profiling Coach

Daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly rhythms matter. Without them, leaders live in reaction mode — constantly responding instead of leading. Systems protect time so decision fatigue doesn't take over and burnout doesn't creep in.

In my experience coaching thousands nationwide, leaders don't burn out from lack of effort. They burn out from lack of structure. Once time is systemized, clarity returns. Focus sharpens. Pressure eases.

I'm Maryam Habashi, founder of INFUSE System, voted San Diego's top transformational business coach. My clients don't just grow revenue — they regain control of their calendars and their lives.

If your time feels fragmented, I offer a complimentary connection call to assess where your energy is leaking and how to restructure for scale without stress.

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What did you do before you became a realtor?

Before stepping into real estate, I worked in clinical research and continue to offer consulting services for clinical trials. That foundation in data analysis and risk evaluation allows me to approach real estate with precision; guiding my clients to not just purchase property, but to build generational wealth through smart investments.

When Did You Start Your Real Estate Career?

While I officially became a licensed realtor in 2024, my journey in real estate began in 2017 when I purchased my first property. That experience sparked my interest in the industry and opened my eyes to the incredible opportunities real estate can provide for long-term wealth building.

Through buying and selling properties myself, I developed a deep appreciation for the strategy behind real estate investing and homeownership. That personal experience ultimately inspired me to pursue my real estate license so I could help others navigate the process with confidence.

In my first year as a licensed agent, I was fortunate to close over \$10.5 million in sales volume, and I'm currently approaching \$15 million in career volume.



What are you passionate about right now in your business?

Right now, I'm especially passionate about helping people understand the long-term potential of real estate. Many clients initially see a home simply as a place to live, but real estate can also be one of the most powerful tools for building financial security and generational wealth.

I enjoy educating my clients about opportunities in the market, whether that means purchasing their first home, upgrading as their

family grows, or exploring investment properties.

What has been the most rewarding part of your business?

The most rewarding part of my business is helping people achieve milestones that can truly impact their lives. Whether it's a first-time homebuyer getting their keys or a client successfully purchasing an investment property, those moments are incredibly meaningful.

Real estate is more than just transactions, it's about

helping people create stability, opportunity and a future they're excited about

What was your biggest challenge as a realtor?

One of the biggest challenges when starting in real estate is building momentum in a competitive market. Success requires persistence, discipline, and a strong commitment to long-term goals. Those challenges pushed me to grow quickly, build strong relationships, and stay focused on delivering value to my clients every day.

Define success

To me, success means creating meaningful impact while continuing to grow personally and professionally. It's about helping people achieve their goals, building lasting relationships, and creating opportunities for my family and the families I serve.

Success is not just about numbers; it's about the lives you positively influence along the way.

How Does Real Estate fit into your dreams and goals?

Real estate aligns perfectly with my long-term vision of helping families create financial stability and opportunity. I believe property ownership is one of the most powerful tools for building generational wealth.

My goal is to continue growing my business while also expanding my knowledge as a real estate investor so I can guide my clients even more effectively.

What are your hobbies and interests outside of Real Estate?

Outside of real estate, I love spending time with my family, traveling, exploring new places and staying active. I also enjoy learning about investing and personal development.

Tell us about your family

Family is the center of everything I do. My husband and I are raising two beautiful children, our daughter Elise and our son Santiago.

Becoming a mother has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. My family inspires me every day to build a business that supports them while also helping other families achieve their dream of homeownership.

Any favorite books?

I enjoy reading books focused on personal development, business, and financial education, especially those that emphasize mindset, growth, and long-term wealth building.

Given your status and expertise, what is some advice you would give an up-and-coming agent?

Stay consistent and focus on building genuine relationships. Real estate is a relationship-driven business, and the agents who succeed long-term are the ones who truly care about helping people.

Stay disciplined, keep learning, and think long-term about your goals.

In closing, is there anything else you would like to include in the article?

I'm incredibly grateful to be part of the San Diego real estate community and honored to be recognized as a Rising Star. I look forward to continuing to serve my clients and helping more families achieve their real estate goals.

"Real estate has the power to change lives. For me, it's not just about buying or selling homes. It's about helping families create opportunity, stability and a future they're excited about"



“**REAL ESTATE HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE LIVES.**”





It's All in the Details

BY JOSEPH COTTLE
PHOTOS BY LAUREN FINCH
PHOTOGRAPHY

There's a simplicity to the way Meg Bogart talks about her work that almost undersells how much intention sits behind it. Ask her what she wants people to know about her business, Closing Photos, and she doesn't reach for anything flashy.

"I go above and beyond for my clients," Meg says.

Meg is quick to point out that she's "not a run-and-gun photographer." Instead, she treats

every shoot as a collaboration, taking time to understand both the property and the person behind it. Before she ever clicks the shutter, she's walking through the home, adjusting details, and helping shape how the space will be presented.

Even in professionally staged homes, she's still refining the composition, making sure everything translates well on camera. It's a level of care that, in her experience, isn't always standard.

That attention to detail extends beyond the physical space. Meg invests time in understanding each agent she works with—how they like their photos styled, what catches their eye, and how they want their listings to feel.

"It's usually about composition," she says. "Knowing what they like and need in their photos, what they don't, and how to translate that."

Meg first picked up a camera while photographing high-end residential construction projects for her family's business in the Palm Desert and Palm Springs area. At the time, it was simply a practical task—something done for marketing, not a future career.

Years later, after spending about 15 years working remotely in marketing and administrative roles, she found herself ready for something different.

"That was just not doing it for me," she says. What she was missing became clear: connection, creativity, and the ability to build something of her own. Real estate photography gave her a way to satisfy that while also getting back to working with people face-to-face. After years behind a screen, that shift mattered.

Now, it's one of the things she values most about the job. Through her work, Meg has watched firsthand the emotional and mental investment they make in their clients. That perspective has shaped her own approach to service.

"Getting to know what it's like for a real estate agent has really brought me a lot of respect for them," she says. "They dedicate so much time to their clients."

That respect translates into how she shows up—prepared, collaborative, and willing to go the extra mile.

Day to day, she's driven by a mix of challenge and connection. On the property side, no two shoots are the same.

"Every home is going to be completely different," Meg says. "It still excites me."



"Every home is going to be completely different."

On the branding side, where she photographs agents themselves, the work becomes more personal.

"I like to pose people. I like to try to make sure that they feel comfortable," she says. Meg takes pride in helping them find confidence in that process.

Outside of work, life is a little quieter, though not entirely separate from what she does. Photography still bleeds into her free time through street photography, but her world largely revolves around her two Boston terriers. "They are the little loves of my life," she says. Whether it's at home, in the park, or at the beach, they're her constant companions.

That blend of independence and intentionality shows up in her life as much as her business. From growing up in the Southern California desert and eventually settling in San Diego County, Meg has followed her own path.

It's the same approach she brings to her work—thoughtful, personal, and just a little bit different from the norm. And for the agents and homeowners she serves, that difference is exactly the point.

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All in THE FAMILY

For a Mother's Day special, we wanted to feature two outstanding real estate moms, and the children who have joined them in this profession. Victoria Sandoval & daughter Isabel Chavez from Select Premiere Properties, and Silvia Tirado and Omar Carrero with Finest City Homes & Loan are two great examples of families working together in real estate. Read their stories on the next few pages and see how rewarding it can be to have real estate success all in the family!



VICTORIA Sandoval ISABEL Chavez

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

There's a difference between working with a real estate agent and working with a family. For Victoria Sandoval and her daughter, Isabel Chavez, that distinction sits at the center of everything they do.

"Working with us," Victoria says, "is working with a family that's trustworthy. You're going to be treated like family, and you're going to be cared for. You're going to be nurtured."

That idea—care, trust, and a deeply personal approach—didn't come from a business plan. It was built through experience, sacrifice, and years of showing up when it mattered most.

Victoria came to real estate out of necessity. As a young single mom, she knew quickly that the traditional path wasn't going to give her the life she wanted for her daughter.

"I was working at a bank, and then I got my first paycheck, and realized there was no way I was going to be able to survive or support a daughter with it," she says. "I just thought to myself, what profession can I get into, where my efforts would pay off, where there's no ceiling of income."

Real estate became that opportunity. She started on the mortgage side as a loan processor at 20, earned her license at 23, and never looked back. Over more than two decades, she built not just a business, but a deep understanding of every angle of the transaction. That knowledge proved invaluable, especially during the 2008 housing crash.

"People went from owning five cars and three houses to barely being able to get their nails done," Victoria recalls. "But I stuck it through... it built grit and a lot of knowledge."

That resilience still defines how she works today. Consistency, discipline, and a refusal to quit are the principles she lives by—and the same ones she's passed on to Isabel.

For Isabel, real estate wasn't a sudden decision. It was something she grew up in. "I've been around real estate my whole life. I would go with my mom to her showings, door-knocking with her on the weekends," she says.

Even so, she took her own path to the realization. After briefly pursuing criminal justice in school, she found herself drawn back to what had always been in front of her. "When I studied for my real estate license, I was like, this is it. This is what I want to do," Isabel says.

Now four years into the business, she brings a complementary energy to the team. "I'm more like the Care Bear, and my mom brings the strong negotiating side," Isabel says.

Together, they've built a dynamic that clients immediately feel. It's not just about buying or selling homes. It's about guidance, support, and walking people through one of the biggest decisions of their lives with someone they trust.

That's also what keeps them coming back every day.

"For me, it's the smell of fresh opportunity every morning," Victoria says. "You meet new people every day and the possibilities are endless."

Over time, many of those clients become something more. "The majority of the people in my life are actually either friends because they're clients or clients because they're in the business," she says.



For Isabel, it's the unpredictability and momentum. "Every day is different. You could get a text in the morning like, 'Hey, I'm looking to buy a home,' and it just makes your day," she says. And then there are the moments that remind them why the work matters.

"It's very rewarding when you hand over the keys, and you see the excitement in people's eyes," Victoria says. "You see their kids running to their room; it's a beautiful thing to witness." Outside of work, that same sense of connection carries into their personal lives. They spend time with their family, take their pets on walks, try new restaurants around downtown San Diego, and lean into the simple moments—game nights, bowling, and being together.

Because at the end of the day, that's what all of this is about. Looking ahead, they have big goals: growing their team, expanding their presence, and becoming one of the top teams in downtown San Diego. But even as they look ahead, the foundation won't change.

They're not just building a business. They're building something that feels like home—for themselves, and for every client they serve.

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SILVIA *Tirado* & OMAR *Carrero*

Silvia Tirado and Omar Carrero don't describe their work in real estate in terms of sales, volume, or transactions. For them, it starts somewhere deeper.

"We do it to help people," Silvia Says. "So that's our main purpose, to help people. And we do it from our hearts."

That perspective isn't something they adopted after finding success—it's the foundation they built everything on. For Omar, it's something he learned early, long before he had his own clients. "My mom instilled into me that I had to work from my heart and treat every client like they're one of my brothers or sisters, someone that's close to my family and me, to always have their best interests in mind," he says.

Silvia's path into real estate didn't begin with an obvious calling. For years, she built a career in supply chain management, stepping into the workforce right out of high school and quickly finding success. She negotiated contracts, earned promotions, and established herself in a stable, upward-moving role. But over time, stability started to feel like stagnation.

"I had been doing negotiations for as long as I can remember," she says. "It kind of got boring because that's all I did all my life."

Real estate had always caught her attention, but timing mattered. As a mother raising her kids, she wasn't willing to step into a career that would demand evenings, weekends, and constant availability. "I didn't want to leave my kids when they were smaller," she explains.

When her children got older—and, as she jokes, "started ignoring me"—she knew it was time. Encouraged by a friend, she took the leap and got her license in 2019. From the very beginning, something clicked. "I loved it from day one. I still do," she says.

Still, the transition wasn't immediate. Silvia began part-time, balancing her new venture with the security of her full-time job. Then 2020 hit, and like many agents, her early momentum stalled. It wasn't until 2021 that she fully committed, making a decision that would define her career.

After interviewing with a brokerage that required full-time dedication, Silvia faced a choice—stay comfortable or take a risk. As a single mother supporting two kids, the decision wasn't easy. But she stepped forward anyway. "I took a leap of faith, and I went in," she says.

What followed was a breakout year that few could have predicted. From April to December, she closed 22 transactions and earned Rookie of the Year, a record she still holds.

Her secret wasn't a built-in network or an easy pipeline. It was work ethic. "I literally just put my head down and worked," Silvia says. "From like five in the morning to late at night every day, all I did was put my head down and work."

Omar saw it up close. "She is one of the most hard-working people you can meet," he says.

While Silvia was building her business, Omar was finding his own path into real estate. He didn't ease into it—he jumped in early. "I actually started when I was 18 years old," he says. "At one point, I think I was the youngest licensed realtor in California."

From the beginning, he worked alongside his mom, learning the business not just through training, but through experience. Over time, that foundation started to take shape into something of his own.

Silvia has watched that growth happen in real time. "I see him now really getting a hold of it," she says. "I see him full on now taking a mature approach."

Their partnership is more than just a team—it's an extension of their family dynamic. That includes Silvia's other son, Giovanni, who, while not directly in the business, remains an important part of the life they've built together. He recently enlisted in the Air Force, and they both are filled with pride. Family isn't something they work around. It's something they work for.

That commitment to family was tested in a profound way over the past couple of years. When Silvia's best friend, Rebecca, was diagnosed with cancer, everything else took a back seat. Rebecca was really more of a sister, and Silvia decided what was most important to her.

"I took the time to just be there with her," Silvia says. "I went to every single doctor appointment with her,



every chemotherapy, every session. I spent every single second I could with her."

After Rebecca passed, Silvia stepped away from the business to grieve and heal. The slowdown wasn't a setback—it was a reflection of her priorities. The same heart that drives her work also guides her life.

Now, she's stepping forward again with clarity and renewed energy. "This year I decided, 'You know what? I'm back,'" she says. "Boots on the ground. I'm back."

That resilience has become a defining part of their story. For both Silvia and Omar, real estate isn't about chasing deals—it's about building something meaningful, both for their clients and for themselves.

This includes giving back to their city, their colleagues, and their community whenever possible, because they both share a deep conviction that they should freely return the blessings they've received.

Silvia serves as a board member for the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals (NAHREP) alongside Omar, who helps on the committee. She recently returned from Washington D.C., where she advocated for affordable housing as well as expressing the boards concerns about housing scarcity and expensive insurance premiums.

Omar succinctly expresses their focus on generosity beyond the scope of their transactions—"I believe God puts us into these places so that we're able

to continue to help people," he says.

At its core, their approach is simple. Treat people like family. Work hard. Stay grounded in what matters.

"We've always loved helping people, even outside of real estate," Omar says.

And for this mother-son team, that's not just a philosophy. It's the reason they show up every day.



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Thanks To Melissa Sofia for an engaging afternoon! Much wisdom was shared and appreciated. Thanks to Claremont Escrow for sponsoring lunch and Barrett Financials' Jared Kelley for being our auctioneer!



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