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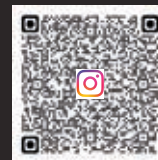


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PROFILES



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EDITOR'S NOTE: IN OUR SEPTEMBER 2026 EDITION, IN OUR COVER REWIND SECTION, WE INCORRECTLY IDENTIFIED LINDSEY MARTIN AS A BROKER/OWNER. WE APOLOGIZE FOR THE ERROR AND APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CORRECT THE RECORD.



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OUR BUSINESS... IS A MARATHON



There is something about endurance events that continues to draw me back.

Recently, I had the opportunity to run the Children's Marathon, an event I have come to appreciate not only for the physical challenge, but also for the impact it makes in our community. Running 26.2 miles is certainly an accomplishment, but when the miles are connected to something bigger than yourself, the experience takes on a different meaning.

That combination of challenge and purpose is probably why I continue signing up for these things.

A marathon has a way of exposing you. There are stretches where everything feels good. Your training is working, your pace feels comfortable, and the miles seem to pass quickly. Then there are stretches where the same pace suddenly requires considerably more effort. Your legs get heavy, the distance remaining feels much longer, and you have to remind yourself that you have prepared for this.

Business has seasons that feel a lot like that.

Right now, I think many real estate professionals would agree that this is a challenging season. The market has changed. Transactions require more work. Consumers have questions and concerns that weren't necessarily part of the conversation a few years ago. Deals can take longer, negotiations can become more complicated, and sometimes considerably more effort is required to produce the same result.

For professionals who have experienced easier markets, it can be frustrating. But I also believe these are the seasons where years of preparation begin to show.

During a marathon, you don't suddenly become prepared at mile 20. Whatever foundation you have at that point was built months earlier. It came from the early mornings, the long runs, the days when the weather wasn't ideal, and the workouts you completed when nobody was watching. The same is true in business.

The relationships you've spent years developing matter more when business becomes difficult. The reputation you've built matters more. The systems, experience, communication skills, and ability to remain calm when a transaction becomes complicated all begin to separate seasoned professionals.

That doesn't make the difficult miles easy. It simply means you are better prepared to handle them.

One of the things I've learned through endurance sports is not to make too many judgments about the entire race based on one difficult mile. You can feel terrible at mile 18 and surprisingly strong again at mile 21. Sometimes the answer isn't to completely change the plan. It's to stay patient, manage your energy, trust your preparation, and keep moving forward.

I think there is something valuable in that for our industry right now.

A challenging market doesn't necessarily require us to abandon everything that helped us become successful. It may require adjustment. It may require more discipline, better communication, stronger relationships, or a willingness to learn something new. But difficult seasons can also sharpen us. They remind us what we're capable of and expose areas where we've become comfortable.

And they give us an opportunity to become

better prepared for whatever comes next.

That's also one reason the Children's Marathon means so much to me. The miles are personal, but the purpose is communal. Knowing the event is making an impact on children and families in our community provides perspective when the race becomes uncomfortable. There is something powerful about choosing a difficult challenge while knowing the effort is connected to something beyond your own finish line. I believe business works best that way too.

Production matters. Goals matter. Growth matters. But when our work is connected to serving people, strengthening relationships, supporting our communities, and doing something meaningful for others, it becomes easier to remember why we started when the season gets difficult.

If you're feeling some of that difficulty in your business right now, I hope you'll remember that a challenging stretch doesn't define the entire journey. You've spent years preparing for moments like this. Trust the relationships you've built the experience you've earned. Stay willing to adjust when necessary, and keep moving forward.

Sometimes the hardest miles are the ones that remind us just how much endurance we've built along the way.

Cheers,

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TESS

Utterback

Finding Her Stride

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCCABE
PHOTOS BY JARON JOHNS



***“No hour of life is wasted
that is spent in the saddle.”***

— Winston S. Churchill

For Tess Utterback, the best days involve horses, horsepower and a little real estate along the way. Most mornings, she gets dressed in riding clothes. Not because she has the day off. Quite the opposite. She may have emails to answer over coffee, a listing appointment across town, clients waiting to see a property and a dozen other things demanding her attention. But somewhere between the contracts, phone calls and showings, Tess will look for an opening in her calendar.

“I just need an hour,” she smiles.

She heads to the barn, climbs onto Nico, her dapple gray Irish Sport Horse, and for a little while, everything else falls away.

“Riding truly keeps me sane,” Tess says. “It’s good for my soul.”

It is difficult to separate the horsewoman from the REALTOR® anymore. Tess has spent nearly three decades in real estate, 18 years in corporate sales and about 18 years riding horses. Over time, those seemingly separate paths converged into a career that fits her almost perfectly. Today, more than half of her business involves farms, and approximately 85% comes from the eventing community.

A Career Comes Full Circle

Tess earned her real estate license in 1995, shortly after college, although real estate wasn’t initially part of the plan. She studied pre-law at the University of Kentucky before moving to North Carolina and working as a paralegal. After a year with a personal injury and workers’ compensation attorney, she realized law wasn’t for her.

Then, while Tess was vacationing with a friend, her friend said something that would change the course of her life, “You would be such a good

REALTOR®.” Tess thought about it. “You know, that’s a really good idea,” she remembers responding.

She returned to Lexington, earned her license and spent approximately eight years selling real estate full time. Eventually, she transitioned into corporate America for greater stability and spent the next 18 years in IT sales. She kept her real estate license and continued doing transactions on the side.

Then came 2020. COVID took Tess off the road for her corporate position and

gave her an unexpected opportunity to rethink her life. She began doing more real estate and, in August 2020, returned to it full time.

Only this time, she brought something entirely different with her: Horses.

Where Two Worlds Meet

Tess didn’t grow up riding. She started in her 30s and fell hard for it. Nearly two decades later,

“
**In sales, we are
trusted confidants,
cheerleaders and talk
them off the ledge.”**

horses are woven into her daily life. Tess competes in three-day eventing, a demanding equestrian sport combining dressage, show jumping and cross-country jumping. She has owned her own small horse farm, cleaned stalls, fed horses and experienced firsthand what equestrian property owners actually need.

Naturally, her real estate business began moving in the same direction. She started with hobby farms because she understood them. Soon, larger farms followed. Last year, Tess handled both sides of the approximately \$4 million sale of a historic Thoroughbred farm in Midway, her largest transaction to date. Today, she sells everything from smaller properties where someone can keep a pony in the backyard to large working Thoroughbred and sport horse farms.

“I love it,” she says. “I spend 90% of my time in riding clothes.” That’s not an exaggeration. Tess can finish a riding lesson, jump into her truck and head straight to a showing. “The farms are really where my passion is and what I really enjoy,” she says.

Tess’ connection to the equestrian community goes far beyond selling farms. She rides, competes, volunteers, and even sponsors horse shows. Her logo appears on her horse trailer and even on jumps at the Kentucky Horse Park.

“My daughter teases me about being famous,” Tess laughs. “I just market myself really, really well.”

But marketing only goes so far. The equestrian community is close-knit, and Tess credits much of her success to the people who have trusted her, supported her and referred her over the years.



“I’ve been really fortunate that this community has embraced me so well,” she says.

Her clients have warmly embraced her as well. The best real estate advice she ever received was, “Never let the client see money in your eyes.” In other words, the transaction should never become about the commission.

“In sales, we are trusted confidants, cheerleaders and talk them off the ledge,” she says. Tess puts clients “100 percent first.”

Her equestrian experience may distinguish Tess, but she credits her 18 years in corporate America gave her something equally valuable: discipline. Working in outside sales taught her how to structure her own days and hold herself accountable.

The Horse That Changes a Bad Day

Tess has three horses, each special in a different way. There is Lou Lou, her





original trail horse; Simon Says, her daughter's retired pony; and Nico, whose show name is Master Martini.

Nico is Tess' competition horse.

"He's like that guy in school everybody's best friends with," she says. "He's super cute. Everybody likes him, and he's even nicer than he is cute." Tess rides him about six days a week. The pair is

particularly strong in dressage, while cross-country jumping remains what Tess calls their "Achilles heel."

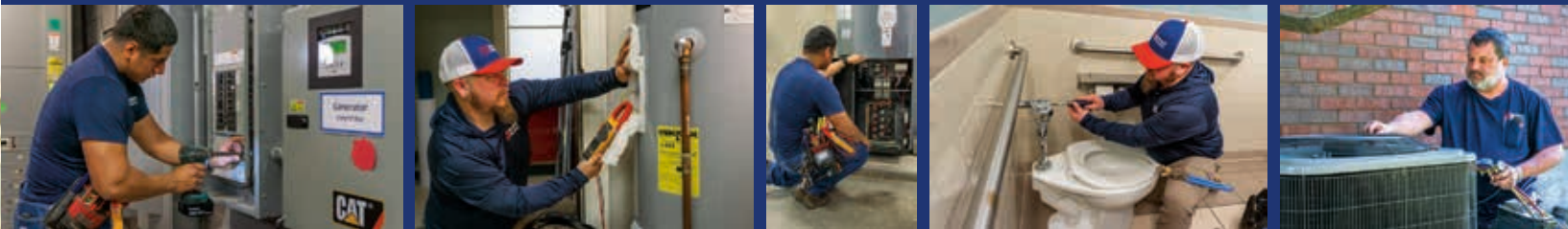
Earlier this summer, after nearly two years together, Tess and Nico won their first event. They also qualified for the American Eventing Championships.

Small but Mighty

Away from work and the barn, Tess is also Mom to her 12-year-old daughter, Isla, and enjoys a close circle of family and friends. She describes her family as "small but mighty."

In her free time, Tess loves fashion. "I enjoy shopping," she says. Other pastimes include cooking for friends, traveling, hiking and spending time with the many friendships she has formed through riding.

And somewhere in the middle of it all, she'll find her way back to the barn. Back to Nico. Back to the place where the noise quiets, the rest of the day disappears and Tess Utterback finds her stride. 🐾



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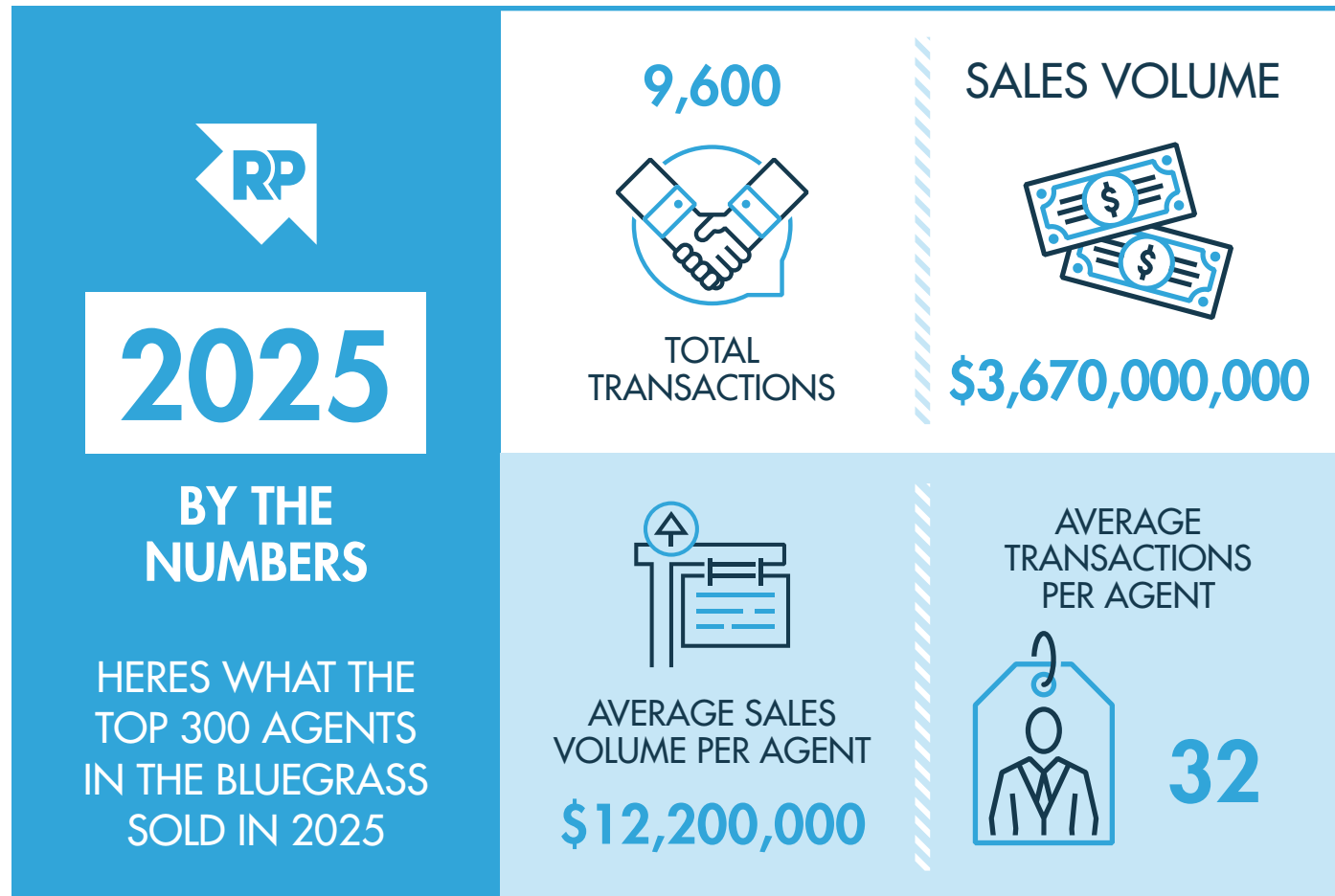
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Kentucky Home Team

At the heart of the Kentucky Home Team, we hold a firm belief that our most crucial role is to assist and educate our clients, empowering them to make well-informed decisions. We see real estate not merely as a series of sales, closings, or transactions. Instead, we view it as an opportunity to assist our clients in achieving their goals and making sound long-term decisions.

So, what can you expect from our team? Whether you're contemplating buying, selling, or both, or perhaps you're on the hunt for your first home, your forever home, or an investment property, we're here for you. We pride ourselves on being a valuable resource for the community at large and especially for our clients. We're here to offer our services and explore how we can assist you. Even if you're just curious about real estate or the process in general, we're more than happy to answer your questions.



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We value genuine conversations and believe in building lifelong relationships. We want to understand your journey and how we can help. - **Miranda Hinchman, Owner, Kentucky Home Team**

The Kentucky Home Team



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46Solutions

Elevating Spaces and Securing Success

PHOTOS BY JARON JOHNS

For top-producing real estate professionals, delivering exceptional client experiences extends far beyond closing day. Whether a buyer is trying to navigate a complex existing smart home setup, a seller wants to elevate their listing with high-end entertainment features, or a brokerage needs bulletproof cybersecurity, technology plays a critical role in modern real estate. That is where 46Solutions steps in.

Rooted in a rich history, 46Solutions originated within the Davis H. Elliot Company, a trusted brand dating back to 1946. After developing its internal IT department in the 1990s, 46Solutions officially launched as a stand-alone business in 2019. Starting with just nine employees, the company rapidly expanded into a full-service technology powerhouse. Today, the team includes dedicated professionals like Audio/Video Consultants Alex Mars and Douglas Hocker, Systems Manager Nathan Cecil, and Manager of IT Services Josh Dixon, all working together to deliver seamless tech integrations across Central Kentucky.

What truly sets 46Solutions apart in the industry is its business structure: it is 100% employee-owned. “Our employee-ownership model gives every team member a personal stake in the client’s experience and the company’s reputation,” explains Systems Manager Nathan Cecil. “We support both residential and business technology, which gives us a broad view of how people actually use their systems day to day.”

This personal investment translates directly into value for local REALTORS®, brokerages, and their clients. REALTORS® do not need to be tech experts when they have a reliable partner to call. 46Solutions assists agents with the tech questions that inevitably arise during listings, purchases, renovations, or new builds. Their comprehensive services include improving Wi-Fi coverage, mounting and concealing televisions, installing whole-home and outdoor audio, designing custom home theaters, adding security cameras, automating lighting and motorized shades, and simplifying existing smart home setups.

Beyond residential solutions, 46Solutions provides commercial-grade support designed to protect and streamline agency operations. “We help REALTORS® and brokerages stay secure, connected, and productive by protecting sensitive client information, improving cybersecurity, and keeping computers, networks, and phone systems running smoothly,” notes Josh Dixon, Manager of IT Services. “With a trusted technology partner like 46Solutions, real estate professionals can focus on serving clients and closing deals instead of troubleshooting IT problems.”

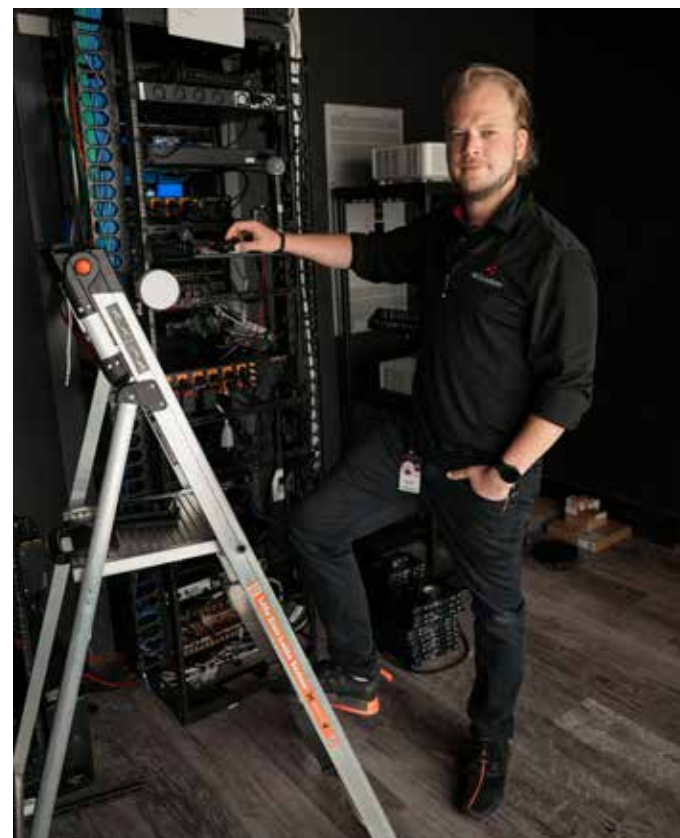
To make home and business technology even more accessible, 46Solutions opened its state-of-the-art Audio/Video Showroom at Lexington Green. This space allows clients and REALTORS® to test and experience integrated technology in person before making decisions. The showroom has also become a highly desired event space for corporate meetings, gatherings, and industry networking.

“Our early years reinforced a lesson that still guides us today: technology works best when it is designed around the people using it,” says Audio/Video Consultant Alex Mars. “For our commercial IT clients, that means understanding their operations and security needs. For residential audio and video clients, it means understanding the space and how the family will actually live in it. Asking the right questions early helps us create reliable solutions, prevent frustration, and provide support long after installation.”

This commitment to client-first service has earned 46Solutions widespread recognition. Among their accolades are the Salute to Small Business Success Award, Small Business of the Year, ABC 36 Best Home Entertainment, BIA Best Marketing Campaign, and consistent top rankings on the Business Lexington Best of Lex lists for Best Technology Company and Best AV Company. They also proudly maintain an endorsement partnership with local personality Ryan Lemond.

Despite these major accomplishments, the team measures success by simple, meaningful moments. “The most rewarding moments are often simple ones,” shares Audio/Video Consultant Douglas Hocker. “A homeowner finally has reliable Wi-Fi, a family can enjoy movie night without a stack of remotes, or a local business avoids downtime because our

“
We love removing
the frustration
people associate
with technology
and giving them
total confidence
in their systems.”





team caught a security issue early. We love removing the frustration people associate with technology and giving them total confidence in their systems.”

At its core, 46Solutions operates on a clear mission: harness the power of technology to provide innovative solutions and unparalleled service. They view every project as an opportunity to build a long-term relationship rather than complete a transactional sale.

“REALTORS® do not need to become technology experts,” Cecil emphasizes. “They simply need a trusted resource who can answer questions, evaluate an existing system, and help a client understand what is possible. 46Solutions is proud to be that local resource.”

Whether you need a single consultation for a picky buyer, an upgrade for your brokerage office, or a hands-on demonstration in their Lexington Green showroom, 46Solutions is ready to support the Kentucky real estate community with expert, reliable, and friendly service. 🍷

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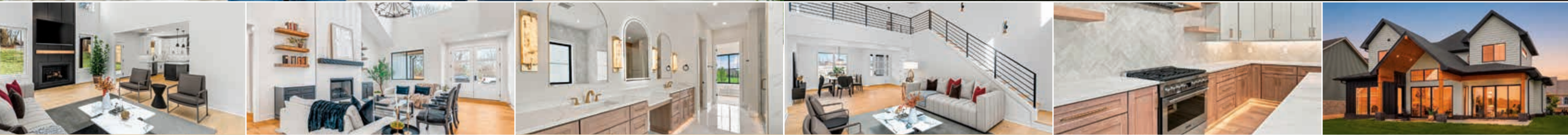
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In September, *Bluegrass Real Producers* brought together some of Central Kentucky's top real estate professionals for our **I Heart Realtors®** event, hosted inside a beautiful new construction home by **GSL Homes** in Drake's Landing. The home provided the perfect backdrop for an afternoon centered around connection, relationships, and celebrating our local real estate community.

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us and made the event such a success. These gatherings are about more than networking. They're an opportunity to build meaningful relationships with other professionals who understand this industry and the value of staying connected.

We're especially grateful to our event sponsors, **GSL Homes, Achosa Home Warranty, Benchmark Mortgage, and Elevare Creative**, whose partnership and support helped make the afternoon possible. This couldn't have been made possible without the help of **Kentucky Home Team** a special thanks to Miranda Hinchman for the continued support.

Thank you to everyone who came out, connected, toured the beautiful **GSL home**, and helped make **I Heart Realtors** a memorable afternoon!





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Kymberly McCreary

PHOTOS BY CRE8TIVE VISIONS



Kymberly McCreary's journey exemplifies a life rooted in service, resilience, and leadership. Before becoming a successful real estate leader, she served in the U.S. Army's elite 1st Space Battalion in Colorado Springs, where she learned the vital importance of precision, teamwork, and accountability.



McCreary translated her military discipline directly into her real estate career. She closed 48 homes in her first year, 77 in her second, and soon expanded into property flipping, construction, and investment management. She founded the Valor Homes Team, guiding her business with clear purpose and an unwavering commitment to her clients. Today, she boasts over \$265 million in career sales volume.

Her drive stems from overcoming a challenging childhood. Raised largely by her great-grandmother in Winchester, Kentucky, McCreary was the first in her family to graduate, serve in the military, and build a lasting enterprise. Her childhood experiences instilled a belief that everyone deserves a safe home. Driven by this vision, she prioritizes people over profit—building a Virtual Assistant team in the Philippines to support local communities and coaching her agents to achieve financial independence and “freedom of time.”

Supported by her sister Kendra, who serves as Operations Manager, McCreary continuously invests in her personal and professional growth. Outside of work, she cherishes family life with her husband, BJ, and their blended family of five children, prioritizing travel and creating shared memories.

Ultimately, McCreary's philosophy centers on authenticity, continuous self-improvement, and leading through service. From military space operations to top-tier real estate, her career demonstrates that true leadership relies on showing up for others, learning from failures, and building a meaningful legacy.

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