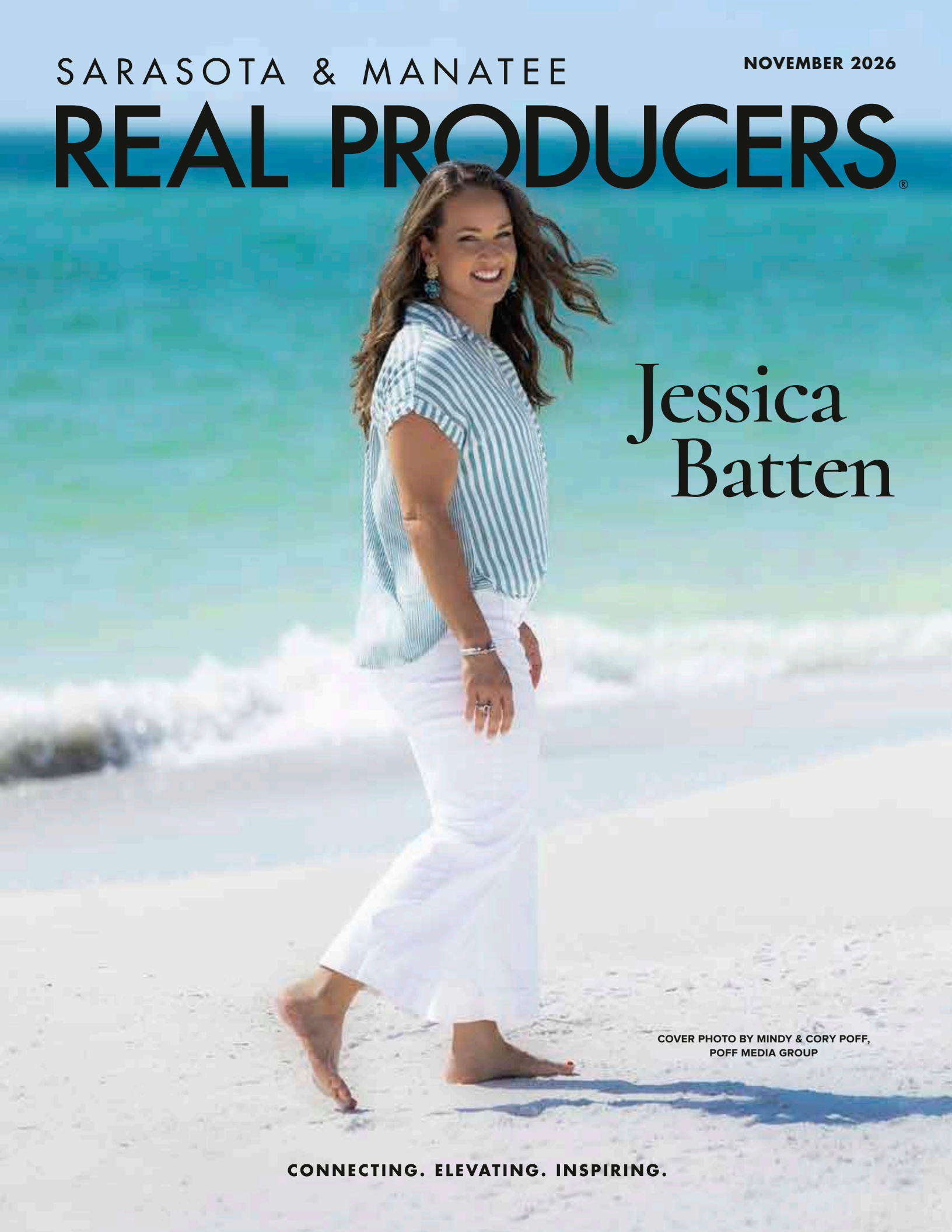
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If you are interested in nominating people for certain stories, please email us at: joni@n2co.com.



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AVERAGE TRANSACTIONS PER AGENT



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Jessica BATTEN

From Educator to **Top Real Estate Professional**

STORY BY ELIZABETH MCCABE
PHOTOS BY MINDY & CORY POFF, POFF MEDIA GROUP

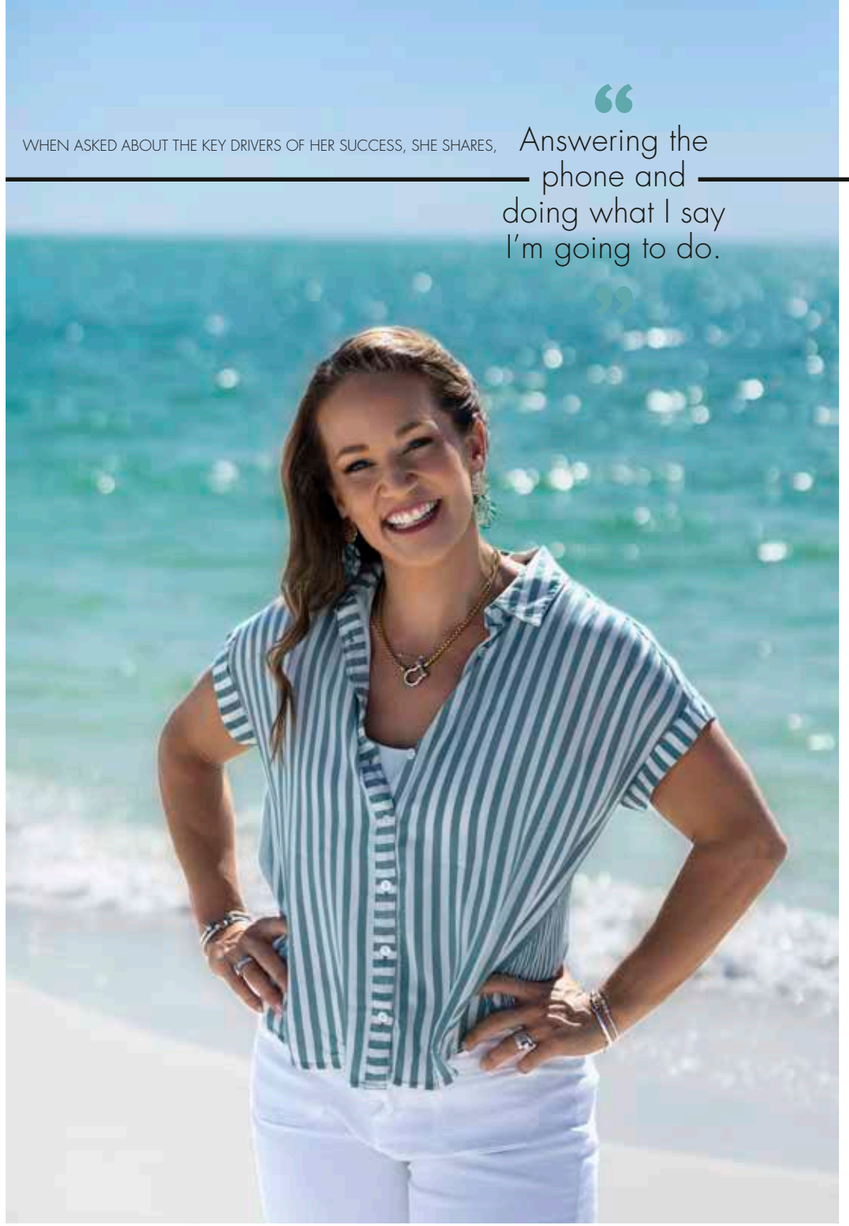
Jessica Batten was a teacher and administrator for almost a decade before transitioning into real estate in 2017. While her career has changed, Jessica has never stopped being an educator. Her lessons now include contracts, inspections, market statistics, and guiding people through one of the largest financial decisions most will ever make. “I love real estate so much,” says Jessica. “It’s someone’s home, someone’s story, and someone’s life.”

Being trusted with a person’s largest investment is something Jessica takes seriously. She wants everyone to understand the process, what they are signing, and why. “Taking the time to educate people is so important, whether they are a first-time or a very seasoned buyer,” she notes. “Each negotiation and property is different.”

Originally from Massachusetts, Jessica received her undergraduate degree from Champlain College in Vermont and a Master of Education from Loyola. An avid snowboarder, sailor, and multi-sport athlete, she decided after graduation that some warmth and sun might be a welcome change. She went to the Virgin Islands, where she met her now-husband, Aaron. He was a charter boat captain, and she was working as the Director of Sailing for the St. Thomas Yacht Club. Subsequently, Aaron opened his own charter boat company, and Jessica continued teaching, but this time on dry land at an international Montessori school in St. Thomas.

They had their first child in St. Thomas, but when Jessica was pregnant with their second child, the Zika virus forced them to leave and move near her family in Delaware. While their plan was to return to the Caribbean, Hurricanes Irma and Maria had different plans. The storms, as Jessica put it, “blew our life away.” Still desiring warmer climates, they moved to Bradenton, Florida, where Aaron had grown up.

Somewhere along the way, real estate entered the picture. Family and friends encouraged Jessica to give it a try, as they believed she had the discipline, intellectual curiosity, and personality to succeed in the competitive business.



WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE KEY DRIVERS OF HER SUCCESS, SHE SHARES,

> “Answering the phone and doing what I say I’m going to do.”



Photo by Luis Aguilera



She earned her license in 2017, joined M/I Homes in the Tampa division, and proved she was a very quick learner.

In her first year, Jessica was nominated for Tampa Bay Builders Association Rookie of the Year. During her five years with M/I Homes, she was consistently one of the top-producing agents, both regionally and nationally, and was also named the TBBA Salesperson of the Year. During that time, she estimates she helped build approximately 600 homes and at one point was managing around 100 homes under construction. She accomplished much of this while having her third child, born in the middle of COVID.

Jessica loved the multifaceted challenges of new construction, but as her older children approached kindergarten, Jessica wanted something else, too: the chance for some nights and weekends with her family. Time is precious.

She took another leap, leaving the success she had with new construction and trying her skills in general real estate. She joined Sato Real Estate in 2023, focusing primarily on Anna Maria Island and Northwest Bradenton while expanding into Longboat Key. “I love being on the island,” she shares. More importantly, she loves representing people in the community she calls home.

Not surprisingly, given her background as an educator, Jessica is a big believer in doing her homework. She pores over data and sales trends to help her clients make the most informed decisions possible. Jessica jokes that she sometimes feels like a “total nerd” but believes her clients deserve the best information available. When asked about the key drivers of her success, she shares, “Answering the phone and doing what I say I’m going to do.”

This approach seems to be working well. Jessica was recently voted Anna Maria Island’s #1 Favorite Real Estate Agent in the Anna Maria Island Sun’s Annual Readers’ Choice Award, and she is projecting around $50 million in sales as a single agent for 2026.

Her business spans a wide range, from more modest homes and townhomes to multi-million-dollar properties, but one thing is consistent: her approach and service to her clients. She knows that, as in sports and the classroom, there are no shortcuts to success in real estate.

Jessica is a lifelong learner, continually reading, taking courses, and studying the data because the market never stops changing. She also earned her broker’s license in 2025. She is a champion of building relationships, following up, and simply being there.



Behind all of Jessica’s work is her favorite team: Aaron and their three children. To relax, she likes working out, competing in fitness events, boating, and enjoying time with her family. Faith is also a part of her family’s life, and she serves on the worship team at her church.

The classroom might be gone, but Jessica Batten is still doing what she has always done best: helping people understand what is in front of them, giving them tools to move forward confidently, and cheering them on.

And if the lesson plan changes halfway through? Jessica knows a thing or two about pivoting.

Stay tuned for what Jessica accomplishes next. Something new is on the horizon for this top producer. Let’s just say there’s more to come.






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Q&A with Jason Schneider, Market Leader at CMG Home Loans

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Q: Jason, what sets you apart in the mortgage industry?

A: With over seven years in the business and closings across multiple states, I bring a wide range of lending knowledge to the table. Whether I'm working with a first-time buyer or a seasoned investor, my focus is always on finding the right solution that aligns with their financial goals.

Q: Real estate agents are busy—what can they expect when working with you?

A: Clear communication and proactive updates. I make sure every client fully understands the process, from start to finish. That means no surprises, just well-managed expectations and smooth transactions.

Q: What types of clients do you work with most?

A: Everyone—from families purchasing their very first home to investors building their portfolios. I've worked with a variety of loan programs, so I can tailor solutions no matter the situation.

Q: How does your personal background shape the way you work?

A: Having spent most of my life in New York and now splitting time in Florida, I understand the needs of clients in diverse markets. Outside of work, I've been married for over 25 years, have kids from teens to adults, and stay active in my community. I believe the discipline I put into staying mentally and physically strong also translates into how I serve my clients and partners.

Q: Why should agents connect with you?

A: Because I make their clients' success my top priority. Agents can trust me to keep deals moving forward and clients informed every step of the way. That partnership makes all the difference.



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Vinnie VINOPAL

COLDWELL BANKER REALTY

STORY BY JACKI DONALDSON
PHOTOS BY MINDY & CORY POFF, POFF MEDIA GROUP

Vinnie Vinopal was only 17 when he signed up for the U.S. Marine Corps between his junior and senior years at Manatee High School. He finished school, left for boot camp in 2006, and spent nearly a decade in the military before returning to the Bradenton area. Born in Wisconsin, Vinnie moved to Bradenton with his family at 9 months old. “I’m about as native as you can be without being born here,” he jokes.

As an intelligence analyst in the Marines, Vinnie spent much of his career at Camp Pendleton in California. His first deployment with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit took him across the Pacific and into the Middle East, where he trained alongside military forces in multiple countries.

His second deployment brought an entirely different experience. With piracy a significant threat off the coast of Somalia, Vinnie trained alongside Force

Recon Marines for visit, board, search, and seizure missions. His additional training included Navy search-and-rescue swimming and small-boat operations.

Vinnie was part of the Marine unit involved in the 2010 rescue of the Magellan Star, a merchant vessel overtaken by pirates. The Marines regained control of the ship and rescued its crew without casualties. One moment remains particularly vivid for Vinnie: The crew members had barricaded themselves inside for protection and initially refused to open the door. A Marine cut through enough of the metal to show them the American flag on his uniform. Once they saw it, they knew help had arrived.

Vinnie later deployed to Afghanistan as an intelligence chief with a helicopter squadron before leaving the Marines in 2015. The transition to civilian life required some adjustment, but real estate had already planted a seed.

While preparing to sell his California home, Vinnie researched neighborhood properties and independently calculated what he believed the house should be worth. When he met with the listing agents, his number matched their recommended price. “They asked, ‘Have you ever been in real estate?’” he recalls. He hadn’t. But the question stayed with him.

Vinnie liked the idea of a career where discipline and hard work could directly influence his success. After returning to Florida, he earned his real estate license and began with Coldwell Banker Realty in January 2016.

The discipline and confidence he brought from the Marines served him well. During his first year, he was named Coldwell Banker’s Rookie of the Year for Southwest Florida. “If I don’t have rockets shooting over my head, I’m always going to have a good day in this business,” he once told a company panel. Real estate can be stressful, he explains, but his military experience taught him to control his emotions, step back, and work through problems calmly.





Within a few years, former clients began asking whether they could get licensed and work with him. Vinnie formed a small team, rediscovering something he had missed since leaving the Marines: camaraderie and leadership.

That experience ultimately pointed him toward management. In 2020, he was offered an assistant broker position. Soon afterward, opportunities shifted, and Vinnie moved into the managing broker role. Today, at 38, he oversees Coldwell Banker Realty’s two Lakewood Ranch locations.

He no longer competes for clients. His job is supporting the agents who do. “Brokers should serve the agents; the agents shouldn’t serve the broker,” he says about the culture he has created. Agents collaborate through an internal group chat; gather for meetings, training, happy hours, and awards; and step in to help one another. In an industry where remote work and technology can easily replace face-to-face interaction, Vinnie intentionally protects the human connection. He also credits his staff, particularly longtime sales support team member Lisa, whom he calls his “secret weapon,” with helping create an office where people feel welcomed and supported.

For Vinnie, seeing agents enjoy their careers and knowing they have someone to call when problems arise is now more rewarding than closing his own transactions. None of it, he says, would be possible without his wife, Meghan. “She has stood behind me through every stage of my career,” Vinnie shares. Late calls, transaction emergencies, interrupted family time, and the responsibility he feels to be available to his agents affect the entire family. Meghan supports that commitment while also reminding him that professional success cannot come at the expense of being present at home.



> “IF I DON’T HAVE ROCKETS SHOOTING OVER MY HEAD, I’M ALWAYS GOING TO HAVE A **GOOD DAY** IN THIS BUSINESS.”

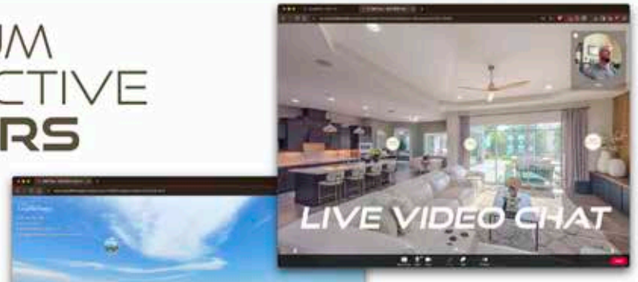
Together, they are raising their daughter, Raevin, 6, and son, Zander, 4. Zander was born with heart disease and underwent open-heart surgery at 3 months old. Today, he is doing well and returns for yearly checkups.

Outside the office, Vinnie prioritizes family activities, movies, trips, and date nights with Meghan. He’s also a lifelong car enthusiast who has spent the past decade rebuilding a 1967 Camaro, now pushing 1,000 horsepower. Each year, he reunites with his Marine brothers for a motorcycle racing weekend in Austin, Texas.

Nearly 11 years after entering real estate, Vinnie still draws on the lessons that first shaped him as a Marine: discipline, composure, leadership, and looking out for the people beside him. Only now, the team he serves looks a little different.

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DAN NELSON

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STORY BY DAN CLARK
PHOTOS BY MINDY & CORY POFF,
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REFRESH | LIST | SELL

Tucked into the suburbs of Philadelphia is a glass dance floor Dan Nelson hasn't thought about in decades. He built it. And for eight years in the 1970s, it made the Downtowner one of the top nightclubs in the region—back when rock and roll was at its peak, disco owned the dance floor, and R&B was just getting smooth.

But that was one chapter in a career that has defied easy description. It reads like an impressive resume. Mainframes for Burroughs Corporation in an era before personal computers existed. VP of Sales at Commodore when Commodore and Apple were the only two PCs on the market and before IBM even entered the picture. A general contractor's license in Atlanta, where for eight years he built custom homes from the ground up because his wife wanted a backyard with a swing set for their daughter, and he came from a family of tradesmen who taught him to figure it out. Tech companies with successful exit strategies. Retirement in 2014. A decade of consulting. And then, a problem nobody was solving.

"I didn't want to be just another remodeling contractor," shares Dan. "I saw an opportunity to become what I like to call a renovation advisor."

RenoVision is the vehicle Dan built around a premise most of the industry was missing. Walk into almost any home listed for sale, and you'll likely find the same thing: five rooms painted five different colors. Cabinets with hardware corroded since the '90s. A shower that looks dated and tired. A front door that needs painting so badly that every buyer walking up the driveway wonders what the rest of the house looks like inside. None of it is structural. None of it requires a major renovation. And almost nobody in the industry was stepping in to fix it

"We're trying to modernize a home and make it look like a brand-new model home on the inside by just doing cosmetic updates."



strategically before the sign went in the yard. RenoVision operates in that gap.

Pre-listing home improvements, done in collaboration with the listing agent, focus on cosmetic updates that typically require no permitting, wall demolition, or months-long timelines. Projects typically run $10,000 to $35,000 and take about a month from start to finish. For sellers who don't have the cash on hand, RenoVision partners with Notable, a financing platform that advances up to $75,000 against the project with repayment at closing. Sellers pay nothing until they close.

"We're trying to modernize a home and make it look like a brand-new model home on the inside by just doing cosmetic updates," Dan explains.

The first thing Dan notices when he walks into a listing is the front door. Then, he sees the corroded lock set. The 18-inch gap between wall cabinets and the ceiling. The mirrors with edging starting to peel. The three shades of gray across an open floor plan chosen by three different owners across two decades. These are the details most sellers stop seeing because they've lived with them too long. They're the first things a buyer sees.

Dan's answer is never a massive renovation. It's a focused, strategic refresh. He runs an educational session at brokerage sales meetings he calls The Home Refresh Playbook, built around five high-impact refreshes for under $10,000: painting, flooring, cabinet refinishing, bathroom updates, and curb appeal. The goal is education rather than a sales pitch. "Many home sellers assume they need a major renovation to make a meaningful difference," Dan explains. "However, the right strategic refreshes can completely change how a home looks and feels."

Dan has been in sales his entire career. What connects it all is the instinct to find a need nobody is filling and build something around it. He built the nightclub because he wanted to own one. He built the custom homes because he came from a family of tradesmen and figured he could be one, too. He built RenoVision because he retired, tried consulting for a decade, and couldn't stop seeing a problem that nobody in real estate was solving.

Today, 45 percent of Dan's work comes through listing agents who bring him in before the house hits the market. The other 55 percent comes through buyer's agents whose clients just closed and want to make the house their own.

Dan isn't simply in the renovation business. He's in the first-impression business. The renovation is just how he changes it.

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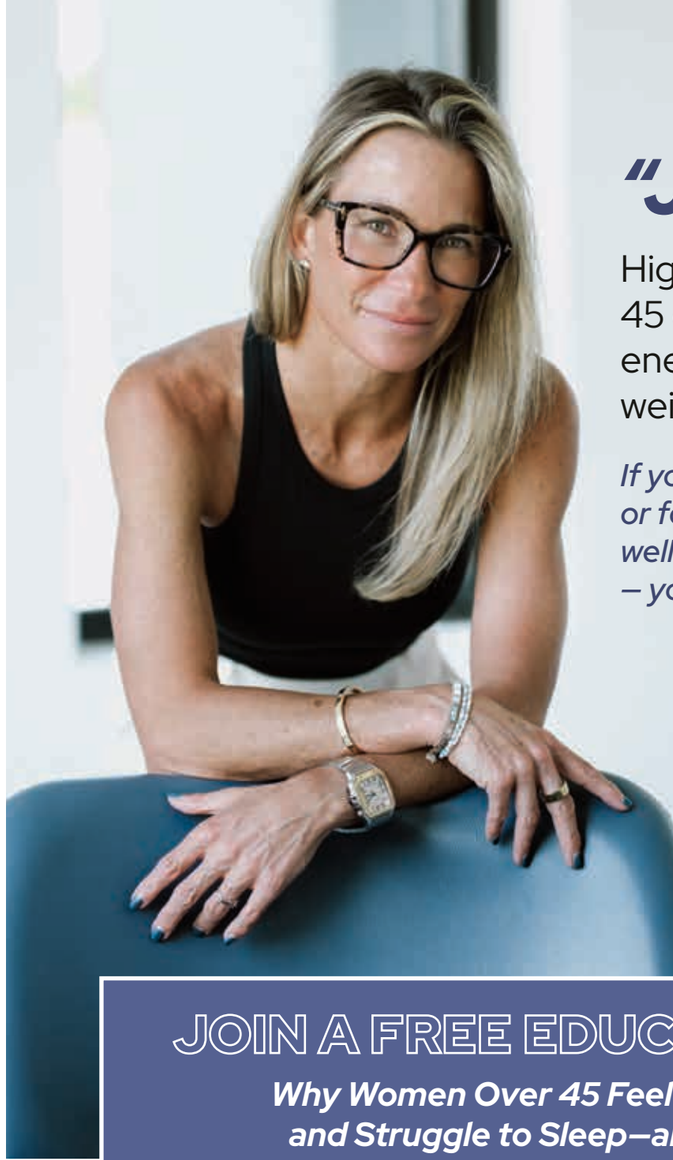


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Fevil Patel

FINE PROPERTIES



STORY BY JACKI DONALDSON
PHOTOS BY MINDY & CORY POFF, POFF MEDIA GROUP

When Fevil arrived in the United States in 2008, he expected pharmacy to be his future. Born and raised in India, he earned a bachelor's degree in pharmacy and became a registered pharmacist there before moving to the U.S. at his parents' encouragement. He continued his education at Stevens Institute of Technology in New Jersey and earned a Master of Science in 2009.

With his uncle already established in business in Florida, Fevil and his family headed south in 2009. Later that year, he married his wife, Jaymini, who joined him in Florida from North Carolina. Entrepreneurship quickly became part of their story. Fevil and his brother bought a small retail business in Sarasota in 2010, and Fevil also worked as a pharmacy technician.

In 2013, Fevil and Jaymini welcomed their first daughter, Sanvi, and he began looking for ways to create additional income for his growing family. Fevil's curiosity about business began with the people behind it—the individuals who built businesses, served their communities, and created careers around helping others. He started asking business brokers about their experiences, what motivated them, and what it took to build a successful business. Around the same time, he and Jaymini were looking for a home, and he began asking real estate agents similar questions about their careers and how they built relationships with their clients. Then his brother-in-law called. "He said, 'Why don't you get your real estate license?' I was already thinking about it," Fevil recalls.

Fevil earned his real estate license in 2015 but didn't want to rush into a business he didn't understand. He immersed himself in the industry, taking training courses through Keller Williams and spending much of his first year preparing before he began selling in 2016.

His first couple of years were challenging as he worked to find his footing. "I kept telling myself every

day, ‘I can do this,’” he states. Fevil called friends, family, and people he had met since arriving in Florida, held open houses, attended social gatherings, and built relationships. Word of mouth gradually became the foundation of his business. Between 2016 and 2022, he spent almost nothing on paid marketing or lead generation.

After starting with Keller Williams and spending time with an independent brokerage, Fevil joined Fine Properties in 2018. A solo agent, he personally oversees his transactions and coordinates everything from photographers and staging to vendors and closing gifts.

Fevil sums up his approach in three words: knowledge, honesty, and loyalty. “I never worried about how much I would make,” he shares. “It was about helping the client, providing the knowledge, staying honest, and being loyal. That’s how I build relationships with everyone.”

For Fevil, the responsibility that comes with representing a client isn’t something he takes lightly. “For most of the people we serve, real estate is probably going to be the biggest transaction they make in their lifetime,” he explains. “For them to trust me with the process gives me joy and peace.”

He approaches every transaction as though his own money is at stake, guiding clients through closing and remaining a resource afterward. Some of the people he helped when he began selling in 2016 have remained friends over the years, and he continues to maintain those relationships today.

His entrepreneurial interests haven’t stopped with real estate. Fevil has purchased multiple locations of a food business with the help of family members, who help oversee the operations, allowing him to focus primarily on real estate.

Lakewood Ranch has been part of Fevil’s vision since he began selling real estate. He watched the



> **“I never worried about how much I would make. It was about helping the client, providing the knowledge, staying honest, and being loyal. That’s how I build relationships with everyone.”**

community grow and dreamed of eventually calling it home. In 2023, his family made that dream a reality.

Outside of work, Fevil’s world revolves around Jaymini and their daughters, Sanvi, 13, and Mayra, 7. He credits Jaymini with supporting him through every stage of his journey, noting, “She has seen the ups and downs and the struggle in the beginning, and she has always stayed with me and supported me.”

Weekends mean friends, family, community, and cultural celebrations. Fevil also plays cricket every Sunday.

Underlying everything is Fevil’s faith. He follows a teaching from HH Pramukh Swami Maharaj that guides how he approaches his family, friendships, businesses, and clients: “In the joy of others lies our own.”

For a man whose original plan brought him across the world to practice pharmacy, the career Fevil ultimately found looks very different. But the desire behind it is remarkably similar. He wanted work that allowed him to help people. In real estate, he found it.



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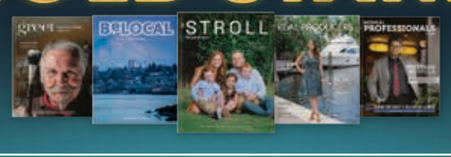
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