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The Standard You Set

Why consistency, not circumstance, defines long-term success

BY
GABRIEL
CHANDLER

Excellence is never accidental.

In real estate, success isn't defined solely by volume, rankings, or numbers on a page—it's shaped by the standard you hold yourself to every single day.

The difference between solid performance and sustained leadership isn't luck.

It's commitment.

Commitment to preparation.

Commitment to discipline when no one is watching.

Commitment to setting expectations so high that growth becomes inevitable.

A Moment for Honest Assessment

High performers don't drift—they decide.

They create opportunity rather than wait for it. They build trust rather than chase transactions. And they understand that yesterday's wins are only valuable if they inform today's discipline.

Ask yourself:

- Are you showing up informed, prepared, and positioned as a trusted authority?
- Are referrals happening by design—or by chance?
- Are you refining your skills and relationships to stay ahead of change, or relying on what's worked in the past?

The answers to these questions quietly determine trajectory.

Environment Shapes Execution

The people you surround yourself with influence what you tolerate—and what you strive for.

At Real Producers, our focus is not just recognizing excellence, but reinforcing it. By bringing top agents together with trusted partners, we create an environment where high standards are normal—and accountability is shared.

When you operate among professionals who expect more from themselves, excellence stops being optional. It becomes the baseline.

Choose the Level You Lead At

Standards are not statements—they're habits.

They're reflected in how you prepare, how you communicate, and how consistently you show up for clients, partners, and peers. The level you reach tomorrow is determined by the standard you uphold today.

So be intentional:

- Choose environments that elevate you.
- Invest in relationships that sharpen your edge.
- Demand more from yourself than the market ever will.

Because in this business, you don't rise to the level of your goals—you rise to the level of your standards.

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Gabriel Chandler
Publisher

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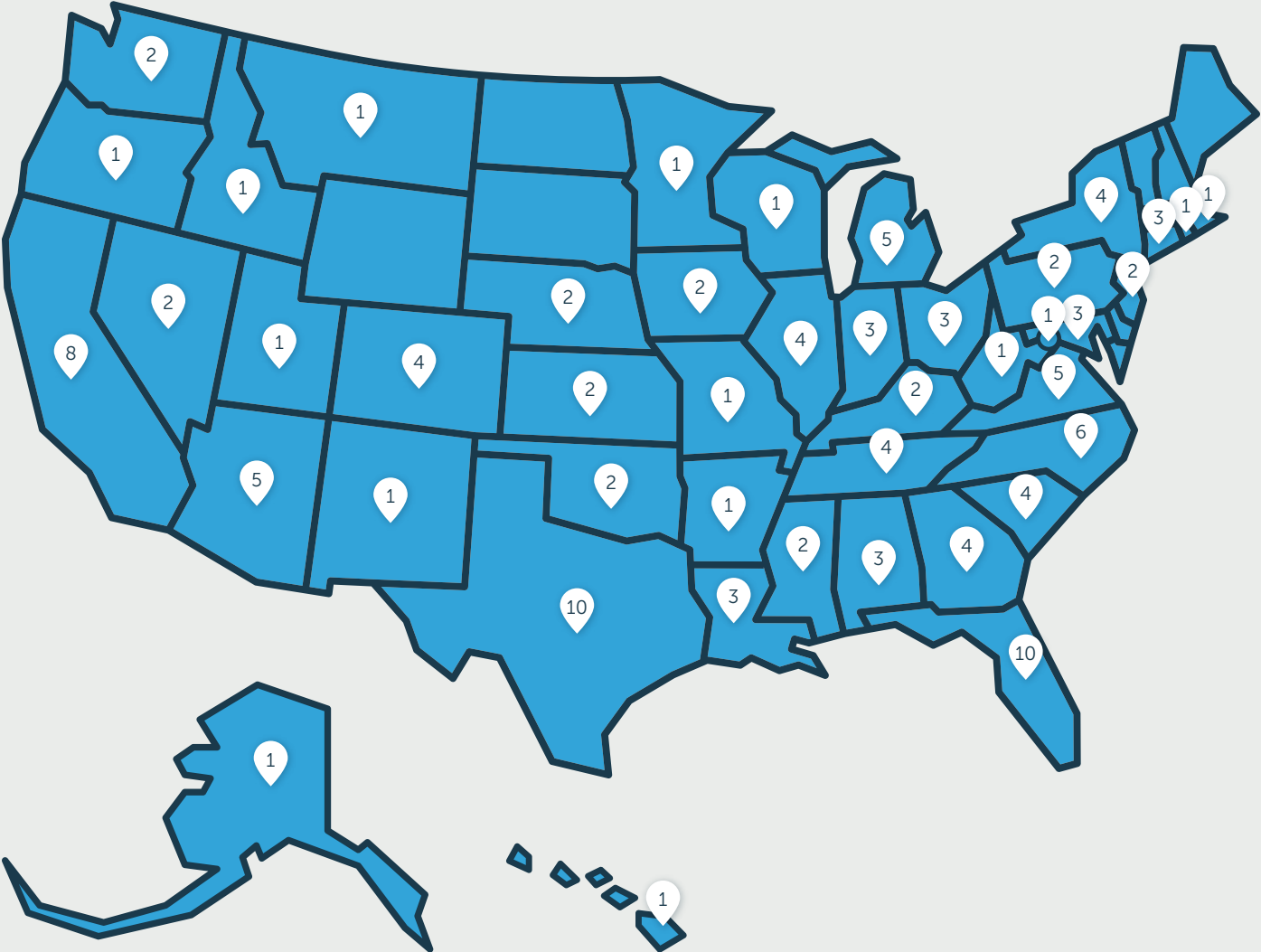
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2026 REAL ESTATE RULE CHANGES:

WHAT WILMINGTON BROKERS NEED TO KNOW

As North Carolina's real estate market continues to evolve—especially in fast-growing coastal areas like Wilmington—2026 has introduced several regulatory updates that every broker, firm, and investor should understand. While none of these changes radically alter brokerage practice overnight, together they signal a continued push toward transparency, accountability, and professional standards.

Fee Adjustments and Administrative Updates

One of the most immediate changes impacting all licensees is financial. Effective April 1, 2026, the North Carolina Real Estate Commission (NCREC) increased the annual license renewal fee from \$45 to \$50. This modest adjustment reflects rising administrative costs but also reinforces the importance of timely renewal during the May 15–June 30 window.

Additionally, application fees for new brokers have increased slightly, now sitting at approximately \$105. While not burdensome, these incremental increases are worth factoring into brokerage budgeting and recruiting conversations.

Rule Modernization and Compliance Focus

The NCREC approved a series of rule updates in early 2026, many of which focus on clarifying existing practices rather than introducing entirely new ones. The overarching theme is tighter compliance—particularly around licensing, education, and brokerage conduct.

Education requirements remain consistent at 8 hours annually, but updated course content for 2025–2026 places heavier emphasis on legal updates, fair housing, and agency responsibilities. For Broker-in-Charge (BIC) roles, supervision and accountability continue to be a focal point, reflecting ongoing concerns about team structures and oversight.

Wholesaling Clarified as Brokerage Activity

Another important legislative update affecting investors and off-market transactions is the clarification that residential property wholesaling constitutes brokerage activity and therefore requires licensure.

This change is especially relevant in markets like Wilmington, where investment activity and assignment

contracts have grown in popularity. The law also introduces consumer protections, including cancellation rights for homeowners, signaling increased scrutiny of investor-driven transactions.

What This Means for Wilmington Professionals

For brokers operating in Wilmington and the surrounding Cape Fear region, the takeaway is clear: professionalism and compliance continue to take center stage. The regulatory environment is tightening—not dramatically, but steadily.

Firms should prioritize:

- Strong BIC oversight and documentation practices
- Clear communication around compensation structures
- Ongoing education that goes beyond minimum CE requirements
- Careful handling of investor and wholesale transactions

In a market defined by growth, relocation demand, and coastal investment, these updates reinforce a simple reality: the agents who succeed in 2026 and beyond will be those who adapt quickly, operate transparently, and stay ahead of regulatory change.



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Kirk Pugh Becky Brown

Creating New Opportunities

PHOTOS BY: T.J. DRECHSEL
WRITTEN BY: DAVE DANIELSON

For Kirk Pugh and Becky Brown, success has never been measured solely by sales volume, awards, or market share. While those accomplishments have certainly followed, the foundation of their careers has always been much simpler: serve people well, do business the right way, and never compromise integrity.

Today, as co-founders of KBT Realty Services, Inc. and leaders within Keller Williams Innovate in Wilmington, North Carolina, Kirk and Becky have built a business that reflects those principles. Together, they have combined decades of experience, complementary skill sets, and a shared commitment to client service to create one of the region's most respected real estate organizations.

Two Different Paths, One Shared Vision

Long before launching KBT Realty Services, both Kirk and Becky built successful careers in other industries that helped shape their approach to business.

Born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, Kirk spent 25 years in the food, beverage, hotel, and private club industry. The hospitality business taught him the value of customer service, attention to detail, relationship-building, and creating exceptional experiences.

Becky's path began right here in Wilmington. A true local, she has witnessed firsthand the growth and evolution of Wilmington and the surrounding coastal communities over the years. Prior to real estate, she built a successful career in banking and insurance, developing expertise in finance, contracts, negotiations, customer service, and problem solving.

While their backgrounds were different, both discovered that real estate offered the perfect opportunity to combine business knowledge with a passion for helping people.

Becky entered the real estate industry in 1995 and quickly found her calling. Over the past three decades, she has experienced virtually every type of market cycle imaginable while building a reputation for professionalism, expertise, and trusted guidance. Early in her career, she became a co-owner of a real estate franchise, gaining invaluable

experience in leadership, recruiting, operations, and business development.

Kirk began investing in real estate in 2001 before transitioning into the industry full-time after relocating to Wilmington. By 2009, he had earned his real estate license and launched what would become a highly successful real estate career.

Building a Business with Purpose

In January 2015, Kirk and Becky officially launched KBT Realty Services, Inc., bringing together their experience, vision, and shared commitment to client care.

What began as a partnership has evolved into a thriving organization built on relationships, professionalism, local expertise, and personalized service.

"Foundationally, we approach business with a servant's heart and are always looking for ways to enhance the client experience," says Kirk.

That philosophy continues to guide every aspect of the business.

For Becky, one of the greatest advantages she brings to clients is perspective. After more than 30 years in real estate, she understands the importance of steady guidance, honest communication, and helping clients navigate challenges that inevitably arise during important life transitions.

“Real estate has never been just about selling houses,” she says. “It’s about relationships, trust, communication, and helping people through important moments in their lives.”

Both Kirk and Becky believe that while technology and marketing continue to evolve, relationships remain at the center of every successful real estate transaction.

“Relationships and reputation have been the biggest game changers in my career,” Becky says. “Technology and marketing are important, but this business is still built on trust, communication, consistency, and doing what you say you’re going to do.”

Growth Fueled by Experience

The numbers tell an impressive story.

Last year, KBT Realty Services closed just under \$50 million in sales volume. This year, the team is on pace to approach \$70 million in production while continuing to expand its reach throughout Southeastern North Carolina.

Today, the organization includes 18 agents, with plans to grow to 30 in the near future.

For both founders, growth is about more than adding agents. It is about creating opportunities and helping others build successful, sustainable businesses.

Becky’s years of leadership experience continue to influence how the company mentors and develops agents. She is passionate about helping professionals build careers rooted in professionalism, integrity, and service.

Her advice to newer agents is straightforward.

“Learn your contracts. Learn your market. Answer your phone. Be honest with people, even when the conversation is difficult,” she says. “Relationships and reputation will outlast every trend. Real estate is a long game.”

The entrepreneurial mindset that Kirk and Becky have has led them into the rapidly evolving world of real estate technology. As founding shareholders in PLACE, Inc., a PropTech company, they have helped support a platform now serving thousands of real estate professionals nationwide.

Locally, they are pursuing the launch of an Envoy Mortgage branch in Wilmington, creating additional opportunities and resources for both clients and agents.

Together, Kirk and Becky have created a business model that blends innovation with the relationship-based service that remains at the heart of real estate.

A Commitment to Community

Giving back has always been important to both Kirk and Becky.

KBT Realty Services actively supports a variety of charitable organizations throughout the Wilmington area. Among the causes closest to the team’s heart are Canines for Service, the Cape Fear Chapter of the American Heart Association, and numerous Realtor-related charitable initiatives.

Becky’s commitment to service was recognized in 2015 when she received the prestigious Paul Sullins Community Service Award. Presented annually to a Realtor who demonstrates exceptional service to the community, it remains one of her most treasured accomplishments.

“Receiving an award tied to service and community impact meant far more to me than production numbers ever could,” Becky says.

For both founders, success means using their business as a platform to

“Relationships & reputation will outlast every trend. Real estate is a long game.”





“There is no deal worth sacrificing my integrity.”



“There is no deal worth sacrificing my integrity or reputation,” she says.

A Philosophy That Endures

When asked to define success, both Kirk and Becky return to many of the same themes: integrity, relationships, service, and trust.

“There is no deal worth sacrificing my integrity,” Kirk says.

Their shared philosophy has guided every stage of their careers and every decision they have made in building KBT Realty Services.

Markets change. Technology evolves. Consumer expectations shift.

But honesty, communication, professionalism, and doing right by people never go out of style.

At KBT Realty Services, those principles continue to drive every decision. Whether serving clients, developing agents, supporting charitable causes, or expanding into new opportunities, Kirk and Becky remain focused on the same mission that inspired them from the beginning: helping people while building a business rooted in integrity, growth, and lasting relationships. ▀

make a positive difference beyond real estate transactions.

Life Beyond Real Estate

Despite the demands of leading a growing organization, both Kirk and Becky believe strongly in maintaining balance.

Kirk enjoys traveling, exploring great food and wine, spending time on the water, golfing, and making memories with family and friends. One of his favorite traditions each year is spending time in Hatteras with a close group of friends during the Big Rock Blue Marlin Tournament.

Becky embraces the coastal lifestyle that first inspired her love for Wilmington.

She enjoys boating, traveling, hydroponic gardening, reading, afternoon picnics, and spending time with family and friends. Her three miniature dachshunds provide plenty of companionship and entertainment.

She especially enjoys cooking for the people she loves.

“If I invite you into my home and cook a meal for you, that’s my way of showing that I genuinely care,” she says.

For Becky, success is not measured simply by sales numbers. It is about building a meaningful life and business rooted in integrity, relationships, stability, and freedom.



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Molly
WHITE

A PATH OF PROFESSIONALISM

PHOTOS BY BRADLEY STICKLAND
WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

Molly White's path into real estate didn't follow a traditional blueprint—and that's exactly what makes her story resonate. Today, as a solo agent with Coastal Realty Associates LLC in Hampstead, North Carolina, Molly runs her business with clarity, conviction, and a deep respect for the trust clients place in her. Her confidence didn't come overnight, but through years of refinement, education, and intentional growth.

Early Foundations
of Responsibility

Born in Oregon, Molly grew up moving between Washington state, Wyoming, and a brief stint in Montana. As the youngest of eleven children, she learned early how to adapt, observe, and shoulder responsibility. Her upbringing was structured and demanding, shaped by strong rules and clear expectations that





.....
“I didn’t have
a choice but
to make it.
Failure wasn’t
an option.”
.....



emphasized discipline and accountability.

Those early experiences instilled resilience and self-reliance—qualities that would later become cornerstones of her professional identity.

Discovering Real Estate as a Career Path

Real estate was never entirely foreign to Molly. Her father was a general contractor, and she grew up watching homes take shape—from framing to finish—and observing the business decisions behind each build. Still, real estate didn’t initially present itself as a career option.

That changed in 2019, when Molly began thinking seriously about building

a profession that could support her family long-term while still allowing her to be present for her children. She enrolled in real estate school, and midway through the process, life shifted dramatically. With no safety net, she knew she would need to make the business work—fully and decisively.

While completing her coursework, Molly cleaned houses to stay afloat, then transitioned into real estate full-time about six months after earning her license in 2020. “I didn’t have a choice but to make it,” she says. “Failure wasn’t an option.”

Learning Through Structure and Experience

Molly approached the early years strategically. After interviewing with ten

brokerages in five days, she signed with BlueCoast Realty, where initial financial support helped her get started. Though she gained traction, she soon realized she needed deeper mentorship and systems to grow.

She later joined Coldwell Banker, where Ninja Selling training sharpened her communication and client relationship skills. From there, she spent three years on a high-producing team, learning consistency, production, and repeatable processes. By the end of 2023, however, the financial realities of team splits prompted a reevaluation.

In 2024, after a year marked by transition and reflection, Molly considered stepping away from the business

entirely. Instead, she recommitted—with greater clarity than ever before.

Stepping Fully Into Her Own

In April 2025, Molly went fully solo at Coastal Realty Associates. She invested in her own website, branding, and systems, committing to running her business in alignment with her values and strengths. That same year, she achieved the best results of her career, closing \$13.5 million in volume and earning Top Producer recognition for her firm.

Later in 2025, she joined Ryse Platinum Partners, an elite coaching group for agents in the top 1–5% nationwide. Surrounded by high-level peers and supported by one-on-one coaching, Molly

found herself stepping into leadership with confidence.

A Business Built on Transparency

Molly's reputation is rooted in honesty. In seller consultations, she explains upfront that one of three things will happen: the client may decide she's not the right fit, she may decide the same, or they'll move forward together. "It's us against the market," she tells clients—not agent versus expectations.

With buyers, she emphasizes education and protection. She prepares clients for the realities of ownership, points out concerns before inspections, and refuses to let anyone settle. Her communication is structured and respectful—weekly updates, defined boundaries, and no surprises.

Life, Balance, and Intention

Molly's days begin early, balancing family life, planning, and work with intention. She manages a blended household of six

children ranging from 10 to 19, protects Sundays for rest and church, and believes success is measured less by volume than by presence.

To her, success looks like repeat clients, referrals, shared dinners, no debt, and the ability to travel with her children. Real estate, she believes, is about relationships long after the closing table.

Changing the Narrative

Early on, when Molly shared that she was pursuing real estate as a career and a way to support her family, someone responded bluntly: "No one likes their Realtor."

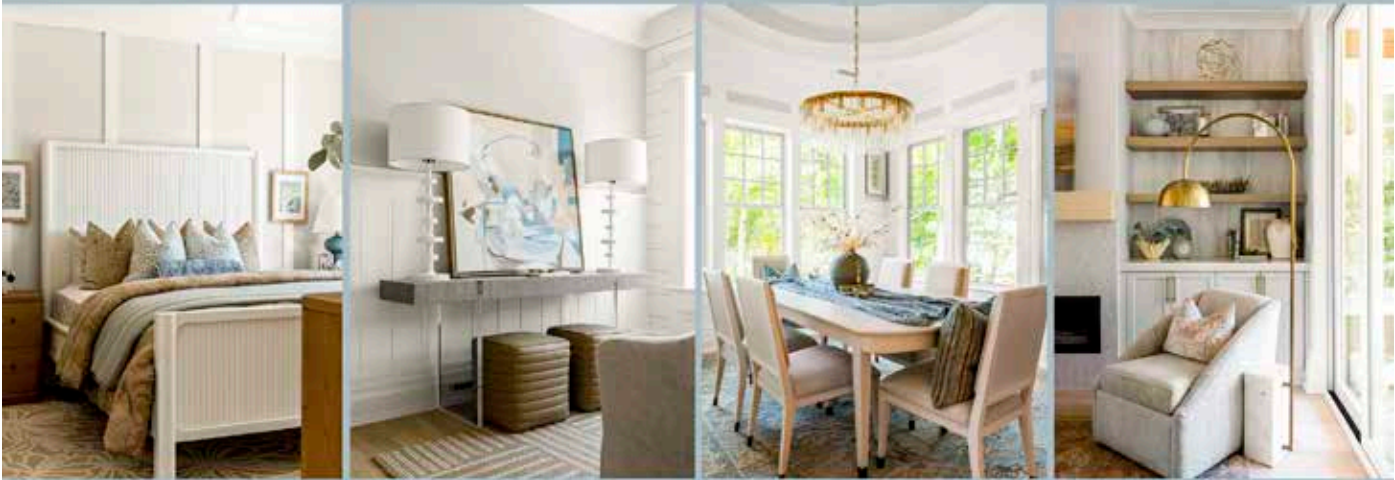
Molly didn't argue—but she quietly decided they were wrong.

That moment became a personal challenge and an unspoken mission. Through transparency, consistency, and genuine care, Molly White is steadily changing how people experience real estate—one relationship at a time. ❏



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At first glance, a home inspection might seem like a technical step in the real estate process—another box to check before closing day. But for David Youngs, owner of Uncharted Home Inspections, it's something far more meaningful: a responsibility built on trust, clarity, and protection for families making one of life's biggest financial decisions.

DAVID YOUNGS

PHOTOS BY BRADLEY STICKLAND
WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

Precision & Purpose



Operating out of the Scott's Hill area of Wilmington, Youngs has built his business around a simple but powerful mission: deliver thorough, unbiased home inspections that help clients move forward with confidence, not confusion.

From Military Service to Mission-Driven Business

David Youngs' path to home inspections began long before he ever stepped into a crawlspace or climbed onto a roof. Originally from Hampton Roads, Virginia, his early life eventually led him into military service with the U.S. Coast Guard, a career that took him through coastal assignments including the Oak Island area and later Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

He also studied at Virginia Tech and completed specialized technical training through the American Home Inspectors Training Institute (AHIT), alongside ongoing field education throughout his career.

As his military career neared its end, he began reflecting on what came next. After personally experiencing a disappointing home inspection during a purchase of his own, something clicked. The inspector had lacked attention to detail, and the experience left him uneasy. That moment became a turning point.

"I realized I could take the discipline, precision, and accountability from my military background and apply it to something that directly serves people in a critical moment of their lives," he explains.

A Business Built on Clarity, Not Confusion

Uncharted Home Inspections is grounded in a straightforward philosophy: clients deserve honest answers without intimidation.

The company provides residential home inspection services designed to clearly explain a home's condition and systems.

Whether buyers or sellers are involved, Youngs ensures they walk away with accurate information that supports confident decision-making.

His ideal clients are those who value transparency and clarity. Instead of overwhelming reports filled with jargon or fear-based language, he delivers findings in a way that is easy to understand and actionable.

A Veteran's Approach to Detail and Integrity

What separates Youngs from many competitors is not just experience—it's mindset. As a veteran-owned business, Uncharted Home Inspections reflects the discipline and structure of his military background.

"I MAKE IT A PRIORITY TO BE ACCESSIBLE. I always offer follow-up calls so clients can ask questions and fully understand the findings, especially if they couldn't attend the inspection in person."

Every inspection is conducted with meticulous attention to detail. Youngs physically inspects roofs rather than relying on shortcuts, ensuring nothing is missed. But just as important as thoroughness is communication.

"I make it a priority to be accessible," he says. "I always offer follow-up calls so clients can ask questions and fully understand the findings, especially if they couldn't attend the inspection in person."

That combination of precision and personal connection has become a cornerstone of his reputation.

The Foundation of Success: People First

While technical skill is essential, Youngs believes the real driver of his success is how clients feel during and after the inspection process.

A big part of that comes from simplifying complex findings and removing unnecessary stress. Instead of creating fear, his goal is education.

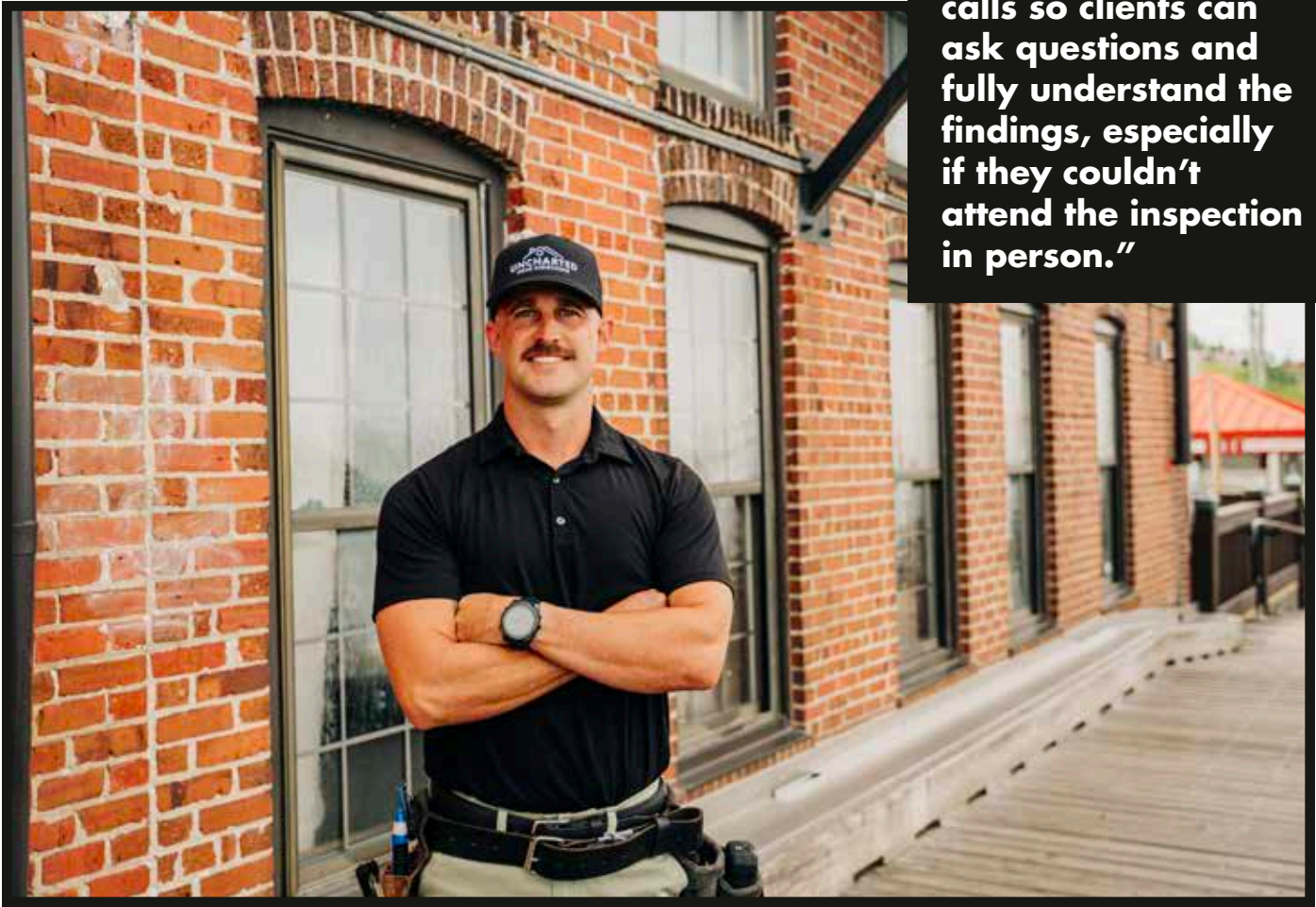
This approach has helped build strong relationships with both clients and real estate professionals, many of whom rely on him as a trusted partner in transactions.

Growth With Purpose

Looking ahead, Youngs has clear goals for the future of Uncharted Home Inspections. He hopes to expand his team—ideally bringing on fellow veterans who share his values of discipline and service.

The long-term vision is to build a highly skilled, community-focused inspection team that continues to serve coastal North Carolina with integrity and professionalism.

At its core, the mission remains unchanged: be a trusted guide in the



“EVERY CLIENT IS A POTENTIAL NEW NEIGHBOR OR FRIEND. Some of those relationships continue well beyond the transaction, and that’s incredibly rewarding.”

real estate process and a steady source of clarity for clients.

The Most Rewarding Part of the Job
For Youngs, the most meaningful aspect of his work is not found in reports or inspections—it’s found in people.

Meeting new clients, especially those relocating to coastal North Carolina, has become one of the most fulfilling parts of his career. Many start as strangers and end as neighbors, friends, or long-term connections.

“Every client is a potential new neighbor or friend,” he says. “Some of those relationships continue well



beyond the transaction, and that’s incredibly rewarding.”

Life Beyond Inspections
Outside of work, Youngs is deeply rooted in family, faith, and community. He is a single father to his eight-year-old son, who is at the center of his world. Much of his time outside inspections is spent coaching his son’s soccer team, a role he describes as one of the most meaningful in his life.

Living in coastal North Carolina gives them access to boating, jet skiing, and beach days on nearby sandbars. He also enjoys working on cars, attending car shows, and maintaining a few collector vehicles.

Faith plays a central role in his life as well. He is actively involved with Life Church ILM and supports Hope For The Warriors through regular giving and service. He also participates in church softball leagues and small groups, staying connected to his community in multiple ways.

A Philosophy That Guides Every Decision
When asked about his guiding principles, Youngs keeps it simple: “Serve well. Work hard. Stay honest.”

He credits his faith as the foundation of both his personal and professional life,

trusting that direction and clarity come from staying grounded in those values.

A Trusted Partner for Real Estate Professionals
For top-producing agents, Youngs offers more than just inspection reports—he offers reliability.

He understands the pace and pressure of real estate transactions and prioritizes responsiveness, clarity, and follow-through. His reports are designed to be easy to read, and his communication is direct and timely.

As he puts it, “I’m focused on helping deals move forward while keeping clients confident and informed.”

In an industry where details matter and timing is everything, that combination has made him a valuable partner in the field.

Building Trust One Home at a Time
At the heart of Uncharted Home Inspections is a simple promise: to help people make informed decisions with confidence. For David Youngs, that promise is not just business—it’s personal.

Every inspection reflects a career shaped by service, discipline, and integrity. And every home inspected is another opportunity to help someone step forward with clarity and peace of mind. 🏡




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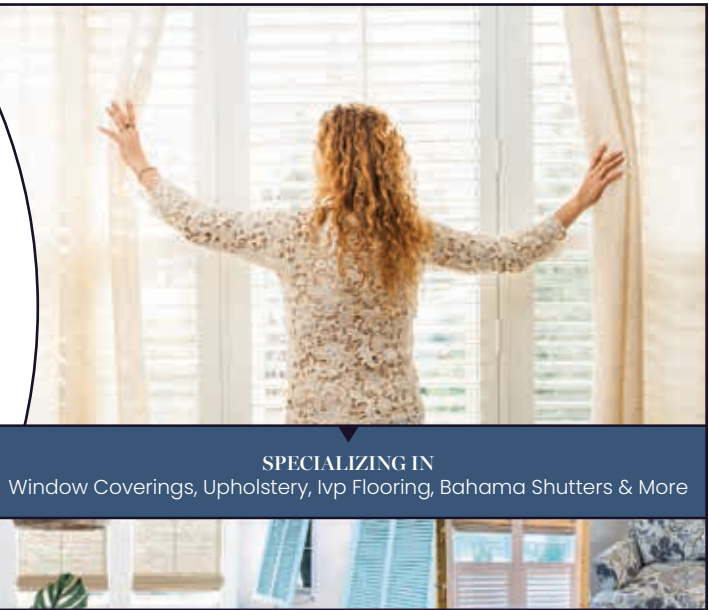
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Darlene Burns

BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS & SUCCESS



PHOTOS BY BRADLEY STICKLAND
WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON

For Darlene Burns, real estate has never been simply about properties. It is about people—the excitement on a buyer’s face when they discover the right home, the trust a seller places in her to prepare a property for the market and the friendships that continue long after everyone leaves the closing table.

A REALTOR® with Living Seaside Realty Group in Wilmington, Darlene has spent more than a decade building a career around those connections. In 2025 alone, she recorded \$11.5 million in sales volume. Yet some of the most meaningful measures of her success can’t be found on a sales report.

“I love my client friends,” Darlene says. In fact, those relationships have become so close that she has served as a witness at two clients’ weddings during the past two years.

Coming Home to Wilmington

Born in Belhaven, North Carolina, Darlene moved to Wilmington when she was 6 and considers the area home. She graduated from New Hanover High School before attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, earning her bachelor’s degree in 1983.

Her first career took her into healthcare and pharmaceuticals, where she worked as an oncology sales account manager and later as a marketing director.

Although the industry was different, the desire behind her work was remarkably similar to what drives her today.

“I truly have always wanted to help others in any way I can,” she says.

Real estate provided a new avenue for doing exactly that.

Darlene received her license in 2015 and initially worked part time, primarily representing buyers. She quickly discovered how much she enjoyed the process of matching people with properties.

“It was such fun to find the perfect property for clients,” she remembers.

After relocating back to the Wilmington area, Darlene left her marketing career and committed to real estate full time. She has been with Living Seaside Realty Group since 2018.

Going Beyond the Listing

Today, Darlene works as a solo agent and represents both buyers and sellers. There may be no such thing as a typical day.

“I start early and work late,” she says with a laugh.

Her favorite activities include meeting new people, preparing homes for the market and embarking on the hunt for what a buyer considers the perfect home.

Her Wilmington roots give her an important advantage. Having grown up in the area, Darlene brings firsthand familiarity with the community to her clients. She also points to availability, consistent follow-up and strong negotiating skills as important parts of her approach.





mother to raise the two children. As both a mother and schoolteacher, she demonstrated qualities Darlene would carry into adulthood.

“I learned hard work, the importance of an education and kindness from watching her,” Darlene says.

That spirit of caring for others can also be seen in the causes she supports, including St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, Tunnel to Towers Foundation, St. John Church, Samaritan’s Purse, Good Shepherd Center, Easterseals, Pender County Animal Shelter and Food Bank of North Carolina.

“

**I truly have
always
wanted to
help others
in any way
I can.”**

Family, Laughter and Life at Home

Away from real estate, family remains at the center of Darlene’s world. She and her husband, David, have two sons, Charlton and Kennon. Both graduated from UNCW and now live and work in Wilmington.

The family also includes Holly, a rescue dog, and Bayley, a Goldendoodle.

When she isn’t working, Darlene enjoys reading, crafts, knitting, walking and spending time with friends. Her bookshelf frequently features authors such as Freida McFadden, Kristin Hannah and Elin Hilderbrand. And when it comes to music, there is little question about her preference: she loves country music.

For sellers, one of the biggest game changers in her business has been incorporating staging and repair project management into her listing services.

Rather than simply placing a property on the market, Darlene helps clients work through what may need to happen first to position their home effectively. That additional involvement requires time, organization and attention to detail, but it reflects the level of service she wants clients to experience.

Referrals have become another important component of her success, demonstrating the lasting value of relationships established through previous transactions.

Lessons From Mom

The person Darlene most admires is her mother, whose example continues to influence both her life and career.

Darlene’s father died when she and her brother were young, leaving her



“
If you love real estate and people, you will be successful.
Just remember to work hard.”

A Career Built Around People

Ask Darlene what success means and her answer reveals a great deal about her priorities. It means having happy children, a happy husband and mother, good friends—and happy clients.

For agents hoping to build their own successful careers, she believes the formula doesn’t need to be complicated.

“If you love real estate and people, you will be successful,” she says. “Just remember to work hard.”

After 11 years in the business, Darlene still finds genuine excitement in discovering the right property, preparing a listing and meeting someone new. Her healthcare, sales and marketing background provided valuable professional skills, but her career ultimately reflects something much more personal.

If there is one thing she hopes people understand about her, it is that she genuinely enjoys being around them.

And chances are, when Darlene is there, there will be plenty of laughter too.

“I love to be around people,” she says, “and I laugh a lot.”

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Adam SINK

Building
Together



PHOTOS BY: T.J. DRECHSEL
WRITTEN BY: DAVE DANIELSON

For **ADAM SINK**, success in real estate has never been about simply getting bigger. It is about getting better—better service for clients, better opportunities for agents, and a better way of doing business.



That philosophy is helping shape the next chapter of Coastal Realty Associates. Since acquiring the independent brokerage in 2025, Adam has focused on building the kind of brokerage today's agents are looking for, one that combines innovative marketing, collaborative leadership, meaningful relationships, and an unwavering commitment to exceptional client service.

"Coastal Realty Associates isn't trying to be the biggest brokerage," he says. "We're focused on being one of the best, by investing in our agents and delivering exceptional service."

Built for Leadership

A North Carolina native, Adam has always considered the coast home. After earning a degree in Chemistry from East Carolina University, he discovered a profession that was a natural fit for his analytical mindset and passion for helping people make confident

decisions during some of life's most important moments.

He entered the real estate industry in 2012, drawn by the combination of problem-solving, relationship-building, and the opportunity to help clients navigate complex decisions with confidence.

"I was drawn to real estate because every client and every situation is different," Adam says. "I enjoy solving challenges, finding creative solutions, and developing thoughtful approaches that help clients make confident decisions and achieve the outcomes they're looking for."

He credits much of his approach to being analytical and a willingness to challenge conventional thinking. Whether developing marketing strategies, coaching agents, or advising clients, he's always looking for a better way to achieve the best possible outcome.

Over the next decade, he built a successful real estate business while earning a reputation for thoughtful strategy, strong negotiation, and innovative marketing. As his business continued to grow, he found that helping other agents improve their businesses became just as rewarding as growing his own. In 2023, he formed his own real estate team.

As the team grew, he discovered that one of the most rewarding parts of leadership wasn't increasing production. It was helping other agents build confidence, sharpen their skills, and achieve goals they hadn't thought possible.

When the opportunity to purchase Coastal Realty Associates presented itself in 2025, it felt like a natural next step. It offered the chance to build the kind of brokerage he believed agents were looking for: independent, collaborative, innovative, and deeply

focused on serving both clients and agents well.

“It was an opportunity to build something special,” he says. “I saw the chance to create the kind of brokerage I always wanted to be part of.”

Creating a Different Kind of Brokerage

Adam had a clear vision. He wanted to create an environment offering agents hands-on leadership and sophisticated, modern marketing without the layers of bureaucracy often associated with larger organizations.

As Owner and Broker-in-Charge, Adam remains deeply involved. His responsibilities include overseeing brokerage operations, coaching and recruiting agents, developing marketing strategies, negotiating transactions, and continuing to personally serve clients.

That accessibility helps define Coastal’s culture.

“Collaborative, professional, and client-first” is how Adam describes the organization.

Monthly meetings focus on meaningful initiatives rather than simply generating enthusiasm. Coaching happens in real time, including working alongside agents on active transactions. And instead of fostering internal competition, Adam encourages agents to exchange ideas and help one another succeed.

His recruiting philosophy reflects that same approach.

“I recruit for character before production,” Adam says. “Skills can



be developed, but integrity, work ethic, and a willingness to learn are much harder to teach. Give me an agent willing to put in the work and I can teach them how to be very successful.”

Reputation Is Everything

Coastal Realty Associates operates around four fundamental values: putting clients first, operating with integrity, embracing innovation, and developing lasting relationships through exceptional service.

For Adam, those aren’t simply words for a wall or website. They are standards that have to be demonstrated transaction after transaction. “Reputation is everything,” he says. “Every client interaction, every transaction, and every promise kept adds to the long term trust in both our brokerage and our agents individually.”

That means educating rather than simply promoting. Adam wants clients to receive genuine market knowledge that helps them make informed decisions—not information designed merely to move them toward a transaction.

He also recognizes that the way consumers choose real estate professionals is changing rapidly.

Artificial intelligence, digital marketing, and new technologies are transforming how consumers search for properties and connect with agents. Adam embraces those tools but believes technology makes the human side of real estate even more important.

“Relationships and local knowledge remain irreplaceable,” he says. “If anything, they matter more as everyone’s marketing starts to look the same.”

Independent by Design

Adam believes independence gives Coastal Realty Associates a significant advantage. Decisions can be made quickly, strategies can change with the market, and new technologies can be implemented without waiting for direction from a distant corporate office.

The combination of high-level marketing, local expertise, personalized service, and accessible leadership is central to what Adam believes makes Coastal different.

“EVERY CLIENT INTERACTION, EVERY TRANSACTION, AND EVERY PROMISE KEPT adds to the long term trust in both our brokerage and our agents individually.”





“HELPING AGENTS SUCCEED
in this industry and build the lifestyle
they’ve always wanted is the biggest
win for me.”

When he’s not working, Adam enjoys sharing the coastal lifestyle with his family. Whether they’re out on the boat, golfing, fishing, exploring local restaurants, or spending time at many of the places that make coastal North Carolina special, those moments provide an opportunity to relax, recharge, and stay connected to the community they proudly call home.

Being actively involved in the community is something Adam values deeply. He believes understanding the people, neighborhoods, and businesses that make the area unique not only enriches his family’s life, but also helps him better serve the clients and agents who trust him. Those priorities shape Adam’s definition of success. While growing Coastal Realty Associates is an important goal, he measures success just as much by the opportunities he creates for others and the positive impact he can have on clients, agents, and the community.

Those priorities also influence Sink’s definition of professional success. He sees success as creating opportunities for others while building a company that positively impacts clients, agents, and the community.

“Helping agents succeed in this industry and build the lifestyle they’ve always wanted is the biggest win for me.”

Ultimately, Adam hopes his legacy is straightforward: doing the right thing, treating people well, going above and beyond, and helping others accomplish more than they believed possible. It is also the foundation of his vision for Coastal Realty Associates.

“I believe independent brokerages can compete at the highest level by embracing innovation while never losing sight of relationships.”

His immediate goal is sustainable growth: recruiting quality agents who want to elevate their businesses, continuing to improve marketing for clients, and establishing Coastal Realty Associates as one of coastal North Carolina’s premier independent brokerages.

Adam’s leadership philosophy, however, isn’t based on having every answer.

“Leadership isn’t about having all the answers,” he says. “It’s about creating an environment where people have the

tools, confidence, and accountability to perform at their best.”

Building Something Meaningful

Away from real estate, family remains at the center of Adam’s life. He and his wife, Kristen, have been married for 10 years, and their nearly 5-year-old son, Parker, is both his greatest source of joy and a daily reminder of what truly matters.

“He’s a good reminder of why building something meaningful matters,” Adam says.

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