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OCTOBER 2026

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Coldwell Banker Alfonso Realty

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MARTHA FORD

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More Than a Magazine

A COMMUNITY WORTH SUPPORTING



BY ROBERT ORSO, PUBLISHER

If your business depends on relationships with Realtors, there is one question worth asking: **Are you building relationships with the Realtors who are actually doing the most business?**

That is exactly why *Gulf Coast Real Producers* exists.

Each month, we celebrate, connect, and promote the top-producing real estate professionals throughout the Mississippi Gulf Coast. These are the agents and brokers who are helping hundreds of families buy and sell homes, recommending businesses to their clients, and influencing where millions of dollars are spent throughout our local economy.

But Real Producers is much more than a magazine.

At the heart of our platform is a simple idea: **Real Estate is Relationships.**

Our high-quality monthly print magazine is created exclusively for the top-producing Realtors in our market. Rather than filling the pages with generic real estate content, we tell the stories of the people behind the production. We feature successful agents, Rising Stars, Brokers in Charge, teams, and the businesses that serve and support this community.

And Realtors love it.

Why? Because everything we do for them is **free**. There is no subscription

fee, no membership fee, and Realtors never pay to be featured. In fact, one of the greatest strengths of Real Producers is that agents want to be featured. Those who have been featured are proud to share their stories, while many who haven't been featured yet hope their opportunity is coming.

That creates something extremely valuable for our Preferred Partners: **engagement and goodwill.**

Our reach also extends far beyond the printed page. Every issue is available digitally and promoted through **Facebook and Instagram**, as well as on our **Gulf Coast Real Producers website**. Our digital newsletter expands that reach even further, putting our content in front of thousands of Realtors throughout the Gulf Coast market.

But even that is only part of the story.

Every month, we host our **Magazine Reveal & Celebration Parties**, bringing featured Realtors, top producers, and Preferred Partners together face-to-face. Throughout the year, we also host larger networking and social events designed to create connections and strengthen relationships.

We continually promote our Realtors and Preferred Partners through social media, digital content, events, and personal introductions. The result is not a one-time advertisement. It is an ongoing opportunity to become part of a community.

That distinction matters.

Businesses can advertise almost anywhere. But advertising alone doesn't necessarily create trust or relationships. *Gulf Coast Real Producers* gives businesses the opportunity to **support something Realtors genuinely value while building relationships with the very people they want to do business with.**

Our Preferred Partners make everything we do possible. Their support allows us to provide the magazine, digital exposure, social media promotion, events, celebrations, and recognition to Realtors at no cost.

In return, our goal is to help those businesses become **known, trusted, and connected** within the top-producing Realtor community.

If Realtors are an important part of your business growth strategy, I invite you to learn more about becoming a **Gulf Coast Real Producers Preferred Partner.**

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Martha Ford

FORD REALTY, INC.

Real Estate Is In Her Blood

For Martha “Marty” Ford, real estate isn’t simply a profession she chose. It’s a family legacy she was born into, a business she has spent more than four decades building upon, and, by her own admission, something that never really leaves you.

“I feel like, in real estate, you never retire,” Martha says. “It gets in your blood, and it’s just part of your life. I’m always thinking about the next adventure.”

As broker and owner of Ford Realty, Inc. in Picayune, Martha represents the third generation of a family business with an extraordinary 77-year history. Through decades of changing markets, evolving technology, and countless transactions, one principle has remained remarkably simple: treat people well.

Three Generations of Real Estate

Born and raised in Picayune, Martha graduated from Picayune Memorial High School in 1981 and attended Mississippi State University the following year. Before beginning her sales career, she worked as an appraiser for Home Land Title in Jackson and later transferred to its Hattiesburg location.

But real estate was already familiar territory.

“I grew up in real estate; it was the family business,” she says.

Martha became a licensed real estate agent in 1984 and has been with Ford Realty ever since. Over the years, she continued adding to her professional expertise, becoming a licensed appraiser in 1995 and earning her Certified Manager of Community Associations designation in 1997, followed by GRI and CRS designations in 1998 and SFR in 2010. In 2012, she earned her real estate broker’s license.

Today, she operates Ford Realty as a solo broker and owner, carrying forward a name that has been associated with local real estate for nearly eight decades.

“Our longevity has allowed for knowledge to be passed through the generations,” Martha says.

That institutional knowledge is difficult to replicate. Markets rise and fall.



Technology changes the way homes are marketed, and transactions are managed. But decades of experience create an understanding of properties, people, and the community that only time can provide.

Still Loving the Work

More than 40 years after becoming an agent, Martha continues to produce at an impressive level. In 2025, she completed 31 sales totaling more than \$8.36 million in volume.





What keeps her motivated after so many years isn't a number on a sales report. It's the people behind each transaction.

"Each day, I look forward to seeing and meeting new people from all walks of life," she says.

Her favorite part of the business remains helping match people with the right property and sharing in their excitement when everything comes together.

That's also why Martha believes every client deserves the same level of care, regardless of the size or price of the transaction.

"Treat all clients equally, no matter what they are buying or selling," she says. "Respect everyone equally; it will come back ten-fold."

It's a philosophy that has helped sustain not only Martha's career, but a family business across three generations.

Experience Earned Over Time

A career spanning four decades has also taught Martha that success in real estate rarely comes without sacrifice.

The profession's unpredictable schedule can make balancing work with family and personal commitments challenging. Real estate doesn't always respect evenings, weekends, or carefully made plans.

Yet Martha believes the rewards ultimately outweigh those challenges.

Her advice to agents building their own careers reflects the same straightforward approach she brings to her business.

"Treat others like you would like to be treated," she says. "You will encounter bumps in the road that you will have to overcome, but at the end of the day, the accomplishments will outweigh the obstacles."

For Martha, success itself is equally uncomplicated: enjoying what she does for a living while still making time for family and friends.

Beyond the Brokerage

Martha's commitment to her community extends beyond real estate. She co-founded Animal Advocates of Pearl River County and currently serves on the Professional Standards Committee of the Mississippi Real Estate Commission, as well as on the Advisory Panel for Keesler Federal Credit Union.

When she isn't working, Martha enjoys traveling, attending concerts, trying new restaurants, and deep-sea fishing. She also has a longtime love of antique cars—an interest that eventually led her to purchase a few of her own.

Then there are Kiki and Koko, her pets, who Martha readily admits "pretty much RULE!"

Treat all clients equally, no matter what they are buying or selling.

**Respect everyone equally;
it will come back ten-fold."**





That ability to enjoy life outside the office is an important part of the success she has worked to create. Looking ahead, she plans to continue investing in real estate and expanding her portfolio with an eye toward creating long-term security for her family.

Professionally, she remains equally committed to providing clients with the best experience possible and keeping the Ford name synonymous with successful, family-owned real estate.

A Legacy Still Being Written

Seventy-seven years is an uncommon milestone for any business. Three generations carrying the same family name through those years makes the story even more meaningful.

Martha understands the responsibility that comes with that history, but she

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the accomplishments will outweigh the obstacles.”

isn't simply preserving what previous generations built. She's continuing it.

More than 40 years into her own career, the excitement of meeting someone new, finding the right property, and wondering what opportunity might come next is still there.

Perhaps that's the clearest explanation for Ford Realty's longevity. For Martha, real estate was never merely a job to begin with.

It was family. It became a career. And somewhere along the way, it became part of who she is.

After all, some things simply get in your blood. 🏡

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OPENING DOORS TO THE AMERICAN DREAM

For Mariela Goodman, the American Dream is both personal and professional.

She has lived it herself as an immigrant from Peru who built a life, family, and successful career in the United States. And for more than two decades, she has helped others pursue a piece of that same dream through homeownership.

Today, Mariela is a Top Agent with Coldwell Banker Alfonso Realty in Ocean Springs, where she serves on the company’s Advisory Council. In 2025, she closed more than \$10 million in sales volume across 54.5 transactions.

Yet the accomplishment that fills her heart most isn’t measured in dollars.

“Success is to be able to go to bed every night knowing you are making a difference in people’s lives,” she says.

A New Life, A New Opportunity
Born and raised in Peru, Mariela is the daughter of a Peruvian Air Force officer and a homemaker. She studied Business Administration at the University of Piura before her father’s career brought the family to the United States. He was sent to Miami on a diplomatic assignment as Chief of the Peruvian Air Force logistics office, beginning a new chapter for the entire family.

Mariela’s early dream was to become an architect, and she always loved designing and decorating homes. Eventually, those interests drew her toward real estate.

Before earning her license in 2003, she worked in the casino industry and for the U.S. Postal Service. When she entered real estate, she quickly recognized an opportunity to serve a population that was largely being overlooked.



There were few, if any, Spanish-speaking REALTORS® in her market focused on helping the Hispanic community. The need became especially apparent following Hurricane Katrina.

Mariela stepped in.
For years, she became a trusted real estate resource for Hispanic families along the Gulf Coast, combining fluency



in Spanish with an understanding of both cultures.

“I think I opened the doors for many other Hispanic agents,” she says. “Many of them were my clients and now they are successful REALTORS®, and that makes me happy.”

Generations of Homeownership

More than 20 years later, first-time homebuyers remain Mariela’s greatest professional passion. She also works extensively with investors, including builders and property flippers.

But something particularly meaningful has begun happening as her career has matured: the children are coming back.

These are young adults who remember Mariela helping their parents purchase homes when they themselves were still in school. Now they’re ready to become homeowners, too—and they are turning to the same REALTOR® their families trusted years ago.

“Helping them become homeowners makes my heart full,” she says.

For Mariela, those relationships embody what a career in real estate can become when it is built for the long term.

Her clients return. They refer their friends and families. And in a profession filled with talented choices, that

continued trust is something she never takes for granted.

Excellence With Impact

Mariela’s production has earned significant recognition throughout her career. She has received annual awards from local REALTOR® associations, including Sapphire and Emerald recognition, as well as Round Table and Multi-Million Dollar honors through GCAR and BOSAR.

She also ranks among the top 1% of Coldwell Banker REALTORS® in Mississippi and the top 2% nationally for units sold.

One distinction, however, is especially notable: Mariela has been named to the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals’ NAHREP Top 250 for 13 consecutive years—an achievement she says makes her the only Mississippi agent to reach that milestone.

For Mariela, however, recognition follows the work rather than defines it.

Her advice to newer agents is not to enter the profession simply for financial gain.

“Do it to make an impact in people’s lives,” she says. “Always disclose, and treat every client the same way, whether it’s a \$100,000 buyer or seller or a \$1 million one.”

Her own guiding philosophy is similarly straightforward: “Work with passion, honesty and diligently, and success will follow.”

Living the Dream

Mariela has been married to her husband, Roy, for 24 years. Together, they have three children: Leslie, 22; Leanne, 20; and Alex, 19. Her extended family also includes stepson Michael, daughter-in-law Brittany, and 7-year-old granddaughter Michaela, along with dogs Sasha and Wolfie and a “grand-dog,” Pilot.

Travel is one of the family’s greatest passions. Their adventures have taken them around the world, including Japan,



“WORK WITH
PASSION,
HONESTY &
DILIGENTLY, &
SUCCESS WILL
FOLLOW.”

Egypt, Iceland, Spain, Germany, and Jamaica, to name a few—with more bucket-list destinations still waiting.

Closer to home, Mariela enjoys music, time with friends, community events, and attending Spanish Mass at St. Alphonsus.

And despite more than two decades in real estate, retirement isn’t something she is eager to contemplate.



"I love what I do and see myself doing it until I am very, very old," she says.

Keep the Door Open

Mariela's story began thousands of miles from the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Today, she has built a career here helping others create security, opportunity, and a sense of belonging through homeownership.

She has witnessed market highs and lows, helped families through first purchases and later generations through



**"I LOVE WHAT I DO
AND SEE MYSELF
DOING IT UNTIL I
AM VERY, VERY OLD."**

their own, and watched members of the Hispanic community she once served as clients become successful real estate professionals themselves.

It is a legacy built one open door at a time.

"I am an immigrant who is living the dream of helping others with the American Dream," Mariela says.

And she hopes her story encourages others to pursue their own possibilities while they have the chance.

"Follow your dreams," she says. "Always try something new because time is a thief and opportunities come and go in the blink of an eye." ❏

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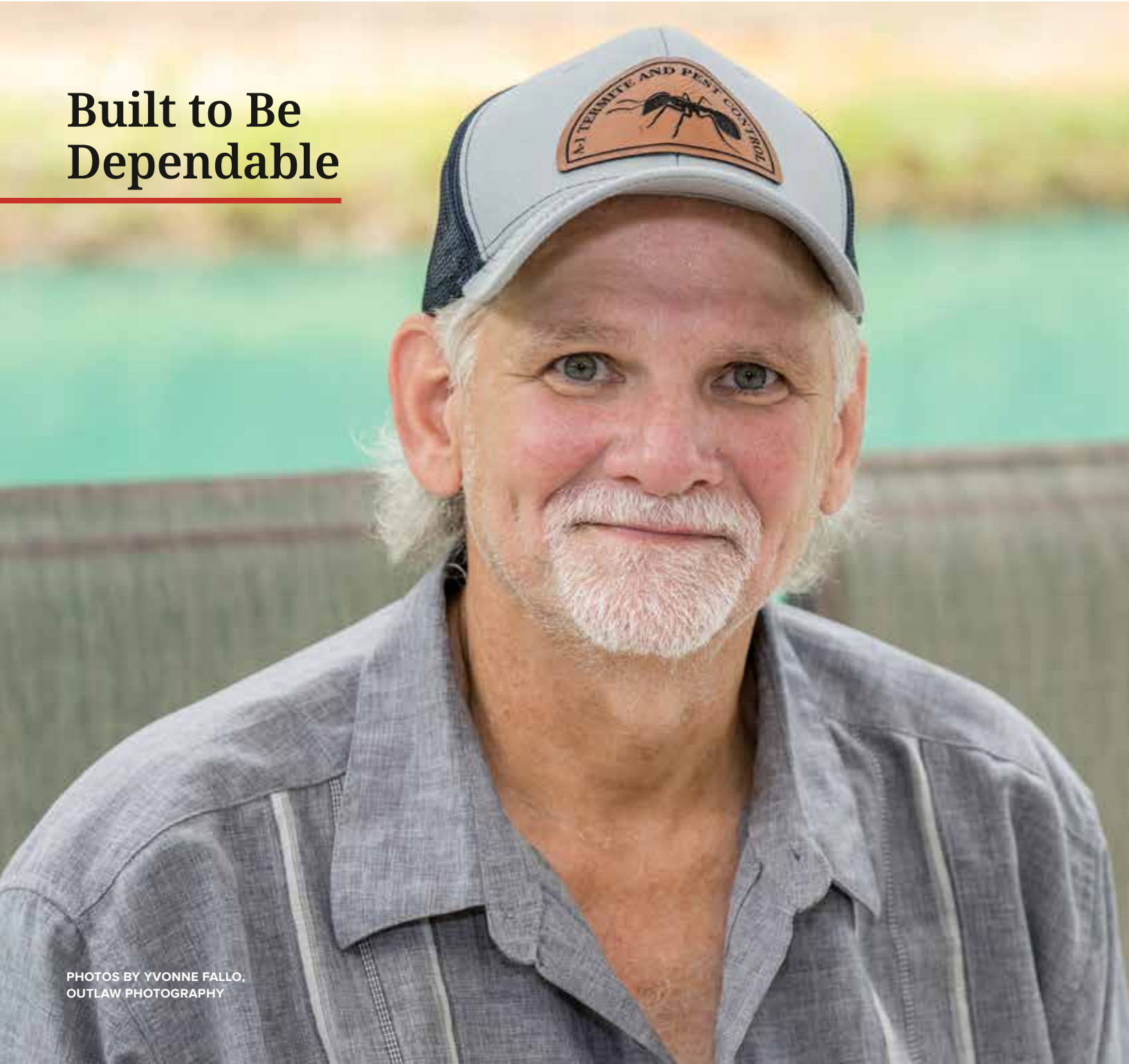
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Leroy Rushton & Ashley Holifield

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In a real estate transaction, some of the most important work happens behind the scenes.

When a termite inspection is needed, a report must reach the closing table, or an unexpected pest issue threatens to slow things down, REALTORS® need partners who understand that timing isn’t optional.

At A-1 Termite and Pest Control, owner Leroy Rushton and Office Manager and Senior Field Technician Ashley Holifield have built their approach around a

simple promise: communicate clearly, show up when they say they will, and get the job done.

“If a realtor has had another person or company fall through, we do everything we can to step in, show up, and get the job done,” Ashley says.

More Than Two Decades of Service
Leroy’s career in pest control began in Mississippi in 1998. After working as a technician for another pest control company for eight years, he ventured out to build A-1 Termite and Pest Control.

What began as a small operation serving just four counties has grown substantially over the years. Today, A-1 serves approximately 10 counties, providing commercial and residential pest control and termite services.

That growth hasn’t come without challenges. Leroy recalls Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 as two significant tests for the company. But each time, A-1 kept moving forward. More than two decades into the journey, he remains grateful for the customers, communities,



“We treat every customer with respect, communicate clearly, and stand behind the quality of our work. Our goal is to be a trusted partner you can count on.”

As Senior Field Technician, Ashley performs pre-treatments, post-treatments, pest control services, termite bond renewals, and Wood Destroying Insect Reports, or WDIRs. She also helps train new technicians.

Her preparation has been equally hands-on. Ashley spent four years learning the administrative side of the company while training extensively in the field to become licensed. Continuing education, seminars, and conferences remain part of the job as she stays current with industry practices and requirements.

Looking ahead, Ashley hopes to take everything she’s learned and eventually

use it to take over A-1 or build a business of her own.

Keeping Closings Moving

For REALTORS®, A-1 provides WDIRs along with termite treatment and prevention, pest control, and other services for residential and commercial properties. Leroy’s services also include rodent and animal control and reptile removal.

Both Leroy and Ashley emphasize the same qualities when discussing their relationships with real estate professionals: responsiveness, honesty, communication, and dependability.

A-1 works to provide quick turnaround times on inspections, treatments, reports, and other necessary documentation without sacrificing quality. Ashley says the company is upfront about pricing and timelines, while Leroy stresses the importance of understanding that delays can have consequences far beyond the inspection itself.



“We understand that timing is critical,” Leroy explains in his questionnaire.

The goal is to address issues early, provide necessary documentation promptly, and help prevent an unexpected pest concern from complicating a closing.

Relationships Behind the Service

For Ashley, the people themselves are one of the best parts of the work.

“What motivates me most is meeting and getting to know the people we serve,” she says.

She believes taking time to listen and understand someone’s concerns creates a personal connection and ultimately leads to better service.

Leroy expresses a similar philosophy. Knowing REALTORS® and customers trust him with their pest control needs motivates him to provide value with honesty, self-discipline, and dependability.

That commitment extends into the community. A-1 sponsors local school ball teams and supports the Mississippi Gulf Coast Corvette Club’s annual car show, which raises money for local charities. The company also offers discounts to seniors, military members, and churches.

Family, Home and What Comes Next

Outside work, Ashley’s world revolves around her three daughters, Carlie, Areianna, and Ivy. Originally from Lucedale, she moved to Pascagoula for

work and stayed, creating a home her daughters love as well.

“For me, home is wherever they are,” she says.

Together, they enjoy mud riding, boating on the river, crawfish boils, BBQs, movie nights, and game nights.

Leroy is equally family-oriented. He and his wife, Kellye, have been married for 30 years and have twins, Jonathan and Paige, and five grandchildren. They spend their free time on a small Jackson County farm, where life includes peacocks, chickens, ducks, pheasants, a catfish pond, and George—a 150-pound tortoise.



Professionally, Leroy’s goal is straightforward: continue providing exceptional service to customers, REALTORS®, and the community until retirement.

After decades in the industry, he knows exactly what he wants A-1’s reputation to represent.

“We treat every customer with respect, communicate clearly, and stand behind the quality of our work,” he says. “Our goal is to be a trusted partner you can count on.”

For Leroy and Ashley, that’s what dependable service ultimately comes down to—not simply completing an inspection or eliminating a pest, but becoming the people clients and REALTORS® know will answer the call when they’re needed most. 📌

CONTACT US!

Contact A-1 Termite and Pest Control
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Ashley Hollifield | Office Manager & Senior Field Technician
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Mary HANKINS

Epique Realty

BETTING ON HERSELF

When Mary Hankins entered real estate in February 2025, she wasn't looking for an easy career. In fact, part of the appeal was knowing it wouldn't be easy at all.

She wanted a challenge. She wanted an opportunity to grow. And, perhaps most importantly, she wanted to discover what could happen if she truly bet on herself.

The answer came quickly.

During her first year in real estate, Mary closed 16 transactions totaling more than \$3.6 million in sales volume. She earned Epique Realty's \$3 Million+ Sales Volume Award, Breakthrough Agent of the Year and Social Media Standout awards, among other honors, and ranked #9 in Mississippi by units sold. More recently, she reached another milestone by capping at Epique Realty, allowing her to earn 100% commission through February 2027.

Yet for Mary, the most meaningful part isn't found in any award or sales figure.

"The most rewarding part of my business has been seeing what I was capable of when I finally bet on myself," she says.

From Ink to Real Estate

Mary's entrepreneurial story began long before she earned her real estate license.

A lifelong Mississippi Gulf Coast resident, she spent 12 years as a professional tattoo artist and still owns Raven and Rose Tattoo in Biloxi. Although she no longer tattoos, those years taught her invaluable lessons about entrepreneurship, serving people, building relationships, and creating a business through real-world experience.



When Mary decided to pursue real estate, she brought that same work ethic with her.

"I knew there was money to be made, but more than that, I knew it would take hard work, consistency, and a willingness to keep growing," she says. "I wanted to prove to myself that I could build something meaningful and successful."

Life had already taught Mary plenty about perseverance. Rather than allowing previous challenges to hold her back, she entered real estate believing she had already developed the grit necessary to face whatever came next.

That mindset transformed obstacles into opportunities to learn.

Creating Her Own Market

Today, Mary is a solo agent with Epique Realty in Gulfport, but her influence already extends beyond her own production. She mentors approximately 11 agents and has completed the brokerage's area leader program with hopes of stepping into that leadership position in the future.

Helping buyers and sellers remains her first passion, but Mary has discovered another purpose in helping fellow agents recognize their own potential.

She enjoys introducing REALTORS® to the opportunities she has found at Epique and watching newer agents grow in confidence and build businesses of their own.

Her advice to those agents? Ignore the noise.

“People will tell you, ‘There are too many REALTORS®,’ or ‘The market is terrible.’ I simply don’t believe that,” Mary says. “You create your own market.”

She encourages agents to show up consistently, build genuine relationships, remain coachable, and resist the temptation to compare themselves to everyone around them.

“Be authentic. Be different. Don’t be afraid to stand out. The things that make you different are often the very things that attract the right clients to you.”

And yes, Mary knows being different comes naturally when you’re the REALTOR® with the tattoos.

But while her appearance may make her memorable, she hopes something deeper leaves the lasting impression.



Joy, Peace and Positivity

Mary describes joy, peace, and kindness as guiding principles in both her life and business.

Real estate can become stressful quickly. When it does, she wants to be the person who remains steady, positive, responsive, and firmly in her client’s corner.

“And yes... I answer the phone,” she says. “It sounds simple, but being available and responsive is something I take seriously.”

Her goal is for clients to know they have an advocate who will work hard, communicate honestly, and put their interests first.

The same generosity extends to other agents. Mary believes there is enough success to go around and makes a point to encourage and celebrate others rather than viewing every colleague as competition.

That’s also reflected in how she defines success.

“I define success by the impact I leave on others, not just the numbers,” she says.

Home Is Her Happy Place

For someone who spends her professional life helping others with



“I define success by the impact I leave on others, not just the numbers.”



Ghost, Roscoe, and Cletus—two cats, Psycho and Athena, and miniature donkeys Ethel and Beulah.

Mary suspects the farm's population isn't finished growing.

When she's not working, she's happiest

homes, it's fitting that Mary's own favorite place is exactly that: home.

She and her husband, Josh, have been together for 17 years and are building their dream property and "little farm." Their blended family includes sons Barry and Dominic; bonus children Cassandra, Rebecca, and JJ; and grandchildren Hazel, Axel, and Ace.

Being "Honey" to her grandchildren is one of Mary's greatest blessings.

Then there's the growing collection of animals: five dogs—Raven, Maggie,

there with her family and animals. She has also recently enjoyed Pokémon card vending with her boys, turning a longtime collecting hobby into a small family business.

Her faith is equally central to her life, and Mary is actively involved at New Life Family Church.

Dreams Big Enough to Be Scary

Mary's favorite saying is, "If your dreams don't scare you, they're not big enough."

Less than two years into real estate, she is already living evidence of what

can happen when someone embraces that philosophy.

Looking ahead, she wants to continue growing her business, serving more buyers and sellers, mentoring agents, and building a legacy centered on encouragement and opportunity. Personally, she looks forward to continuing to build the family property where generations can gather and make memories.

"I truly believe the best is yet to come," Mary says, "and I'm excited to see where God leads me next."

Whatever comes, Mary doesn't simply want to be remembered for how many houses she sold.

"I want to be remembered for the way I made people feel and the difference I made in their lives," she says. "If I can do that, then I've done my job." ■

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Q: WHO RECEIVES THIS MAGAZINE?

A: The top 300 agents in the Gulf Coast Area. We pulled the MLS numbers (by volume) from Jan. 1, 2022, through Dec. 31, 2022, in the MS Gulf Coast market. We cut the list off at number 300, and the distribution was born. For this year's list, the minimum production level for our group is \$5 million in 2022. The list will reset at the end of 2023 for next year and will continue to update annually.

Q: WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR BEING FEATURED IN THIS MAGAZINE?

A: The process is simple. Every feature you see has first been nominated. You can nominate REALTORS®, agents, affiliates, brokers, owners, or even yourself. Office leaders can also nominate real estate agents. We will consider anyone you bring to our attention because we don't know everyone's story, and we need your help to learn more.

A nomination currently looks like this: Email us at robert.orso@realproducersmag.com with the subject line "Nomination: (Name of Nominee)" and explain why you are nominating the individual. Maybe the person has an amazing story that we need to tell, or perhaps someone overcame extreme obstacles, is an exceptional leader, has the best customer service, or gives back to the community in a big way. The next step is an interview with us to ensure a good fit, and then we put the wheels in motion for our writer to conduct an interview and for our photographer to schedule a photo shoot.

Q: WHAT IS THE COST TO FEATURE A REALTOR®, AGENT, OR TEAM?

A: Zero, zilch, zippo, nada, nil. **The feature costs nothing**, my friends, so nominate away! We are not a pay-to-play model. We share real stories of Real Producers.

Q: WHO ARE THE PREFERRED PARTNERS?

A: Anyone listed as a preferred partner in the front of the magazine is a part of this community and will have an ad in every issue of the magazine, attend our quarterly events, and be a part of our online community. We don't just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. One or many of you have recommended every preferred partner you see in this publication. We won't even meet with a business that you have not vetted and stamped for approval, in a sense. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network for the REALTORS® and agents in the area and for the best affiliates so we can grow stronger together.

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A PREFERRED PARTNER?

A: If you have a recommendation for a local business that works with top real estate agents, please let us know. Send an email to robert.orso@realproducersmag.com.

FAQ

Welcome to *Real Producers!* Some of you may be wondering what this publication is all about, which is why we have created this FAQ page. Here, we will answer the most commonly asked questions from around the country regarding our program. My door is always open to discuss anything regarding this community — this publication is 100% designed to be your voice!

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