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Melissa  
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# MERITAGE HOMES FEATURED AGENT OF THE MONTH

## YARELI OROZCO

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Yareli started her real estate career in October 2024 with a passion for helping families achieve homeownership and creating a smooth, positive experience for every client she works with. In her first year alone, she sold just under \$9 million in real estate volume, earning recognition as the #2 Rookie at her brokerage.

*"As a first-generation Latina realtor, I take pride in guiding and educating my community through the home buying and selling process while building lasting relationships based on trust, communication, and dedication. I'm incredibly grateful for the support of my clients and I'm excited to continue growing and serving even more families in Arizona."*



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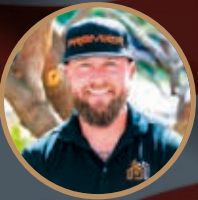
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SURPRISE

# *Melissa* TWITCHELL

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FINDING SOLUTIONS THROUGH NEW EXPERIENCES

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WRITTEN BY KENDRA WOODWARD  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAULSON PHOTOGRAPHIC



Melissa Twitchell has never been very good at sitting still. If there's a new skill to learn, a different way to serve her clients, or an unexpected opportunity hiding around the corner, chances are she's already exploring it. It's a curiosity for knowledge which has become one of the defining traits of her real estate career, allowing Melissa the ability to grow and learn with each new day while also helping her clients navigate one of the biggest decisions of their lives. *"You're always learning something and always growing, and being able to share those things with people is huge."*

Melissa was born in Flagstaff before her family moved to the Surprise area in 1996. Homeschooled through middle school, she grew up with a schedule that looked different than most kids her age, where volunteer work through her church, local food bank and frequent travel were the norm. Because of that lifestyle, Melissa learned how to be self-reliant from a young age and was often coming up with creative new ways to earn extra money for the things she wanted in life.

One memory still sticks with Melissa today, recalling a time when she wanted to attend Space Camp Aviation Challenge. She asked her mom if she could go and her mom promised she would get her there so long as Melissa could pay her own way. Whether she was baking, cleaning houses, or completing some other tasks, she always found a way to reach her goals. And while most might see those early hurdles as a detriment, looking back, Melissa credits those early experiences and having very little growing up for developing the work ethic that made her business successful.

By age 17, Melissa landed her first career with Wells Fargo while still in high school. She was truly dedicated to the role and enjoyed it very much, anticipating it to be her forever career. She enjoyed the day-to-day responsibilities that came with a career in banking, which even helped her in purchasing her first condo by age 19! As she continued to excel in the industry, Melissa eventually began working in the home equity and mortgage loss mitigation departments which provided unique perspective few real estate agents are privy to.

Despite her real estate interests always taking a backseat, Melissa took it as a sign when two friends suggested she'd make a great agent...in the same week. Having watched so many homeowners navigate the financial challenges of maintaining their property, she was

excited to learn a bit more about the industry from a new perspective. She put in vacation time to attend a nine-day real estate crash course and walked away certain she'd found her calling. "I knew that's what I wanted to do." Deciding to trust the timing of it all, Melissa immediately took vacation from the bank, and after attending school put in her notice and dove full speed ahead into real estate.

Licensed since 2018, Melissa continues to approach the industry with the same mindset that first drew her in. "I love the fact that as I grow in this career, you always learn something new. There's always a different experience and something you can take and make your own." That curiosity even led her to purchase a sewer inspection company in 2025, adding another resource for both her business and her clients. "That's what I love about real estate. Unique, weird opportunities are always being presented to you," she says with a laugh.

As those opportunities continue to grow, Melissa notes that she recently realized how proficient she's become in helping Arizona's 55+ residents even though it was never part of some grand business plan. And surprisingly, the volunteer work she did as a teenager has also unexpectedly come full circle as she continues to reconnect with many of those same neighborhoods now, years later. In fact, Melissa is even considering making one of those communities home herself in the next few years, giving her an even deeper understanding of the lifestyle many of her clients are seeking.

When it comes to the systems and processes that keep her business running smoothly, Melissa admits she's always been pretty savvy at utilizing social media and incorporating technology into her daily work flow. It's actually become one of her biggest advantages! Rather than tying herself to an office, Melissa has built a business that moves wherever she does and is able to pull up her notes on any client at



“

You don't need to be tied to a desk. I always thought of my car as my office and my phone as my desk. I use my cell phone for everything so that I'm able to stay on top of things constantly.”



the click of a button...or search bar. “You don't need to be tied to a desk. I always thought of my car as my office and my phone as my desk. I use my cell phone for everything so that I'm able to stay on top of things constantly.”

She's also quick to acknowledge that no successful business is built alone, crediting the knowledge she's gained from many different people throughout her career, while giving special recognition to her transaction coordinator, Heather Gallick. “She takes a lot of the mundane things off my plate

so I can be out there doing other things for my clients.”

Home life is every bit as full, too, as Melissa and her fiancé, Mike Siers, share a busy household with three children and three dogs. When she's not working, you'll likely find Melissa on the pickleball court or soaking up Arizona's sunshine by their backyard pool. Looking ahead, one of her biggest goals in life isn't centered around production numbers or closed transactions, but focuses more on the importance of building a legacy for her kids...if they

choose to take it. Purchasing a sewer inspection company in 2025 is part of that legacy.

With one son already involved in the sewer inspection business, Melissa hopes to get them involved with small tasks here and there, like creating content for social media and marketing, as an effort to get them a leg up if they choose to follow in her footsteps. And if they don't, that's okay, too, because Melissa believes every experience can teach you something new, but it's up to you to decide where you take it. ▀



# Brad McCaughey

*Renovating Your Business*

WRITTEN BY KENDRA WOODWARD  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GRAFOBOX MEDIA

Most people spend years searching for a business model they believe in, and once Brad McCaughey found the one that fit his industry experience, he immediately saw the possibilities.

After more than two decades in real estate investing, construction, and entrepreneurship, Brad recognized a recurring issue many agents encounter every day with their sellers; they want top dollar for their investment but aren't always sure which improvements are worth making. And in a market where buyers will walk away from a home simply because it has some cosmetic flaws and they can't visualize the finished project, it's up to people like Brad to ensure that vision comes to life.

It's a struggle agents face constantly in their effort to separate themselves in an industry which makes it difficult to stand out, so when Brad discovered Renovation Sells in 2023, he saw a solution that connected everything and made it possible for agents to get a leg up without putting anything down. "I feel like I've struck gold with a business model that truly provides value to agents," he says with a laugh.

But to understand how Brad came to this point, we need to take a step back and understand how his unique perspective on the industry was brewing long before he ever contemplated purchasing the North Phoenix franchise of Renovation Sells. Originally from Ann Arbor, Michigan, Brad spent his younger years chasing a hockey puck towards the University of Michigan before moving through the minor leagues and spending time playing overseas.

Hockey eventually brought him to Arizona in 1992 when he played for the Phoenix Roadrunners, introducing him to the Valley, his future wife Michelle, and the area he would soon consider home. The next few years found him playing and coaching professional roller and ice hockey, taking him and Michelle to California, Alaska, and then back to Arizona as head coach of the Phoenix Mustangs. By 1997, Brad decided Arizona was where he wanted to build his future, and a few years later, he entered real estate, earning his license in 2000 and his broker's license in 2003.

Numbers were a natural inclination for Brad so taking on investment properties and fix-and-flips was an ideal match, creating a niche organically from the start. At one point, he was managing three offices and roughly 120 agents total, while simultaneously gaining experience as a real estate investor, property manager and fixing and flipping. All this experience led to his knowledge in becoming a licensed, bonded, and insured general contractor through his company, AZ Rehab and Construction LLC. Looking back, every piece of his journey slowly prepared Brad for every chapter that followed.



Even when the market shifted and he stepped away from traditional real estate, Brad remained connected to the community through his lifelong passion for hockey as he began coaching youth hockey. The experience allowed him to give back to the sport that had shaped so much of his life and gave him time to reflect on his journey as he contemplated what his next chapter might look like. Years later, he stumbled across the Renovation Sells model and everything seemed to click into place.

What caught his attention wasn't simply the renovation side of the business; it was the invaluable support system behind it. Through the franchise, Brad gained access to a professional design team that analyzes market trends and creates design boards tailored to each project. Paint colors, lighting fixtures, countertops, flooring, and finishes are all selected with resale value in mind. Another key piece to the business model was access to multiple pay-at-close options, allowing the work to be done without the seller having to go into their pockets. So rather than spending years building that infrastructure from scratch, Brad could focus on what he enjoys most: building relationships with agents and helping them grow their businesses.

That agent-first mentality is woven throughout everything Renovation Sells does, with one of the company's specialties being its renovate-to-sell model where cosmetic updates are strategically chosen to maximize ROI before a property hits the market. With today's buyers increasingly drawn to move-



in-ready homes, Brad works alongside agents to identify improvements that make financial sense rather than simply spending money for the sake of renovation.

Having worked in the industry for over 25 years, Brad can anticipate the conversations his agents have to navigate and is able to ease the communication between them and their sellers. It not only helps the sellers get a better return on their investment, it also helps the agent strengthen their business by utilizing a marketing strategy many don't learn. Part of that process includes learning a home's "three values": the as-is value, cash value, and reno-to-sell value. By understanding all three, homeowners can make informed decisions based on their goals rather than assumptions.

The beauty in the Renovation Sells model, however, is that it extends well beyond sellers by helping buyers who are struggling to find a turnkey home within their budget, as well as homeowners looking to make upgrades that will be beneficial to their ROI down the line. The process also helps buyers understand the value in purchasing a home below market value and renovating strategically. This opens doors that might otherwise remain closed while also introducing buyers to a multitude of renovation financing, allowing them to wrap the renovations into their loan.

And the reason the model works so seamlessly is because of Brad's commitment to ensuring the renovation side of the process goes smoothly. In an industry often associated with missed deadlines, budget overruns, and inconsistent communication, Brad and Michelle focus on transparency, reliability, and delivering projects on time and on budget, thanks to a strong network of subcontractors who share their same standards and commitment to quality. While Brad focuses heavily on agent partnerships and renovation strategies designed to maximize value, Michelle often works directly with homeowners who are renovating spaces for personal enjoyment rather than resale, and together, they provide solutions for clients at every stage of homeownership.

As the business continues to grow, Brad remains dedicated to finding new ways to help his agent-partners grow through offering their clients more options through unique strategies like Reno to Sell, Reno to Buy, and Buy Before You Sell. He hosts a Monday morning Zoom meeting, "Coffee with Brad", where he shares his industry knowledge and expertise. He also wrote a book, *Renovate Your Business*, designed to help agents incorporate renovation services into their businesses and create additional opportunities for their clients.

Outside of work, Brad and Michelle are proud parents to three NAU Lumberjacks. They share their home with two dogs and enjoy traveling whenever business allows, whether that's returning to Michigan or spending time with Michelle's family here in Arizona. Brad still enjoys golfing, fishing, and the outdoors, though these days much of his energy is focused on growing his business. Because in Brad's world, the best opportunities are the ones where everybody wins. ▀

In an industry often associated with missed deadlines, budget overruns, and inconsistent communication, Brad and Michelle focus on transparency, reliability, and delivering projects on time and on budget, thanks to a strong network of subcontractors who share their same standards and commitment to quality.

# WHAT SHOULD YOUR SELLER FIX BEFORE LISTING?

BY BRAD MCCAUGHEY

One of the most common questions sellers ask their agents is also one of the hardest to answer:

“What should I fix before I put my home on the market?”

The answer usually isn’t everything.

After spending more than 25 years in real estate and now working as a general contractor, I’ve seen this question from both sides. One of the biggest mistakes sellers make is assuming that every improvement adds value. It doesn’t. The goal is to

identify the improvements that will have the greatest impact on how buyers see and experience the home.

Here are a few areas worth looking at before the listing goes live.

**Start with paint and lighting.**

These are often two of the simplest ways to change the feel of a home. Light, neutral paint can make rooms feel cleaner, brighter and larger. Good lighting can do the same. Sometimes changing a dated fixture or simply improving the quality and consistency of the lighting can make a surprising difference.

**Look at the kitchen through a buyer’s eyes.**

A full kitchen remodel may not be necessary. Dated countertops, worn cabinets or old hardware, however, can make the entire kitchen feel older than it is. Strategic improvements to the surfaces buyers notice first can have a much bigger impact than spending money on things they may never notice.

**Take care of the little things.**

Loose handrails, missing GFCI outlets, broken fixtures and other maintenance items may seem minor, but buyers often see them as evidence that a home hasn’t been well maintained. They can also become unnecessary issues during an inspection.

**Don’t overlook the first impression.**

Before buyers see the kitchen, bathrooms or flooring, they see the front of the house. Trimmed landscaping, fresh mulch and a clean, well-maintained entry can influence how buyers feel before they ever walk through the door.

Most importantly, don’t assume renovation automatically means a major project.

Sometimes a home needs significant updating to compete. Other times, a relatively small investment in the right areas is enough to completely change buyer perception.

That’s where good pre-listing strategy comes in.

Before recommending that a seller spend money, ask a different question:

**Will this improvement change how a buyer sees the home?**

If the answer is yes, it may be worth considering. If the answer is no, that money may be better left in the seller’s pocket.

Brad McCaughey is a licensed, bonded and insured general contractor and spent 25+ years in real estate as an agent and broker. He works with REALTORS®, teams, and brokerages in renovating to sell and buy. He has published two books, “Renovate Your Business” and “The Bridge Agent”, and owns Renovation Sells in North Phoenix.



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HOMES IN VICTORY AT VERRADO

# Laurie Mendoza

## WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

Some people build a career by following a carefully mapped plan, while others find themselves standing at the intersection of opportunity, persistence, and a few unexpected nudges from the people who know them best. For LAURIE MENDOZA, the path to becoming the owner and designated broker of Impresa Real Estate seems to have been shaped by both.

Even though Laurie now leads a boutique brokerage, starting her own business was never part of the plan. With a laugh, she admits that real estate was never really part of the plan either. However, she took encouragement from her husband, Phillip, who believed she had the ability to accomplish great things within the industry.

After moving to Arizona in 1996, Laurie helped grow the family construction business, gaining valuable experience that would later shape her career in real estate. Working behind the scenes, she discovered her strengths, learned to think bigger, and eventually took the leap into an industry that felt like a natural fit.

As an administrator for the construction company, Laurie developed first-hand knowledge of building materials, timelines, repairs, and communication between contractors and clients. She also saw how important trust and guidance were during major decisions, which inspired her to earn her real estate license.

In 2002, Laurie began her real estate journey part-time while raising two children with another on the way. Even after becoming licensed, she continued

balancing both careers until 2012, when she committed to real estate full time. Her construction background remains an important part of how she serves clients today. Her understanding of repairs, renovations, and costs helps buyers and sellers make informed decisions, whether they are preparing a home for inspection or considering a future project. It is practical knowledge that has become a defining part of her brand.

That hands on approach also explains why, despite serving as designated broker, she still spends plenty of time in the field. *"I'm hands-on, and I sell because I truly love it,"* she says. While many brokers step away from production as their brokerages grow, Laurie believes staying active keeps her connected to the market and better equipped to guide the agents she supports. Her attention to detail and strong sense of responsibility shape every decision she makes because protecting both her clients and her agents has always been at the heart of how she leads.

What truly excites Laurie about real estate is the variety each day brings. From distinctive homes and retirement properties to investment opportunities, commercial real estate,



land, and even selling mobile home parks, she embraces every opportunity to expand her knowledge. She thrives on learning new facets of the industry, navigating changing market cycles, and using evolving technology to better serve her clients.

Somewhere along the way, another title became part of her story when Laurie was crowned Mrs. Arizona America in 2014. The role gave her new opportunities to support women, children, and animals through local organizations while building meaningful connections within the Verrado community she loves. It also earned her the nickname AZ Queen of Real Estate. *“It was kind of funny at the time, but then it stuck,”* she laughs, explaining how the title naturally became part of her branding. Her love for animals also shows up in her business through Chloe, her beloved rescue dog and frequent marketing

sidekick, whom Laurie jokingly calls the secret sauce for selling homes.

Outside of real estate, Laurie’s favorite role is one that does not come with a license or title: being the matriarch of a family that genuinely enjoys spending time together. She and Phillip recently celebrated 35 years of marriage, and their home has become what the family affectionately calls “home base.” Their son lives just a bike ride away, their oldest daughter’s house is visible from their front door, and their youngest daughter just moved back home to continue her college education. Nearly every holiday, birthday, and family gathering somehow ends up back at Laurie’s house. With six grandchildren and one more on the way, their home is always filled with love, laughter, and just the right amount of chaos!

Laurie is also a signed model and actress with the FORD/Robert Black

Agency, appearing in everything from billboard campaigns and magazine covers to television commercials. Her work in the industry has taught her valuable lessons about marketing, rejection, adaptability, and confidence, all of which have strengthened her real estate career. Her two worlds recently came together when a California casting agency searching for a real estate professional discovered her through the hashtag [AZQueenOfRealEstate](#).

When Laurie carves out time for herself, she enjoys traveling in the RV, working out, practicing yoga, meditating, reading, and listening to podcasts. For her, the different parts of life have never truly existed separately. Her construction background, charitable work, modeling and acting career, family, brokerage, and the relationships she has built along the way have all shaped the woman and business owner she is today. 🍷



“  
I’M HANDS-  
ON, & I SELL  
BECAUSE I  
TRULY LOVE IT.”

# NOAH

## ARONSOHN

### Your Only Limit is the One You Set

Building a real estate career at 20 years old requires more than just ambition. It takes the confidence to walk into rooms where you're often the youngest person, the discipline to keep learning when others are relaxing, and a willingness to let your work speak louder than your age. And that's exactly the path Noah Aronsohn has chosen, proving that consistency and preparation can open doors long before most people ever expected.

WRITTEN BY KENDRA WOODWARD  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAULSON PHOTOGRAPHIC



Born in Long Beach, California, but raised in Phoenix, Noah grew up surrounded by a family that encouraged him to dream big while staying grounded. "I come from a supportive family that has always encouraged me to pursue my goals," he says, admitting that his sisters and mothers had a major influence on honing his manners while his mother's Swedish roots introduced him to different cultures through travel at an early age. Those experiences helped shape his perspective on the world and his career path, while his upbringing in Phoenix gave him something equally valuable: a genuine understanding of the communities he now serves. "I enjoy being part of a growing city and helping people find opportunities through homeownership."

Long before deciding that real estate was going to be the career path he followed, Noah was fascinated by finance, investing, and the way smart decisions could shape someone's future. His parents, Liz Aronsohn and Terrie Greshel, owned rental properties and often invited him to help, giving him an early glimpse into his future while teaching Noah lessons that still influence him today. That foundation eventually led him to Arizona State University, where he is currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Finance with a minor in Real Estate while simultaneously building his business as an agent with the Valle Home Group at West USA Realty since earning his license in 2025.

Admittedly balancing college and entrepreneurship hasn't always been easy, but Noah believes the two complement one another in a way many agents don't get to experience. "I have always been interested in finance, investing, and helping people achieve financial goals. Real estate combines all three and gives me the opportunity to make a meaningful impact on people's lives while building a business of my own." Thanks to his passion and education in finance, as well as the industry expertise he gleaned from his moms, Noah's ability to analyze market trends, investment opportunities, and affordability for clients has become

somewhat of a specialty for him. "It also allows me to explain the financial side of homeownership in a way that is easy to understand."

More than anything, Noah hopes his journey encourages other young professionals who may wonder if they're too young to succeed. "I want to show other young professionals that age is not a limitation if you are willing to work hard, stay disciplined, and continuously

learn," he says, crediting much of his own growth to intentionally surrounding himself with people who challenge him to become better and putting in the work...every single day. "I want readers to know that the success I have been able to achieve is due to surrounding myself with people who are where I want to be. If you are not confident in yourself then others will see it. Make goals that others think are impossible and do not be like others; you are yourself."



While Noah embraces professional photography, drone imagery, digital marketing, and social media like many of his colleagues, he believes his greatest responsibility to the client is helping them fully understand the decisions they're making. "I focus on educating my clients, advocating for their best interests, and maintaining clear communication throughout the process." From frequent open houses to detailed weekly feedback, he enjoys thinking creatively and finding solutions that other agents may overlook because, to him, informed clients become confident clients, and confident clients refer their friends and family.

Noah also credits his team leaders and mentors, Kevin Valle and Ryan Reed of the Valle Home Group, with accelerating his growth and helping him develop the skills needed to serve clients at a high level. Their guidance has reinforced a philosophy he carries into every day, that, "Success in real estate comes from consistency, not shortcuts." It's a reminder that every conversation, every showing, and every transaction is another opportunity to improve himself while helping someone else build long-term financial security.

Away from work and the classroom, Noah enjoys golfing, traveling,

discovering new restaurants, and spending time with family and friends. Even then, his curiosity rarely takes a day off as he admits he's constantly reading and learning about business, finance, investing, and real estate. Looking ahead, he plans to complete his degree, continue growing his business, and expand his investment knowledge in the coming year, but one goal stands above the rest: "I want to help a minimum of 100 families in the next five years." And for someone who believes the future belongs to those who are willing to keep learning, it feels less like a lofty ambition and more like the next milestone already in motion. ▀



**“Success in real estate comes from consistency, not shortcuts.”**



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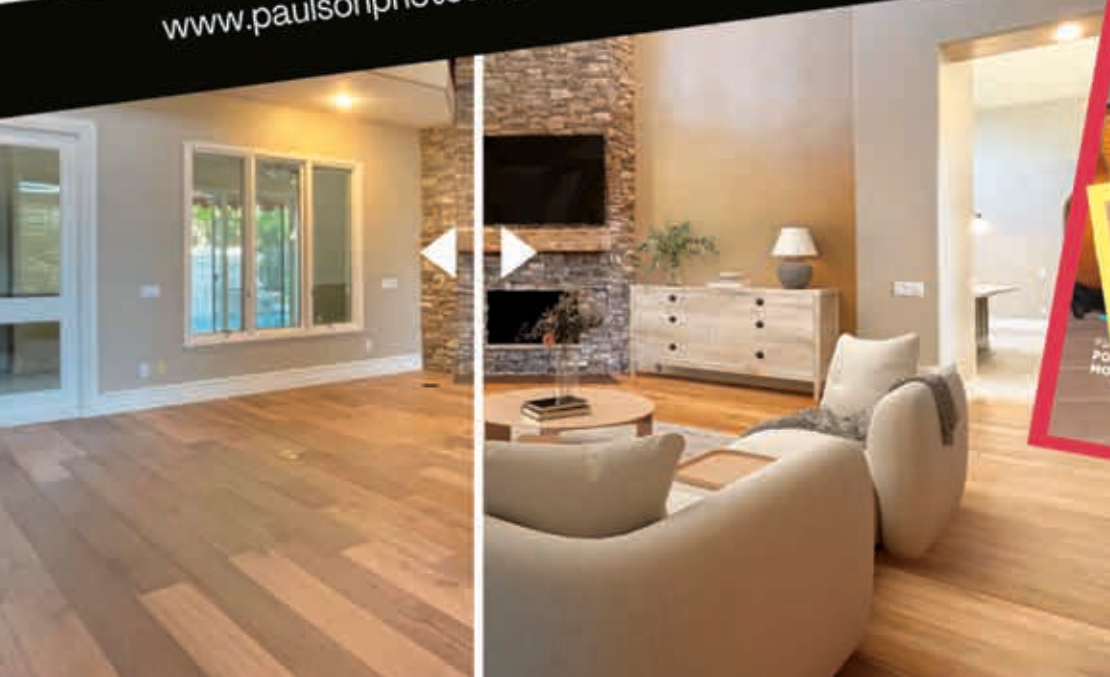


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