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SEPTEMBER 2026

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Cameron

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THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

WHY THE RELATIONSHIPS YOU CHOOSE DETERMINE HOW FAR—AND HOW WELL—YOU GROW

BY GABRIEL CHANDLER

There's a reason the saying endures: *going fast is possible alone—but going far requires others.*

Real estate often celebrates the solo grind—the long hours, the personal sacrifice, the relentless push. And while discipline and work ethic matter, no lasting success is built in isolation.

Behind every top-producing professional is a circle of influence—mentors, peers, partners, and collaborators who sharpen perspective, challenge assumptions, and expand what's possible.

Your environment matters.

And your circle matters even more.

Take a Closer Look at Your Circle

The people you spend time with shape how you think, how you decide, and how you grow.

Ask yourself honestly:

- Do the people around you challenge your standards—or reinforce comfort?
- Do they expand your vision—or keep it familiar?
- Do they create momentum—or distraction?

Growth doesn't come from proximity alone—it comes from **alignment**.

At Real Producers, the goal has never been to simply tell stories. It's to intentionally connect top-tier professionals with others who operate at a high level. Every feature, event, and introduction is designed to bring the right people into the same conversation.

Why Relationships Are the Real Asset

In this business, trust is everything.

Clients entrust you with major decisions. Partners become extensions of your reputation. And the people you associate with quietly shape how you're perceived—often before you ever enter the room.

Success isn't just about effort.

It's about **who you build with**.

The strongest professionals understand that collaboration outperforms competition in the long run. They invest in relationships that create opportunity, stability, and shared growth.

Choose the Rooms That Shape Your Future

Real estate is ultimately a people business.

Who knows your work?

Who speaks your name when opportunity arises?

Who are you intentionally building alongside for the long term?

If you want greater opportunity, stronger alignment, and a more enduring brand, be selective about the rooms you enter—and intentional about the relationships you cultivate.

Surround yourself with people who elevate your thinking.

Contribute value wherever you go.

And become the kind of professional others want in their circle.

Because in the end, success isn't just about what you build—it's about **who you build it with**.



Gabriel Chandler
Publisher

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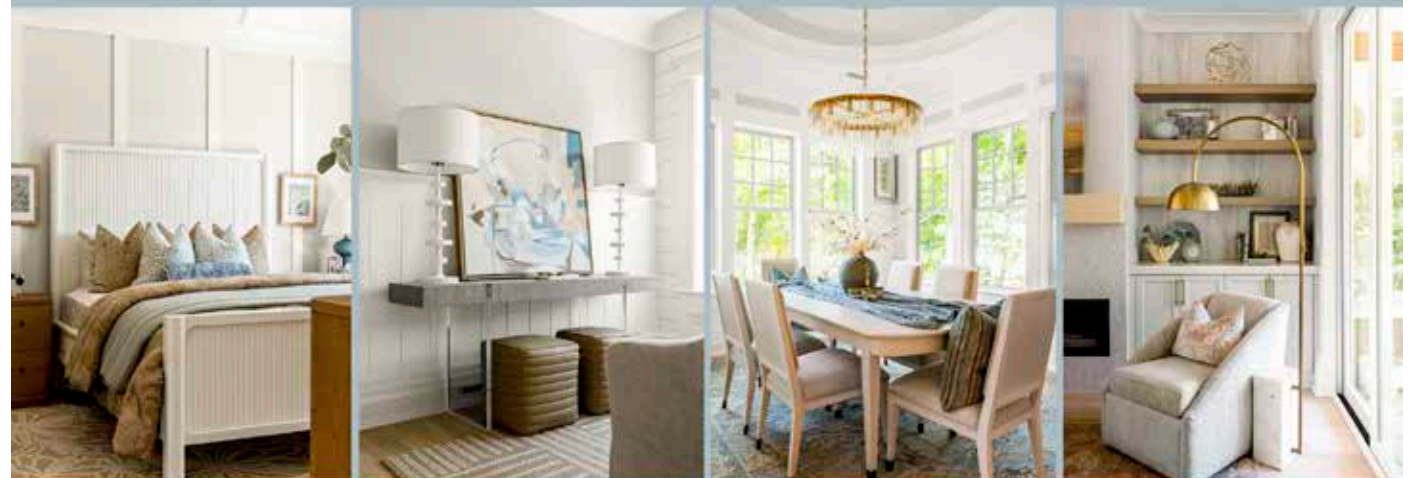
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2026 REAL ESTATE RULE CHANGES:

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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MANDY BOBO

ROOTED IN RELATIONSHIPS

Mandy Bobo’s story begins in Oak City, a small farming community in Eastern North Carolina where hard work, integrity, and strong relationships weren’t just values—they were a way of life.

As an individual agent, Mandy collaborates closely with a network of trusted partners and local vendors to deliver a seamless, full-service experience rooted in connection and care.



WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON
PHOTOS BY: LOGAN BURKES OF BURKE’S MEDIA

From Small-Town Roots to Coastal Perspective

Raised in a tight-knit rural town, Mandy developed a deep appreciation for land and homeownership. That perspective followed her to the coast, where she became drawn to how real estate shapes not just where people live, but how they live—especially in a region defined by water access, outdoor living, and community.

Recreation Specialist in Chapel Hill and later in clinical research in Wilmington. After the birth of her first daughter, she stepped back from her career to focus on raising her family—a chapter she describes as one of the most rewarding of her life.

During that time, she stayed active in her community by teaching fitness classes, working as a teacher's assistant in New Hanover County Schools, and helping her husband launch Sound Heavy Machinery. These experiences strengthened her communication, organization, and relationship-building skills—qualities that would become the foundation of her real estate career.

A Natural Transition into Real Estate

Mandy's interest in real estate was sparked by her upbringing and her growing connection to coastal living. She was drawn to how homes and communities shape lifestyles, particularly along the coast where lifestyle and location are deeply intertwined.

She earned her real estate license in 2020 and joined Intracoastal Realty, where she has built her career representing properties throughout Wilmington and Wrightsville Beach. From the beginning, her business has been rooted in trust, market knowledge, and a highly personalized client experience.

Building a Business on Trust and Referrals

Mandy's success is driven largely by repeat and referral business—something she considers her greatest achievement. She has consistently been recognized as a Top Producer within her brokerage and as a Top 100 Realtor in the Cape Fear region by Cape Fear Realtors®.

Her production reflects steady growth and strong relationships, with over \$34 million in career sales, \$14 million closed in 2025, and \$6.1 million already closed in 2026. Still, she emphasizes that her focus is never on the numbers alone.

"My business is built on trust," she says. "Strong relationships and local knowledge are what drive everything I do."

Guiding Life's Important Transitions

One of the most meaningful aspects of Mandy's career is guiding clients through life's major transitions. Whether it's a first home, a move for a growing family, an investment, or a dream coastal retreat, she values the trust clients place in her.

"That trust is something I don't take lightly," she says. "It's an honor to be part of those moments."

Deep Local Knowledge and a Proactive Approach

What sets Mandy apart is her deep understanding of the coastal market and her proactive approach. Her familiarity with neighborhoods, waterfront nuances, and market trends allows her to provide insight that benefits her clients at every stage of the process.

Passion for Coastal Living and Community

Mandy is passionate about helping clients find not just homes, but lifestyles. The coast offers boating, outdoor living, and a strong sense of community—elements she strives to connect her clients with in every transaction.

Her personal life reflects that same passion. She enjoys boating,

"MY BUSINESS IS BUILT ON TRUST."

Strong relationships and local knowledge are what drive everything I do."

She attended the University of North Carolina Wilmington, earning a degree in Therapeutic Recreation in 2000 while also walking on as a member of the women's tennis team. The combination of academic focus and athletic discipline sharpened her competitive edge and strengthened her ability to understand and connect with others—skills that now serve her well in guiding clients through important real estate decisions.

A Career Built on Service and Connection

Before real estate, Mandy built a diverse professional background. She worked as a Therapeutic





“THAT TRUST IS SOMETHING I DON’T TAKE LIGHTLY.

It’s an honor to be part of
those moments.”

beach walks, fitness, travel,
and spending time with family
and friends. She also supports
causes such as the Autism Society
of North Carolina and Strike Out
for Childhood Cancer, giving
back to organizations that impact
local families.

Family at the Center

Family is the foundation of
Mandy’s life. She and her husband,
Mark, recently celebrated 20 years
of marriage. Together, they have
built a life centered on support
and shared values.

Mark owns Sound Heavy
Machinery and has been a
constant source of encouragement
throughout her career. Their
daughters—one attending Auburn
University and the other in high
school—are at the heart of their
world, along with their two dogs
who keep life active and fun.

A Lasting Commitment to Service

Looking ahead, Mandy plans to
continue growing a relationship-
driven business while staying
grounded in the values that
have shaped her journey.
Whether helping a first-time
buyer or someone searching for
their dream coastal home, she
remains committed to delivering
exceptional service.

“My business is rooted in
small-town values,” she says.
“Trust, hard work, and genuine
relationships guide everything
I do.”

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Melanie CAMERON

WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON
PHOTOS BY T.J. DRECHSEL

A Path of Excellence

Her work is supported by The Cameron Team, a group of professionals who share her commitment to excellence. She has three full-time agents, including Tammy Suggs, Ashley Pierce and Rachel Belch, along with two full-time administrative team members—Meghan Henderson and Heather Lindquist-Bull (who is also licensed), as well as a Transaction Coordinator—Kelcie Currie. Clients benefit from a collaborative team with diverse expertise, ensuring every transaction is handled with precision and care.

“I really feel invested in the process,” she says, emphasizing her hands-on approach and deep commitment to each client relationship.

Building Systems and Embracing Innovation

Over the years, Melanie has learned that consistency in a competitive market requires both discipline and adaptability. She has embraced systems, strong partnerships, and new technologies—including AI—to enhance her marketing and client experience.

Intentional marketing, repeatable processes, and strong vendor relationships have allowed her to elevate both her team’s performance and the level of service she provides. Her business continues to evolve, but her core values remain unchanged.

A Day in the Life of a Top Producer

Melanie’s day begins early—often at 5 a.m.—with coffee, emails, and a workout alongside her gym partners. A morning walk with her labrador, Arden, offers a moment of calm before the day accelerates.

From there, she dives into market analysis, client communication, and listing preparation. Her afternoons are filled with showings, negotiations, inspections, and coordinatiMelanie Cameron’s story begins in Selma, North Carolina, where strong values of hard

work, relationships, and community were woven into everyday life. Those early lessons didn’t just shape who she is—they became the blueprint for how she built her career. Today, as a leading real estate professional with Coldwell Banker Sea Coast Advantage, Melanie’s business is rooted in trust, service, and long-term relationships.

Her approach is simple but powerful: treat people well, do the right thing, and success will follow. That philosophy has guided her through nearly three decades in real estate and continues to define her work today.

From Chapel Hill to Coastal Carolina

Melanie attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she earned a degree in Political Science

with a minor in History. While her academic focus gave her a strong analytical foundation, she jokes that she also excelled in the “social skills” department—an ability that would prove invaluable in her future career.

She entered real estate immediately after college in 1994, immersing herself in the industry by learning from top-producing agents. That early exposure helped her quickly develop the knowledge, discipline, and work ethic required to succeed. Nearly 32 years later, she remains a force in the Wilmington, North Carolina market.

A Career Defined by Excellence and Consistency

Melanie has built her career serving buyers and sellers across Wilmington



and surrounding coastal communities. Known for being detail-oriented, strategic, and highly responsive, she ensures her clients feel informed and confident throughout every step of the process.

Her numbers speak volumes: over \$519 million in career volume and \$55.7 million in recent annual production. Her accolades include Team of the Year, Runner Up Team of the Year, and multiple honors within Coldwell Banker's International President's Elite Circle.

But for Melanie, success isn't just measured in awards—it's measured in trust, relationships, and the ability to guide clients through meaningful life decisions.

A Strategic and Client-Focused Approach

Melanie's approach to real estate blends market expertise with creativity and strategy. She doesn't simply list homes—she positions them. She doesn't just help clients buy—she guides them through lifestyle-aligned decisions.

Responsiveness and proactive communication are at the heart of her daily routine.

No two days are alike, and that's exactly how she likes it. She thrives in the fast-paced, ever-changing nature of real estate, where problem-solving and adaptability are essential.

Relationships at the Core of Everything

For Melanie, the most rewarding part of real estate is the relationships. Being invited into a client's life during a major transition is something she never takes lightly.

Many of her clients become lifelong friends—a testament to the trust she builds and the care she provides. Real estate, for Melanie, is never just transactional; it's deeply personal and relational.

Overcoming Challenges with Resilience

Like many entrepreneurs, Melanie has faced the challenges of building

RESPONSIVENESS & PROACTIVE
COMMUNICATION ARE

at the heart of her daily routine.





and maintaining consistency in a competitive market. She overcame these obstacles by focusing on long-

term growth, surrounding herself with strong teammates, and committing to continuous improvement.

Her resilience, paired with her willingness to adapt, has allowed her to not only sustain but thrive in an ever-changing industry.

A Life Rooted in Family and Balance
Family is the cornerstone of Melanie's life. She has been married to David Cameron since 2003, and together they have twins—James and Maggie—both now in college. James is studying engineering at Virginia Tech, while Maggie pursues history at Appalachian State University.

The Cameron family is currently building their dream home in Hampstead, a project that reflects their shared vision and values. Melanie also cherishes having her mother nearby and looks forward to welcoming her into their new home.

While she acknowledges that balancing work and life can be challenging, she emphasizes the importance of structure, boundaries, and intentional time with family.

Giving Back to the Community
Melanie is deeply committed to giving back. She supports local organizations and contributes a portion of every commission to charitable causes that strengthen families and communities in coastal North Carolina.

Her dedication to service extends beyond real estate—it's part of who she is and how she operates in both business and life.

Defining Success Through Purpose and Integrity
For Melanie, success is not just about production or accolades. It's about building a business rooted in integrity, serving clients exceptionally well, and creating a life aligned with her values.

She encourages her team to “do what's right first,” believing that success will naturally follow. This philosophy has guided her throughout her career and continues to shape her leadership. 🏡

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WRITTEN BY
DAVE DANIELSON

MELISSA MARTIN

PATH OF PURPOSE

For Melissa Martin, real estate is about much more than contracts, closings, and commission checks. It is about people, purpose, and creating opportunities for others. As the founder of Harpo Properties at Keller Williams in Wilmington, North Carolina, Melissa has built one of the area's most successful real estate teams while staying deeply connected to the values that inspired her journey in the first place.

Today, with more than \$82 million in career sales volume and a reputation as one of the region's top-producing agents, Melissa is helping families build wealth through homeownership while honoring a legacy that began with a beloved therapy dog named Harpo.

An Unlikely Beginning

Born and raised in Wilmington, Melissa's professional path did not initially point

toward real estate. Before earning her real estate license, she worked with a plumbing fitting company serving yacht and RV manufacturers and also led a successful team within a network marketing organization.

Her original plan for real estate was modest.

When she became licensed in May 2019, she intended to simply make referrals for friends and family. At the time, she was spending more than 20 hours each week volunteering alongside Harpo, her therapy dog. Together, they visited nursing homes, schools, libraries, and programs serving children with disabilities.

Because people frequently sought her recommendations for Realtors, Melissa decided obtaining her license would

allow her to formally connect people with trusted professionals.

She had no idea that within months her life would change forever.

A Tragedy That Changed Everything

In August 2019, just three months after becoming licensed, Melissa experienced a devastating loss.

Following exposure to blue-green algae blooms, all three of her dogs became critically ill. Despite emergency veterinary intervention, she lost all three dogs in a matter of hours.

The loss was especially painful because of the impact Harpo had made in the community. As a therapy dog, Harpo had touched countless lives through volunteer work and service.

"Losing him gutted me," Melissa recalls.

For a period, grief consumed her. Then an opportunity arrived that would redirect her future.

A Keller Williams colleague, Manda Price, encouraged Melissa to enroll in the company's BOLD training program. What started as an effort to shift her mindset and provide a positive distraction quickly became something much bigger.

During the seven-week program, Melissa acquired 14 clients.

More importantly, she discovered a new purpose.

Using the pain of her loss as fuel, she committed fully to building a real estate career.

The Birth of Harpo Properties

As her business began taking shape, Melissa knew she wanted Harpo's legacy to remain part of everything she built.

She named her team Harpo Properties, drawing inspiration from both her beloved companion and the iconic character from *The Color Purple*. Purple also happens to be the signature color of Keller Williams' BOLD program, creating a meaningful connection between the tragedy that changed her life and the opportunity that followed.

The team's tagline—"Your Best Friend in Real Estate"—perfectly captures the culture Melissa wanted to create.

Even more meaningful is Harpo Properties' Get a Home, Give a Home program.

With every home sold, the team helps save a shelter dog, ensuring Harpo's impact continues long after his passing.

What began as a tribute has evolved into a mission that resonates deeply with clients and the community alike.

Building Success Through Relationships

Melissa's rise in the industry has been remarkable.

She earned Rising Star honors during her first year in real estate and was later recognized as a Keller Williams Culture Ambassador finalist. She has served on the Associate Leadership Council for three years, earned recognition from Real Producers for her community involvement, and joined Gary Keller's elite Top 200 Agent Mastermind community.



Her team has consistently ranked among the top producers in the market, including achieving the number two ranking for team volume across the North and South Carolina Keller Williams region.

Last year alone, Melissa closed more than \$26.5 million in sales volume, contributing to a career total exceeding \$82 million.

Yet she remains focused on what matters most: helping people.



Creating Opportunities Through Homeownership

One of Melissa's greatest passions is helping first-time homebuyers achieve something many never thought possible.

Having grown up in an environment where entrepreneurship and wealth-building through real estate were not common, she understands how intimidating the process can feel.

Her team hosts monthly first-time homebuyer workshops designed to educate and empower future homeowners. The impact has been significant, accounting for more than 14 percent of the team's business last year.



Melissa believes homeownership can transform lives and create generational opportunities for families who may not have previously seen a path toward building wealth.

That mission continues to drive much of her work today.

A Family Business and a Family Life

Melissa's success extends beyond business — it's rooted in the people who walk beside her every day.

Her story with Charity Tuttle is one worth telling. In the summer following the heartbreaking loss of her dogs, Melissa crossed paths with Charity at an open house Charity was hosting for her. New to Wilmington and navigating an industry turned upside down by Covid, Charity was still finding her footing. Martin reached out the way she does with everyone — genuinely, and with a desire to help. What started as a casual business lunch grew into a deep friendship, then a mentorship, and ultimately, a love story. In 2025, the two were married. Today, Charity serves as the lead buyer's agent for Harpo Properties and is, without question, Martin's biggest cheerleader. "I couldn't do what I do without her making sure I'm taken care of," Melissa says simply.

Her oldest daughter, Morgan Grady, came on board during the Covid shutdown after stepping away from teaching — a new mom, stretched thin, looking for steadier ground. What she found was a business growing faster than it could keep up with, and a mother who needed

her more than either of them probably realized at the time. Morgan stepped in and never stepped back. As Director of Operations, she keeps Melissa grounded, the team focused, and the business running with the kind of quiet brilliance that doesn't always make headlines — but absolutely should. She's also the cre-

ative force behind Harpo's social media presence, which speaks for itself.

Her youngest daughter, Jordan Wilson, works in design for N2 Publishing and is busy raising twin boys — Melissa's grandsons, Porter and Fisher.

And then there's Brooklyn, Morgan's daughter, who already carries herself with the kind of personality, confidence, and determination that makes Melissa smile and say, without hesitation, that Brooklyn may very well lead Harpo Properties someday.

Family remains at the center of everything she does — whether they're traveling together, chasing new adventures, or making memories at Disney World. Melissa protects that time fiercely. Because at the end of the day, that's what it's all for.

Leading with Integrity

Despite impressive production numbers and growing success, Melissa remains grounded in a simple philosophy.

Integrity matters more than any commission check.

She believes success means helping people, creating opportunities, and making a meaningful impact on the lives of others.

Her advice to agents is equally practical: focus on a few proven lead-generation strategies, avoid chasing distractions, build genuine relationships, and always operate from a place of contribution.

Above all, Melissa wants to be known as the agent who welcomes everyone.

She believes every person deserves respect, care, and a seat at the table. That commitment has become the foundation of her business and the reason clients continue to trust her with some of the most important decisions of their lives.

For Melissa Martin, real estate is not just a career. It is a vehicle for service, a platform for impact, and a way to honor a best friend whose legacy continues to change lives every day. 🏡



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Lee Eatmon

BUILDING WITH
EDUCATION,
EXPERIENCE &
EXPANSION

In real estate, growth doesn't just come from sales—it comes from learning, leadership, and access to the right resources. That's exactly what Southern Choice Real Estate Academy has been delivering to professionals across the region since 1995.

At the center of that mission is Lee Eatmon, Director of Southern Choice, who has helped shape the academy into one of Eastern North Carolina's most trusted independent education providers. Built outside of brokerage

influence, the school remains focused on one purpose: quality real estate education that elevates professionals at every stage of their careers.

"We're really a locally focused school that is independent from any brokerage," Lee says. "We're here for the sole purpose of quality education."

A Second Business Built on Practical Real Estate Solutions

While Southern Choice Real Estate Academy is a cornerstone of Lee

Eatmon's professional impact, it is only one part of his work in the industry. He is also the owner and operator of Unlimited Property Solutions, a real estate property management company focused on practical, real-world property needs.

Unlimited Property Solutions complements his educational mission by keeping him actively engaged in the day-to-day realities of real estate—properties, clients, and transactions. Through this business, Lee maintains a hands-on connection to the market, reinforcing the real-world experience he brings into the classroom at Southern Choice.

Together, the two businesses reflect a dual commitment: educating agents while also staying deeply rooted in active real estate practice.

The Joy in Teaching and Doing

For Lee, the most rewarding part of his work is not just building systems—it's working with people.

"The best part is definitely the people ... the brokers we interact with, along with our instructors and staff," he says.

Southern Choice is powered by a team of two full-time staff members and approximately a dozen rotating contract instructors. Each instructor is either actively selling real estate or has extensive experience in the field, ensuring that students receive current, practical instruction grounded in real market conditions.

"One of the things I really enjoy is teaching myself," Lee adds. "I make it a point to teach every class in some part of each rotation."

Expanding Reach Across the Carolinas

The reach of Southern Choice continues to grow throughout Eastern North Carolina, serving a 16-county region that has become the core of its student base. The academy also attracts professionals from neighboring South Carolina markets and even Myrtle Beach, where agents seek education on North Carolina-specific practices.

Looking ahead, Lee sees continued expansion into South Carolina as a natural next step.

The academy has also embraced modern learning formats, expanding from traditional in-person instruction to a full range of online courses. This shift ensures accessibility while maintaining the same level of engagement and quality.

"We've definitely shifted and offered the full range of online classes," Lee explains. "We'll continue to refine those while also maintaining in-person instruction."

"The best part is definitely the people ... the brokers we interact with, along with our instructors and staff."

The school is also actively developing new coursework, with additional classes recently written and submitted for state approval—further evidence of its commitment to continuous improvement.

An Active Role in Real Estate Practice

Beyond education and business ownership, Lee remains actively engaged in real estate sales and brokerage operations. With 21 years of experience in the field, he serves as Managing Broker for his firm, Carolina One Properties, with offices in Wilmington and Carolina Beach NC.



This ongoing involvement in active transactions allows him to bring current market knowledge directly into his teaching, strengthening the connection between theory and practice.

A Lifestyle Rooted in the Coast
Outside of business, Lee embraces the coastal North Carolina lifestyle with his family. His time is often spent boating, swimming, working out,



“I think the thing that really drives me is the hope that I can inspire others to be better. Whether it’s as a salesperson or manager, I want to see people grow through life.”

and enjoying the outdoors with his children—Kylie, 21, and Asher, 7, and the newest edition Ellie, 1.

That balance between professional responsibility and personal life is something he values deeply, and it reflects in the energy he brings to both of his businesses.

Passion for Growth in Others

At the heart of everything Lee does is a simple mission: helping others grow.

“I think the thing that really drives me is the hope that I can inspire others to be better,” he says. “Whether it’s as a salesperson or manager, I want to see people grow through life.”

That philosophy is present in both Southern Choice Real Estate Academy, Unlimited Property Solutions, and Carolina One Properties—three businesses that operate in different spaces but share the same core value: empowering others through knowledge, experience, and opportunity.

Boosting the Business—Every Day

Whether in the classroom or in the field, Lee Eatmon continues to play a dual role in the real estate industry—educator and practitioner, mentor and operator.

Through Southern Choice Real Estate Academy, he helps shape the next generation of real estate professionals. Through Unlimited Property Solutions, he stays grounded in the realities of the business itself.

Together, those efforts create a powerful combination: one that continues, day by day, to boost the business across Eastern North Carolina and beyond. ▀





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Mende KITZMAN

WRITTEN BY DAVE DANIELSON
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MOVEMENT & MEANING

At 1001 N Lake Park Blvd. in Carolina Beach, Mende leads her business with the same energy and heart that have defined her life journey. As team lead of the Right Coast Real Estate Team at Coldwell Banker Sea Coast Advantage, she brings something rare to the industry—a global perspective grounded in deep personal connection, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to people.

A Life Shaped by Adventure and Purpose

Mende's story begins in Southern California, where she grew up in suburbia before attending Point Loma Nazarene University, perched above the Pacific Ocean in San Diego. There, she earned her degree in Child Development and Education, along with a K-12 teaching credential. Her husband, Dave, raised on an avocado farm along California's central coast, would become her partner not only in life, but eventually in business.

The two met at a surf contest in Huntington Beach—a fitting beginning for a couple whose lives would be defined by movement, adventure, and shared purpose. Both began their careers in education, teaching in San Diego while starting their family. But by 2002, their path began to shift.

Over the next decade and a half, Mende and Dave lived and worked across the globe—from Raleigh, North Carolina, to Lima, Peru, where they taught in international schools, launched a nonprofit sports ministry, and expanded their family. Their journey also took them to Indonesia, where they studied language and culture, embracing life abroad in ways that would later shape their approach to real estate and relationships.



A Return Home—and a New Beginning

In 2018, an unexpected return to the United States brought the family to Wilmington, where they moved into an investment property they had purchased sight unseen. At a crossroads both personally and professionally, Mende embraced what she jokingly describes as a “mid-life reset.”

“We didn’t know what we were going to do,” she says. “So we tried a little bit of everything.”

That “everything” included teaching, running sports camps, managing rental properties, homeschooling their children, and continuing their involvement in international mission work. But one thread remained constant: a deep and growing interest in real estate.

Early experiences buying and selling homes—starting with a profitable sale in San Diego and continuing through FSBO transactions—sparked a passion that would eventually become her



profession. In 2019, both Mende and Dave earned their real estate licenses, launching what would soon become a thriving business.

Building the Right Coast Real Estate Team

Initially working as a solo agent, Mende built her career within the Carolina Beach office of Coldwell Banker Sea Coast Advantage. In time, Dave officially joined her, forming the Right Coast Real Estate Team—a partnership rooted in more than three decades of marriage and shared life experience.

Today, the team is supported by Mende’s niece, Katelyn, who assists with operations, allowing Mende and Dave to focus on what they do best: connecting with clients and guiding them through life-changing decisions.

“We love real estate and we love people,” Mende says. “This business allows us to enjoy both every single day.”

With a career volume of \$20 million and \$6.7 million in sales last year alone, the team’s growth has been fueled largely by repeat clients and referrals—a testament to the trust she builds with those she serves.

Resilience Through Life’s Challenges

Mende’s journey has not been without hardship. She speaks candidly about the challenges her family has faced, including multiple near-death experiences involving loved ones, the loss of nearly all their possessions in a theft, and a serious head injury in 2023 that required a long and difficult recovery.

Through it all, her perspective has remained rooted in faith, family, and perseverance.

“Life throws things at you that you don’t expect,” she says. “You just need to stay flexible, keep firm roots, and embrace the strength of the people surrounding you.”

That resilience is evident not only in her personal life but in her professional approach—where adaptability,

“**MY FAVORITE PART OF THIS JOB IS HEARING PEOPLE’S STORIES. THEN FINDING A HOME OR INVESTMENT THAT ALIGNS PERFECTLY WITH WHO THEY ARE AND WHAT THEY WANT.”**

problem-solving, and empathy are essential tools.

A Business Built on Connection

What truly sets Mende apart is her ability to connect. Having lived internationally and navigated countless transitions, she understands the emotional and logistical complexities that often accompany real estate decisions.

Fluent in Spanish and deeply relational by nature, she serves a diverse clientele, helping each individual or family find not just a property, but the right fit for their goals and lifestyle.

“My favorite part of this job is hearing people’s stories,” she says. “Then finding a home or investment that aligns perfectly with who they are and what they want.”

Her approach is both practical and deeply personal—balancing market knowledge with genuine care for the people she serves.

Life Beyond Real Estate

Outside of work, Mende leads a full and vibrant life. She and her family are active members of Crosswinds Church in Leland and spend much of their time supporting their



**“WORK HARD,
STAY HUMBLE,
AND ENJOY
YOUR FAMILY.
THAT’S WHAT
MATTERS MOST.”**

children’s activities—from surfing and soccer to archery and tennis.

A passion for sustainable living has also led Mende to start a small farm in Brunswick County, where her family raises specialty livestock, tends gardens, and explores ways to provide clean, local food to their community. Though the venture was temporarily scaled back following her injury, it remains an important part of her future vision.

Family is at the center of everything. With six children, three grandchildren, and extended family still in California, Mende cherishes time together—whether at home, on the farm, or traveling the world.

Defining Success Through Service
For Mende, success is not defined by numbers alone. It is measured in

relationships, in resilience, and in the ability to serve others with authenticity and care.

“Work hard, stay humble, and enjoy your family,” she says. “That’s what matters most.”

Her advice to other agents reflects the same philosophy: be prepared for anything, surround yourself with experts, and treat others the way you would want to be treated.

At the core of it all is a simple but powerful principle.

“I’m action-based,” Mende says. “And that action is grounded in love.”

It’s a mindset that continues to guide her work, her family, and her growing impact along the Carolina coast—one relationship at a time. ▀

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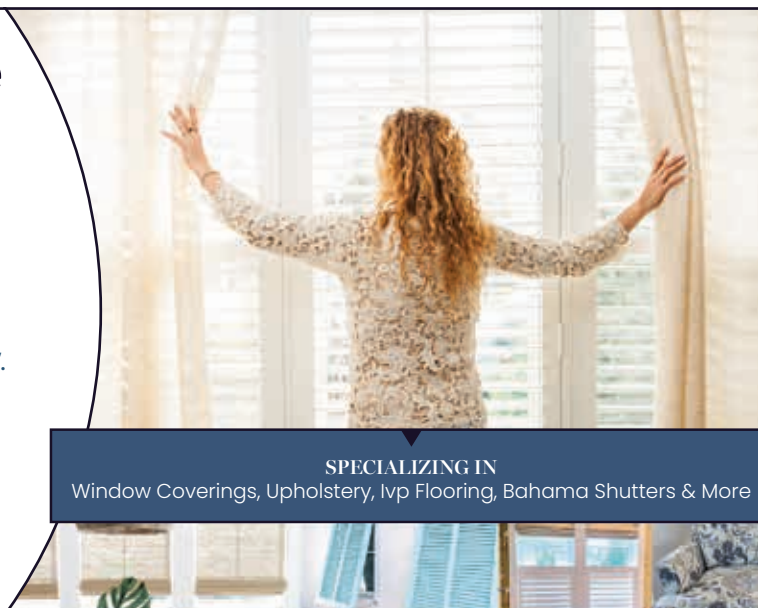
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