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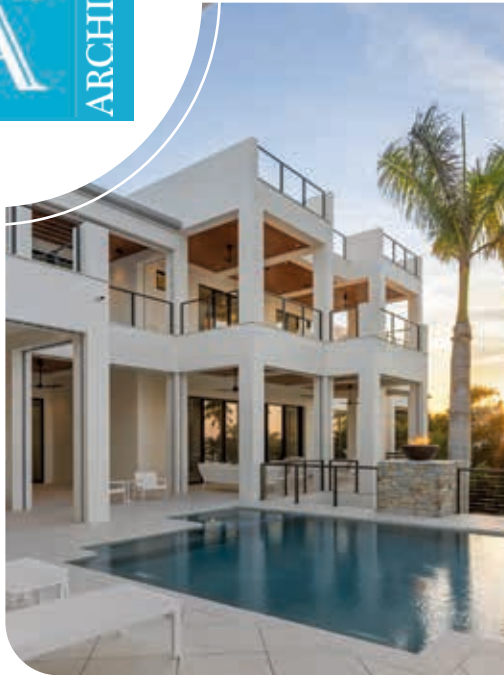
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10 Ryan Miller
COVER STORY

If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for feature stories, please e-mail us at joni@n2co.com.

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Ryan Miller

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Ryan Miller had been following up with a prospective client for 14 months without receiving a response. Every month, he checked in. Every month, nothing. Then, on a Friday night around 8:30 p.m., while meeting a friend at Waterworks in downtown Sarasota, his phone rang. “It was that client,” Ryan recalls. “She said, ‘We’ve been looking at three homes, and we’re flying in next weekend. Are you available?’”

Ryan spent the weekend touring properties with the California couple, but none of them felt quite right. Then, on Super Bowl Sunday, they called wanting to see another home. The property already had multiple offers. Ryan quickly developed a winning strategy, and despite never seeing the home in person, his clients trusted him enough to move forward. They secured the property, closing on a home valued at more than \$5 million.

Reflecting on his tenacity, Ryan says, “I’m persistent, not pushy. I believe in staying in front of people and



Ryan with his mom, Renee Miller

being there when they’re ready.” That persistence has defined Ryan’s career from the beginning.

A second-generation Sarasota native, Ryan’s family has called the area home for more than 50 years. He attended the same private school as his mother before earning

dual degrees in finance and asset risk management from the University of South Florida. Originally, Ryan planned to work in finance, possibly relocating to New York or Boston. But another path kept calling.

His father worked in construction, and Ryan spent weekends and summers

learning everything from trim carpentry and roofing to painting, demolition, and finish work. Meanwhile, his grandfather, longtime broker and developer Milton Yoder, built a successful real estate career that Ryan admired. “I loved the lifestyle he had and thought real estate looked like something I’d enjoy,” he says.



STORY BY JACKI DONALDSON
PHOTOS BY MINDY & CORY POFF,
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Local Flavor

Ryan's photo shoot took place at Peachey's Baking Co., his brother-in-law and sister's bakery located at 999 Cattleman Rd., Unit E, in Sarasota. Known for its handcrafted doughnuts, homemade soft pretzels, and craft coffee, Peachey's has become a favorite destination for locals. Ryan is proud to support the small businesses that help make Sarasota such a vibrant community.

Ryan earned his real estate license in February 2020. One month later, the world shut down. "I remember thinking I'd made the biggest mistake of my life," he says.

After leaving a steady position with DutchCrafters to pursue real estate full-time at age 23, Ryan launched his business with hesitation during one of the most uncertain periods in recent history. Then, he found himself entering one of the strongest real estate markets the industry had ever seen.

Ryan credits two decisions for his early success. First, he leaned into the relationships he'd built growing up in Sarasota. "I give a lot of credit to my parents," he says. "They put me in great surroundings, and I grew up knowing a lot of families and business owners." Second, he personally called or messaged every contact he had after earning his license.

He also created *The Sarasota Pulse*, a lifestyle-focused email newsletter delivered every Friday at 4:30 p.m. Featuring market updates, listings, local businesses, restaurants, and community happenings, the newsletter averages an impressive 40 percent open rate while keeping Ryan connected with anyone who has shared an email address with him.

His business philosophy is straightforward. "If you focus on giving great service to your clients, you don't have to worry about where the next deal is coming from," he says. "Every transaction creates another opportunity to help someone else."

That approach has fueled remarkable growth, with Ryan increasing his production year after year and ranking among the top real estate agents in Sarasota-Manatee County for the past three years. "My goal is to be number one," he says. "But it's not about beating someone else. It's about becoming the best version of myself. I'm incredibly grateful for everything, but I'm never satisfied because I know I can continue improving."

Today, Ryan continues building his business as a solo agent with Harry E. Robbins Associates, Inc., working alongside an assistant while mentoring newer agents. His mother joined the brokerage after earning her real estate license in 2022, and the family occasionally works transactions together.

Away from work, Ryan enjoys spending time with his parents, sisters, and extended family, all of whom still live nearby. He follows the Cleveland

Browns, Cavaliers, and Ohio State Buckeyes and enjoys golf, pickleball, reading, traveling, and spending time with his English Cream Golden Retriever, Lila.

His advice for new agents is simple: "Keep your faith first, stay close to your family, find great mentors, and block out the noise. A lot of people told me I was too young and that real estate was too risky. I chose to listen to people who were already where I wanted to be."

Ryan credits mentors Marlin Yoder, Kevin Robbins, and Troy Robbins, along with his family, for encouraging him throughout his career. He also points to his parents as the foundation of his work ethic. During the 2008 recession, he watched his father show up every day without complaint while his mother returned to work to help support the family. Those lessons continue to guide him.

For Ryan, success begins with faith, relationships, and consistency. The sales, awards, and recognition have followed, one conversation, one client, and one Friday newsletter at a time. 🏠



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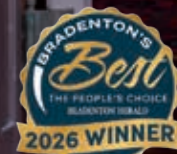
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Linh

STORY BY MADDIE PODISH
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NextHome Excellence

Pham

Linh Pham wasn't chasing a fresh start when she moved to America in 2013. She was chasing a better future for her family. She had already spent more than 15 years building a career in retail operations and management in Vietnam. What she didn't expect was that creating a new life would also mean rebuilding her career from the ground up.

With children depending on her and financial responsibilities waiting at home, going back to school full-time was not realistic. Instead, Linh stepped into the nail and cosmetic tattoo industry while adjusting to life in a new country. She worked long hours because she had to, but eventually, something began to weigh on her more than exhaustion.

One night after work, Linh came home wanting to spend time with her children. "When I got home, I wanted to play with them," Linh recalls. "But they told me no, which really hurt me."

In Vietnam, family life looked different. Time together happened naturally. Here, work seemed to consume everything. "This wasn't what I wanted when I moved here," she says. "I wanted a career where I could still take care of my family and be there for my children."

While working during the day, Linh studied for her real estate license at night. Looking back, she believes God was already putting the pieces in place long before she could see the bigger picture. When she purchased her first home in America, the experience showed her how overwhelming real estate could feel for someone navigating an unfamiliar system, especially immigrants and families

who may not fully understand English, contracts, or negotiations. "I wanted people to understand everything," Linh shares. "I wanted them to know someone was looking out for them."

When Linh entered real estate, she did not have a large sphere of influence or years of established relationships. Instead of focusing on what she lacked, she leaned into the skills she already





“

I never push clients into a home. I wait until they find the right one because when they feel happy, I feel happy.”

had. “I didn’t know many people, but I knew how to build relationships and work hard,” she points out.

Using her background in customer relationships and marketing, Linh began connecting with Vietnamese communities through social media, sharing information about Florida real estate and creating conversations instead of sales pitches. At the time, she noticed opportunities in vacant land throughout areas like North Port and Port Charlotte. She researched market history, saw potential, and began sharing what she found with others. “I saw opportunity,” Linh notes. “If I thought it could help people in the future, I wanted to share it with them.”

People listened, and before long, the calls started coming in. Those conversations turned into clients, referrals, and lasting relationships. Today, much of Linh’s business still comes through referrals, which she values deeply. “Referrals mean people trust me, and that means a lot because relationships are more important than transactions,” she explains.

That mindset also shapes the way she works with clients. “I never push clients into a home,” Linh states. “I wait until they find the right one because when they feel happy, I feel happy.”

Some clients spend months searching. Others spend years. “I’ve worked with some clients for three years before they found the right home,” she comments. “I don’t mind because I want them to be happy.”

That trust has led to consistent top-producer recognition throughout her career and two President’s Circle awards with NextHome, but Linh measures success differently these days. Growing up in a broken household, she watched her mother work tirelessly to support their family. That example shaped the way Linh approaches both life and business. “I don’t get scared easily,” she says with a smile. “I just keep trying my best.”



Today, Linh continues to build a successful real estate career while creating long-term stability for her family through investing. Along the way, she has also had strong support from her husband, Jehu, who helps with their children, investment properties, and countless behind-the-scenes responsibilities that keep the business moving forward. “Without him, I couldn’t do any of this,” she says.

Even now, Linh still works hard. She travels often, returns to Vietnam with her family each year, and somehow balances business and home life while keeping relationships at the center of everything she does. “The greatest blessing in my career isn’t the recognition or awards,” Linh shares. “It’s the relationships I’ve built, the trust people place in me, and the many blessings God has given me and my family throughout this journey.”



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RJ Diaz



MODUS BUILDERS

STORY BY MADDIE PODISH
PHOTOS BY MINDY & CORY POFF, POFF MEDIA GROUP

After spending two decades managing construction projects in Manhattan, RJ had built an impressive career working alongside world-renowned architects on high-end commercial interiors. But each morning began before his children woke up, and each evening ended after they had gone to bed. The work was rewarding, but the lifestyle no longer matched his priorities.

So RJ and his wife made a bold decision. They stepped away from the fast pace of the Northeast, spent a year living in Costa Rica with their young children, and eventually settled in Sarasota to build a different kind of life. That decision didn't just change where he lived. It transformed the way he approached building.

Today, with one child preparing to leave for college and the other not far behind, RJ knows he made the right decision. As quickly as those years have passed, he's grateful he traded long commutes for soccer games, swim meets, and everyday moments he once worried he would miss. "It was absolutely



driven by lifestyle,” he reflects. “I just wanted to be around for my kids.”

Today, as founder of Modus Builders, RJ believes every successful project begins long before construction starts. It starts with listening, collaborating, and helping clients create spaces around the way they want to live. “I wanted to start a business that focused on partnership,” he explains. “We’re project partners with the homeowner, the architect, the designer, and everyone involved.”



“When someone walks through a house, they don’t always see what it could become. Helping people **REIMAGINE A SPACE** is one of my favorite parts of what we do.”

Although many people assume RJ is an architect, his path ultimately led him to construction management. After studying architecture at Penn State University, he discovered he enjoyed bringing great design to life just as much as creating it. More than 30 years later, that architectural mindset shapes every project he takes on. “I love the creativity aspect of construction,” he shares. “It’s where creativity meets practicality.”

Modus Builders officially opened in 2019, beginning with remodeling projects before steadily expanding into custom homes, renovations, and development. Today, the company is increasingly involved in custom home construction while also pursuing thoughtfully planned neighborhood developments throughout the Sarasota area.

RJ believes the best projects happen when builders are involved early, before plans are finalized and before construction begins. By working alongside architects, designers, and homeowners from the start, his team helps establish realistic budgets, identify potential challenges, and create a smoother building experience from concept through completion.

For REALTORS®, that collaborative approach makes Modus Builders a valuable resource long before a client ever breaks ground. Agents often call RJ to evaluate renovation possibilities, estimate improvement costs, or help buyers envision how an older home could better fit today’s lifestyle. Whether opening up a floor plan, adding living space, or determining the feasibility of building on a piece of land, RJ enjoys helping clients see the endless possibilities. “When someone walks through a house, they don’t always see what it could become,” he notes. “Helping people reimagine a space is one of my favorite parts of what we do.”

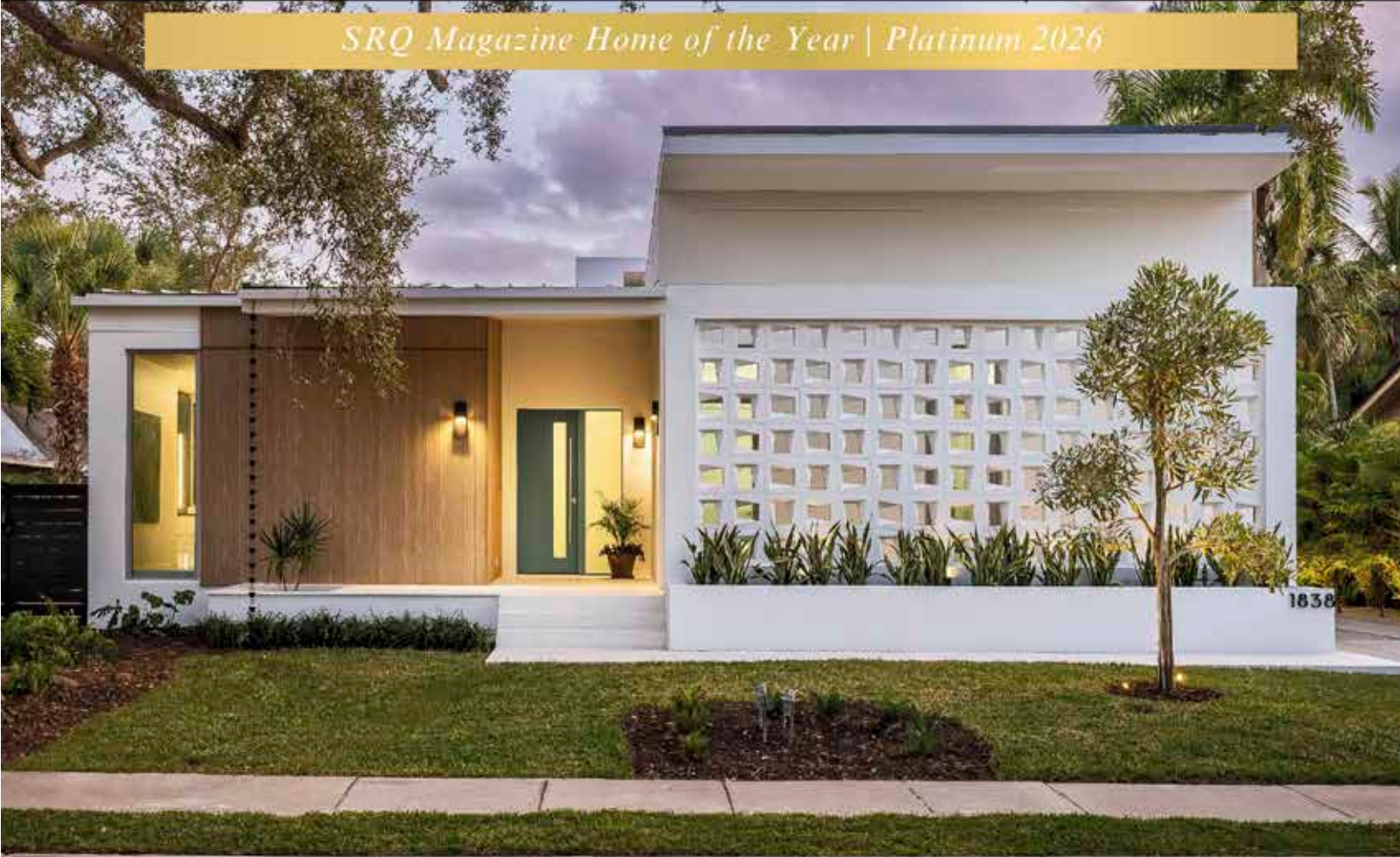
Communication is another cornerstone of the Modus experience. While custom construction can feel overwhelming, RJ believes clients don’t need to understand every technical detail; they need someone who can explain the process clearly and guide them with honesty. RJ describes his role as part builder, part translator. He elaborates: “Our focus is on planning, communication, and coordination. We want homeowners to understand what’s happening and why so they feel confident throughout the process.”

Living on Florida’s Gulf Coast has also strengthened RJ’s passion for resilient construction. As storms continue to reshape the region, he’s become an advocate for building homes that are better equipped to withstand high winds, heavy rain, and future weather challenges without sacrificing thoughtful design.

Even after decades in the industry, RJ still finds excitement in every project. Breaking ground, walking clients through framed walls for the first time, and watching a vision gradually become reality never gets old. For him, construction is about creating places where families gather, memories are made, and lives unfold for years to come. “Our job is to take great design and successfully bring it to life,” he says. 🏡



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MORGAN Marziali

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NCC Properties

Morgan Marziali watched a referral close, realized the opportunity she had given away, and made herself a promise: “I’ll never lose another deal again.”

At the time, Morgan was living in Fort Lauderdale when a friend who had been traded to the Florida Panthers called because he needed a house. She connected him with an agent, watched the transaction unfold, and quickly realized her network could become the foundation for a real estate career.

She got licensed soon after and has now spent approximately 12 years in the industry. Today, Morgan works with NCC Properties in Sarasota while also serving as the sales manager for Nutter Custom Construction, a high-end custom homebuilder led by broker and builder TJ Nutter. The dual role allows her to help clients find land, build a custom home, and sell it if their plans change. “I kind of have the best of both worlds,” she says.

Morgan grew up in a small town in Ontario, Canada, inside a close-knit hockey community. Years on the ice led to a full



athletic scholarship at The Ohio State University, where she played Division I hockey and served as a team captain.

College also expanded her world. She formed friendships with athletes who went on to professional careers in hockey and football, relationships that remained strong long after graduation. When one of her closest friends from Ohio State invited her to move into a family-owned condo in Fort Lauderdale, Morgan decided to take the chance. Her parents expected the move to last a year. Instead, Fort Lauderdale became home, and 15 years later, the relationships she built through hockey and college continue to shape her business.

She has represented athletes, worked with their agents and trusted advisors, and learned that discretion carries enormous value when serving high-profile clients.

Her athletic background shaped far more than her network. It created the competitive drive, discipline, and leadership style she brings to every transaction. “I’m going to work my butt off,” she says. “I’m going to do whatever I can to win this deal.”

Morgan trained intending to compete at the Olympic level, and she brings that same intensity to her clients. At the same time, she describes herself as deeply empathetic. She wants clients to feel comfortable talking with her, trusting her, and knowing she’ll lead every professional involved in the transaction.

She sees real estate through the same lens she once viewed hockey. Agents, lenders, title professionals, builders, and clients all have different responsibilities, but the result depends on how well they work together. “Everything’s a



Take advantage of the knowledge in front of you. I’m not going to figure it out on my own. **Nobody has time for that.”**



Morgan with TJ & Angela Nutter, Founder/President/Owner of Nutter Custom Construction & NCC Properties, LLC

team effort,” she explains. “You are the leader of all of this.”

That leadership has taken on a new dimension since Morgan moved from Fort Lauderdale to Sarasota. She met her husband, Andrew, while visiting the Bahamas with friends. Their boats happened to be docked near each other, and the relationship eventually became long-distance as they traveled between Florida’s two coasts. When they decided the time was right to build a life in the same place, Morgan wanted to have the right professional opportunity waiting for her. Through Andrew and his family, she met TJ Nutter.

TJ brought her into Nutter Custom Construction as sales manager and asked her to help lead NCC Properties. Morgan moved to Sarasota in August 2025, and she and Andrew married in February.

Working alongside a respected custom builder has expanded her knowledge of residential construction. Nutter Custom Construction builds about 15–18 homes each year, allowing the team to remain highly involved in every detail. Morgan has learned how homes are designed and built from the ground up, knowledge she now carries into listing appointments and buyer consultations. “I can tell you exactly how it was built, from the sticks and bricks up,” she says.

Clients may come to Morgan looking for land. She can help secure the lot, guide them into the custom-building process, and represent them again if they decide to sell. Each part of the experience adds another layer to her understanding of the property and the client’s goals.

Morgan also recognizes the value of having an experienced mentor nearby. Early in her career, she

worked at a small boutique brokerage surrounded by knowledgeable professionals. Looking back, she wishes she had spent more time shadowing them, sitting in on conversations, and learning directly from people who had already built successful careers. She’s approaching this season differently.

Morgan accompanies TJ on drives, meetings, and calls whenever possible. She’s willing to sit quietly in the room and absorb what’s happening because she understands how much faster growth can happen when someone shares years of hard-earned experience. “Take advantage of the knowledge in front of you,” she advises. “I’m not going to figure it out on my own. Nobody has time for that.”

She first learned that lesson while choosing a college. Morgan could have attended a newer program where

she would have immediately been one of the strongest players. Instead, she chose Ohio State, where she practiced alongside Olympians and became better by competing with the best. Today, she’s applying that same philosophy to her real estate career.

Outside of work, Morgan and Andrew spend most of their free time on the water. They live on Siesta Key, fish in tournaments, free dive, and travel to the Bahamas during the summer.

After more than a decade in real estate, Morgan is embracing a new market, a new marriage, and a role that allows her to learn every side of the homebuilding process. She has already proven she knows how to compete. Now, she’s combining that grit with construction knowledge, strong relationships, and a mentor who’s encouraging her to spread her wings.

Morgan isn’t watching opportunities pass anymore. She’s building them. ▀





2025

BY THE NUMBERS

HERE'S WHAT SARASOTA
& MANATEE TOP 500
REALTORS® SOLD IN 2025



\$10,420,371,000

TOTAL SALES VOLUME



14,461

TOTAL TRANSACTIONS



\$20,840,742

AVERAGE SALES VOLUME
PER AGENT



30

AVERAGE TRANSACTIONS
PER AGENT



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Florida Continues to Welcome the World

BY CHUCK BONFIGLIO JR., 2026 PRESIDENT FLORIDA REALTORS®



Florida has long been the international gateway to United States real estate, and the National Association of REALTORS®' 2026 Profile of International Transactions in U.S. Residential Real Estate confirms that our state continues to lead the nation as the top destination for foreign homebuyers.

Even as international activity remains below pre-pandemic levels, foreign buyers purchased 67,100 existing homes across the United States between April 2025 and March 2026, representing \$45.3 billion in residential real estate transactions. Those purchases accounted for 1.7% of existing home sales and 2% of the nation's \$2.3 trillion in existing home sales volume.

Once again, Florida ranked No. 1, attracting 20% of all international homebuyers, ahead of California at 19%, Texas at 12%, New Jersey at 4%, and Georgia at 4%.

The report also offers valuable insight into today's international buyer. More than half (56%) of foreign buyers now reside in the United States as recent immigrants or non-immigrant visa holders, demonstrating that many international transactions are driven by people putting down permanent roots in our communities. Foreign buyers also continue to invest confidently in real estate. Nearly 48% purchased all cash, compared to 28% of all existing home buyers, while the median purchase price reached \$465,000, well above the national median of \$413,600.

For those of us who work in Florida's real estate industry every day, our top ranking comes as no surprise. People from around the world continue to choose Florida because we offer more than beautiful weather and miles of coastline. We offer strong communities, a growing economy, no state income tax, world-class healthcare, outstanding educational opportunities, and an exceptional quality of life.

Simply put, Florida's international story is very compelling. According to the Florida Realtors® Profile of International Residential Transactions in Florida, international buyers generated more than \$10 billion in residential sales volume while purchasing approximately 16,400 existing homes across our state. Florida's largest international buyer markets continue to include Canada, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, and the United Kingdom, reflecting the state's strong connections throughout North America, Latin America, and Europe.

International buyers are especially drawn to South Florida, but demand extends well beyond Miami. Orlando,



Tampa Bay, Naples, Cape Coral, Fort Myers, and Sarasota continue to attract buyers seeking everything from primary residences to investment and vacation properties.

The global connection works both ways. Florida Realtors® are also helping clients explore opportunities beyond our borders. According to the Florida Realtors® Profile of International Residential Transactions in Florida, one in four members reported working with clients interested in purchasing property abroad. Spain, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Portugal, and Costa Rica ranked among the top countries of interest, reflecting the increasingly global nature of today's real estate consumer.

Serving international buyers requires more than market knowledge. It requires cultural awareness, language skills, and an understanding of cross-border transactions. Florida Realtors® continue to lead the industry in these areas. Many of our members speak multiple languages, hold specialized international designations, and have built trusted referral networks around the globe that make complex transactions seamless for buyers and sellers alike.

As our state continues to grow, international real estate will remain an important contributor to Florida's economy and housing market. Every international transaction supports local businesses, strengthens communities, creates jobs, and reinforces Florida's reputation as a premier place to live, work, invest, and retire.

For Realtors® in Florida, that's something we can all be proud of. Every day, our members help people from around the world achieve the dream of homeownership in the Sunshine State. That's not just good for our profession; it's good for Florida.

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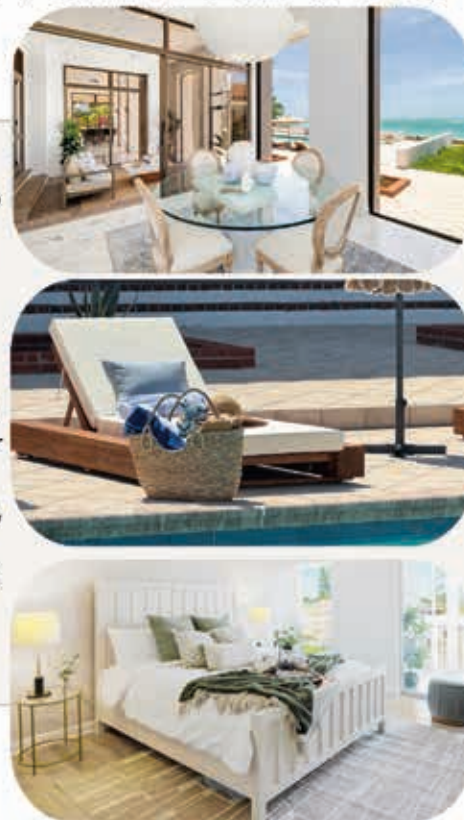
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Q&A with Jason Schneider, Market Leader at CMG Home Loans Your partner in navigating today's mortgage market

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q: Why should agents connect with you?

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



Jason Schneider

Loan Officer, NMLS ID# 1849287

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