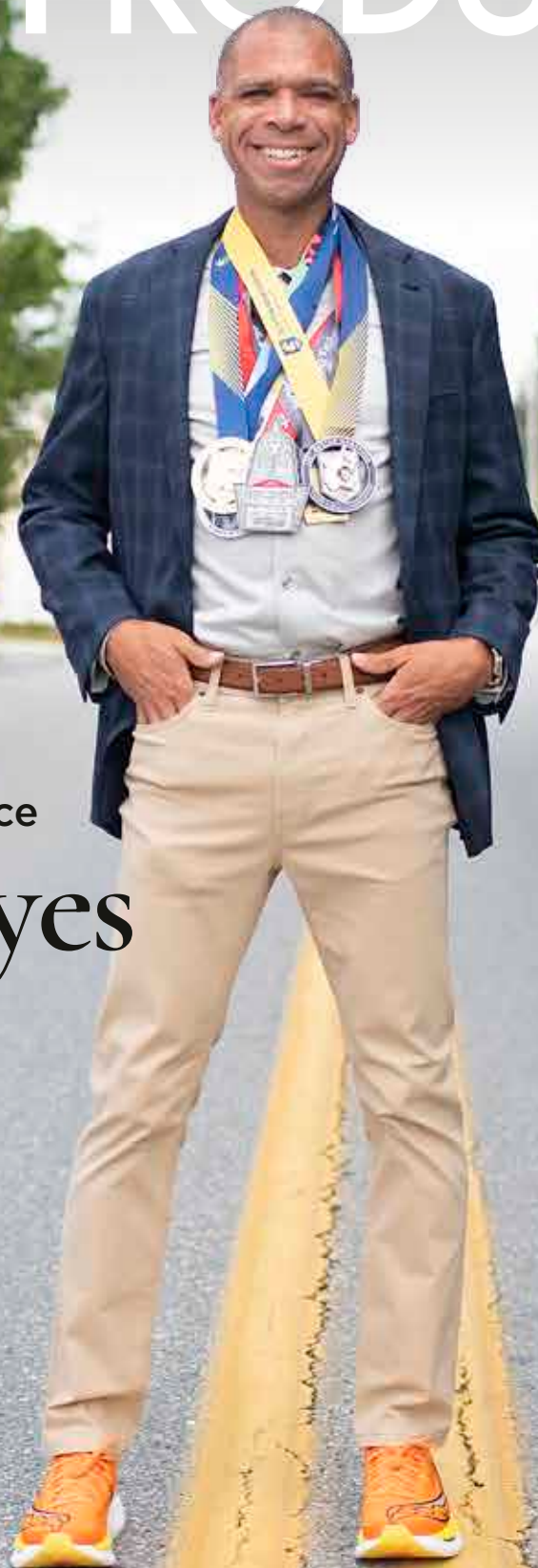


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September Momentum

September is when plans become action.

The vacations are over. The calendars fill back up. Families settle into new routines, and the pace of business begins to accelerate once again.

For real estate professionals, this is often one of the most important stretches of the year.

The habits you've built, the relationships you've nurtured, and the systems you've put in place over the past several months begin to show their results. There's still plenty of time to finish the year strong, but success rarely comes from trying

to sprint through the final quarter. It comes from doing the fundamentals exceptionally well, day after day.

The best agents understand that consistency builds confidence. Every phone call returned, every client cared for, every promise kept strengthens a reputation that lasts far longer than a single transaction.

The professionals featured in this issue exemplify that mindset. They continue to learn, adapt, and invest in their communities because they know that real estate has always been, first and foremost, a relationship business.

As we head into one of the busiest seasons of the year, I hope their stories remind you that momentum isn't created overnight. It's earned through countless small decisions made with excellence and integrity.



Here's to a productive fall and a strong finish to the year.

With gratitude,

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Publisher
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A Heart for Home

How DEBRA BURKE built a business rooted in resilience, relationships, and giving back

PHOTO BY NEXT DOOR PHOTOS | MIRIAM SMITH



When Debra Burke talks about real estate, she rarely starts with houses. She starts with people. After rebuilding her own life following a major transition, the Keller Williams Elite REALTOR® understands that every move represents something bigger. Whether she's guiding clients through a joyful new beginning or a difficult life change, Burke believes home is about more than the sale of a house—and she's found ways to extend that philosophy into the Lancaster community she now proudly calls home.

You describe yourself as a Jersey girl transplanted to Pennsylvania. How did that journey shape who you are today? Everybody's got a story. Mine starts in New Jersey. My husband at the time had a job opportunity, and we'd never lived anywhere else. We had two little girls and thought, "Lancaster looks like a nice place to raise a family." So we took the leap.

Even though it was only three hours away, I had to rebuild everything. I grew up in Basking Ridge and lived in the Princeton area, so Lancaster was a very different pace of life. I picked the neighborhood that looked the most like New Jersey and dug in.

Looking back, that experience gave me firsthand understanding of what relocation feels like. You're leaving behind relationships and routines and starting over. I know what that's like, and I think it helps me relate to clients who are making big changes in their own lives.

There was another season where you had to reinvent yourself. What did that teach you?

I was fortunate to be a stay-at-home mom for 17 years. When my marriage ended, I needed to reinvent myself. I'd left a career in pharmaceutical sales all those years earlier, and that wasn't something I could just jump back into.

I'd spent years volunteering on the BOD at the public library, church ministries, PTOs, fundraising for charities—doing meaningful work—but none of it paid the bills. I needed to provide for my daughters at that stage.

I took a job in a medical office because it was so close to their school and fit our schedule, but eventually I realized I needed something with more flexibility and opportunity. That led me into advertising sales, knocking on business doors every day.

It was challenging, but I discovered I loved helping people grow their businesses and achieve their professional goals. I won awards, earned incentive trips, and made more money than I ever imagined. More importantly, I realized I could build something for myself while helping others.

What eventually led you into real estate? The seed had actually been planted years earlier.

Back in New Jersey, we built a custom home from the ground up, and I absolutely loved every part of the process. I carried those blueprints everywhere. Picking finishes, fixtures, designing spaces, thinking through every detail—I didn't realize it then, but that experience stayed with me.

Once my daughters were older, I knew it was time. I saved enough money from my advertising career to fund my first year in real estate because I knew income wouldn't come immediately. I took the classes at LCAR, passed the licensing tests on the first attempt and interviewed nearly every brokerage in the county before choosing a team where I could learn from experienced professionals.

I knew I didn't know enough to start alone, and my mentor on that team, Elizabeth Bowlin, made all the difference. Her teachings became the foundation of my career, and I've been helping people achieve their personal goals through real estate ever since.

What has been the biggest surprise about this business?

It looked a lot easier than it actually is.

What surprised me most is that every client is going through a significant shift

of life. Moving is almost always tied to a life transition. Sometimes it's exciting and planned—like marriage, a growing family or building a dream home. Sometimes it's because of divorce, illness, loss or other circumstances that people never expected and did not choose.

There are always emotions involved.

As REALTORS®, we're advisors, but we're also sounding boards during these significant life events. We have to stay calm and professional while helping



Debra with Renee Norman, Licensed Operations Manager

people navigate some of the biggest decisions of their lives. That's something I didn't fully appreciate until I started doing it.

How has your business evolved over the last several years?

After almost four years on a team, I realized most of the business I was bringing in was my own. I wanted the freedom to build a business that reflected who I am, so I made the move to Keller Williams Elite.

The culture felt right from the beginning.

In January, my business became The Debra Burke Group when I hired my licensed operations manager, Renee. She is like my right arm. Renee supports me so we can serve more clients at a consistently high level of client care with concierge services.

Giving back seems to be woven into your business. Why is that so important? Because home means different things to different people.

Every day I help people buy and sell homes, but I also drive through Lancaster and see people who don't have one. That breaks my heart.

I feel strongly about supporting our local nonprofits, and I want my clients to become aware of them, too. At every settlement, I give clients a list of

organizations that I personally believe in, invest in and volunteer with. I ask them to choose one, and then I donate part of my commission in honor of their closing.

It's a simple way to celebrate their new chapter while helping someone else.

I'm also a member of **Lancaster County Women for Good**, a giving circle that supports local nonprofits through collective philanthropy and volunteerism. Being part of that organization has introduced me to so many incredible people and even more causes throughout our community.

The more I learn about the needs in Lancaster County, the more committed I become to helping however I can.

What keeps you grounded outside of work?

My daughters are still my greatest joy. They're both Penn State graduates who have built wonderful lives and careers of their own, and watching them



Debra's daughters

become independent women has been one of my proudest accomplishments.

I also love to travel and I absolutely love Broadway. That's two traditions I have carried on through their lives. Ever since they were little, we've gone to New York

for musicals, and now we still make weekends out of it whenever we can. Our annual family trips and girls-only adventures are more than vacations—they're opportunities to create lasting memories and build a legacy that keeps me grounded and centered on what matters most.

Those experiences together are priceless.

Looking ahead, what excites you most about the future?

I don't think in terms of numbers.

If you give me a production number as a goal, that will not motivate me. But if you tell me to help more people, strengthen my community, or make a bigger difference, I can get excited about that.

I want to continue growing my business, helping more people through life's transitions, serving clients well, and finding more ways to give back. If I can accomplish those things, I'll feel like I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be. 🏡

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All About Real Producers of South Central PA

Real Producers magazine started in Indianapolis in 2015 and is now in over 120 markets across the nation and continues to spread rapidly.

Q: WHO RECEIVES REAL PRODUCERS' MAGAZINES?

A: The top 500+ producing real estate agents in Dauphin, York, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, Cumberland, Franklin and Adams Counties.

Q: WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE PROGRAM?

A: To connect, elevate and inspire our entire industry. We are better together. We can create change when we surround ourselves with other successful, like-minded people. We as people grow. Our businesses grow. Our impact on the community grows. Real Producers is the platform that brings together.

We take the top 500 real estate agents and RP-vetted businesses in every market, and we build an exclusive community around that group. We share their stories, successes, market trends, and upcoming events — really, anything that will connect, inform and inspire, we put in our monthly publication.

Q: DOES REAL PRODUCERS HAVE EVENTS?

A: Yes! In fact, in-person celebration and collaboration are essential to building REAL RELATIONSHIPS with Real Producers. We will have specific networking, learning and community events throughout the year.

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

A: It's really simple. You have to be on the top 500 list, and we take nominations seriously. You can nominate other real estate agents, businesses, brokers, owners or even yourself! Office leaders can also nominate real estate agents. We will consider anyone brought to our attention who is in the top 500 because we don't know everyone's story, so we need your help to learn about them. We cannot guarantee a feature, but we encourage you to meet with one of our team members, support Real Producers and attend our private events to increase your chances.

Q: WHAT DOES IT COST A REAL ESTATE AGENT/TEAM TO BE FEATURED?

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

Q: WHO ARE THE RP-VETTED BUSINESSES?

A: They are the best businesses in South Central PA in their category, and you can find them listed in our index! We don't just find these businesses off the street, nor do we work with all businesses that approach us. Many of the top agents have recommended every single business you see in this publication. We won't even meet with a business that has not been vetted by one of you and "stamped for approval," in a sense. Our team will further vet every business to make sure they are a good fit and bring value to our community. Our goal is to create a powerhouse network, not only for the best real estate agents in the area but the best businesses so we can grow stronger together.

Q: HOW CAN I RECOMMEND A BUSINESS?

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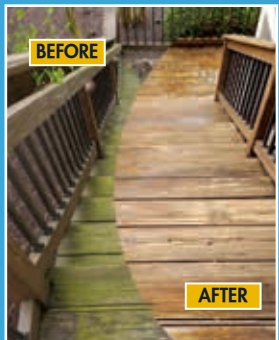
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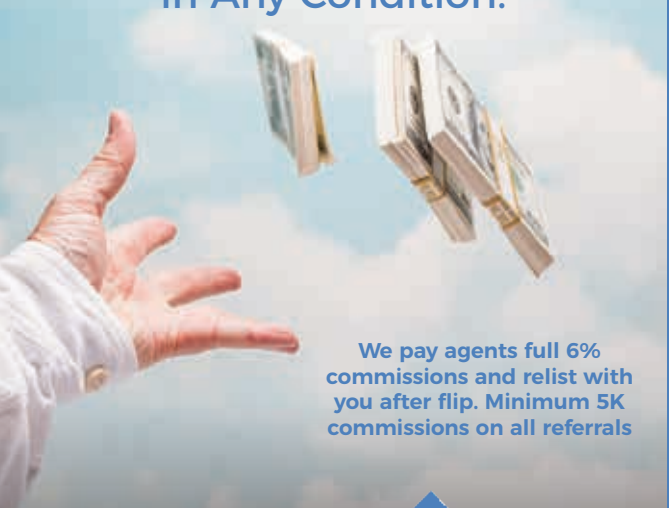
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Building Better Leaders

SHERRI JOHNSON COACHING & CONSULTING

After decades in real estate, **Sherri Johnson** has discovered that success isn’t just about selling more homes—it’s about becoming the kind of person others want to follow.

“You have to add value to get hired,” Sherri Johnson says. “If you add more value than your competitors, people will choose you.”

It’s advice she first heard from her father while growing up in Cleveland, Ohio, where business conversations happened around the dinner table and learning wasn’t confined to a classroom.

Long before she became a nationally recognized coach, speaker, and consultant, Sherri was absorbing lessons from her parents’ commercial printing business—lessons that continue to shape how she teaches real estate professionals today.

“My parents started their company with about \$500, and I got what I call an MBA at the dinner table,” she says. “I worked in every department, went on sales calls with my dad, and learned early that leadership is about creating value and helping other people succeed.”

Her father taught her to know her business inside and out. Her mother constantly encouraged her to lead.

“She always told me, ‘Go be a leader.’ I heard that my whole life.”

A Different Measure of Success

Those principles followed Sherri into real estate, where she quickly found success as a REALTOR®. But while she built a thriving business, another transformation was happening behind the scenes.

“The biggest turning point in my life wasn’t an award or a

promotion,” she says. “It was getting sober.”

Just months into her real estate career, Sherri recognized that alcohol had become a problem and made the decision to enter recovery. Nearly three decades later, she still considers it one of the defining moments of her life.

“I realized I was looking for approval through achievement,” she says. “If I accomplished enough, maybe I’d feel enough. When I put the drink down, my whole life changed.”

That shift reshaped not only her personal life but also her philosophy as a leader.

“I found that the things I had been chasing—

recognition, all of it—they weren’t what gave me peace. What really mattered was becoming the best version of myself.”

That perspective has remained at the heart of everything she’s done since.

After nearly a decade as a successful agent, Sherri made a move that surprised many of her peers, stepping away from sales to lead offices and develop other agents.

“People thought I was crazy for leaving sales,” she says. “But I always knew I wanted to coach. I knew I needed the leadership experience so one day I could truly help people grow.”

Over the years, she led brokerage offices, developed managers, and coached



hundreds of agents while refining the systems and strategies that would eventually become the foundation of her own coaching company.

Helping Others Grow

“I’ve always loved helping people discover what they’re capable of,” Sherri says. “Watching someone go from wondering if they can sell 10 homes to believing they can build an incredible business—that’s what excites me.”

Sherri eventually launched her coaching company in 2017, a leap she describes as equal parts preparation and faith.

“I just decided I was going to jump off the cliff and build my wings on the way down,” she says.

The decision quickly opened doors to speaking engagements, coaching opportunities, and consulting relationships with some of the industry’s largest organizations. Yet she rarely talks about those accomplishments without returning to the same idea that has guided her since childhood.

“It’s always about adding value,” she says. “If I can help someone become a better leader, communicate better, build stronger relationships, or create systems that give them their life back, then I’ve done my job.”

Outside of business, Sherri is equally passionate about personal growth. A longtime runner, she has completed dozens of half marathons and says many of her best ideas have come while logging miles.

“Running became meditation in motion for me,” she says. “It’s where I think, where I pray, where I solve problems. Every finish line reminds me we’re capable of more than we think.”

She’s also proudest of the role she has played as a mother to her two children, calling that responsibility her greatest accomplishment.

“My career has been amazing,” she says. “But raising my kids and becoming the woman I hoped they would see—that matters more than anything.”

Today, Sherri continues coaching agents and brokerage leaders across North America, helping them improve their businesses while encouraging them to grow personally as well.

“I don’t believe success is just about production,” she says. “It’s about building a life you’re proud of.”

Looking back, Sherri can see the common thread running through every chapter of her journey, from the family printing business to real estate to leadership to coaching.

“It all comes back to serving people,” she says. “When you focus on becoming someone who genuinely adds value, everything else has a way of taking care of itself.”

To contact Sherri, visit www.sherrijohnson.com.



RUNNING HIS OWN RACE

PAUL HAYES

eXp Realty

PHOTO BY NEXT DOOR PHOTOS | MIRIAM SMITH

For PAUL HAYES, success isn't measured by one transaction or one finish line. It's built through consistency, commitment, and the discipline to keep moving forward—whether on the roads to Boston or in the neighborhoods he calls home.

“There are so many correlations between training for marathons and running a real estate business,” Paul says. “The outcome is measured over a long period of time.”

It's a comparison he didn't fully appreciate until he returned to competitive running after more than two decades away. Today, the lessons he learned chasing Boston Marathon qualifying times inform everything from the way he serves clients to the way he defines success.

A Dillsburg native, Hayes has spent more than two decades in real estate, helping shape the local industry while remaining deeply rooted in the community that raised him. Today, he serves clients across Central Pennsylvania while continuing to mentor agents, invest in innovative business ventures, and coach the next generation of runners.

Through it all, his priorities have remained remarkably consistent: faith, family, and serving others.

Every Mile Builds the Next

Hayes didn't set out to become a real estate agent. After graduating from Virginia Tech on a Division I track scholarship, he married his college sweetheart, Katie, and followed her career to eastern Pennsylvania. Looking for an apartment, he wandered into a real estate office, where two agents suggested he get licensed instead.



Within weeks, he had passed the exam. Then reality hit.

“For months, I sat on floor duty waiting for the phone to ring,” Paul says. “It rarely did. Without a local network, I had to learn how to prospect—working expired listings, for-sale-by-owners, and open houses until opportunities finally began to come.”

That willingness to embrace unglamorous work has never left him.

Years later, Hayes found himself returning to another passion he had set aside. After more than two decades away from competitive racing, he laced up his sneakers again. What started as

a personal challenge became something much bigger, eventually leading him to qualify for—and complete—the Boston Marathon twice. Qualifying with times of 2:47 and 2:37, respectively.

The experience reshaped the way he views success.

Training for a marathon, he says, isn't about one great workout. It's about months of consistent effort, often when no one is watching. The same is true in real estate.

Run Your Race

That perspective influences the way Hayes approaches both clients and colleagues.



later embraced another industry shift by moving to eXp Realty. Rather than resist change, he sees it as an opportunity to improve.

He compares new business models to the “super shoes” used by elite marathoners: high-end technology doesn’t change the runner but

allows them to perform more efficiently and run faster with the same effort. New brokerage models allow agents to make significantly more money with the same effort they’re used to.

Success, he believes, still comes from putting in the work. The right tools simply help maximize the effort.

Looking ahead, Hayes expects real estate to become increasingly specialized, with teams playing a larger role and agents creating value by solving more complex problems for clients.

“Adapting has never meant abandoning relationships. It means finding better ways to serve them.”

A Life Bigger Than Business

While real estate has provided a fulfilling career, Hayes is intentional about keeping it in perspective.

“My faith, my family—everything else is tertiary to that,” he says.

That commitment is evident throughout his life. Sundays often bring dozens of family members together for lunch, a tradition that includes his 99-year-old grandmother. He coaches track and cross country at Northern High School, serves on the boards of the Dillsburg Library, and of Radiant Hope, a nonprofit dedicated to serving those affected by cancer.

He has also expanded his service beyond traditional real estate by co-founding Complete Senior Transitions, a company that helps older adults and their families navigate downsizing, moving, estate cleanouts, repairs, and every logistical challenge in between. The business grew from his longstanding passion for working with seniors and reflects the same problem-solving mindset that defines his real estate career.

For Hayes, success isn’t measured by one closing, one race, or even one season. It’s built over years of showing up, serving others well, and trusting that consistent effort eventually compounds into something meaningful.

And much like in a marathon, the finish line is never really the end, it just marks a milestone.

“Real Estate is an endurance business, and we are all just running our own race — one mile, one client, one season at a time.”

He believes too many people compare themselves to someone else’s results instead of focusing on their own goals. Running taught him that every athlete has a different journey, different strengths, and different challenges. The only meaningful comparison is with the person you were yesterday.

“Runners can be in the same race and have vastly different goals. Some run to win, PR, or just finish. Others are running for charities or running to support a friend. I’ll run my race, you run yours, and we can collaborate along the way.”

It’s advice that resonates in an industry where comparison can easily become a distraction. Hayes has watched real estate evolve through multiple market cycles, helped launch Keller Williams Keystone during one of the toughest economic periods in recent history, and

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More Than a Place to Live



Eden Village Harrisburg is moving closer to creating a 32-home community for people experiencing chronic homelessness — but bringing the vision fully to life will take more than land and construction.

For years, Eden Village Harrisburg existed as an ambitious idea: create permanent housing for some of the region’s most vulnerable residents and surround them with the relationships and support needed to make that housing truly feel like home.

Today, that idea is moving steadily toward reality.

Plans call for 32 approximately 400-square-foot tiny homes and a community building on South Front Street in Harrisburg. The development plan has been approved by Harrisburg City Council, a general contractor has been hired, the project has received its NPDES permit, and significant donations and grants are helping move the approximately \$5.8 million project toward construction.

But the people behind Eden Village say completing the homes is only part of the mission. The project will need financial support, professional expertise, volunteers and, eventually, people willing to become part of the lives of those who live there.

From an Idea to a Village

The roots of Eden Village Harrisburg go back to a small group of families who began looking for ways to address housing needs in their community. Their early efforts



included bringing food and clothing to people living in shelters and Harrisburg’s tent communities, but they became increasingly interested in addressing a more fundamental need: permanent housing.

Jon Bomberger, Associate Broker and Branch Vice President with Coldwell Banker Realty, was part of that original group with his wife. While reading *REALTOR® Magazine’s* Good Neighbor Award edition, he came across Eden Village, a model that began in Springfield, Missouri.

“I read about what Linda Brown, also a fellow REALTOR®, and her husband had started in Springfield, Missouri, and I decided to reach out,” Bomberger says. “One phone call led to the next, which led to a visit to Eden Village of Springfield, which led to visits to other villages in different parts of the country.”

The Harrisburg group began working with Eden Village Springfield to adapt the model locally.

The concept is designed specifically for people experiencing chronic homelessness and disability. Residents pay approximately \$300 per month in rent, with income potentially coming from employment, disability benefits or other sources. Just as important as the individual homes, however, is the community created around them.

Building More Than Houses

For Joy Daniels, Broker/Owner of Joy Daniels Real Estate Group, that distinction is central to understanding the project.

“Eden Village reminds us that home means so much more than a house,” Daniels says. “It means safety, stability, dignity, community and the opportunity to begin again. When you realize there are people in our own community who have lived for years without those things, it is difficult not to want to help.”

Daniels recently accepted an invitation to join the Eden Village board after learning more about the project through the Greater Harrisburg Association of REALTORS® (GHAR). The association has committed \$75,000 to sponsor one of the village’s homes.

Eden Village Board President Wendell Hoover sees that contribution as an important example of the kind of broader community participation needed to move the project forward.

“We hope that this is the first of many community organizations that believe in Harrisburg and this mission that we can help the chronically unhoused,” Hoover says.

The model also depends on something that can’t be purchased through a capital campaign: relationships.

“We’re building more than tiny homes. We are building hope and community,” Bomberger says. “Without the power of connection with other humans who can care for and love each other, the model doesn’t work.”

Once residents move in, volunteers will have opportunities to become part of that community, offering the kind of consistent human connection that organizers believe is essential to the village’s success.

“The residents will need human connection and to feel love,” Bomberger says. “We need people willing to be that family to the residents. Those volunteers will be the secret ingredient for the whole project.”

Bringing More People to the Table

Before that stage arrives, there is still considerable work ahead.

Eden Village is continuing its capital campaign as it approaches construction, and organizers are looking for people with fundraising experience and connections to potential donors. The project also offers opportunities for businesses, churches, community organizations and individuals to contribute financially, volunteer or introduce the organization to others who can help.

That makes South Central Pennsylvania’s real estate community a natural source of support — not simply because of its connection to housing, but because the industry includes an extensive network of builders, lenders, developers, contractors, title professionals, vendors and community leaders.

“Real estate professionals understand better than most how complicated it can be to turn an idea for housing into an actual front door someone can walk through,” Daniels says. “We understand land, zoning, development, construction, financing, community relationships and all the pieces that have to come together.”

Just as valuable, she says, are the connections those professionals make every day.

“You don’t have to be one of the people leading the project to make a meaningful difference,” Daniels says. “You can give financially. You can introduce Eden Village to someone who may be able to help. You can involve your company, your clients, your vendors, your church or your network. You can volunteer.”

For a project that began with a handful of people asking what they could do about homelessness in their own community, that expanding circle may be exactly what carries Eden Village through its next stage.

As Bomberger puts it, “Who do you know in your network that would be passionate about a project like this?”





Joy Daniels



Wendell Hoover



Jon Bomberger



Help Build Eden Village Harrisburg

Eden Village Harrisburg is moving closer to becoming a reality, and there are many ways to be part of what comes next. Donate, volunteer, connect the organization with potential partners or simply help spread the word.

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Finish the Fourth Quarter Strong: **The 4th Quarter PUSH**

By Sherri Johnson

Top producers know the fourth quarter isn't the time to slow down—it's the time to separate yourself.

While others begin waiting for January, elite agents use Q4 to build momentum, gain market share, and position themselves for next year. Success isn't driven by motivation; it's driven by discipline and standards.

Make one decision: No coasting. No waiting. No playing defense. This is your 4th Quarter PUSH.

P — Protect Your Pipeline

Your pipeline is your business. Prioritize conversations, follow-up, database engagement, and appointments. If your pipeline feels inconsistent, the answer is usually better follow-up—not more leads.

U — Upgrade Your Standards

Elevate your schedule, systems, communication, and client experience. Protect your time, eliminate distractions, and stay consistent. The market rewards discipline.

S — Stay Visible

Buyers and sellers are still making decisions. Stay present through conversations, personal outreach, video, events, and delivering value. Visibility builds trust, and trust builds business.

H — Have a Vision Bigger Than the Current Market

Don't let today's market dictate tomorrow's success. The work you do over the next 90 days will shape next year. One relationship, one listing, or one season of focused execution can change your trajectory.

The fourth quarter PUSH isn't about pressure—it's about intention. Lead yourself well, protect your momentum, stay visible, and finish strong.

The market still rewards excellence—and excellence is always a decision.

FINISH THE FOURTH QUARTER STRONG: **THE 4TH QUARTER PUSH**



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