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Partner Spotlight:

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Rising Star:

Colton Weisenstein

Broker Spotlight:

Brooke Brock

Behind-the-Scenes All-Star:

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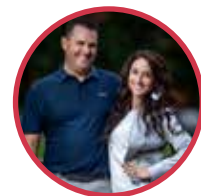
2023

▶ publisher's note

As the new year rushes in and the hustle of the holidays settle down, January brings a clean slate of ideas, fresh perspective and an opportunity to set new goals and objectives — otherwise known as new year resolutions. This is the time of year when people look back at the past year and try to improve themselves for the upcoming year. Basically, looking back to move forward. The experiences from last year — both good and bad — are excellent tools to building a better new year. Regardless of what resolution you commit to, the goal is to improve life in the coming year.

This year we encourage you to make some new connections with some of our Preferred Partners. This

magazine is FREE to the Top 300 real estate agents in Wayne County thanks to them. If you know someone who should be added to our partner list, please recommend them by filling out the form at linktr.ee/realproducers. See you at our next event, and cheers to 2023!



Chris and Terra Csotty

Publishers of Real Producers of Wayne County
linktr.ee/realproducers
chris.csotty@realproducersmag.com
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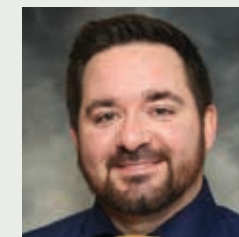
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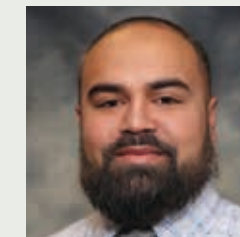
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▶▶ event announcement

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▶▶ top producer

By Robbyn Moore
Photos by Stylish Detroit

BRIAN

A FAMILY BRAND BUILT ON AUTHENTICITY

Brian Hill built his business based on authenticity and passion, and with his family, created a superior team of agents supported by a trusted and tireless work ethic. His success was found in a short amount of time and in one of the most demanding real estate markets. "It's all about a person's willingness to work hard and build lasting relationships," he said. "Success isn't about how big of a team you can build; rather, it's the type of team you build. I do well because I'm a trusted advisor and not a sales guy to my clients."

As the vice president and associate broker at Metropolitan Real Estate Group LLC (MRG), Brian runs the independent brokerage alongside his family with an easy style that's relatable and approachable. "Our MRG family is very close," he shared. "We have been able to grow and succeed in a difficult market because we are genuine in our work and dedicated to our clients. The work I do and the effort I put into this company is not only to ensure my family is always taken care of but also so that every agent in our MRG family feels taken care of as well."

Brian launched his real estate career after nearly 13 years of working at Life Time Fitness. "I was at a point in my life when my priorities had shifted," he recalled. "My father passed away of a sudden heart attack at age 57, and that put a lot of things in perspective for me. Additionally, as one of six kids, I had a desire to work with my family and build something that could be passed down to our children when we are gone."

Brian's dad, who owned a carpet cleaning company for 30 years, had a huge influence on Brian. "My dad was amazing with his customers," he said. "I used to tell my friends that if my dad didn't like you, there was a problem because my dad loved everyone. He was honestly one of the nicest people I had ever known, and that influenced me on how I try to be with every client. He taught me



that business is about building trust, doing what's right and focusing on more than the money: It's about caring about the person you are helping. I know it would have been a dream of his to have built something that he could have passed down, and that inspired me to build something that could grow with my family."

In 2013, Brian's sister-in-law Kelly Lauderbaugh launched MRG with her father, Don Rousseau, which grew to \$25 million in just a couple years. The chance to build something special with family spurred Brian to leave his career with Life Time Fitness. His brother Nevin and brother-in-law, Steve, came on board with MRG at the same time as the family truly put all hands on deck and laid the foundation to grow the brokerage and a future for their families.

In just six years, Brian surpassed a career volume of \$80 million — \$21 million of which he accomplished last year. "We have grown from a \$25-million independent agency to having an over-\$100-million agency," Brian said. "I have always been very competitive, which is great in the real estate business. Working with my brother, I joke that every year my only goal in life is to beat him. That being said, we have fun working together as a family and with the amazing agents on our team."

Brian realized early in his professional career that he was good at helping people navigate through difficult decisions. "I don't take it lightly that I'm in a position to help my clients find a home in which they will be creating a lifetime



of memories," he said. "While our job is stressful, it's the relationships that make it worthwhile."

Currently, Brian is most passionate about seeing his new agents thrive. "I have always been in commission jobs, and I know that it can be very difficult when you first get going," he said. "Being in a position to coach these agents gets me excited for the future."

For Brian, the hardest aspects of his job are the uncertainty of the market and time management. "Making sure that I'm finding time for my family, myself and my clients can be very difficult,"



“HAVING A STRONG PARTNER LIKE MY WIFE, KATIE, AND A TEAM THAT IS WILLING TO STEP IN WHEN THINGS GET UNMANAGEABLE IS THE ONLY WAY THAT I’VE BEEN ABLE TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS BUSINESS.”

he shared. "However, having a strong partner like my wife, Katie, and a team that is willing to step in when things get unmanageable is the only way that I've been able to be successful in this business."

Brian and Katie have three children — Landon, 6, Kenley, 2, and Liam, 1. Together, they enjoy movie nights and time at the lake with family. Brian is also an avid musician and spends time in his home-recording studio, just as his dad did in the family garage. Additionally, since the age of 10, Brian and his Uncle Brian — whom he was named after — have shared a family custom of organized fireworks. Brian keeps the tradition going with a show at his in-law's Fourth of July party each year.

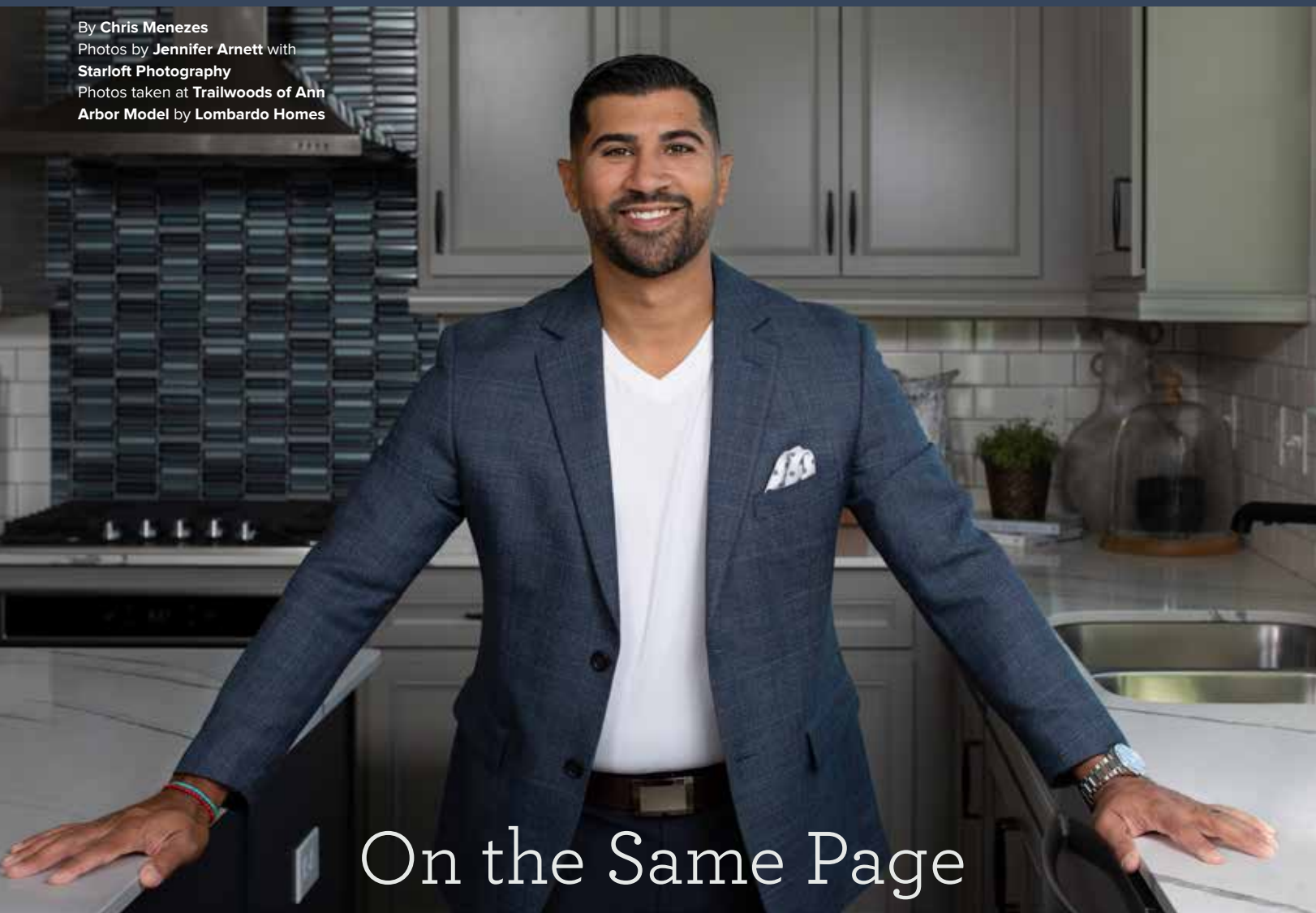
The team at MRG plans to grow as a company and eventually venture into other states. "We work hard to create lender relationships to ensure we find good people who fit our company brand and personality," Brian said. "My personal hope is to have our family and the families of our team be a part of what we are building for as long as they may choose. Creating something for generations to come would be one of the most amazing feelings in the world."

Brian's focus is not on whether he's known for being the best real estate agent or having the greatest volume: His motivation comes from building relationships that have a positive impact on others. "I hope to live a life in which people talk about me the same way they speak of my dad," Brian admitted. "My goal is to be a kind, honest, hardworking family man."

"You don't need to have a big name behind you to succeed: A true brand is created by authenticity," Brian said. "That's the amazing part of being in this business — the sky's the limit."

ALAN BERRY PROSPECT APPRAISAL

By Chris Menezes
Photos by Jennifer Arnett with
Starloft Photography
Photos taken at Trailwoods of Ann
Arbor Model by Lombardo Homes



On the Same Page

Alan Berry is not a typical real estate appraiser. As the president of Prospect Appraisal, he runs one of the most prolific teams in Southeast Michigan, having completed over 10,000 appraisals since 2014. Their production is not only a testament to Alan's strong work ethic and ability to lead, but it's also an indication of the ease in which he works with real estate agents and their clients.

"Appraisers have somewhat of a

stigma in the industry; brokers and agents think that they can't discuss anything with them and that many appraisers will not deviate from their original valuation. I don't like to run my business this way," Alan explained. "I have a team-mentality: The mortgage broker, real estate agent and appraiser are all in this together. I try to discuss the appraisal as much as I can with all parties involved — without crossing boundaries, of course — in order to educate

and help everyone understand the details of the appraisal."

Alan's goal is to always be on the same page as the agents whom he works with. He even conducts classes for brokers and agents to better understand what appraisers look for and how they determine their values. Alan said that he is always available to answer questions or concerns about appraisals and the process — whether he is the appraiser on the job or not. He also understands



that nobody is perfect — especially if they are handling the large volume of business that Prospect Appraisal does — and is always willing to review sales provided by agents and change his value if necessary.

"We are human and do make mistakes and may miss a comp or two, leading to a 'low' appraisal," Alan explained, "but we are quick to admit mistakes and correct any valuations that need correcting. I want real estate agents to know that when I am appraising a property they are selling, they will receive a reliable, credible and unbiased appraisal."

Alan knows how important it is for everyone in the transaction to work together because he has personally worked in every position. He started in the real estate industry as a mortgage broker in 2006 and briefly transitioned into sales as an agent in 2009.

his wife, Ronia, is his favorite way to spend time. They enjoy going to museums, farms and anywhere that involves animals.

"My son Joseph loves everything animals or dinosaurs, so that's where our free time goes," Alan said. "We also love going out to my uncle's lake house on weekends in the summer. Joseph can't get enough of riding the Jet Ski with me. When we can, my wife and I try to vacation several times a year, which is another perk of being an appraiser."

For Alan, "success" isn't monetary or material — it's his reputation throughout the industry and

He was a real estate agent in San Diego, California, when he began working as an appraiser trainee to supplement his income. It wasn't until 2012 that he decided that being an appraiser was the route for him. "What captivated me the most in being an appraiser was the ownership I was able to take of my career and the flexibility that it offered me in my personal life," Alan said.

When Alan isn't working or exercising at the gym, being with his two kids — Joseph and Ryan — and

I would rather be remembered for being a respectful and reliable person, and most of all, a great husband and father.

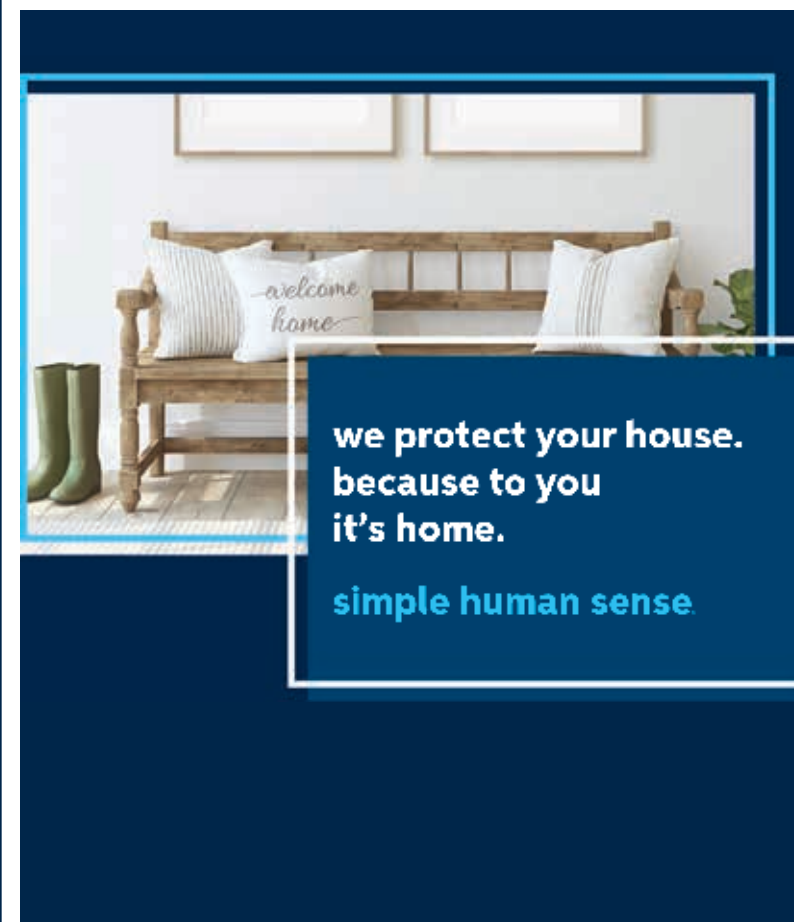
how well respected he is. Above all else, it's the path he provides for his children to grow. His ultimate goal is to give them the tools to become the best human beings they can be, regardless of the wealth they attain.

"At the end of the day, I don't necessarily care to be remembered for my profession," Alan explained. "I would rather be remembered for being a respectful and reliable person, and most of all, a great husband and father. When all is said and done, what my family thinks of me is most important."

For more information about Alan and Prospect Appraisal, visit prospectappraisal.com.



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▶▶ rising star

COLTON WEISENSTEIN

SERVICE WITH A SMILE

By Chris Menezes
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Heights in Rochester

HAVING ONLY WORKED PART TIME HIS FIRST THREE YEARS IN REAL ESTATE, COLTON WEISENSTEIN JUST COMPLETED HIS FIRST YEAR AS A FULL-TIME AGENT AND HAD HIS BEST YEAR EVER. WHILE IT'S BEEN A LONG ROAD FOR COLTON, HIS STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO CREATING THE LIFE HE ALWAYS WANTED HAS FINALLY PAID OFF, AND HE COULDN'T BE HAPPIER.

Colton worked as an auto body collision damage estimator for a large collision shop franchise conglomerate prior to getting into real estate and while he was getting his business off the ground. Discontent with the "toxic work environment" of his previous job, Colton dreamed of the day when he could solely work in real estate and help people.

"I literally came from one of the worst work environments into one of the best I could have ever imagined with The Corey Welch Real Estate Team at eXp Realty," Colton explained. "We are a younger team in the business who are very motivated and success-driven. We strive to make an impact within the lives of our clients as well as within our community. We are not the average white-collar professionals who would make you feel uncomfortable when working with us: We are someone you can relate to every step of the way."

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“ I JUST WANT TO SPREAD GOOD VIBES AND HELP PEOPLE. ”

that kicked him into high gear didn't occur until 2020 when his daughter, Mia, was born.

“I wanted to have a free schedule to do what I love as well as spend time with my family so I would not miss out on watching my daughter grow. I want to drop off my children and pick them up from school in the future and be fully involved in their lives,” Colton shared.

Colton loves being able to take care of his daughter during the day, knowing there was a time when it would not have been possible. He also loves spending time with his family, riding dirt bikes and four-wheelers while traveling to their favorite destination in northern Michigan — Saint Helen. Most of their weekends and summer months are spent traveling to dirt bike tracks, where they compete in sanctioned races.

As Colton looks to build on his current success, he remains motivated by the opportunity to help as many people as he can — whether it's his clients, other agents in the industry or people within his community.

“I just want to spread good vibes and help people,” Colton said. “I will always be here to help guide those who want to become agents or need some training to become better in the business. Success to me is knowing that I made my clients happy with the sale or purchase of their home, making them smile as much as I do when I'm working with them. That means the world to me.”


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A highly positive person who always has a smile on his face, Colton thrives on connecting with people and is always looking for ways to help others. He developed an interest in real estate through investing. After the purchase of his second house, his personal real estate agent encouraged him to enter the business. Although the guys he worked with at the auto shop thought he would never be

successful in real estate, Colton was driven to prove them wrong and create a better life for himself.

However, it took some time for Colton to build his confidence as an agent. While finding personal and professional fulfillment by helping people in real estate was motivation enough for him to get started in the business in 2018, the real motivator

- Headshots (on and off location)
- Branding Sessions
- Real Estate Photos
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Thank You for Attending our MARKETING/BRANDING/ SOCIAL MEDIA PANEL & Networking Event!

Top real estate agents and our Preferred Partners from Oakland and Wayne Counties gathered to learn helpful tips, recommendations and new ideas to help build their brand online. We hope everyone who attended walked away inspired and motivated to become even more successful.

Maria Kopicki with Coldwell Banker Weir Manuel said, "It was very beneficial to get ideas on how to utilize various social media platforms. I already use many, but I learned some new techniques to incorporate. I am always grateful for the great connections Real Producers makes, and I have used many of the partners/sponsors in my business. Thank you!"

Joe Romain from Golden Bear Home Inspections said, "I enjoyed the different approaches on how to market with social media." As for Amber Goodwin from eXp Realty, she said that she enjoyed

the "lively" and "informative" panel, and the "opportunity to connect with the sponsor."

We want to thank Defined Mortgage for being our Beverage Sponsor, our Food Sponsors — Lombardo Companies and Morse Moving & Storage — and our Support Sponsors — Graphic Takeover, Impact Home Staging Experts, Modern Title Group, Rebecca Alley with Capital Mortgage Funding and The Gonzalez Group powered by NEXA Mortgage.

Additionally, we want to thank Jennifer Arnett with Starloft

Photography for taking photos and WayUp Media for taking video.

Special thanks to our panelists: Erik Wright - Social House Group, Nicole Elizabeth - eXp Realty, Paul Wolfert - CENTURY 21 Row, and Robert Courtney - Robert Courtney & Associates for providing so much insight and useful information to all our attendees.

We are so grateful to all of you who came out to connect and spend the evening with us. Thank you all so much! We look forward to making more memories with you at our next event.



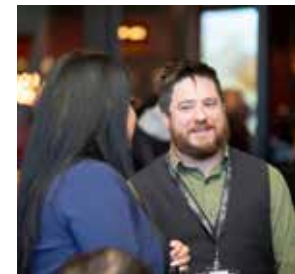


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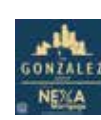
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►► broker spotlight

By Chris Menezes
 Photos by Tracie Seeley
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GIVING THE GIFT OF REAL ESTATE

After just seven years as a real estate agent, Brooke Brock opened her own brokerage, BBR Realty, LLC (Bringing Better Results) on January 1, 2022, in downtown Trenton. She already has six agents, including herself, and while she is excited about all the potential agents who are currently looking to join, she emphasized that she wants “quality versus quantity” for her brokerage.

“I am passionate about building a strong brokerage,” Brooke explained. “The environment and culture that we are creating are so appealing and warm. We are all about education and lifting each other up. Personally, I just want to uplift anyone I can. I want everyone to recognize their worth, to grow in their confidence and education, and to find their joy in business and in life.”

While Brooke admitted it has been a “quick seven years” since she started in real estate to now running her own brokerage, she also emphasized her

lifelong connection to the business. Her stepdad, Wayne Flaishans, has been an agent for 46 years and currently has emeritus status. Her grandfather had his own office before that, and her mother, Debbie Flaishans, recently retired from First American Title, and will also be joining Brooke as the BBR Realty in-house title specialist.

“Growing up in the business and being around all of my parents’ friends — who were also in the business — I was surrounded by some great industry leaders,” Brooke explained. “I feel like I’ve been involved in real estate my whole life.”

Before entering the unofficial “family business,” Brooke worked for Trenton Public Schools so she could be a full-time mom to her three boys — Johnny, Cole and Brett. Eventually, she wanted something more in her life and decided to get her real estate license — which she felt like she was born to do.

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"I always found myself in the position of wanting to help people. With the encouragement of my parents and my friends, I became an agent, knowing one day I would reach my highest goal of becoming a broker. Providing for my three sons gave me all the determination I needed," Brooke shared.

Brooke immediately loved real estate. She loved connecting and helping people while building friendships along the way. Although she was doing well as an agent, she eventually came to a place in her career where she wanted to create more income for herself. As she found herself on the other side of a divorce, she needed that additional income to support her family, and she wanted to give others the opportunity to do the same.

"I realized I could create a brokerage firm that would not only promote growth within my business but also help me nurture others as well. I created a formula to help agents achieve higher pay with lucrative commission plans, so now we're Bringing Better Results to our clients and agents. I just have a passion for others, and now I have the chance to impact so many people every day," Brooke said.

While Brooke was excited to open her own brokerage, she was also apprehensive. She expressed her gratitude for how everything fell into place. The only problem she has now is the lack of inventory in the housing market, which she shares with everyone in the business. She remains undeterred, however, in her goals, and she knows that real estate will always be part of her life.

"I love it too much," Brooke said. "Looking into the future, I only see growth with my brokerage and the many people whom I can help. More office space? Yes. Multiple offices? That would be amazing!"



When Brooke is not pouring into her agents and clients, she loves spending time with her husband, Jason, and her three boys. She makes it a point to have dinner every night as a family. When it comes to movies and TV series, they consider themselves a Star Wars and Marvel family. Brooke also loves the Outlander book series by Diana Gabaldon and the Bible, and is currently reading a lot of books about sales, marketing, self-improvement, and how to always learn and grow — all with the aim of building BBR Realty into the best brokerage for its agents.

Brooke joined the Trenton Business Association (TBA) and Downriver Business Association (DBA), and is looking to join other local organizations. "I just want to focus on the community," she said. "Last year, at the end of February, we had the First Annual Trenton Winterfest in downtown Trenton. Here at BBR Realty, we set up a tent and a selfie station and handed out free hot chocolate and handwarmers. It was an amazing event and day! We met so many people!"

"To me, success is happiness, stability, and security for my family and for my agents," Brooke continued. "Money is a bonus. Being able to have a job you love to do is a gift, and I hope to pass that gift on to others with BBR Realty."



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Cheyenne DOWNES

NAME: Cheyenne Downes

POSITION/TITLE: Head of Marketing

OFFICE/COMPANY: Social House Group

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR/WITH THE PERSON WHO NOMINATED YOU? 3 years.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING IN THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY? I've been in the real estate industry since 2016.

1. What did you do before you began working in your current position?

Before stepping into my role as head of marketing at Social House, I previously worked as a marketing coordinator for Real Estate One in Troy for three years. The majority of my professional career has been in real estate.

2. What does your typical workday look like?

No day is the same at Social House. Throughout the week, you may catch me onboarding a new agent, creating a TikTok, stepping up our social media engagement, or hosting a virtual training with our real estate agents. My one constant, day in and day out, is collaboration. Every workday for me involves collaborating with our team and refining our marketing strategy, as well as discovering places where Social House can grow.

3. How would you describe your job in one word?

Stimulating

4. Why do you think you excel at your job?

I joined Social House because I saw the value of blending digital marketing with real estate, I am extremely self-motivated, and my mindset perfectly aligned with



Social House's way of thinking. As I've grown with Social House, I think that I have become more easily adaptable and can go into any situation open-minded. Ultimately, I want to see our team thrive, and I think that plays an important role in the success of anyone at Social House.

5. What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

The most rewarding part, by far, is looking around the office and seeing how much our team has grown. When I came onboard at Social House in 2019, I was Employee #1, and we had four agents. Our team grew faster than I could have ever imagined, especially during a pandemic. Since then, we've cultivated a dedicated team, and every person on our staff plays an essential role. We have about 40 people who call Social House their home, and it's beyond awesome.

6. What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Every day brings a new challenge — that's what makes working at Social House interesting and rewarding. We are still a fairly young company, and every day I find myself learning and adapting.

7. What is one thing about you that others might find surprising or interesting?

Most people are surprised to hear that my favorite celebrity is Guy Fieri. I've been brainstorming a tattoo of him and have a Funko Pop! of him on my desk in the office. My love for him doesn't just stem from watching tons of episodes of Guy's Grocery



Games and Triple D, though. Guy Fieri is extremely charitable, highlights small restaurants and up-and-coming chefs, and owns goats. This guy definitely deserves a Google deep dive if you're not on Team Fieri yet.

8. When you're not working, what do you like to do for fun?

With less than two years until my thirtieth birthday, a big part of what I do for fun is tackle my 30-before-30 bucket list. Most of my list involves my passion for being outdoors, learning about gardening, reading, eating good food from local restaurants and going on Northern Michigan adventures.

9. How do you feel about being nominated as a Behind-the-Scenes All-Star?

Yaz and I have developed a close professional relationship over the last three years, so the nomination means a lot to me. Being nominated by Yaz is a perfect example of how supportive our entire team is of each other and that we're not afraid of expressing gratitude.

10. Is there anything else you'd like to share about yourself, about your job or about your relationship with the person who nominated you?

If you're an agent who is looking for a new brokerage, our team would love to see if Social House is a good fit for you. We have a dedicated admin support that wants to help your personal real estate business grow.

According to co-Owner Yesmeen "Yaz" Abdullatif, Cheyenne is the backbone of Social House Real Estate Group. "Cheyenne is online every day, focusing on new branding material, responding to clients with the highest sense of urgency and always making sure our clients are first," Yaz said.

If Yaz could describe Cheyenne in one word, it would be "ambitious." "Cheyenne jumped into her role with little-to-no guidance. She has been an amazing asset to the team and always exemplifies a can-do attitude," Yaz shared.

Other than her ambition, Cheyenne is also known for her upbeat personality. "Cheyenne's ability to remain positive — even through unprecedented times — has been the team's most appreciated quality," Yaz said. "Her positive attitude and ability to always look for ways to make any process better is what makes her stand out the most."

Do you want to nominate someone Behind-the-Scenes? Email terra.csotty@realproducersmag.com.



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