

TOP PROFESSIONALS • UNDER 40 •

These Columbus REALTORS® members were selected for our 2023 Top Professionals Under 40 through our Young Professionals Network. This recognition highlights six members as outstanding individuals in their area of expertise. These members are well-rounded, client-oriented and take time to be impactful members of their community. From helping people buy homes to volunteering at non-profit organizations, they find the time to do it all – and we applaud and acknowledge their achievements. Please take a moment to read the inspiring stories of these young professionals, who are dedicated to providing the best service to their central Ohio communities every day.

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ADAMS

CODY



As a major foodie, Cody doesn't shy away from trying new things or sharing his honest opinions. Growing up in Circleville, OH, he speaks highly of the community that he says "closely resembles Hallmark movies." He enjoyed attending the annual Pumpkin Show and one day could see himself becoming a vendor at the event with his own cheese-on-a-stick food truck. With a specialty in local Columbus restaurants, he's always on the hunt for the next hole-in-the-wall place that will wow him and his husband.

Getting to know the areas that his clients are looking to buy or sell in is a key part of his business strategy. Being able to refer them to various resources or local area businesses is knowledge he has acquired over time, and continues to stay up to date on. He advises other REALTORS® to do the same. "Study your local markets and know what's going on. There's a huge difference in markets just from Dublin all the way up 33," says Cody. "I really think young people can benefit from being highly involved and knowledgeable on the area they serve."

In addition to educating himself on local areas, Cody has a passion for educating first-time homebuyers and those who need financial advice in the home-buying process. The foundation of his personal brand consists of honesty, genuine relationships, and getting to know his clients personally to fully understand their needs. "Someone will never forget the time you spent with them to accomplish a goal through building credit, fixing poor credit, or finding grants or proper loan programs. My business is truly referral based and is built around providing a great experience," Cody says.

Helping someone accomplish their goal means just as much to Cody as it does to the client. A memorable transaction of his dates to 2021, where he helped a single mother of three, who lost her husband to cancer, locate an affordable, safe home for her family. On the verge of being evicted from her rental property due to the landlord selling it, Cody helped build her credit in just two months in order to secure a beautiful, 4-bedroom home within her price range. She never thought she could accomplish this on her own – and Cody supplied her with the proper resources and education so that she didn't have to.

Cody's drive to be successful comes from many places. One of those places is the aspiration for independence and financial freedom. In the past, he's experienced stressful financial situations similar to those his clients endure today, which is why he can relate to them on a personal level and go above and beyond in helping them get to where they need to be.

A goal he had while growing up was to end the cycle of renting properties and to have a home to settle down in as a family. Not only has he achieved that goal but has gone a step further by building his first home in Marysville, OH – which ultimately inspired his start in the real estate industry. During the building process, he was fascinated by how it all came together, but felt he lacked a real estate agent who could provide him with all the information he needed to know. "I decided to get into real estate to educate people on credit worthiness, unexpected expenses that arise from homeownership, and where to go if they need help."

STEVE BESKID

“There are no shortcuts or substitutions for real, genuine relationships,” says Steve. Whether they’re personal or professional relationships, Steve goes the extra mile to make strong connections that last. One relationship that means a great deal to him and his family was fostered through his church and the charity foundation Children’s HopeChest. Martha, a 10-year-old girl from Uganda, has been sponsored by Steve and his family for the last five years. They receive monthly letters from her where they can witness the direct impact they’ve had on her growth and development.

In addition to charity work, Steve is also extremely family-oriented with two children of his own, Elliot and Brooklyn. Like many others in the industry, he doesn’t have a lot of personal time, but wakes up at 3:00 a.m. every morning so that he has time to be a dad, husband, and business owner. A big part of making his lifestyle work for him is openly communicating his schedule with those around him. “You’ve got to find time for yourself and find a routine that works for your lifestyle,” he says. “The key to being successful is not necessarily what you’re doing, but is just that you do it, and you do it every day – and you don’t miss.”

Steve’s determination and drive comes from a place that many others in this industry can relate to. Beginning his career as a loan officer at a bank, he no longer wanted to be tied to a desk. “The goal was to go out on my own and create a path for myself that had no ceiling. I wanted to be involved in my local real estate community and push the boundaries for what I was capable of, on a personal and professional level,” he says.

The need for person-to-person interactions in his everyday life is what fuels his passion for consistent and transparent communication with his clients. These communication methods are a key part of Steve’s business strategy, which he attributes his success to today. By using technology to grow his business rather than hinder it, Steve has found unique ways to make the financial process of home-buying as smooth as possible. “Between the automated emails, consistent Friday phone calls, and text messages throughout the process, there is never a reason that the buyer, buyer’s agent, or listing agent does not know what is happening in the financing process,” he explains.

Aside from these forms of communication, Steve enjoys interacting with his client base through social media. His goal is to create brand awareness around him as a person, as people like doing business with those who they like, know, and trust. Whether he’s making short videos about market updates or sharing major personal or professional milestones, Steve prioritizes connecting with his audience at least once a day. “The most important thing is being true to yourself. Don’t try to be someone you’re not. If you’re consistent with what you do, the rest will take care of itself.”





CAROLE GREENZALIS

“Never settle” were Carole’s famous words to live by as she industry-hopped before finally finding a home in real estate. Having experiences in everything from financial reporting to improv comedy, she viewed her early professional years as a chance to explore new things and truly find herself. Now, she’s able to utilize all the skills and lessons she’s accrued towards being the REALTOR® she is today. “The fact that I performed in college and Chicago at Second City makes me really comfortable working with others,” Carole explains, “but I also have managed projects that report directly to the President of a major healthcare system, so I’ve had to become a mix of professional and down to earth.”

With that improv comedy background, Carole intends to bring some fun into her business strategy. “Part of my mission is to bring fun into people’s inboxes, and it’s that positive mindset that builds my client base. I want to make it a fun experience because it can be really overwhelming and stressful,” she says. Rather than inundating clients with strictly business emails, she wants them to get excited about their potential future home by including details like the best place to get a margarita or coffee in their area. Carole believes REALTORS® have a unique opportunity to both support their clients as well as promote local businesses.

All fun aside, she also understands the emotional side of buying and selling real estate. Over the years, she’s honed her skills to take on her client’s emotions in a productive

and healthy way. This includes one transaction in which she cultivated an environment where the buyers and sellers ended up becoming friends at the end of the sale. She’s proud that the other listing agent and herself were able to create a calm, peaceful, and professional atmosphere that led to a friendship she still hears about today. This transaction affirmed for her that she can be a strong REALTOR® for her clients, in addition to empathizing with them.

Helping others is a core reason why Carole loves the real estate community, as well as something she likes to incorporate into her personal life. While balancing recently becoming a mother and prioritizing being a good partner, friend, and family member, she is continually looking for ways to volunteer her time and energy to those in need. “Because of my success in 2022, I was able to donate \$1,000 to support the homeless in Columbus, and I feel like I’m just getting started.” Aside from financial contributions, Carole also donates her time through various volunteer opportunities and non-profit organizations, and she encourages others to do the same.

When asked what advice she has for other young professionals, she pulls from the many experiences that made her into the well-rounded individual she is today. “Whether it’s a relationship, friendship, or your career – never settle. Keep going and you will find the right place for you,” says Carole. “My life isn’t perfect, but I know that I’m where I’m meant to be, both personally and professionally.”

ELEA KARRAS

When Elea's grandparents fled war-torn Greece for a better life in America as entrepreneurs, she witnessed what it takes to be successful – integrity, determination, and grit. She still attributes her success today to these skills, as they represent a large part of her brand and identity. "My grandparents sacrificed everything to create a better future for me," she explains. "Real estate allows me to make a real impact on others, while carrying on their legacy."

Despite those initial challenges, Elea's family found their home base in Dayton, OH, and created a home life much like that of the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. With a large family and her dad being a semi-professional Greek musician, there were always parties and dances happening at her house. She still tries to travel to Greece every few years to stay in touch with her roots.

Elea has now grown her own roots in the Columbus area, having recently purchased and renovated her first home. She enjoys long walks with her bernedoodle, Charlie, around the area to admire the old, early 1900's architecture. While she's lived in Columbus for eight or nine years now, this is the place that made Columbus home for her – which is a feeling she tries to replicate for her clients with every sale. "The transfer of real estate is an extremely important matter and must be handled with skill and care. My real estate business strategy has been built on being the most skilled agent in the room," says Elea.

When asked what sets her apart from other real estate professionals, she describes her unique entry into the industry and the individuals that fostered her knowledge and experiences. Prior to receiving her license in 2019, she worked as an intern for her current team, Millennium Group. Here, she was able to shadow the top agents in the industry before working as a co-listing agent with one of her biggest inspirations and former Top Professional Under 40 winner, Rachel Alley. Rachel brought Elea along on over 80 listing appointments where she was able to assist in 67 seller transactions. This



expedited her growth and allowed her to learn how to do real estate right away, without having to reinvent the wheel.

Elea has many inspirations that fuel her drive for success in the industry, but her competitive side is also a result of being a collegiate athlete who grew up on the basketball court. In such a demanding role, she sometimes finds it difficult to balance her work and personal life but has recently found an outlet in coaching high school basketball. While so much change has occurred in the last few years with her career taking off and moving to a new city, she explains that basketball has been her constant. "When I'm in the basketball gym, I feel like my old self and that this is who I am and who I'm supposed to be. It's a really calming feeling to be there," she says.

In the future, Elea is excited to help train, coach, and mentor other agents in the Central Ohio area and beyond, as the training she received so early in her career is something she holds close to her heart. Her advice for young professionals in the field? "Make sure you're keeping an eye out for new opportunities and new doors to open, even if it's not exactly what you're imagining. If it feels right, dive right in and it will probably lead you somewhere better than you could have even planned."

ALON MELMED



“Find something where you can be in charge of how successful you are, and work harder than everybody else you know. Then, pass that knowledge on to someone else – give the opportunity to other people. That’s what brings intrinsic happiness,” says Alon. After working in many corporate roles, climbing his way up the ladder only to be pushed back down, he decided to take his future into his own hands and hasn’t looked back.

Alon was introduced to the real estate industry by a family member who owned a small, local real estate brokerage. It was there that he learned the ins and outs of the industry and quickly grew among the ranks of top performers in the company. This wasn’t enough for him, as his previous management roles fueled a strong desire to educate and lead others. “My mission is to pluck individuals who have untapped potential from within the industry or other industries, and help them grow into successful entrepreneurs.” Currently, his team consists of seven women who hail from backgrounds in nursing, marketing, art, and graphic design.

Diversity isn’t something that Alon necessarily planned for his team, but at this point, he says it’s intentional. He’s discovered that by bringing together individuals with different skill sets and backgrounds, he’s cultivating a unique environment that is highly motivational and enhances their growth. “In order to produce, retain, and elevate top performers, there must be a balance between focusing on each member’s contribution to the team and their own personal growth,” says Alon. This year, he hopes to grow his business even more by recruiting individuals who have a similar mindset to his current team.

Sometimes being a coach, teacher and leader means taking a step back to watch other individuals succeed. Alon doesn’t mind doing this because he is able to see the bigger picture. When asked what transaction he is most proud of in his career, he chose one that highlighted his team’s victory, rather than an individual triumph. In January 2023, two members of his team were representing the seller and buyer of a transaction. Because of this unique situation, he was able to observe and coach while evaluating how effective his training had been. “I view every transaction I have with my team through this lens,” says Alon. “How can I bring the best out of them? What barriers are truly in their way of achieving their potential? These are questions I ask myself daily and conversations I openly have with each member of my team.”

Going from the corporate ladder to being in control of his own destiny, Alon describes himself as hungry, intentional, and open to growth. “My team will act as an incubator for successful real estate agents,” Alon says, “to help them change their lives, their client’s lives, and encourage each person to ‘pay it forward’ to someone else. This award will help expedite my overall goal of reaching as many people as possible.”

Originally from Louisville, KY, Laura has come to love the small-town energy that Columbus emits. While at first she wasn't sure how to go about meeting new people, she quickly found her bearings when she met other Kentucky natives in her area. The connections snowballed from there, and now she has a wealth of people in her corner, a neighborhood community that her family loves being a part of, and an abundance of people to serve as a REALTOR® for.

Laura's real estate journey began after two drastically different real estate transactions. While working with one agent who argued with her and lost the keys to the property, another agent saw potential in Laura and noted how quickly she picked up the process. "It struck me how few listing agents had true marketing knowledge, and I found a void that I might be able to fill," she explains. "From the day we closed, our agent called me every day with encouragement until I agreed to get my license. The rest is history!"

Graduating from the University of Kentucky with an Integrated Communications degree, Laura found that she was able to approach real estate in a unique way that valued relationships, personality alignment, and emphasized her role as a REALTOR® – not a salesperson. "I'm never going to try and 'sell' anyone anything because my role is to market the house," she says. "I never want to be in a position where I'm talking someone into a decision that they didn't make for themselves." She goes on to explain how real estate is often a lot like dating. Not every agent and client pairing are going to be a good fit, and she might not be for everyone – but when the matchup is right, they will accomplish amazing things.

Laura believes that someone's home is a big part of their life, and she strives to be a part of her client's family. While some might view empathy as a hindrance in this industry, Laura finds ways to make it an asset. "My integrity and personality drive me to do my best," she says. "Someone once advised me to care less and take emotion out of the deal entirely so that I would be less stressed. I informed him that unfortunately, that's not how I live my life nor how I operate my business. Removing empathy from the equation is impossible."

Laura's empathy has led her to some incredible accomplishments in her career. In 2019, her client purchased a home in Southern Orchards to flip. Because it was sold by an estate attorney, she got to know the family throughout the sale process. The family told her about the woman who lived there,



Ethel, who happened to be one of the first African American female wrestlers in the country. Laura and her client knew they had to plan something to honor Ethel and commemorate the memories of the home; so a plaque was placed on the house, honoring Ethel and her memory. "Recognizing Ethel's history, her legacy and the memories of her family was an opportunity that I'm incredibly proud of. Rather than 'just a flip', it's a home that held a rich story in history and is worthy of celebration from our Columbus community."

This year, Laura hopes to grow her business even more while also taking time for herself and her family. Through navigating being a mom and a successful businesswoman, she hopes to go on a vacation with her family this year to relax and have quality time together away from work. Her daughter certainly thinks it's possible, as she puts it – "Mommy can't get fired, because she's her own boss."

LAURA RADULOVICH