

Clockwise from top left, Rachel Reynolds of Lake Oswego, Ore.; Anna Maria Wong of San Leandro, Calif.; Brad Kintz of Alexandria, Va.; Shannon Williams of Austin, Texas; and Jamal Smith of Blue Bell, Pa.

Success
on their
own
terms

30 UNDER 30

Energetic. Enthusiastic. Entrepreneurial. These are among the defining characteristics of this year's class of 30 REALTORS® under 30 who are making their mark on the industry. REALTOR® Magazine's editors pored over more than 500 applications, selecting candidates based on their passion for the business, their professional achievements, and their innovative business techniques. This year's fresh faces come from different parts of the country, have different backgrounds, and focus on different niches, but they share a desire to control their destiny and measure success on their own terms, whether that's by maximizing

their sales potential or enjoying the freedom to pursue other interests, including time with family and friends.

In the profiles that follow, you'll gain insight into how these impressive young stars built their business: They share their strategies and secrets for marketing, team building, negotiating, and more. You'll also learn of the benefits they derive from volunteering for both professional and community organizations. Their energy and ideas will help invigorate and shape the industry in the years ahead. And no matter where you are in your career, some of their tips may help you breathe new life into your business.

BY BARBARA BALLINGER, HALEY HWANG, SARAH KLEIN, CHUCK PAUSTIAN,
KELLY QUIGLEY, ELYSE UMLAUF-GARNEAU, CHRISTOPHER WRIGHT

PHOTO FOR RM BY CYNTHIA HOWE ©2005

30 UNDER 30



David Crisp (right) knows his business partner and mentor, Carl Cole, always has his back.

DAVID M. CRISP 25 *president, Crisp & Cole Real Estate, Bakersfield, Calif., www.theagentsyouwant.com* In four years, Crisp has gone from waiting tables to being president of his own real estate company, which he launched this year. He's also opened his own loan company and production outfit, which creates the 30-minute television shows he uses to promote his listings. Crisp's team, which includes seven unlicensed assistants and eight sales associates, was responsible for \$95 million in sales and 355 transactions in 2004. Crisp attributes his success in part to his partnership with Carl Cole, CRS®, GRI, whom he met when both were working as salespeople at Kyle Carter Real Estate. "He believed in me from day one," Crisp says of his partner, who is 22 years his senior, "I wouldn't be where I am without him." **Bling is the thing:** Crisp insists that his salespeople wear professional attire and be well-groomed. He buys luxury automobiles for his salespeople and has flown clients in private jets to view properties. "Image is key in this market," he says. "Clients want to feel important and be with a real estate professional who's successful." **Sky-high goals:** One of Crisp's long-term goals is to build Crisp and Cole Tower, a 12-story, 500-unit condominium building. He also wants to fund the construction of a new building for his church.

BRAD BEACHAM 28 *associate broker, Beach Realty & Construction, Kitty Hawk, N.C., www.bradbeacham.com* When he's not helping people buy and sell real estate in North Carolina's Outer Banks, Beacham's riding the Atlantic waves on his surfboard or serving as the youngest deacon at his community church. The Outer Banks native has watched his hometown turn from a sleepy beach community into a sizzling resort and second-home market. Beacham jumped into the business five years ago at the encouragement of a local businessman. In 2004 he closed more than \$19.7 million in sales—a 58 percent jump from 2003—and opened the door to a steady stream of referrals. **Keeping his balance:** Beacham never skimps on quality time with his family, his faith, and his hobby, surfing—even when business is hectic. On weekends, he works by appointment only. **Staying the course:** He's learned to stay true to his business plan, even when there's no deal in the pipeline. "It's important to stay consistent with follow-up and prospecting," he says.



BEACHAM

ANTHONY BOZZI 26 *salesperson and team leader, EYA Urban Properties Inc., Washington, D.C., www.eyaurban.com* In Bozzi's first year of college, he was telling a friend over lunch about his interest in real estate when a practitioner at the next table offered him a job. An avid *Architectural Digest* reader, Bozzi combines his interest in design with his passion for the center city. "I love city life, the buzz, the people walking around." His enthusiasm must be contagious, because his team did \$32.8 million in business in 2004. The team, which he assembled two years ago, consists of three salespeople and a transaction coordinator. The company also has a dedicated marketing department that brings in prospective clients and sets appointments. This frees him up to do what he loves best, showing people around the city's different neighborhoods. **Follow the money:** Bozzi joined EYA because the boutique company, affiliated with a local builder, offers its salespeople a salary, benefits, paid time off, and continuing education. **All aboard:** He displays his intimate knowledge of the market by taking prospective clients on private bus tours around the city.



BOZZI

JEFF B. BRICK, GRI 27 *director of team building, VIP Services Division, Prudential Americana Group, REALTORS®, Las Vegas, www.americnagroup.com* Brick worked for three real estate companies before finding one that embraced his mentoring concept. He's a veritable matchmaker, assembling teams with a manager who oversees recruiting and workload, a team leader, about 10 salespeople, and an administrative assistant. In the past three years, he's mentored 150 teams, helping team leaders generate an average of \$6 million more in sales in their first year. Even with his mentoring and coaching duties, Brick found time to close 107 transactions and \$26 million in sales last year. **Change agent:** Brick chairs the Nevada Association of REALTORS® Forms and Contracts Committee and is working to get the state to adopt a uniform purchase agreement, a task he accomplished with the Las Vegas Association of REALTORS®. **Lesson learned:** Discover people's best skills and place them in a job in which they're able to use those skills.



BRICK

KRISTIN J. CARVALHO, ABR® 27 *vice president and owner, The ROI Group Inc., Keller Williams Southwest Realty, Scottsdale, Ariz., www.roirealestate.net* Carvalho, who posted more than \$10 million in sales on 48 transactions in 2004, draws on her University of Arizona MBA degree and her experience as a management consultant when dealing with her clients—high-net-worth individuals looking for residential investments in the Phoenix area. Licensed in 2003 and herself an investor, she provides her clients with sophisticated financial analysis reports and communicates with them via e-mail on a regular basis. "Most of my investors are pleased to have someone work with them on an almost daily basis and not just on a transaction," she says. **Hot marketing tool:** Her most popular report is the weekly "Hot Sheet," in which she analyzes several attractive investment opportunities. The analysis is so detailed that some clients have invested in properties sight unseen. **Taking it easy:** Carvalho, a self-described "Type A" personality, says she has to remind herself to slow down and not try to do everything today. "People will make their decisions when they're ready, and all I can do is present them with information."



CARVALHO

SEE PAGE 38

30 UNDER 30

FROM PAGE 36



PHOTO FOR RM BY WALTER URIE ©2005

Shelley Dow (left) keeps tabs on team productivity for her mother, Marty Rodriguez.

SHELLEY DOW 29 broker and office manager, Century 21 Marty Rodriguez Real Estate, Glendora, Calif., www.c21martyrodriguez.com When Dow graduated from the University of Southern California with a degree in business administration, she knew where she wanted to apply her business savvy: to her mother's real estate team. Her mom, Marty Rodriguez, happens to be Century 21's all-star team leader; her company racked up \$199 million in sales in 2004. Dow is at the center of the action, applying her financial acumen to ensure the 15-member team meets its production and financial goals. **By the numbers:** Dow measures everything, from the team's market share by city to the ratio of sales to leads. She shares the results on a weekly basis with the sales manager, who in turn use the data to identify neighborhoods with higher sales potential. Under her daughter's management, "everything is accounted for and everyone follows the rules," says Rodriguez. **Skill set:** Dow says no salesperson has ever said to her, "You don't know what I'm going through." She has experience with all aspects of the job. "And they know I do my research" when it comes to the details of contracts and financing, says Dow.

JEREMY DANIELSON 28 broker-owner, USA 4% Realty, St. Cloud, Minn., www.jeremydanielson.com Danielson began investing in distressed real estate at age 21. In 2001 he decided to make real estate his career, partly for the flexibility it gave him to spend time with his newborn daughter Peyton. Three years ago, he opened a branch of USA 4% Realty, a small Minneapolis-based company that charges 4 percent commissions. "I saw it as a way to gain an edge," he says. Competitors warned him he'd fail, but he knew he'd prove them wrong after he secured eight listings within the first four months. Last year, he personally closed 84 transactions and more than \$13 million in sales. When he's not working, he enjoys golf and spending time with Peyton, now 4, whom he's raising as a single parent. **Getting bigger:** Danielson owns his own office building and has three administrative assistants and four salespeople. **Marketing strategy:** He gets results—usually about one transaction per placement—by placing a \$475 full-page ad in his local newspaper twice a month. Each ad includes his promise of understanding, service, and accountability.



DANIELSON

JULIE DUDUM 29 assistant manager and salesperson, Coldwell Banker, Walnut Creek, Calif., www.dudumrealestate.com It's not uncommon for 20 people to bid on a single property in the East Bay area, so Dudum makes sure her clients' offers stand out. She asks lenders to write positive notes on financing documents and follows up with the seller's agent by phone. "I don't like to lose," she says. Last year Dudum sold \$30 million in the red-hot California real estate market, roughly double that of two years earlier. As a seller's agent, she's equally tenacious. She'll insist her clients purchase warranties on appliances to avoid deal-breaking disputes following inspections. **Relationship builder:** Dudum takes buyers, sellers, and cooperating salespeople out to dinner together after a successful close of escrow. "The clients learn a bit about one another, and the other salesperson and I connect and now have a great business foundation for any future deals together." **Follow through:** Dudum says her work isn't done until the clients are happily moved in. When necessary, she has solicited bids on paint jobs and other repairs after the deal has closed. "It's all part of my service," she says.



DUDUM

MELISSA JONES 26 salesperson, Century 21 Premier Group, Osceola, Wis., www.thejones.com Jones targets FSBOs and expireds through creative direct mail pieces, such as ring-ing cards shaped like cell phones, magnets with various facial expressions that enable the recipient to select a mood, and personalized fortune cookies. With these and other tactics, Jones almost doubled her sales volume last year to \$14.8 million on 120 transactions. Clients are impressed with her willingness to go the extra mile, she says. Once, when it became clear the seller wasn't going to clean a house to the buyer's satisfaction, Jones spent \$200 to hire a cleaning service. **Farming windfall:** To boost her income, Jones acquires farms and subdivides the land into smaller lots for resale. **While you were out:** Jones likes to renovate—even the homes of friends. When her assistant, Brianne Golden, went on vacation for five days, Jones had new cabinets and floor tile installed for her. It was a project Golden had wanted to do but couldn't afford. "I love surprising people," she says.



JONES

KEITH KANEMOTO 28 broker-associate and co-owner, Prudential LTM, REALTORS®, Longmont, Colo., www.kanemoto.com Kanemoto's passion for professional service has been a boon to his commercial real estate business. As the youngest president of the Longmont Association of REALTORS®, a member of the city of Longmont's strategic planning committee, and a director of the Longmont Area Economic Council, he's introduced to people he might not meet otherwise. **Reaching out:** "I've built many friendships and customer relationships through my volunteer work and knowledge of the local market," says Kanemoto, whose father also is a commercial practitioner. Last year, the son reached a sales volume of \$15 million on 58 transactions. **Optimistic outlook:** He also credits his success to a positive attitude. "Even in the most complex real estate transactions, I can come up with a solution," Kanemoto says. In one transaction, he sold excess water rights on farmland, saving his client almost 50 percent of the cost to purchase the land.



KANEMOTO

SEE PAGE 40

30 UNDER 30

FROM PAGE 38

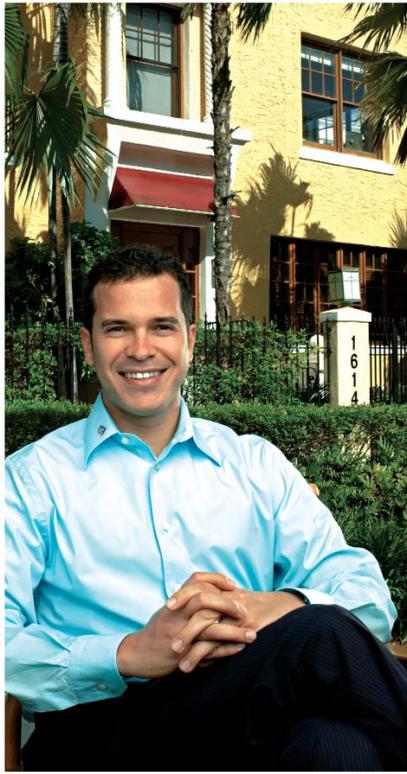


PHOTO FOR RM BY MIKE HAMEL ©2005

HEMLEY GONZALEZ 29 *broker-owner, Affordable Real Estate LLC, Miami Beach, Fla., www.affordablecondos.com* Gonzalez realized it might be a long time before high-end clients would trust him with million-dollar properties, so he went for volume in the underserved affordable condo market (average price, \$200,000) in Miami and the Beaches. His company of eight focuses on about 700 buildings within a six-square-mile area, and closed almost \$36 million in transactions during 2004. Gonzalez markets the company, not individual salespeople, and prospects are divided equally. He provides each practitioner with an office, equipment, and free parking. His salespeople also receive extensive training on target buildings and state condo regulations before they hit the street. **The spirit's the thing:** Gonzalez left Cuba with his family at 13. He dreams of helping to rebuild a democratic Cuba and cultivating an ethical real estate industry in that country. A sense of mission also permeates his company. His clients are generally young people who are just starting out. "We're not selling cookies. It's people's dreams," he tells his sales force. **Branching out:** Within seven years, Gonzalez wants his company to be a recognizable brand in the affordable condo markets of several major cities.

CHRISTINE KIM, e-PRO® 29 *broker-associate, Alain Pinel, REALTORS®, Saratoga, Calif., www.e-christine.com* Kim's mother had been in real estate just six months when she was in a near-fatal car accident on her way to prepare for an open house. It was 1993; the elder Kim survived but is severely brain-impaired. Almost 10 years later, Christine Kim decided to take up the career her mother had tragically left behind. Her father wasn't thrilled about the Northwestern graduate's decision to jump from a high-paying job with Internet networking giant Cisco Systems for the unknown income of a real estate career. But her determination to fulfill her mother's dream of real estate success has paid off—with \$11.7 million in sales volume in 2004. "Dad couldn't be prouder," she says. **Sniffing out listings:** Being a dog lover has propelled Kim's business. When she changed careers, her "dog group" was the first to know, and Kim's first listing in the neighborhood came from a fellow dog owner. **Dedicated to her mother:** "Every time I close a deal, I think of my mom and that I'm doing this for her because it's something she always wanted to do," Kim says.



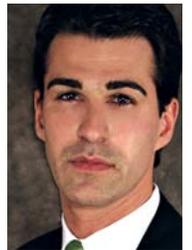
KIM

BRAD KINTZ 27 *broker-associate, Long & Foster, REALTORS®, Alexandria, Va., www.bradkintz.com* Knocking on doors, cold calling, working FSBOs, and handling dozens of listing presentations has been a piece of cake for Kintz, a former walk-on linebacker and strong safety for the University of Virginia football team. The work habits he needed to make the team as a non-scholarship player and to succeed early in his real estate career were developed during many summers and school breaks working for his father, a property manager. Rather than rely on a Web site, mailings, and advertising, Kintz achieved \$7.3 million in sales last year by pounding the pavement and maximizing personal interaction. He says being young is a huge advantage because people respond to his message that he has a lot of time and energy and will work twice as hard for them. **Habla Español:** Kintz studied Spanish in college, and now almost one-fourth of his transactions come from the District of Columbia area's growing Hispanic population. **Reaching the goal line:** Kintz, who set his sights on making the "30 Under 30" list years ago, tells other rookies, "If you can deal with rejection, you can go a long way. Stay off the emotional rollercoaster."



KINTZ

PAUL MURAD 29 *salesperson, Liberty Realty Inc., Las Vegas, www.paulmurad.com* Murad moved to the United States from Azerbaijan, by himself, at the age of 16. With little more than \$1,000 in savings, he worked his way through high school and college at the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma. Before entering real estate, he bought and sold two businesses, a spa and a pizza restaurant. In 2004, his first full year in real estate, he sold \$16 million worth of property. He has purchased 13 properties in Nevada and Florida and has helped U.S. and international clients set up a fund for future investments. **Nose to the grindstone:** Part of Murad's success is his persistence. "A lot of times, things don't get done until you call a couple of times," he says. **Author, author:** Murad has written a book, *Manhattanizing Las Vegas*, describing the vertical growth of the Las Vegas skyline and the opportunities that presents. Putting his thoughts into action, Murad has acquired land to build a high-rise condominium tower with retail in downtown Las Vegas. His goal is to have the tower sold out by his 30th birthday.



MURAD

DONALD L. PLUNKETT JR., CRS® 29 *broker-owner, Congress Realty Inc., Scottsdale, Ariz., and Las Vegas, www.congressrealty.com* Plunkett's flat-fee listing service has generated a lot of attention, from fans—his two offices generated \$128.8 million in sales on 469 transactions—as well as detractors, who believe his limited-service concept is bad for the business and consumers. He's undeterred by such criticism, citing Amazon.com, Costco, and Wal-Mart as examples of retailers that offer consumers low prices by eliminating unnecessary costs. "I appeal to a different type of customer, the For-Sale-by-Owner type," he says. "I'm bringing more sellers into the fold." Still, about 30 of Plunkett's closed transactions last year were full-service. **Capitalist pursuit:** Plunkett earned his license at 18 and loves the fact that he determines his compensation. "It's the American dream—you work hard and you're rewarded for it," he says. **Out in front:** All practitioners need to adapt to the growing use of the Internet in real estate, he says. "You can't sit back and think that, because you have all the market share this year, you'll have it again next year."



PLUNKETT

SEE PAGE 42

30 UNDER 30

FROM PAGE 40



PHOTO FOR RM BY ROBERT RATHE ©2005

James W. Nellis II learned the ins and outs of customer service from his mother, Vicki Nellis.

JAMES W. NELLIS II, ABR[®], CRS[®] 28 sales associate, RE/MAX Allegiance, Burke, Va., www.nellisgroup.com Nellis, a third-generation practitioner, learned from his mother to put the client first. "I never put a commission before the sale," he says. "I do whatever's necessary to make the client happy." That philosophy brought him \$30.6 million in business in 2004; 85 percent of his business is repeat or referral. During the past few years, he built a sales team: seven buyer's agents, an office manager, a contracts coordinator, a client care coordinator, and a marketing director; he expects to add another buyer's agent by the end of summer. Part of his customer service philosophy means being responsive. Everyone on his team is equipped with a Blackberry, and his laptop is always on. "People want answers right now. They'll move on to another salesperson in 30 minutes." **Client-focused fun:** Nellis loans an inflatable moon bounce to clients free of charge for use during the summer months. He also puts on a "Breakfast with Santa" event and has a Super Bowl party at his house for clients where he raises money for cystic fibrosis. **Toting technology:** Nellis's portable USB "lipstick" drive, which he carries on his key chain, includes all his documents, allowing him to work on virtually any computer, anytime.

JAMES RAYSBROOK 26 salesperson, Coldwell Banker Bain Associates, Bellevue, Wash., www.jamesraysbrook.com Raysbrook is so serious about providing great service that he fines himself \$5 if he doesn't answer his cell phone within three rings. So far this year, he's racked up \$4,000 in fines. "The goal is to make all clients feel like they're my only client," says Raysbrook, who puts the money into his marketing budget. Such discipline helped Raysbrook close 46 transactions in 2004 with a total sales volume of \$22.8 million. **Saving the day:** Raysbrook's client tracking system is so detailed that he's reminded more than one husband of an upcoming anniversary. "They've not only thanked me but also passed my name along to their friends," he says. **Making friends:** For Raysbrook, a relocation specialist, every meeting with a new client is the beginning of a friendship. That helps explain his 98 percent conversion rate for qualified relocation prospects. "He doesn't put his mouth where his ears are," says Michael Waggoner, managing broker for Coldwell Banker Bain. "He listens."



RAYSBROOK

RACHEL REYNOLDS 27 broker, Coldwell Banker Barbara Sue Seal Properties, Lake Oswego, Ore., www.rrhomes.com In two years, Reynolds has posted more than \$25 million in sales—\$16.8 million in 2004 alone—and ranks among the top five producers in her 500-associate company. She pegs results to hard work and to thinking outside the box. She'll knock on doors of homes buyers want. "I don't take no for an answer, which is something my mother taught me," she says. She also looks for novel ways to serve clients: At the close of transactions, for example, she gives buyers a map to show where important services, such as banks and dry cleaners, are located. **Early impression:** "I always wanted to be in real estate because I felt it was a way for me to help people improve their lives," she says. She started in high school at the front desk of a real estate company and has never looked back. **Listen carefully:** "Many people think they know what they want, but what they say doesn't always reflect their true desires," says Reynolds. She helps by listening carefully and evaluating buyers' current lifestyle and future plans.



REYNOLDS

TIM RILEY, ABR[®], CRS[®] 29 salesperson, Century 21 Team Realty, San Luis Obispo, Calif., www.yourcentralcoasthomes.com Riley's interest in real estate began at age 20 when he bought his first home. He wrote his senior thesis on owning a real estate company and another paper on how a salesperson could survive a recession. By then it was clear he would pursue a real estate career rather than take over the family business and become a fourth-generation farmer. Still, he returns to the farm often and has been known to close a deal while riding in a combine. Riley closed \$21 million in sales on 47 transactions in 2004 and won the Century 21 Quality Service award. **Personal touch:** Riley tries to meet face-to-face with past clients once or twice a year. He also sends handwritten notes, hosts a client holiday party, and gives customized gifts for closings and special milestones. Strategic alliances with lenders, escrow officers, contractors, and termite companies expand his sphere of influence and save him time. **Board meetings:** Riley says he works 80 hours per week but still finds time for surfing and mountain biking, activities that help him connect with new prospects. "I've put several deals together sitting on a surfboard while waiting for waves."



RILEY

MATT RITTER 27 senior broker, Unique Properties LLC, Denver, www.uniqueprop.com When he first started in investment real estate, Ritter roamed through Denver every weekend to familiarize himself with neighborhoods and the city's apartment stock. He used what he learned to create what he believes to be the most in-depth database on the Denver apartment market—something that has given him credibility with investors. Last year his closed sales volume was \$22 million from 25 transactions. **Keeping it simple:** Marc Lippitt, the company's founder, and a partner, Jeff Johnson, taught Ritter that no problem is unsolvable. In one deal, he says, the prospective buyer was deemed not creditworthy by the lender, so Ritter convinced the seller to guarantee a portion of the loan. The lender then approved the buyer for the rest of the note. "The seller thought it was a great idea and the buyer commended us on finding a solution to a possible deal killer," says Ritter. **Why he loves real estate:** Ritter is gratified that he's helped clients retire early, send their kids to college, and create nest eggs through investment real estate. "I'd do this business for fun."



RITTER

SEE PAGE 44

30 UNDER 30

FROM PAGE 42



PHOTO FOR RM BY KEVIN BRUSIE ©2005

DREW SIGFRIDSON 28 broker, CB Richard Ellis/The Boulos Co., Portland, Maine, www.boulos.com Sigfridson's interest in real estate started on a lobster boat. The boat's captain, who doubled as a developer, told him that the really big fish are in commercial real estate. So Sigfridson began working as an assistant to two brokers at Boulos, eventually obtaining his real estate license in 1999. Last year he handled 48 transactions for \$28.6 million in sales. Sigfridson says his business is all about long-term relationships. He keeps in touch with old clients, taking an interest in their business and mailing them relevant articles. His persistence and professionalism pay off in repeat business and referrals. **Hold the presses:** Sigfridson writes articles (for example, "Build It or Buy It") for a statewide business magazine. He also runs congratulatory ads announcing client moves. **Mixing it up:** To expand his network of bankers, attorneys, and other professionals who can bring him deals, Sigfridson sponsors monthly business mixers at a local restaurant and sits on the board of the Maine Real Estate and Development Association.

JAMAL SMITH 29 salesperson, Keller Williams Real Estate, Blue Bell, Pa., www.smithgrouprealestate.com After six years as a pharmaceutical company rep, Smith decided to take the sales skills he'd acquired and go to work for himself. "I wanted better control over my earnings potential," he says. He got his real estate license in 2002 and went to work for a mom-and-pop company in Florida. After seven months, he moved to the Philadelphia area and switched to his current company, where he was joined by his wife Natalie. To ramp up production, Smith hired a coach, who urged the husband-wife team to tap prior business contacts. They did and found a booming niche—the relocation market. Their combined production zoomed to \$19.2 million last year from \$3.5 million in 2003. **It's in the mail:** The Smiths mail 1,000 cards a month to prospects and clients. The cards cite sales trends and congratulate recipients on milestones. **Crossing borders:** To generate referral fee income, the Smiths remind their sphere of influence that they can help people in any state through the Keller Williams network.



SMITH

NANCY TASSONE 29 managing broker, JDL Brokerage Co., Chicago, www.jdlbrokerage.com Tassone was diverted from a career in corporate America because of a side gig leasing apartments. While negotiating her own real estate purchase, she suggested to the developer that they team up. He'd build it, she'd sell it. They formed JDL, where she specializes in new construction and resales. During 2004, she closed almost \$52 million in business. Tassone steers away from traditional marketing tactics, focusing instead on cultivating word-of-mouth business. "I'm not comfortable sending mailings to strangers. I have a large network and I'm energetic, positive, and nice to people," she says. **Simple strategy:** Listen to clients' needs and deliver what they want. "It's not rocket science, but it leads to tons of repeat business and referrals." **Business advice:** "Real estate is an easy industry to get into, but being good at it is another thing. You can either rise to the top or float somewhere in the middle. That's not good enough for me. Many see the dollar signs in real estate but not that it can be a hard, frustrating business."



TASSONE

JASON R. WARREN 29 salesperson, Prudential Magnolia Realty & Associates Inc., Tupelo, Miss., www.prumag.com Not many 29-year-olds have worked in the same business for 13 years and excelled so admirably. But this go-getter was destined for real estate success. In high school, Warren worked as a real estate assistant. He obtained his license at 19 and sold real estate while a full-time student at Mississippi State University. After graduating in 1998 with a degree in marketing, he worked for his father's door business but continued to sell real estate on the side. After two years, he knew real estate was the career for him. Last year he closed 96 transactions and had sales of \$10.4 million. **Staying in touch:** About 350 contacts receive Warren's tip-filled quarterly newsletter and new listings e-mail. He mails birthday cards to past and potential clients and works with relocation companies to expand his sphere of influence. **Giving back:** Warren is the current president of the Northeast Mississippi Board of REALTORS®. He also volunteers at Tupelo's New Beginnings child-adoption organization.



WARREN

SHANNON WILLIAMS, ABR®, GRI 28 broker-owner, TriBella Realty Inc., Austin, Texas, www.tribellarealty.com Williams, the daughter of a Dallas builder, decided to get her license in 2000 after improvements she made to her first home generated \$200,000 in additional equity. "I think my biggest surprise has been how many people don't realize that real estate is a great long-term investment," says Williams, who closed \$8.9 million in sales and 52 transactions in 2004. She owns four single-family rental properties as well as several antique malls, and about 30 percent of her clients are investors. **Class act:** Williams, a former fourth-grade teacher, conducts a monthly homebuying seminar, complete with wine tasting and dinner, at a local wine shop. She also teaches two extension classes at the University of Texas at Austin. One is on buying and rehabbing properties and the other is on residential real estate investing. **Looking ahead:** Williams, whose company name refers to the three women involved in its founding, dreams of opening offices nationwide but maintaining a small-company atmosphere. "I want TriBella offices to be boutiques with maybe 10 to 20 associates in each," she says. She also would like to offer her real estate classes nationwide.



WILLIAMS

SEE PAGE 46

30 UNDER 30

FROM PAGE 44

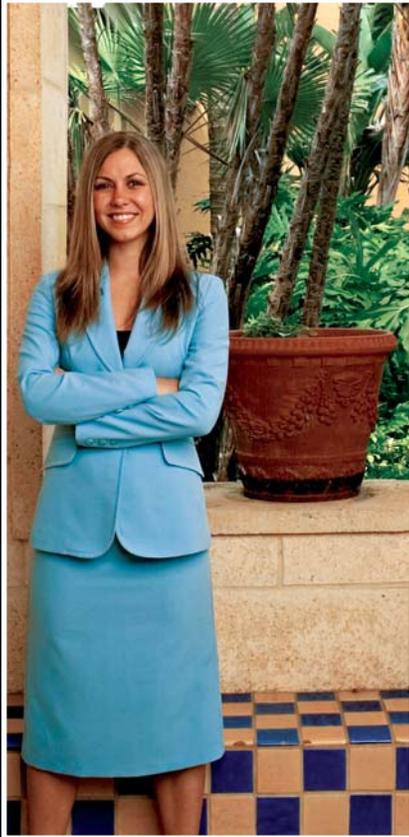


PHOTO FOR RM BY MIKE HAMEL ©2005

KENDRA TODD 27 salesperson, RE/MAX Advantage Plus, Boca Raton, Fla., www.agent53.com "I've always been an entrepreneur," says Todd. Her first venture was an award-winning lifestyle magazine for south Florida. When she realized that many people she was interviewing for her magazine had built their wealth in real estate, she decided to have a go at it herself. "I'm an investor first and a salesperson second," says Todd, who owns five properties. She did \$20.1 million in sales in 2004, focusing on second-home buyers and investors. Todd plans to add brokerage services to her real estate marketing company, My House Real Estate Inc. (www.myhouseRE.com), for which she'll be the broker-owner. She also lectures on pre-construction and condo conversions. **You're fired:** Todd hoped she'd never hear those two words as a contestant on NBC's "The Apprentice" last season. "I went on the show to push my limits and see what I'm made of," she says. At press time, she was one of the final two candidates. **Radio star:** Todd co-hosts a talk show about real estate investing with callers and guests on WBZT 1230 AM (also streamed live on the Web). The show targets south Florida and Las Vegas currently, but is working toward national syndication.

TERRY WOLLAM JR. 29 salesperson, RE/MAX Equity Group Inc., Vancouver, Wash., www.terrywollam.com In Vancouver, Wash., where land is in short supply and the roster of practitioners is long, Wollam keeps tabs on county land use plans. When Vancouver's Clark County expands its boundaries, freeing up new land for developers, he's one of the first to know. By focusing on development, he earns commission income on land purchases, individual lot sales, and home listings. Last year, he sold \$13.5 million worth of real estate. A significant portion of that came from representing the buyer of a 23-lot subdivision. He subsequently listed all of the lots and most of the homes. **Chip off the old block:** Wollam's father, who owns a development and construction company, taught him about construction. "I'm the sounding board in our office on new construction and land," Wollam says. **Balancing act:** Wollam takes his work seriously but values his personal time as well. If he gets too busy, he'll refer deals to a colleague. "You can't do everything," says Wollam, noting that the good deeds are returned in kind.



WOLLAM

ANNA MARIA WONG 28 salesperson and operating partner/owner, Keller Williams Synergy Real Estate, San Leandro, Calif., www.amwhomes.com For Wong, real estate started as a way to earn money before heading to graduate school in business or law. But in her fourth year in real estate, she earned \$1.3 million in gross commissions; she decided to stay in the business she had come to love. By the end of 2001, she had assembled a sales team—two administrative assistants and three buyer specialists. Three years later she opened Keller Williams Synergy, which now has 115 salespeople. Her goal: Run a business with a family environment that promotes both professional and personal growth—but continue to work as an active sales team leader. Her seven-member team posted sales of \$178 million from 284 transactions in 2004. **Maternal instinct:** "They call me 'Mama Bear,' because I'm nurturing," she says. She also inspires others by the example she sets. "I'd never ask someone to do something that I wouldn't do." **Serving others:** Wong gives back to her community and has encouraged her staff to follow her lead. Together they raised \$40,000 last year for The Smile Train foundation, which provides free surgery for children with facial deformities.



WONG

MARIA WURTZBACHER 29 broker-owner, The W Realty Group, Charlotte, N.C., www.thewrealtygroup.com Wurtzbacher's real estate career started when she and her business partner husband fixed up their first rental property. They rented out the property and used their equity to acquire another one. Their love affair with real estate had begun: Wurtzbacher became a broker in 2002; husband Scott quit technology consulting in 2003 to join her full time. Together, they turned 64 transactions into \$12.8 million worth of business last year and have hired a buyer's agent, three referral-only agents, and two full-time assistants. The couple also continue to grow their real estate investment portfolio; they now own 11 units. **Planting a seed:** For one of her clients, Wurtzbacher negotiated with a national lender to purchase one of its REO properties. The lender was so impressed, she landed 20 REO listings that she has since closed. **Keeping tabs:** Scott devised a Web-based tracking system that lets clients log in, see the status of their transaction, and leave comments. The system enables the team to manage a large number of clients and anticipate their needs.



WURTZBACHER

JOE ZIMMERMAN 27 salesperson, @properties, Chicago, www.atproperties.com After a serious car accident in 2002 put him out of commission for three months, Zimmerman began to view time as a precious commodity. He started delegating assignments and concentrating his efforts on his most important prospects—those who generate the most referrals. On them, he lavishes time and personalized attention. "I become a part of their life," Zimmerman says. He sold \$39.1 million in property last year and ranks among the top three out of more than 230 salespeople at his company. **Building a reputation:** Zimmerman also manages sales and acts as liaison to the developers of some of the largest new-construction projects for which @properties is the sales representative. "We wouldn't put him in charge of a 253-unit, \$70 million project if he couldn't command the respect of the major developers," says Michael Golden, cofounder of @properties, a development and brokerage company. **24/7 commitment:** The hours in real estate can be challenging, says Zimmerman. "Your phone can ring at 7 o'clock in the morning or 11:30 at night." But he loves the thrill of making a sale—no matter what day or time.



ZIMMERMAN

RM