

# REVIEW

Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®



# DECEMBER

TUE  
**02**

## NEW REALTOR® ORIENTATION

9:00AM - 12:30PM

Kickstart your real estate journey at our New REALTOR® Orientation, where you'll gain the tools, knowledge, and connections to build a successful career from day one!

FRI  
**05**

## REALTOR® RING DAY

Promote your community involvement as a bell ringer with the REALTOR® Ring Day and join us for the happy hour afterwards!

TUE  
**16**

## GPRMLS TRAINING - FOR ALL SUBSCRIBERS, THE COLLAB CENTER: BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

1:00PM - 2:00PM

Join us as we explore the Collaboration Center.

THU  
**18**

## GPRMLS: NEW USER RULES TRAINING

*This is a required 1-hour session for all new users, and you'll need to complete it within your first 90 days.*

Online Only

THU  
**18**

## PARAGON CONNECT SHORTS: MY CONTENT

1:00PM - 1:20PM

Learn all about features housed within the My Content menu, including Listing Carts, Property Watch, and more!

Online Only



SCAN TO VIEW THE  
OABR CALENDAR

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

# REST, REFLECT, AND WRITE!

### Happy Holidays!

As I sit in the back of a car typing this month's letter on my way home — after seven days on the road attending NAR NXT and another REALTOR® event — I keep thinking about the recurring message shared by many of the keynote speakers.

I was fortunate enough to be invited into two small-room presentations and even a dinner with Brian Buffini. One person at the table called him “The GOAT,” and after hearing him speak, it was hard to disagree. Brian walked us through his upcoming series called “Rest and Run,” and reminded us of something most REALTORS® don't do well: rest.

He said that if you never slow down, you can't show up at your best — not for your clients, not for your business, and certainly not for your family. His message hit home because historically, December is the one time of year when our market tends to catch its breath. The holidays naturally pull us toward family, reflection, and the chance to recharge our internal batteries.

But while many agents take that time to think about the year ahead, very few take the step of actually planning for it. We've all heard it a hundred times, yet few follow through: you must write your goals down.

So this December, I want to challenge you — both personally and professionally — to rest, reflect, and write.

Set goals that matter to you, not goals based on someone else's production, someone else's business model, or someone else's highlight reel on social media.

The 14th Dalai Lama said it well:

*“The goal is not to be better than the other man, but your previous self.”*

And remember:

*A goal without a timeline is just a wish.*

As we close 2025, I hope you find time to recharge, reconnect, and refocus — so you can step into the new year rested, ready, and running strong.

**Wishing you a joyful holiday season and a purposeful start to 2026,**

BRAD FRICKE,  
2025 OABR President





# REVIEW

## OMAHA AREA BOARD OF REALTORS® 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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FRI  
09  
JAN

## GOOD CONTRACT BAD CONTRACT

DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?

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🕒 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

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THU  
29  
JAN

## Brent & Brad's Excellent VA & FHA Adventure

(#1447)

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🕒 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

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FRI  
13  
FEB

OABR PRESENTS

## SHOW ME

#1365

## THE MONEY

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# OABR FOUNDATION: BUILDING OMAHA'S FUTURE

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

**B**uilding the next generation of construction trade professionals is no easy feat. Fortunately, for “The Builders of the Future,” they’re up to the challenge. Building is in their blood.

The Builder Foundation is a burgeoning organization that organically grew over time. Ted Grace and Steve Skidmore co-founded The Playhouse Project in 1993, a program that trained high school students how to build playhouses.

The project continued to grow and eventually evolved into a tradesperson training ground for high schoolers. An integral program of The Builder Foundation is “Builders of the Future,” which places high school students in schools to complete hands-on projects as part of their training in the trades.

Trade workers are critically important to the housing industry. They play an essential role in creating the needed housing supply to support affordability.

The founders formed a charitable nonprofit in 2001; the organization’s official name became The Builder Foundation. Shortly after that, they expanded their mission to building affordable housing through tax credit financing. In 2004, the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) endorsed the Southern Valley Townhome project located at 17th and Q Street, a 48-unit townhome community completed in 2010.

The nonprofit blossomed through partnerships with the Metro Omaha Builders Association (MOBA), Metro Community College, Avenue Scholars, Habitat for Humanity, the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® (OABR), and Wayne State College. By 2022, approximately 800 industrial technology students were enrolled in the program, and they currently support 44 schools from 15 different school districts.

The Builder Foundation is now working to expand beyond the Omaha region to include Lincoln and Central Nebraska, including York, Grand Island, and Hastings.

Mike Reidmann, President Emeritus of NP Dodge Residential Sales Division and Chairperson of the Builders Foundation, said, “The building trades literally construct and sustain the infrastructure we rely on every day – homes, schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, and utilities. Without skilled tradespeople, communities couldn’t function safely or grow sustainably.”



The Builder Foundation Executive Director, Melissa Glenn, is in her third month in the newly created position. Exponential growth created a need for someone to guide them towards the best path forward.

She said they hired Shannon Snow of Snow Consulting Services to evaluate the program to maximize the tremendous growth opportunity. It has the potential to become a state-wide program, possibly a nation-wide program. She explained that a recent grant from the Nebraska Department of Labor provided the necessary resources for additional training and materials over the next five years. Those funds will be used only within the state of Nebraska.

Glenn said they also manage a “Train the Trainers” program that provides hands-on training to teachers in industrial technology over the Summer, who then



teach students the necessary skills. Expanding the number of qualified trainers will help them sustainably grow their program.

She emphasized that this was especially important now since 40 percent of the trades workforce will retire in the next five years, and there are not nearly enough new tradespeople entering the industry to replace them. "This isn't just a tradesperson shortage. It's a crisis that will be detrimental to the housing industry if it is left unaddressed."

They hired a third program facilitator to help with training and hope to hire a fourth in the next two years. Training is such an integral part of the program, one that they hope to expand, which is why they are working to expand scholarship opportunities.

The Builder Foundation also partners with nonprofits. They partnered with Habitat for Humanity of Council Bluffs to build a home in Council Bluffs, with help from students from Council Bluffs High School, Thomas Jefferson High School, and Abraham Lincoln High School.

Builders of the Future is currently working with Saving Grace. This local nonprofit collects excess perishable food from grocery stores, caterers, restaurants, event centers, wholesalers, and other food vendors. It redistributes the food to its nonprofit partners, including food pantries, shelters, and senior centers, free of charge to those in need.

They are building a heated shed for Saving Grace that will house a refrigerator and canned goods. It will enable them to offer free food to those in need in the community from its location at the Charles Drew Health Center near 30th and Fort Street. Glenn said they hope to build even more sheds like this in the spring. "These are not big structures, but they will have a big impact," she added.

The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® Foundation, a separate 501(c)(3) charitable organization, has been an avid supporter of the Greater Omaha community and of The Builders of the Future Program, including a \$22,500 donation this

year. Partnering with nonprofits helps build stronger communities, one project at a time.

**Interested in supporting the OABR Foundation's efforts?** Learn more at [omaharealtors.com/foundation](http://omaharealtors.com/foundation).

## THE BUILDERS FOUNDATION: 40 SCHOOLS, 15 DISTRICTS AND 800 STUDENTS

Abraham Lincoln - Iowa  
Ashland - Greenwood  
Bellevue East  
Bellevue West  
Bennington  
Blair  
Boys Town  
Cedar Bluffs  
D.C. West  
Fort Calhoun  
Fremont  
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Louisville  
Metro College  
Millard North  
Millard West  
OPS - Benson  
OPS - Bryan  
OPS - Construction Acad.  
Papillion La Vista  
Papillion La Vista South  
Plattsmouth  
Ralston  
Platteview /Springfield

Thomas Jefferson - Iowa  
Wahoo  
Youth Build / Goodwill  
North  
Yutan  
Treyner - Iowa  
Woodbine - Iowa  
Waverly  
Pierce  
Norfolk  
Battle Creek  
West Point - Beemer  
Wisner - Pilger  
Wakefield  
Stanton  
Winside  
Wausa  
West Point -Nielsen Ctr.  
Northeast Community  
College West Point  
Extended Campus  
Wayne High  
Laurel-Concord-Coleridge  
Homer



Photo Credit: [builderfoundation.org](http://builderfoundation.org)

# GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

## DISRUPTS REAL ESTATE CLOSINGS

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

The Federal Government veered into the longest shutdown in U.S. history on October 1, preventing the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) from issuing new policies and creating roadblocks to real estate transactions. The gridlock, fortunately, ended on November 12.

The NFIP is managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is made available to the public for coverage required by mortgage lenders in flood-prone areas, since homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage.

According to the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), up to 1,400 closings were affected each day the government remained closed. NAR research shows that the NFIP supports roughly half a million home sales annually, generating one million jobs and contributing \$70 billion to the U.S. economy.

Not every property requires flood insurance; however, the domino effect on real estate closings is magnified when several transactions hinge on another that requires it.

The real estate industry is often reliant on the Federal Government for NFIP, which periodically requires its own congressional reauthorization to continue operations. NAR continues to advocate for a long-term reauthorization of the NFIP program, and its efforts have been critical to keeping the housing industry moving forward. Reauthorization of the program is due again at the end of January.

Considering that real estate accounts for nearly 20 percent of the U.S. economy, a failure of the flood insurance program not only negatively impacts the housing industry but also a substantial part of U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Although there are some private insurance companies offering flood insurance not backed by the Federal Government, some lenders are reluctant to accept the private coverage. Dylan Dravland, a mortgage advisor at NEO Home Loans, said, "Flood insurance is a bit of a wild card. Since there are different types of flood zones, it is tougher to estimate."

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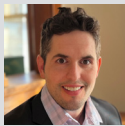
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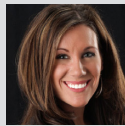




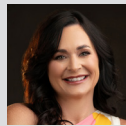
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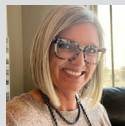
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# EMPOWER HOURS: DELIVER BAD NEWS!

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

Mere days before Halloween, brave real estate professionals seeking a good scare encountered something truly terrifying: the Nebraska Real Estate Commission Director describing how they could lose their license.

Nebraska Real Estate Commission (NREC) Director Joe Gehrki captivated the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® Education Center full of members with words of wisdom acquired from nearly four decades of real estate experience in a special edition of Empower Hours. The event, sponsored by the Young Professionals Network (YPN), earned attendees one CAT credit.

Gehrki first discovered his love for Real Estate Law while attending U.N.O. Like many, he took courses in Real Estate Principles and Practices and Real Estate Law because they fulfilled licensure requirements. It was kismet. Learning about the inner workings of real estate ignited a passion that has spanned his entire career.

The former REALTOR® and former managing broker was first licensed in 1987, served in leadership roles at OABR, the Nebraska REALTORS® Association, and the National Association of REALTORS®. Governmental affairs and advocacy truly captured his heart.

He accepted his current position after his predecessor, Greg Lemon, retired at the end of 2024. Lemon, an attorney, offered legal expertise. Gehrki brings his real estate expertise to the table. He is the sixth NREC Director in its 85-year history, and the first REALTOR® to serve in the role. Gehrki

understands all the emotions involved in REALTOR® life: the highs, the lows, and everything in between.

Gehrki uses a commonsense approach to any complaint. He explores whether there is a way to resolve the issue without a hearing. Can the person filing the complaint get what they want without it involving a drawn-out battle? Have they even contacted their agent or their agent's broker?

Once a complaint is properly filed, it is always investigated. When it comes before the Commission, the names are redacted. Some complaints are dismissed, and approximately 65 percent of all complaints are settled through consent and stipulation orders, according to Gehrki. He added that many of the complaints involve agents failing to return their clients' phone calls or communicate effectively. He advised REALTORS® to promptly return calls and emails, even if you have to deliver bad news. "Bad news doesn't get better with time," he said.

The Nebraska Real Estate Commission has seven members who interpret and enforce the Nebraska License Law. They can reprimand a licensee in a number of ways. They can suspend an individual's real estate license, fine them up to \$5,000 per complaint, or an amount equal to the total commission earned on the transaction.

While Gehrki believes most real estate licensees strive to conduct themselves properly, he also believes that stiffer penalties deter bad behavior by a small number of agents who might otherwise risk a minor fine to acquire a big payout. The Real Estate Commission can also revoke a license, though it typically first attempts to educate to correct behavior.

Software technology is a real estate game-changer that helps streamline essential work functions, but REALTORS® need to use it properly. Any marketing display must prominently display the brokerage's name. Gehrki cautioned attendees about using AI; licensees remain responsible for



maintaining accuracy and complying with license law.

### TOP THIRTEEN WAYS TO AVOID GETTING A COMPLAINT FILED AGAINST YOU

Compiled by Greg Lemon, Former Director, Nebraska Real Estate Commission

If you always remember your fiduciary duty, the other items on this list should fall into place pretty easily.

#### 1 **Don't make misrepresentations.**

- a. Never withhold or deliberately misconvey information even if that information may make the transaction less likely to be completed; always remember that you are looking out for your client's best interests.
- b. Get your facts straight. Don't say the house is not in a flood plain, for example, unless you have checked and verified this with official sources; don't say the roof doesn't leak based

on an assumption or limited knowledge. Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know," or "I will check and get back to you," or "you will need to consult an attorney or other professional," or "there may need to be an inspection done to answer that question."

#### 2 **Communicate, Communicate, Communicate.**

Many of the complaints received by the Nebraska Real Estate Commission start out with "my agent won't call me back." Remember, many of your clients are entering into the biggest monetary transaction of their lives, haven't done a real estate transaction before, or haven't done one for many years. While the Commission does not have, and has no interest in, establishing rules on how fast you respond to a phone call, text, or email, you do have a fiduciary duty to your client, and it will be very hard to fulfill if you are not communicating with them.

#### 3 **Reduce all offers, contracts, amendments, addendums, etc. to writing,** signed by the appropriate parties. The Statute of Frauds provides



that all real estate contracts must be in writing. Agency law requires you to present all written offers in a timely manner. There is a reason for these laws; oral agreements are much harder to prove, much easier to dispute and may not be enforceable.

**4 Provide the Commission's agency disclosure pamphlet at or as soon as practicable after the first substantial contact.** This is kind of like a secondary offense, like driving without a seatbelt or texting while driving, because you are not likely to get a complaint filed against you if this is the only problem. But if a complaint is filed, the Commission will review the transaction and if it finds that this has not been done in a timely manner, it can and likely will be added to any other charges in the complaint or may even be considered standalone grounds to go forward with the complaint, even if the original grounds for the complaint are dismissed.

**5 Always handle the money properly.** Hound your buyer about writing the escrow check if they didn't include it with the offer. Deposit the escrow funds in the appropriate account in a timely manner, record the disposition of any and all escrow funds appropriately.

**6 Be timely.** Don't "sit on" documents, escrow checks, offers, etc. relating to the transaction that your client may want or need. Knowing a better offer may be on its way is not a reason to withhold an offer which is on the table.

**7 Seek Advice.** When faced with an unusual situation or something you don't know the answer to, talk to your supervising broker, call the Nebraska Real Estate Commission when necessary seek the advice of an attorney. When in doubt seek advice before you act.

**8 Disclose, Disclose, Disclose.** Disclose adverse material facts in writing. Disclose that you are a licensee if you are buying or selling property on your own behalf. Disclose dual agency when it

occurs. Disclose all lawsuits, pending criminal charges and convictions on your renewal form.

**9 Do your listing agreement correctly.** Have all aspects of the agreement clearly spelled out in writing, include the precise expiration date, include the specific terms of compensation. If you are planning or need to extend the listing, get the extension in writing before the listing expires. Have all parties that have an interest in the property sign the listing agreement.

**10 Pay attention to detail.** Know the terms of any contract you have pending or listing agreements you have. If you don't know, go to the appropriate source document and verify. Don't assume.

**11 Don't allow unauthorized access to the property.** Don't allow the buyer or tenant to repair, replace, paint, live in, move in, have a party at, store things, etc. on the property prior to the closing of the transaction or commencement of the lease without express written authority signed by the seller.

**12 Keep all your paperwork with the Commission current and correct.** Get your renewal in on time, keep your E&O insurance current, meet your continuing education requirements on time. Keep any business entities you use in your real estate business (Professional Corporation, Corporation, LLC, etc.) properly registered and in good standing with the Secretary of State. Don't start working for Broker B until your transfer from Broker A is complete and confirmed with the Commission.

**13 Remember your fiduciary duty to your client.** You are representing them. Their interests are to be placed above yours in your transactions and dealings with them. Place yourself in their shoes. "If I were buying this house, I would want to know (blank)." Whether the information is about the property, the buying or selling process, or anything else relevant to the transaction.





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# Angie Thiel

## A FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

There are defining moments in a person's career that radically shift the whole trajectory of their life. Angie Thiel had one of these moments almost two decades ago when she was fired from a sporting goods store. It was her first major corporate job. There were a lot of rules she was expected to obey without question. For someone with a free spirit and an entrepreneurial mind, blind obedience to an employer was never an option. She's an innovative nonconformist, not a golden retriever.

She always wanted to be a REALTOR®, but as a military spouse, the time never seemed right. Once she realized that the corporate world wasn't for her, something was set in motion. With her husband now out of the Army, she knew it was time to revisit her old dream.

Angie always had a passion for helping customers. She also had a love for the history of older homes. "I like the idea of running my hand down a banister that someone touched 100 years ago." Her appreciation for a home's craftsmanship, coupled with her gift of gab, made a career in real estate a no-brainer.

Despite a slow start, she eventually excelled at her new career. It would take another three years before she discovered the Women's Council of REALTORS® (WCR). She had the preconceived notion that it was a hoity-toity "ladies who lunch" social group, which sounded dreadfully boring to her.



Then her friend Amy Dritley convinced her to attend a WCR event. Within six months, Angie was serving on the Ways and Means Committee and helping to organize events for the WCR Omaha Chapter.

"It helped me see how being a part of something big in the real estate world doesn't mean it has to be stuffy, corporate, or cultish," she explained. "It can be empowering and make you feel like you're making a difference, for charities and the community, while building relationships, and getting the opportunity to meet people you wouldn't otherwise get to meet."

Her vision for the organization is to keep it fresh and up to date with what's happening in the world today.

"There are a lot of young people involved on the local WCR board. They have great new ideas." This surge of electric energy is just what she thinks the organization could use more of. "No idea is too big. Just put it out there and manifest it."

The vision for her presidency next year is to keep reinventing. She believes that you can't stay stagnant and expect to grow or attract new members. Things should be fun. "It's about developing leaders and lifting women up in real estate."

Fostering leadership skills in emerging leaders is a defining goal of WCR. "Being involved helps you take ownership," Angie said. The leaders bring different talents and thoughts to the table. According to her, they are stronger together, even when people have conflicting opinions. "People are only passionate because they care," she said matter-of-factly.

"I told (the incoming directors) that I'm a 'no drama llama,'" she said with a laugh. At the end of the day, they vote on decisions, and then everyone gets behind the final decision.

Like any good leader, she learned from the leaders who came before her. She described some of her predecessors. She said Liz Otto is laid-back and a good listener who waits patiently before responding. Sarina McNeel is full of energy, and Angie admires her tenacity and commitment to everything she decides

to take on, whether it's starting every day with exercise or doing the 50 Mile March – she is a force. Trac Burkhardt is analytical and excellent at developing systems. According to Angie, Trac developed a process over this past year that will set the organization up for success for the next decade. "We're very lucky to have her," she said and explained how Trac is exceptionally good at delegating and pooling everyone's skills to accomplish a goal.

Angie gleefully described how the WCR Omaha Board of Directors is made up of amazingly talented people ready to take on challenges. The 2026 President said, "I'm really excited about the upcoming year. It's going to be exciting! We're going to have fun, grow our membership, and keep bringing people in."



# OMAHA REALTORS® GIVING BACK

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

**T**here's a magic in the air this time of year. The sweet aroma of freshly baked goods fills homes and hearts, reminding us of fond memories from holidays past while we create new ones. The warmth from a crackling fire invites you to sip hot cocoa and watch holiday classics on a loop.

The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® Foundation embodies the spirit of the season all year round by giving to those in need. Charitable donations to the OABR Foundation help fund critical housing-related needs, educational scholarships, and other community gaps. The Foundation is a separate 501(c)(3) charitable organization, allowing you to make a tax-deductible, year-end contribution that benefits the community under the local REALTOR® banner.

OABR President Brad Fricke said, "The Foundation supports charities and organizations that follow the mission of OABR, which supports our community and promotes homeownership."

Among other worthy investments, the OABR Foundation supports students in the Construction and Building Sciences Program at Metropolitan Community College and the Builders of the Future high school program in Nebraska. Both programs are wise investments that benefit the community by developing the skilled workers needed for construction trades. The Foundation also provides scholarships for UNO students pursuing a career in real estate. This year, the OABR Foundation also supported Heartland Hope Mission, a nonprofit organization that provides essential programs and resources to low-income families.

OABR Foundation 2026 President Jessica Sawyer said, "I enjoy how the OABR Foundation keeps its eyes

and ears open on how to be impactful for our greater Omaha community, like the support given to Builders of the Future. The people involved in that program are people we don't meet every day as REALTORS®, but they are leading in every avenue of the construction of a house and doing the ground-up work by encouraging the next generation of contractors that our world desperately needs."



The OABR Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® absorbs all administrative and overhead expenses, which allows 100 percent of Foundation donations to go directly toward:

1. Critical needs for shelter, including local disasters and emergencies, the REALTOR® Relief Foundation, and the Nebraska Home Buyer's Assistance Foundation.
2. Educational scholarships for UNO students and other post-secondary students working toward a career in real estate.
3. Newer members who are pursuing a REALTOR® Designation or Certification.
4. The Metro Community College's Construction and Building Science program and the Nebraska Builders of the Future High School program for individuals drawn toward the construction trades.
5. Financial support for other special needs in the greater Omaha community.

**[omaharealtors.com/foundation](http://omaharealtors.com/foundation)**



\$31

# FITBIT CHALLENGE

## 31 Prizes!

- Fitbits and other pedometer devices or apps can be used for this challenge.
- All steps must be verified with electronic or printed proof to be eligible.
- Only steps can be counted, some apps award steps for non-physical activity.
- Participants are only eligible to win one challenge during the January Fitbit Challenge.

During January, sponsors will create daily challenges and award prizes.

Register and view daily challenges at [omahaREALTORS.com](http://omahaREALTORS.com).



Investments are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Investments to RPAC are voluntary and are used for political purposes. The amounts indicated are merely guidelines and you may invest more or less than the suggested amounts. The National Association of REALTORS® and its state and local associations will not favor or disadvantage any member because of the amount invested or decision not to invest. You may refuse to invest without reprisal. 85% of each investment is used by your state RPAC to support state and local political candidates; 15% is sent to National RPAC to support federal candidates and is charged against your limits under 52 U.S.C. 30116.



# PAOLA SCHIFF

DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

**WHERE DID YOU GROW UP (IF NOT FROM THE OMAHA, WHAT WERE THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT BROUGHT YOU TO OMAHA AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED HERE)?**

I was born and raised in Lima, Peru, and after eight years in California, I decided to move to Omaha in 2010 to be closer to my dad and sister. My dad had been diagnosed with melanoma, and I wanted to spend more time with him. At first, the change of pace was a big adjustment, but over time I fell in love with the city and its welcoming community.

**WHAT BROKERAGE DO YOU WORK FOR AND ARE YOU A MEMBER OF ANY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY OR NETWORKING GROUPS?**

I joined Nebraska Realty and the Castro Realty Group, where I actively participate in networking events organized by the Greater Omaha Chamber, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the United Hispanic Contractors Association.

**WHAT DID YOU DO BEFORE YOU BECAME A REALTOR®?**

I've spent most of my career in Client Services, including several years with a financial consulting company in Omaha. Working directly with clients taught me how to listen, understand their needs, and provide outstanding support, skills I'll bring to every client I serve in the future.

**WHEN DID YOU GET YOUR REAL ESTATE LICENSE AND WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A REALTOR®?**

I earned my real estate license in mid-September. I've always been fascinated by homes, architecture, and development, and after working with a wonderful REALTOR® when I bought my own home a few years ago, I knew I wanted to help others have that same positive experience.

**WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL BE THE MOST REWARDING PART OF YOUR JOB AS A REALTOR®?**

I would love to help people find a place to call home, or guiding them as they invest and build financial stability. My goal is to give each client the knowledge and resources they need to make the best decisions for their future.



**WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE US TO KNOW ABOUT YOU?**

I'm truly excited to start this new chapter in my life and so thankful to the OABR for granting me the Diversity Scholarship. With dedication and this wonderful opportunity, I'm confident that a brighter future lies ahead for me and my family.



**THE OMAHA AREA BOARD OF REALTORS® DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE ENCOURAGES DIVERSITY IN THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY BY OFFERING THE ETHNIC MINORITY OUTREACH SCHOLARSHIP. IT IS PART OF AN ONGOING COMMITMENT TO AFFIRMATIVELY RECRUIT INDIVIDUALS FROM ALL RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS TO THE REAL ESTATE PROFESSION.**

**TO VIEW THE MINORITY OUTREACH SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION, VISIT: [OMAHAREALTORS.COM/DIVERSITY](http://OMAHAREALTORS.COM/DIVERSITY)**



# Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®

## ADVOCACY

Support real estate ownership, economic growth, and a favorable political environment for real estate.



**Governmental  
Affairs**  
Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®



## KNOWLEDGE

Promote education and training for real estate professionals, including license law, ethics, safety, fair housing, and related areas of expertise.



**Professional  
Development**  
Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®



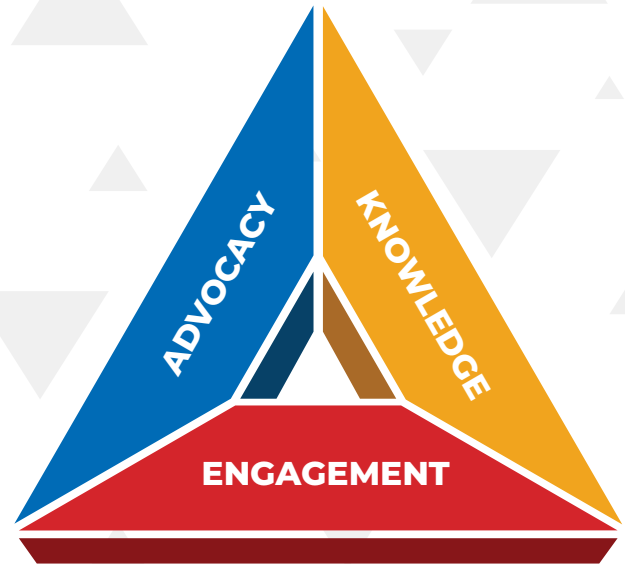
**DIVERSITY**  
SCHOLARSHIP  
OMAHA AREA BOARD OF REALTORS®

## ENGAGEMENT

Foster an atmosphere of cooperation and collaboration within the REALTOR® community, building goodwill among members.



**SOCIAL EVENTS**  
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ALL OABR MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO  
ATTEND YPN EVENTS!**

Find the next YPN Committee meeting on the OABR calendar!

# THE NAR NXT EXPERIENCE

Written by **Melissa McElroy**

**T**welve thousand real estate professionals descended upon the Lone Star State to attend the largest real estate convention in the world: NAR NXT 2025 Houston, a multi-day extravaganza of world-class speakers, top-notch educational sessions, committee meetings, and networking organized by the National Association of REALTORS®. Proof that everything is bigger in Texas.

Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® 2026 President Brad Fricke said there have been many changes over the last 18 months, both at NAR and in the industry. “There are a lot of really good, new people at NAR- new high-level leadership.” He added that CEO Nykia Wright is a great leader and has the association in mind.

According to Fricke, the real estate industry is ever-changing and is now undergoing some of the most significant changes it has seen. Specifically, there are rapid changes in technology. The main takeaway,

according to him? Adapt to AI or get left behind. He said AI would not replace agents, but it would separate the average from the top producers. It is a powerful tool that will help REALTORS® be more productive. He said over half of the courses at NAR NXT centered on AI.

The OABR President also attended the NAR NXT fireside chat with Shark Tank investor Robert Herjavec, who said something that really resonated with him. People dream about a house, not a stock portfolio. Investing in a home is still the most important transaction of a person’s life, and it’s proven to generate wealth.

The showstopper of the convention, in Fricke’s opinion, was NAR’s Chief Economist, Dr. Lawrence Yun, who provided critically essential insights on the most pressing economic news that impacts real estate, like the 50-year mortgage, which Yun seemed to support,



with the caveat that it has to have proper underwriting.

Fricke made this astute observation: “People already have a 50-year mortgage. They just don’t realize it.”

“Every time you refinance and cash out, it’s like repurchasing and getting a new mortgage,” he explained. Some people will refinance more than once and keep the equity from the home, essentially starting over with a new mortgage.

Yun is predicting a 14 percent nationwide increase in home sales for 2026, after a stagnant 2025. He also predicted that new home sales would rise by five percent. Despite a projected increase in sales, he expects home prices to remain stable. “NAR expects prices to climb four percent in 2026, supported by job growth and persistent supply shortages.”

Mike McGlynn, who serves on the OABR Board of Directors, said that he attends NAR NXT not just for the outstanding courses and governance meetings, but for the excellent networking. NAR NXT is like his Super Bowl. It provides the opportunity to reconnect with past colleagues while meeting new contacts. Most of his business stems from out-of-state referrals.

He arrived early for the WCR PMN Pop-Up Course: AI for Real Estate Rockstars: Supercharge Your Business & Income, instructed by Carrie Little, Broker Owner of CARMARC Realty Group. The interactive course taught attendees how to harness AI to streamline workflows, build smart systems, and maximize time.

McGlynn also toured Houston, the energy capital of the world, a city known for rodeos and space exploration. Houston is a car-centric city with up to one million commuters every day. Houston does not have traditional zoning laws that dictate land use. It does have land development ordinances, deed restrictions, and historic district rules. As a result, it is common to see a commercial building next to a residence. It made him think about how simple real estate could be.

When he visits a convention city, he likes to explore how that region approaches housing. While in Houston, he discovered “CoHousing Houston,” Texas’s first cohousing community. The new community is “based on connection and sustainability,” and has more affordable homes. McGlynn left the conference with new contacts and breaking information to help him in his day-to-day business.

In 2026, NAR NXT will be in New Orleans, Louisiana, in November. Specific details will be available, and registration typically begins in mid-June.



**Deda Myhre and Susan Clark**



**Mike McGlynn and Bill Swanson**

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

October Activity	MO	YTD
New REALTOR® Members	12	212
Resignations	11	343
<b>Membership (As of November 1)</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
Designated REALTORS®	187	201
REALTOR®	2975	2978
REALTOR® Emeritus	101	94
TOTAL REALTORS®	3263	3273
Institute Affiliate	86	78
Affiliate Members	131	126
Key-Only Affiliates	133	119

Full membership report at [OmahaREALTORS.com/membership-report](https://OmahaREALTORS.com/membership-report)

## DESIGNATIONS

### Seniors Real Estate Specialist® (SRES®)

- Jace Thompson, BHHS Ambassador Real Estate

## CERTIFICATIONS

### At Home with Diversity® (AHWD)

- Ashley Daniels, BHHS Ambassador Real Estate

## PERSONALS

### Our Condolences

- To the family of BJ Brown, NP Dodge RE Sales, on her recent passing
- To the family of Sam Ganarajah, BHHS Ambassador Real Estate, on his recent passing



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## A YEAR IN REVIEW

Something about this time of year stirs up a feeling of nostalgia. The holidays are in full swing, reminding us of happy memories from holidays past. As I reminisce about the past year, I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude thinking about all the incredible events I attended and all the amazing people I had the pleasure of meeting.

WCR hosted so many great networking events, including a three-part lunch & learn series that was a huge success! These amazing speakers left everyone feeling inspired and gave me some food for thought. The final speaker was none other than Nebraska Volleyball Coach John Cook. It started out as a crazy idea, but we made it happen. He received a hero's welcome at a packed venue. Coach Cook gave an outstanding speech that received a standing ovation.

Some other highlights include attending the Mid-Year Meetings in D.C. Real estate professionals from across the country met with elected officials and voiced concerns. It opened the door for important conversations where we could discuss any legislation that would impact our industry.

Our yearly WCR Spring Event was a big hit. Folks really get into the spirit of fun and get all decked out in costumes, all to raise money for our charity partner, The 50 Mile March, a transformational organization that makes a difference in the lives of veterans.

The WCR Golf event was yet another great highlight where members could mingle, network, and

golf. I look forward to this event each year. Moving it from the blistering hot month of July to September was a smart move.

As the final days of my presidency come to a close, it feels a little bittersweet. Balancing a real estate career with the daily demands of serving in a leadership role proved to be challenging at times, but it has been such a rewarding experience. I will not forget all the friends that I made on this journey. There is a true camaraderie in our network that inspires me. We encourage each other to tackle new challenges, step into leadership roles, and become the best version of ourselves.

Thank you to everyone who made this year possible: volunteers, sponsors, and members. As I close this chapter, I am grateful for all the experiences and memories.

A warm welcome our next WCR President Angie Thiel. I know she will do amazing things in the next year. Congratulations, Angie!

I'll close this out with a quote from Walt Disney. "Goodbye may seem forever. Farewell is like the end, but in my heart, it's the memory and there you will always be."

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

**TRAC BURKHARDT**  
2025 President

Women's Council of REALTORS® - Omaha



# REALTORS® Make the Market

## Omaha Area Residential Snapshot

OCTOBER 31	2024	2025	%
NUMBER ON MARKET	2,536	2,902	+14.4% ▲
NUMBER UNDER CONTRACT (MONTH)	992	948	-4.4% ▼
NUMBER OF SALES CLOSED (YEAR-TO-DATE)	10,085	10,535	+4.5% ▲
EXISTING SALE PRICE (MEDIAN YEAR-TO-DATE)	\$293,000	\$300,000	+2.4% ▲
NEW SALES PRICE (MEDIAN YEAR-TO-DATE)	\$421,620	\$425,000	+0.8% ▲

## AFFILIATES Add Value!



### Differences Between Residential & Commercial Property Inspections

#### What Sets Commercial Inspections Apart?

Commercial property inspections differ significantly from residential ones and require specialized expertise. Inspectors must understand complex systems, regulations, and structural requirements.

#### Capital Expenses & Maintenance Planning

Buyers need details about HVAC systems, water heaters, and roofing components to budget for future expenses. Commercial properties often require advanced assessments to determine potential repair or replacement costs.

#### Safety & Compliance Standards

Commercial buildings must meet stricter safety codes. Features like emergency exit lighting, smoke detectors, exit signs, and fire extinguishers should be serviced annually. Electrical systems over 400 amps should be inspected by licensed electricians, who use specialized safety equipment.

Roofing & Structural Concerns

Flat roofs, such as EPDM or rolled asphalt, are common in commercial properties. Inspections focus on drainage issues, structural support, and signs of material wear or deterioration. Addressing these issues early can prevent costly repairs.

#### Plumbing & ADA Compliance

In Omaha, PEX plumbing is prohibited in commercial properties. Inspections also evaluate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including marked parking spaces, foam protection on pipes, and grab bars in restrooms.

#### Parking Lot & Exterior Checks

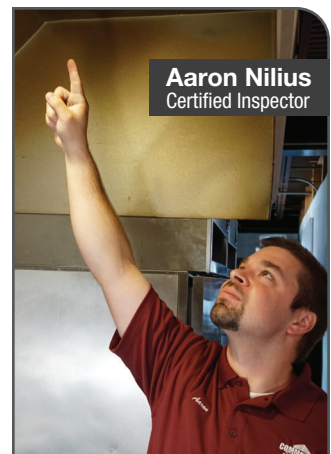
Parking lot striping, curb stops, and signage are assessed for visibility and wear. Gas meters in areas prone to vehicle impact should have protective concrete bollards.

#### HVAC Systems

Package HVAC units are common in commercial buildings. These combined heating and cooling systems are installed outdoors, eliminating the need for metal flues. Inspectors assess the age, efficiency, and condition of these units.

#### Commercial Kitchens & Grease Management

Cooking appliances in commercial kitchens, such as ovens, gas cooktops, and fryers, often require fire suppression systems and exhaust hoods. Fire suppression uses chemical agents to control flames. Grease traps are inspected to prevent drain blockages, as regular cleaning is essential.



Aaron Nilius  
Certified Inspector

#### Why It Matters

Understanding these differences helps buyers and agents evaluate inspector qualifications and make informed decisions. To learn more about the commercial property inspection process or its impact on buying and selling commercial properties, contact us today!



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# IN THE Trenches

The jam-packed schedule. A never-ending to-do list. The perpetually chaotic whirlwind. Working in real estate is, in some ways, like surviving the holidays. Much like beautifully wrapped gifts under the tree, each client is a gift. Some gifts make you carefully consider the return policy.

## NON-STELLAR SELLER

When an old acquaintance reached out to REALTOR® Kate Reeker for help selling his house, that was unfortunately headed to foreclosure. She had no idea what was in store.

For starters, the gentleman was very guarded about who he let in the home, like a dragon guarding his lair. He wouldn't even let the appraiser enter the house. "You gotta be crazy if you think I'm gonna let anyone in my house!" he howled at her.

The surly seller continued day and night with Kate, leaving angry voicemails, sending nasty text messages, and an assortment of emails, often at 2 a.m. He sent her over 300 texts in total. Despite all of this, she was able to sell his house.

However, when closing day came, he needed another two days in the house. Kate initiated an agreement and compensated the buyer for the inconvenience from her own pocket. After the two days had passed, the pesky seller said he had Covid and demanded an additional 14 days. This last delay interfered with the pending foreclosure, and time had expired.

The seller would not leave the property on his own, and he was regrettably evicted. The Sheriff and two deputies had to remove him from the house. To top it off, the U-Haul parked in the driveway was allegedly stolen. Someone's getting coal in their stocking this year!

## BAH HUMBUG!

REALTOR® Tim Reeder remembers helping a client who initially didn't even intend to sell her home. Not until her dream home, one she had always fantasized about owning, went onto the market. She made an offer on the dream property contingent on the sale of her current home.

The day of closing, she closed on the home she was selling. When driving to the closing of the new home, she received a call from the title company telling her not to come. Someone had just put a \$100k contractor lien on the house that very morning, three days before Christmas. The contractor was the seller's spiteful ex-boyfriend, trying to cause drama.

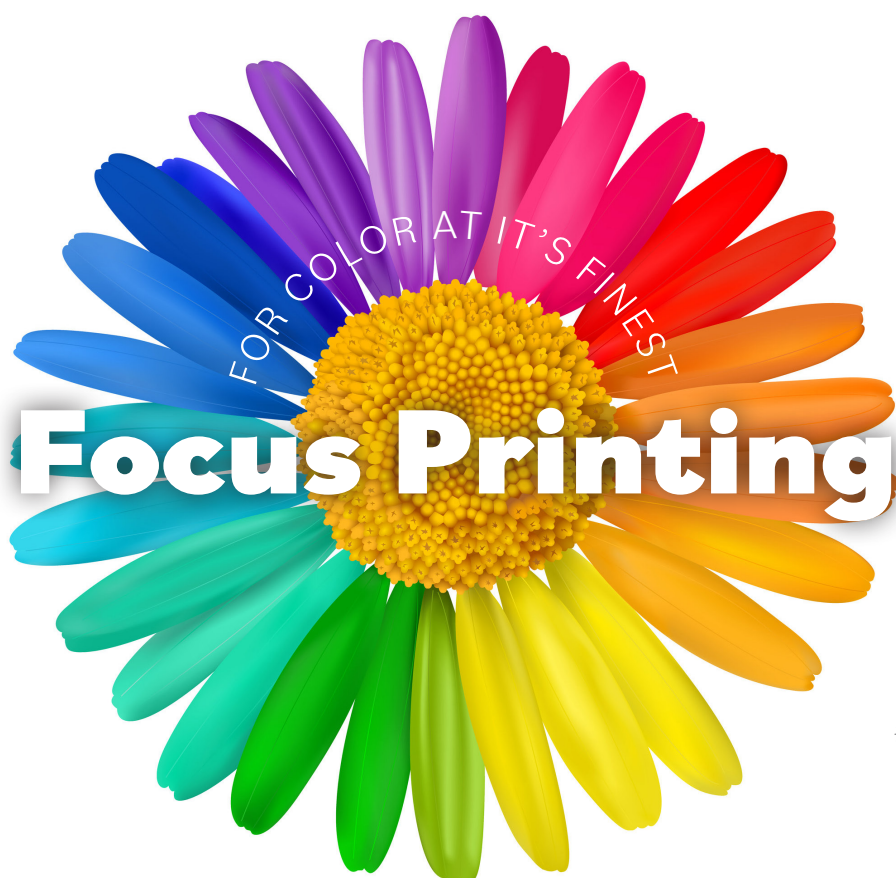
Fortunately, the seller was able to rent the home to Tim's client until they worked everything out. It took six months, but his client closed on her dream home that June. It was a Christmas miracle! Six months late.

Working in the trenches of real estate is not for the faint of heart. May you thrive this holiday season and stay off Santa's naughty list. Happy closings and to all, a good night!

# REVIEW

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