Real estate teams: Is this trend right for you?

We’ve all been taught the value of being a team player since we were youngsters on the playground, but real estate is often seen as a solitary profession. Some Realtors, though, say that adopting a team model can make everyone a winner at their brokerage. The EDGE newsletter talked to a pair of Ontario real estate professionals to learn how the team approach works for them.

Melanie Piche, who has been a Realtor for nine years, runs the BREL Team at Toronto’s Sage Real Estate in partnership with her husband, Brendan Powell. The team comprises 10 Realtors and four full-time support staff. She believes that the team benefits her as a leader because it frees her up from administrative tasks and allows her to concentrate on building the team brand and developing agents who can give excellent service.

“The team model is becoming bigger and bigger as agents are being called upon to market themselves in so many ways online,” Piche says. “Teams can better adapt because they can pool resources.”

Richard Silver, who has worked in Toronto real estate for more than 37 years, is the Torontoism team lead and vice-president of sales at Sotheby’s International Realty Canada. He is part of a seven-member team comprising five Realtors and two support staff. He believes in the team model because “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

“Everyone brings different strengths,” says Silver. “Each of us is better at something than others. Some people speak a different language. Our team contains different cohorts, Baby Boomers and Millennials, and they all provide different viewpoints.”

Silver believes that in a successful team, members learn from one another and feed off one another’s ideas and energy. “We learn from the strengths of others, as well as from their guidance when problems arise,” he says. “Each of us is different and we celebrate our diversity.”

A team succeeds or fails based on its culture, says Piche. “You need to have leadership and a clear vision,” she says. “It’s crucial to bring the right people together. It’s a team of qualified, talented, trained agents who use the brand to deliver a quality experience to customers.”

Piche’s team “revolves around accountability.” Weekly team meetings and monthly individual meetings are scheduled, and each member develops both individual and team business plans.

“It’s very systems-based,” she says. “There are defined expectations of what the buyers and sellers will get, no matter who the Realtor is. However, we play to everyone’s strengths to make up for weaknesses. A successful team needs individuals who care about the success of everyone else on the team.”
Silver employed a coach to help the team get organized, determine responsibilities and settle on the method of compensation. He believes the smooth running of the team flows from that approach.

“I choose to share all my leads with the team and no longer solely represent anyone,” says Silver. “I also wanted their compensation to be high so they would not be tempted to leave and go out on their own.”

Different teams have a variety of arrangements and approaches to the sharing of compensation, notes Piche. In some cases, the distribution of compensation may be determined based on who has generated the lead.

The nature of compensation sharing is a question salespeople should ask when determining whether a team is right for them, she adds. The team approach and shared compensation may appeal to some salespeople but are not for everyone, says Piche.

“We provide the systems, leads, staff and marketing so the team members can focus on what they’re good at,” she says. “Our goal is to help them participate in more transactions with fewer expenses.”

Real estate is a competitive business, but neither team has had much internal conflict. Silver’s team members are careful not to step on one another’s toes, while Piche says that with so many leads to go around, there no reason for conflict. However, Silver says the team can always turn to management at the brokerage if it encounters a problem that seems insurmountable.

Although Realtors are often viewed as rugged individualists, both sources say it is possible for real estate salespeople to work and thrive in teams if the right conditions are present.

“People who can’t work as part of a team are the same people who might also have problems in an office environment,” Silver says. “If it is all about you, don’t choose to be part of a team. Our team members have come to depend on each other and, for the most part, have become social friends, as well as business friends.”

The diversity of Realtors leads to a range of work styles, says Piche. “Real estate draws so many different people from various backgrounds. There are certainly people who should not be part of a team and not everyone has the leadership skills to run one.

“A lot of people leave corporate life and then miss the social environment,” she says. “A team fills that social need and provides support. Some salespeople have tried working on their own, but they just want to sell houses without worrying about websites or marketing. A team can provide a much better outlet for them.”

Piche says that the BREL team has a rigorous interview process and involves other members of the team, too. “The fit has to be there,” she says. “The culture of the group and shared values are so critical.”
Keys to team success:

- Realize that you’re in it for the long haul; it’s not just about getting one deal done.
- If you’re thinking of joining a team, talk to the other team members and get a complete picture. Ask in-depth questions.
- In considering a team, see what the track record is and the longevity of members.
- Be sure that both the team and its affiliated brokerage are a good fit for you.
- Remember, it’s not all about what you can get. What do you bring that can make the team better?
- Consider hiring a coach or finding a mentor when you are starting a team so you can avoid painful mistakes.
- Put people with complementary skills together on your team. The complexity of the market today means no single individual is an expert on every type of property or aspect of the business.

*Story by Elaine Smith*

*Sources: Melanie Piche, Richard Silver*
Seven ways to show your professionalism

The following is the second installment in a series of tips on showing professionalism. Here are seven ways to demonstrate your professionalism to real estate colleagues.

1. Never bad-mouth another salesperson. Although real estate is a competitive business, you should always speak respectfully about other REALTORS®.

2. Always take the high road. If a seller you’ve been contacting decides to list with somebody else, respect that decision. A professional attitude on your part will generate more business in the future than sniping about the competition in the here and now.

3. Identify yourself right away when speaking to other salespeople about a property. Always make sure to tell them you are a real estate salesperson rather than a member of the public.

4. Direct all enquiries regarding terms, conditions, or price of a property to the listing salesperson. Do not discuss these points directly with the seller if you are not their sales representative.

5. Follow proper channels. Always request an appointment to show a property through the listing brokerage or salesperson. Don’t call the owner unless the listing firm has given prior permission.

6. Receive private calls through your cell phone or home phone to avoid tying up the office telephone or administrative staff.

7. When dropping off or picking up courtesy keys, be timely. If you are going to be late or must cancel, call the other representative(s) to let them know.

These tips are excerpted from A Mentoring Kit for New Salespeople, produced by the OREA Real Estate College.

Master the offer process: Join seminar

Handling offers is an exciting but stressful aspect of working in real estate. To learn more about how to master various scenarios and use different forms you may need during the offer process, take part in an upcoming web seminar (webinar).

The Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) is hosting a webinar on Wednesday, May 17 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. It is free to all OREA members. The webinar is called Master Offer Situations Using OREA Forms. The facilitator is Cassandra Agnew Walker, senior manager, standard forms, at OREA. She is a former REALTOR®, OREA director
and real estate instructor. The special guest speaker is Lou Radomsky, a lawyer, real estate instructor, and counsel to OREA’s standard forms committee.

“The offer process can be challenging and complex for consumers and REALTORS® alike,” says Agnew Walker. “It’s vital for real estate practitioners to be well versed in all of the possible scenarios that they may encounter as well as the best ways to handle those situations. This webinar will help them learn how to give their offers the best chance of success.”

The presenters will discuss and review:

- Risky situations and how to minimize them
- Vital steps to ensure regulatory compliance
- Appropriate OREA forms for this stage of the transaction
- Additional forms to assist REALTORS® and reduce liability in offer situations.

The webinar will also cover the following topics: Disclosure before a consumer signs an offer; information used to draft the offer; and key notifications/communications throughout the offer process.

Participants will have the opportunity to submit questions and share their own experiences. This webinar is just one in a series related to standard forms presented by OREA. To join in on webinar day, all you need is a computer with working speakers and internet access. More webinars are planned throughout 2017. If you can’t participate on the date offered, you can watch a recorded version at a later date and time convenient to you.

To sign up for this webinar, click here. On the day of the webinar, members can log in up to 30 minutes before the scheduled start time. Participation in this and other webinars is on a first-come, first-served basis. For more details on these resources, log in to the Members’ section and click on Standard Forms in www.orea.com.
Personal real estate corporations a step closer

Ontario REALTORS® are one step closer to being allowed to form personal real estate corporations, thanks to the success of recent advocacy work by the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA).

This past winter, OREA launched a campaign to support Bill 104, the *Tax Fairness for Realtors Act, 2017*. On March 23, the bill passed second reading in the Ontario legislature. This means the proposed legislation has moved past another hurdle as it progresses to the final stage of debate. The bill must still go through a review by a legislative committee, third reading and a final vote in the legislature before it becomes law.

Real Estate is one of very few regulated professions in Ontario that cannot incorporate under law, but Bill 104 aims to change that. If passed, the bill would permit Realtors to form personal real estate corporations (PRECs). This would enable real estate salespeople and brokers across the province to take advantage of the business benefits of incorporation, such as lower tax rates.

As part of its lobbying efforts, OREA created a website, RealtorTaxFairness.ca, to raise awareness of the campaign. The association encouraged Realtors to write to their Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) in support of the proposed legislation. Almost 10,000 Realtors participated in this call to action, conveying their views to elected officials.

Currently, real estate professionals are not allowed to form PRECs due to a technicality in the *Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002*. However, other regulated professions in Ontario, including accountants, lawyers, health professionals, social workers, mortgage brokers, insurance agents, architects and engineers, can all form personal corporations. Moreover, in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec and Nova Scotia, real estate professionals are permitted to form PRECs.

“This legislation is about giving Realtors the same business rights as everybody else,” said Ettore Cardarelli, president of OREA and a Mississauga Realtor. “OREA is working to make sure Ontario Realtors are treated fairly. This issue has been very important to me. For several years, we’ve been working tirelessly to ensure that Realtors are treated fairly in Ontario and given the ability to incorporate. That’s why I’m so happy about this result. We have been close twice before but never this close.”

This private member’s bill, submitted by Todd Smith, Conservative MPP (Prince Edward-Hastings) was introduced twice before, in 2014 and 2015. It was reintroduced in March of this year and co-sponsored by NDP MPP Catherine Fife and Liberal MPP Mike Colle. It is not yet known when a third reading will take place. However, the bill has the support of three political parties and OREA is continuing its efforts to urge its passage into law.
“Realtors are pillars of their communities and hard-working small business owners,” says Tim Hudak, OREA’s chief executive officer. “Personal real estate corporations will help them offer more services to clients, invest in new technology and create jobs in their communities.”

A 2015 study by the Centre for Spatial Economics found that personal real estate corporations would result in a positive economic benefit for the province. Specifically, the report found that PRECs would create between 33 and 89 net new jobs annually and contribute between $9 and $25 million per year to Ontario’s GDP.

During the recent advocacy campaign, OREA launched a massive call to action, encouraging Realtors to contact their local MPPs in anticipation of a third vote. The association is continuing its advocacy work and urging legislators to pass the bill into law. Realtors can send an email to their MPP by visiting RealtorTaxFairness.ca. For news about the progress of the bill, keep watching the OREA website and blog.

Legal Beat: Confirm clients understand BRA before signing

by Merv Burgard

In this case, the buyer clients said they did not understand what they were signing when they were presented with a Buyer Representation Agreement (BRA).

A salesperson and his broker of record gave confusing evidence as to whether the BRA was explained to these first-time home buyers. This was the salesperson’s second deal and everyone in the transaction spoke English and Urdu. The brokerage sued for overholding commission and lost.

In his 21-page decision, the Brampton small claims court judge referred to the usual issues of credibility and Non Est Factum [a lack of understanding], as noted in several prior decisions.

Century 21 People’s Choice Realty Inc. v Saleem 2016 CanLII 30103 (ON SCSM)

MERV’S COMMENTS

Although not necessary to his ruling, the judge in this case offered suggestions to real estate salespeople. He advised registrants on the handling and explanation of the BRA to consumers who may not have English as a first language and/or to consumers who are inexperienced in real estate transactions.

“I will now comment by way of obiter dictum [a side comment], what agents and their brokerages should do if they are to avoid the defence of Non Est Factum when it comes to execution and delivery of buyer representation agreements. They must, at a
minimum, ensure they do the following:

a) Explain in very clear terms that the representation agreement is different in form and purpose from any offer to purchase that might be discussed when the representation agreement is tabled;

b) Sign the representation agreement in an office environment, not in, or on, a car;

c) Explain to the buyer that the representation agreement is how the agent gets paid for their services;

d) Explain in the buyer’s native tongue, (where necessary), the main terms of the agreement, namely the term, commission rate, exclusive nature of their representation, and draw the buyer’s attention to the nature and purpose of the holdover provision;

e) Make it absolutely clear to the buyer that, under the holdover provision, their obligations under the representation agreement will continue, even if the relationship between agent and buyer breaks down, and

f) Physically separate, and distinguish, the representation agreement from any offer to purchase, if successive signature of both cannot be avoided.

To my mind, if these simple steps are taken, it would make enforcement of buyer representation agreements much easier. It is not enough to rely upon the “acknowledgment” provision toward the end of these agreements as evidence of the buyer’s understanding and acceptance thereof. This provision itself has to be explained if reliance thereon is sought.”

Is that what happens with all of your Representation Agreements with buyers and sellers? This might make a good topic for discussion at your next office meeting.

Merv Burgard, Q.C.

New app provides business plan for REALTORS®

An exciting and useful new app is now available for real estate professionals to develop a business plan and train for success.

The Business Plan for Real Estate Professionals app was developed by the OREA Real Estate College. It enables REALTORS® to set goals, develop marketing plans, and track their activities with buyers and sellers in a systematic way. The program runs on iPad devices and was launched in mid-April. It can be purchased through the Apple Store for $6.99 per user.
“This is a genuinely useful tool for all real estate practitioners,” said Ozzie Logozzo, executive director of the OREA Real Estate College, who conceived of the app, working in tandem with OREA colleagues and a technology company.

The launch is the culmination of a project that was almost two years in the making and required a wide range of skill sets, he said. “It was a massive puzzle that took many pieces to put together, but the result is quite unique, and everyone who’s seen it so far has been very impressed.”

“I’m not aware of anything else out there like this that is specifically geared to the real estate profession,” he said. “This app is a portable and secure training tool for individual REALTORS® as well as something that brokers of record can give to all of their salespeople to drive them towards success.”

The self-directed app guides users from the start in a straightforward, user-friendly way. It gives Realtors information on how to create a business plan and tips on effective time management. It allows you to set your goals for what you want to achieve financially in your real estate career, and populates charts over time so you can review your progress.

The program highlights areas of weakness, giving users the opportunity to pursue continuing education in those areas. “It enables you to compare your performance against the plan and then suggests steps you can take to improve.”

Users can fill in the charts with quantifiable goals such as: desired income; number of transactions you wish to oversee; volume of leads you expect to develop; and the rate of conversion from contacts or prospects to clients. The program begins with a section called the Learning Centre, allowing users to work through numerous steps starting with categories such as: My Market; My Services; My Goals; My Prospecting; My Marketing; My Tracking; and My Reports.

“Since Realtors are independent entrepreneurs, this app gives them the necessary tools and self-discipline to achieve the goals they have set for themselves,” said Logozzo. “The plan is easy to work from and you can adjust it along the way based on your own experiences, goals, successes and failures.”

After purchasing the app, users must create an individual account and log in. The information is housed in your iPad rather than in the cloud, so others cannot access it without the password. To learn more, visit the OREA College section of the website at www.orea.com.

*Story by Mary Ann Gratton*
New video tutorials explain forms

If you need help understanding and working with standard real estate forms, a short video tutorial can help.

Four new tutorials are being posted to the website of the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) on April 28 and can be watched at a date and time convenient to you.

In a fiercely competitive marketplace, information is one of the most valuable assets for REALTORS®, especially when it comes to the legal and regulatory aspects of the real estate transaction. OREA is therefore offering four more forms tutorials to help members navigate their professional obligations and protect the best interests of consumers. These narrated recordings describe the details of various sections of different forms, including screen shots. It brings the current total of this resource for members to 15.

“Each tutorial describes the purpose of the form, circumstances when it can be used, and a walk-through of each section for completion of the form,” says Cassandra Agnew Walker, OREA’s senior manager, standard forms. “Having a solid grasp of each form enables you to provide the best possible service to your clients and customers.”

All tutorials are less than five minutes in length and feature accompanying slides. They are designed to bring members up to speed on widely used forms. These simple, practical tools focus on the purpose of the forms and the steps involved in completing them. They remove guesswork by breaking down the forms into manageable sections.

The new tutorials cover the following real estate forms:

- **Form #124 – Notice of Fulfillment of Conditions:** used when a condition in an Agreement of Purchase and Sale has been fulfilled and the party whom the condition is for is communicating that fulfillment to the other party in the agreement.

- **Form #125 – Termination of Agreement by Buyer:** used after buyers have decided to exercise their right to terminate an Agreement of Purchase and Sale due to non-fulfillment of a condition.

- **Form #130 – Fax Cover Sheet – Offers:** used to track the delivery and receipt of offers and other documents between brokerages.

- **Form #240 – Amendment to Listing Agreement:** used when a brokerage and a seller agree to a change to their Listing Agreement.
To see these forms tutorials, click here. More tutorials are scheduled to be recorded and posted in the months ahead. Keep watching your email inbox for details about these and other resources to help you with your day-to-day transactions.

In addition to the tutorials, OREA is also offering interactive web seminars (webinars) and numerous helpful “Forms Explained” documents that simplify the content of various forms. For more details, visit www.orea.com and log into the Members’ section. Click on Standard Forms and then on Webinars and Tutorials.

*Story by Mary Ann Gratton*

**College to stop delivery of real estate education**

The OREA Real Estate College will no longer offer educational courses for real estate professionals in the province after December 31, 2020, the college announced on March 31.

The industry’s regulator, the Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO), selected another organization to deliver its new Registration Education Program, following its 2016 request for proposals process. On April 4, RECO announced that it had chosen a consortium of Humber College and NIIT Canada to design and deliver the new program.

Ettore Cardarelli, president of OREA, said “We wish the new provider of real estate education success in its delivery of the new program. We are committed to working closely with RECO, Humber College and NIIT Canada in the transition through to the end of 2020. A strong working relationship will benefit both REALTOR® education and the consumers who will work with these professionals.”

“The college has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to developing skilled and competent registrants, which has helped instill increased public confidence in the profession and its practitioners,” said Cardarelli. “Given that OREA has been the provider of real estate education in Ontario for more than 60 years, RECO’s decision did not come without significant disappointment. However, we are extremely proud of our accomplishments over the last 60 years, and we welcome the opportunity for OREA to refocus and strengthen its core member services.”

Over the years, the college has garnered many awards, including the Education Excellence Award from the Association of Real Estate Licensing Law Officials, the 2015 LERN International Award for Excellence in Programming, and the 2015 Education Program of the Year Award from the Real Estate Educators Association. The college has made education accessible province-wide through multiple delivery channels, while ensuring that a consistent standard of education is delivered to all students.

“In light of this change, we want to assure our members that our mission to help Realtors succeed grows ever stronger,” said Tim Hudak, CEO of OREA. “The
association continues to forge ahead with renewed energy and focus, and a
reinvigorated outlook on an exciting future for OREA. While OREA’s role in real estate
education may be changing, our efforts to consistently raise and uphold the high
standards of education we helped set will remain unchanged."

At OREA’s annual general meeting in March, more than 300 Realtors from across the
province gathered to learn about the association’s fresh direction. “We are committed to
building a ‘new’ OREA with increased effort and focus directed towards our key member
services – our government relations, our standard forms and our leadership training,”
said Cardarelli. “We’re working hard to become the most effective professional
association in the province delivering high impact advocacy on behalf of Realtors and
quality services that our members need and want.”

The OREA Real Estate College will continue to provide real estate education through
the remaining term of the Educational Services Agreement until December 31, 2020.
Students enrolled in the existing program will be allowed to complete their courses until
that date.

Supporters of charities, shelters honoured

Members of the public do not always realize the amount of support that REALTORS®
give to charities across Ontario.

The time and effort given by Realtors to shelter-based charities in their local
communities was the focus of a slate of awards presented recently. The Ontario
REALTORS Care® Foundation recognized various individuals during the annual
conference of the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA), held at Toronto’s Sheraton
Centre hotel.

Realtors play a key role in supporting shelters for the homeless and disadvantaged in
communities across the province. This is a natural fit, since real estate professionals are
in the business of helping people find homes.

At a luncheon ceremony at the March conference, Ettore Cardarelli, president of the
Ontario Real Estate Association, and Barb Whitney, president of the Ontario
REALTORS Care® Foundation for 2016, presented various awards to deserving
Realtors.

Spirit Awards recognize both individuals and groups. “The Spirit Awards recognize the
significant contribution of individuals, boards and associations or organizations to the
success of the Ontario Realtors Care® Foundation and/or to the advancement of its
goal to assist our members in supporting shelter-related charities in the communities,”
said Whitney.

“This year’s outstanding recipients have supported the foundation in promotion,
fundraising activities, their dedication in giving to shelter-related causes in Ontario and
exemplary dedication to advancing the foundation’s mission.”
Four individual awards and two collective Spirit awards were given out. Individual recipients of the Spirit awards were: Sue Fowler of the Huron Perth Association of REALTORS®; Bruce Johnson of the Thunder Bay Real Estate Board; Vince Mirabelli of the Thunder Bay Real Estate Board; and Tina Roy of the Windsor-Essex County Association of REALTORS®.

“Each of these individuals support the foundation in their own way,” said Whitney, “either by giving their time, effort, significant promotion or financial donations -- all of which contribute to the success of the foundation.”

In addition, two Spirit awards were presented in the board/association/organization category. Firstly, the Sarnia Lambton Real Estate Board has “contributed to the Every REALTOR® Campaign since its inception in 2008,” said Whitney. (Through this initiative, participating real estate boards collect $1 a month per member, with funds going to the foundation.) “They are big promoters of the purpose and significance of the foundation, and big supporters of giving back in the community.”

Secondly, the Ottawa Citizen/Postmedia “has been a sponsor of the [Ottawa] board’s golf tournament for a decade now. They provide sponsorship each year and have raised close to $50,000 for the foundation. They continue to support shelters and efforts to address homelessness throughout the community.”

In addition, 16 people were named Foundation Fellows for their volunteer efforts and financial contributions to the foundation. Foundation Fellows “represent the heart and soul of the real estate profession”. The 16 newly named individuals join the 282 individuals who have been honoured as Foundation Fellows since the program’s inception in 2001. The recipients were recognized for “leadership, volunteerism and support for their communities” and for their generous contributions of a minimum of $1,000 to the foundation. “Congratulations to all of our new Fellows,” said Whitney.

New Foundation Fellows are: Kim Alvarez,REALTORS® Association of Hamilton-Burlington; Patrick Dummitt, Niagara Association of REALTORS®; Paul Etherington, Toronto Real Estate Board; Stacey Evoy, London St. Thomas Association of REALTORS®; Luigi Favaro, OREA staff member; Charlotte Forget, The Oakville, Milton and District Real Estate Board; Mike Heffernan, Peterborough and the Kawartha Association of REALTORS® Inc.; Norm Langlois, Windsor-Essex County Association of REALTORS®; Vince Mirabelli, Thunder Bay Real Estate Board; Sandra O’Donohue, Durham Region Association of REALTORS®; Adam Rayner, Kingston and Area Real Estate Association; Bruce Shipley, Barrie & District Association of REALTORS®; Irene Smit, North Bay Real Estate Board; Lorne L. Smith (in memoriam), Peterborough and the Kawartha Association of REALTORS® Inc.; Mike Taylor, The Lakelands Association of REALTORS® - Muskoka Haliburton Orillia; and Jeff Van de Vorst of the Guelph & District Association of REALTORS®.

The focus of the foundation’s efforts are shelters and shelter-based charities. Some of the foundation’s recipient charities are: Habitat for Humanity, big Brothers and Big Sisters organizations across Ontario, Collingwood Crisis Centre, YWCA Sudbury, Covenant House Toronto, Couchiching Jubilee House, Domestic Abuse Services Oxford, Community Living Mississauga, the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa.
and the Regional Hospice of Quinte. These are just a few of the charities across Ontario that benefit from the efforts of Realtors.

For more details about the foundation, visit https://realtorscareontario.ca.

Photo caption: FOUNDATION AWARDS: Barb Whitney, 2016 president of the Ontario REALTORS Care® Foundation, and Ettore Cardarelli, president of the Ontario Real Estate Association, presented a slate of awards to deserving REALTORS®.

Story by Mary Ann Gratton

Awards recognize leadership in real estate

Five REALTORS® were honoured at an awards luncheon as part of the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) annual conference recently.

The OREA Young Professionals Network (YPN) Leadership Awards honour real estate salespeople who are either new to the profession or under the age of 40. Nominees were recognized for their volunteer efforts.

“With one third or more of Realtors about to reach the traditional age of retirement, our membership will be undergoing a significant transition over the next 10 years,” said OREA President Ettore Cardarelli at the awards ceremony at Toronto’s Sheraton Centre hotel. “At the same time, technology is revolutionizing the way we do business. OREA’s YPN recognized the need to embrace new pockets of talent and new ways of thinking from within our industry to help us prepare for the changes that lie ahead.”

Steve Kotan, a REALTOR® from North Bay and the recent chair of the OREA YPN committee, presented the five awards to recipients from across the province. “I’m extremely happy to be up here to present our five 2017 YPN leadership awards,” said Kotan, who is also the northern area director on the OREA board of directors.

“This program is designed to recognize and encourage the next generation of real estate leaders,” Kotan said. “Today’s winners are here because of their exemplary track records volunteering for organized real estate, giving back to their communities and investing in their professional development.

“As one of this year’s eight judges, I am incredibly proud of not only the work these five people have done, but also of all the inspiring individuals who took the time to apply for an award,” he added. “I can say firsthand that, with all of the talent we have in this industry, our future is in very good hands.”

The winners are listed alphabetically as follows:

Jeff Bauer of the Huron Perth Association of Relators was praised for his leadership and community initiatives. He has been working in the real estate industry for five years and practicing full-time since 2015. “In this short time, he has become a licensed broker, worked to establish a new YPN committee, and joined his association as a director,” the citation states, noting his involvement in various community initiatives. “Jeff has
combined his leadership and athletic skills to help convene and manage recreational opportunities for members of his community, as well as coaching aspiring athletes.”

**Branden Kameka** of the Mississauga Real Estate Board was lauded for his efforts in organized real estate. “Since joining the industry in 2009, Branden has co-founded his own real estate brokerage, started a YPN chapter in Mississauga, and served as president of the Mississauga Real Estate Board,” the citation states. He has served on various committees, offering his time and expertise to help develop a road map for the future of real estate. “He continuously puts his professional skills to work in his community by raising funds for numerous charitable causes … and he is just getting started.”

**David Kurt** of the Sudbury Real Estate Board was praised for serving various roles, including his recent term on OREA’s board of directors and his position as president of the Sudbury Real Estate Board, and as a member of numerous provincial and local committees. “Early on in his career, David made the decision to get involved in organized real estate, and he has not looked back,” the citation notes. In 2016, Kurt was the first Realtor in his community to be recognized as one of the top 40 Young Leaders Under 40. “It was clear to our judges, as it is to all those who know David, that he settles for nothing less than excellence in every sphere of his life,” said Kotan.

**Lisa Patel** of the Toronto Real Estate Board was praised for making “a huge impression with her extensive track record in the awards’ three categories: organized real estate, professional development and community involvement. “Have you ever met someone who tackles a dozen projects at once and makes it look easy? Well, Lisa is one of those people!” the citation notes. “Her passion for her industry is evident in her tireless commitment to bringing new professionals into the real estate fold, being an ambassador for youth in business, and sharing her extensive knowledge as a media personality and speaker.”

**Brian Santos** of the Kitchener-Waterloo Real Estate Board was lauded for his numerous leadership roles, including chairing several committees and assisting with the launch of his local board’s first YPN chapter. Santos served as a vice-president of his board and “his flair for leadership has also landed him on his local Downtown Action Advisory Committee, where he advises city council on matters of significance to his community,” the citation notes. “Brian’s references concur that it is both his professional achievements, as well as his humility and warmth, that set him apart.”

The above winners will be profiled in videos in the coming months. OREA will highlight their advice and the top lessons learned for success in real estate. Keep watching the YPN page on the OREA website and the OREA YouTube channel.

Photo caption:

**AWARD WINNERS:** YPN leadership award winners were honoured at a ceremony at the OREA annual conference. Left to right are: Jeff Bauer, YPN Committee Chair Steve Kotan, Brian Santos, Lisa Patel, Ray Dubash of the Mississauga Real Estate Board (accepting for Branden Kameka) and David Kurt.
Foundation board installed

The 2017 board of directors of the Ontario REALTORS® Care® Foundation was officially installed at the annual OREA leadership conference in Toronto in March. These volunteers come from across the province and their commitment is vital to the success of the foundation. Members of the board for 2017 are as follows:

Elizabeth Wale of St. Catharines is President; Einas Makki of Timiskaming Shores is President-Elect. Mike Collins of Toronto is Toronto Real Estate Board (TREB) Director. Krista Del Gatto of Windsor is Public Director – Executive Officer. Wendy Giroux of the Durham Region Association of REALTORS® is Public Director. Jenny Kotulak of Milton is REALTOR® Director (Central Region). Barb Whitney of London is REALTOR® Director (Western Region); Regan Lee of Smiths Falls is REALTOR® Director (Eastern Region); Debbie Vernon of Bracebridge is REALTOR® Director (Northeastern Region); Aziz Kanjee of Mississauga is OREA Director; and Tim Hudak, Chief Executive Officer of OREA, is Secretary-Treasurer. For more details, visit www.realtorscareontario.ca.

Photo caption: FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS: (Back row, left to right) Wendy Giroux, Aziz Kanjee, Mike Collins, Barb Whitney, Regan Lee. (Front row, left to right) Debbie Vernon, Einas Makki, Elizabeth Wale, Krista Del Gatto, Jenny Kotulak.

The REALTOR® EDGE newsletter is produced 11 times a year by the Ontario Real Estate Association. The newsletter aims to provide practical and useful news and information about the real estate industry to members of the association. The opinions expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the publisher. We welcome submissions from the real estate community, including letters to the editor, opinion pieces, events and news. The newsletter reserves the right to edit, based on space restrictions and/or suitability, and/or to refuse submitted material for inclusion in the newsletter without reason. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without the express written permission of the publisher, OREA, is prohibited. Contents are copyright of the Ontario Real Estate Association.

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