

TUCSON

REAL PRODUCERS[®]

INFORMING AND INSPIRING REAL ESTATE AGENTS

**ROBIN &
SHANE
SUPALLA**



Photography by Casey James



Robin And Shane Supalla

MOTHER AND SON IMPACTING THE DEAF COMMUNITY

By Kylea Bitoka

A stylist for a designer clothing line and a fisherman called "Big Country" walk into a house. Sounds like the beginning of a joke, right? It's not! It's a dynamic mother and son real estate team who are making a big difference for the deaf community in Tucson. Robin Supalla and Shane Supalla teamed up about eight months ago, but both have been licensed REALTOR®s for a few years.

It all started when Shane wanted to buy rather than rent a house to live in while he went to college. Due to negative experiences she had in past real estate transactions, Robin decided to get her real estate license so her family would have a better understanding and be more in control. She had no intention of becoming a full-time REALTOR®. "I haphazardly became a successful REALTOR®. I got the license to help my family with transactions, but then friends started coming to me and asking for help with buying or selling homes. My goal is to treat everyone as I would my own family, and the business just developed." Her work as a stylist doing trunk shows in people's homes provided the perfect network for her newly budding real estate career. "The hostesses of those shows were some of my first clients." All of her travel with the trunk shows meant that Robin was very familiar with Tucson neighborhoods and houses. It was the perfect foundation for her real estate career.

A year after his mom got licensed, Shane decided to get licensed too. However, with a successful sales career in the sporting goods industry, real estate was put on the back burner. "I never expected to work with my mom, never expected it, but it's been fun," Shane adds with a laugh.

Shane got into the sporting goods industry through his love of fishing. A self-taught fisherman, Shane turned a boyhood hobby into a career. Shane's dad was an avid outdoorsman with a love for camping and hiking. "I grew up going camping almost every weekend - we had a little travel camper." But neither mom (Robin) or dad (Samuel) enjoyed fishing. "My parents were nice enough to buy me the supplies, but I was left to my own devices. It was five or six years before I caught a fish. I would go in and talk to the guys at the sporting goods stores, and they would give me tips." Shane's determination paid off. "When I was around 12 years old, I caught my first fish, a rainbow trout at Rose Canyon Lake in Mt. Lemmon." Shane went from fishing for fun to working as a deckhand on halibut charter boats in Alaska over the summer. "I did well in Alaska; I earned myself the nickname 'Big Country' because I was that country kid from Tucson that taught himself how to fish." He also served as a guide for salmon fishing on the Kenai River.

Shane worked his way up from a guide in Alaska to sales professional to national sales director. He was recruited to another sporting goods company based in Los Angeles, CA. As he worked at that company, the cutthroat nature of high-level sales began to wear on

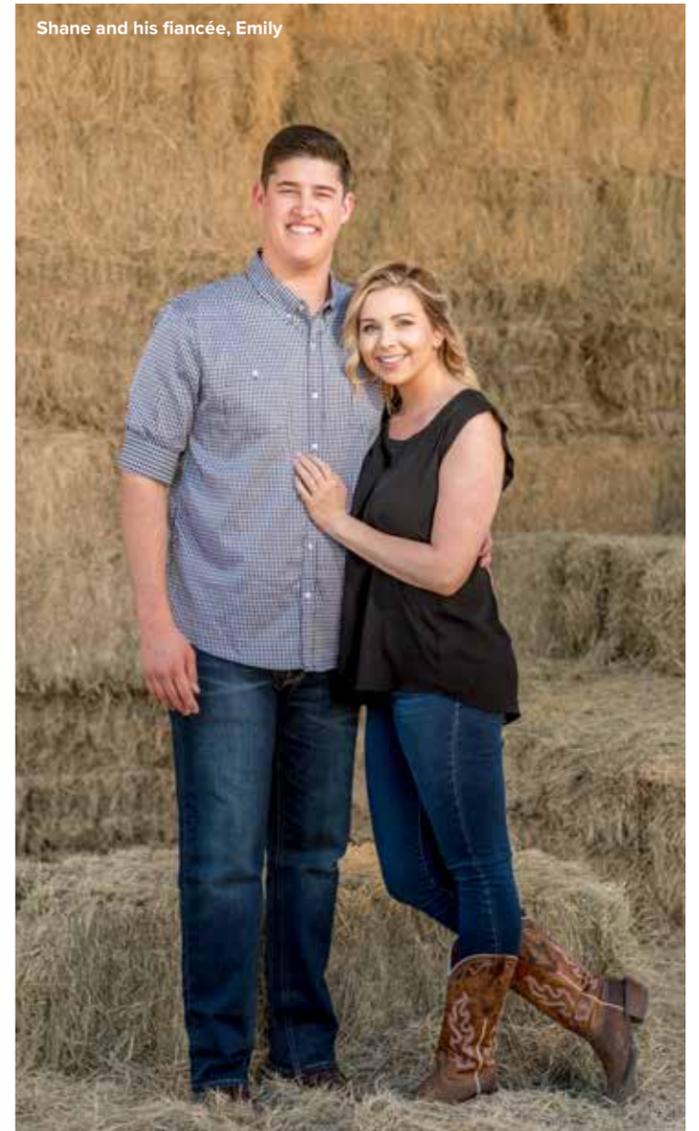
him. Meanwhile, back home in Tucson, his mom, Robin, was starting to refer people to other real estate agents because she had such high volume. Shane knew it was time to retire from the sporting goods industry and go full time into real estate with his mom.

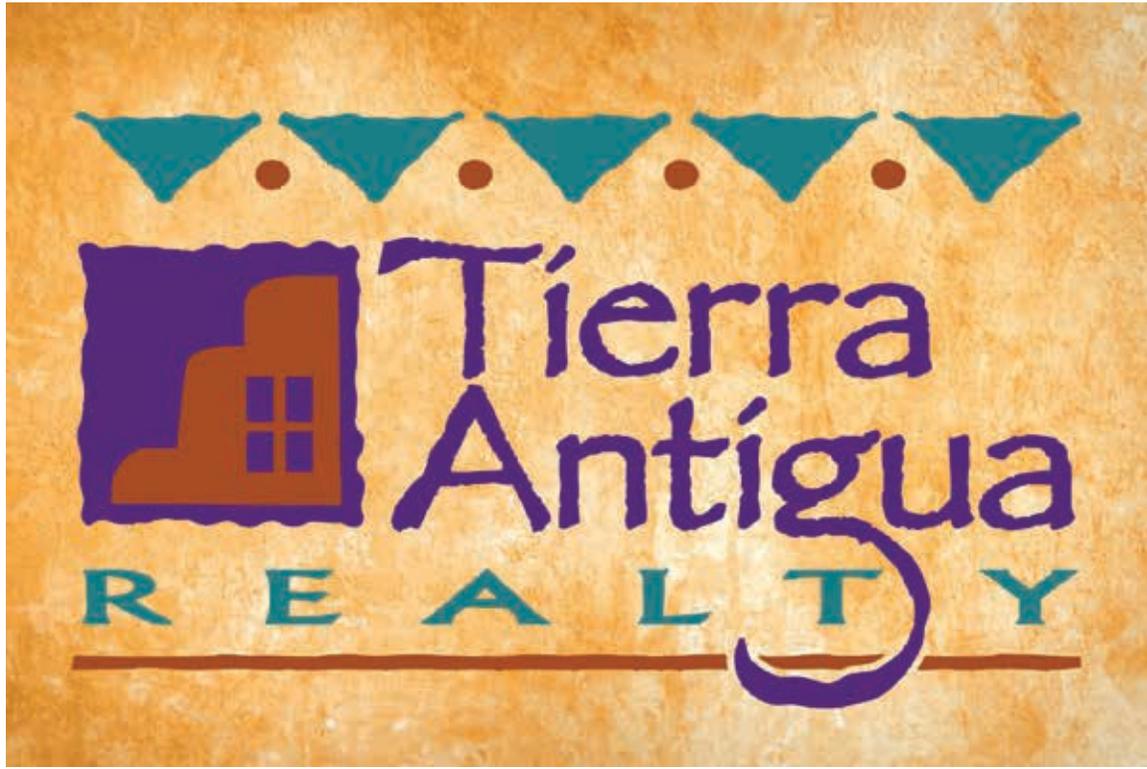
One of the biggest benefits of their collaboration is the peace of mind it offers. "The beauty of this partnership is that I am 100 percent confident I can refer anybody to Shane and know that he will treat them as good as I do. That's been wonderful for me to experience. It's nice to keep it in the family; we have each other's backs." For Shane, it's great that his mother can manage the business during his annual summer trip to Alaska. He volunteers at Kneppers Alaska Fishcamp with their Dads for Lad's program. It's a camp for youth without a father figure in their lives; campers are paired with a mentor and learn a variety of life and outdoor skills in the Alaskan wilderness.

Being a mother and son real estate team is not the only thing that sets Robin and Shane apart. Both are fluent in American Sign Language. "My husband is deaf. All of our kids learned to sign before they could talk." One of Robin's frustrations when she and her husband moved to Tucson was they could not find a REALTOR® that was fluent in American Sign Language. "Real estate is a complicated issue from loans to inspections, and if you can't communicate with your client in their native language it can be very difficult." Robin knew from her own experience that the deaf community was under-represented in the Tucson real estate market. Over the last several months, Robin and Shane have focused on becoming the go-to REALTOR®s in the deaf community. "It's really impactful. It's exciting to see how happy our clients are to be able to communicate with not one but two agents."

For Robin, being the best for her clients is what really matters. "I'm 100 percent focused on the clients we have." Shane teases, "She works all the time." But Robin admits that's not an exaggeration. "I work 24/7. I just think it's important to be available to your clients. However, I do make time for riding my horse. It's therapeutic for me. Though, I will be talking about real estate while we're going on trail rides." Both Robin and Shane chuckle. It's clear that both are passionate about real estate and providing the best client experience. "We don't want to be the biggest team, but we do want to be the best team."

For Robin, what started as a way to help her family turned into a thriving real estate business and now a successful partnership. "It's been a privilege to take our relationship to another level. I am super blessed." For Shane, the adventures continue. Shane and his fiancé, Emily, will get married in September. It's an exciting time, and the Supallas are enjoying each moment as their business and family grows.





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