



Press Release
November 17, 2015

NextHome continues national expansion with NextHome City Life Realty

The franchise adds its second brokerage in New Jersey

Pleasanton, CA— November 17, 2015 — [NextHome](#) is proud to announce our newest addition to the franchise, **NextHome City Life Realty**. This is the franchise's second brokerage in the state of New Jersey.

Owned and operated by Lionel Cruz, the Jersey City-based brokerage will provide residential real estate sales services to the counties of Hudson, Bergen, Union, Essex, Middlesex, and Passaic.

Previous to real estate, Cruz enjoyed a long career in the field of legal litigation. He is no stranger to the intricate details of contracts and the work needed to pay attention to finite details of a transaction. Cruz attributes many of his strong communication skills to his work in legal litigation.

Cruz' initial introduction to real estate came through a familiar theme – as a buyer of an investment property. Originally based in Manhattan, NY, Cruz made the move to New Jersey in 2001 and purchased his first New Jersey property in 2002.

“My first property I bought in New Jersey was a multi-family home,” recalls Cruz. “The property was a great investment, but the service I received from my real estate agent was lacking. Seeing what the agent earned with such poor service, I knew there was an opportunity for someone to bring great service to a great investment opportunity.”

In 2006, Cruz got his real estate license and began working with a Jersey City-based national franchise brand office. While there wasn't much offered by the way of tools or services, he took advantage of all the training offered by the company and built a strong real estate business foundation.

Over the next three years, Cruz was one of the top producers in his area, but by 2009, the Jersey City area was one of the worst hit markets in the United States during the recession. Cruz made a dramatic shift in his business model by working with foreclosures and Real Estate Owned (REO) properties. By working with banks to liquidate their assets, Cruz expanded his brokerage to handle large amount of listings in his market. He also added working with investors in rehabilitating and flipping properties.

In 2013, Cruz made the decision to take a chance on himself and open his own brokerage – *Urban Realty Group (URG)*. As the broker/owner of the company, Cruz recruited talented agents from all over the Jersey City area and grew the brokerage to 20+ agents. The company



focused on foreclosures, shorts sales, traditional listings and helping overseas buyers with investment properties.

Cruz knew he needed to add a component to his brokerage that helped his 20 agents in today's real estate market. After seeing the NextHome franchise in REALTOR Magazine, he Googled the company and loved what he saw.

"NextHome thoroughly impressed me with the vision of the leadership, the fresh branding and color scheme, and tangible products and services that I know will help my agents be more effective with their clients," said Cruz. "When I spoke with other franchise representatives, they all said the same thing. But when [NextHome CEO] James Dwiggins explained in depth about consumer behavior, I knew the leadership of the company understood today's buyers and their habits."

He came up with the name *NextHome City Life Realty* because of "how it serves and speaks to the people of New Jersey," said Cruz.

"Jersey City is one of the hottest real estate markets in the United States," adds Cruz. "With the development of housing, commercial properties and companies in the Northeast, Jersey City is set to surpass Newark as the most populated city in New Jersey in less than 18 months."

"In spending time working through the details of NextHome franchising with Lionel, I have come to appreciate the detail and care he has showed in researching what franchise would be best for his company," said NextHome's Vice President of Sales Charis Moreno. "He already has built a strong presence in the Jersey City area and his quality standards are evident. With his brokerage being 20 agents strong, the addition of NextHome will provide his agents with the tools necessary to take them to the next level."

When not selling real estate, Cruz enjoys spending time with his girlfriend, Alcania and his two children, Tyson (17) and Daniel (15). A self-proclaimed "gym rat", you'll either find Cruz working out or cheering on his beloved baseball team, the New York Yankees. Travel is a big part of his life as well, as he visits his family in Puerto Rico several times a year.

Please join us in welcoming Lionel and his team NextHome City Life Realty to our already exceptional NextHome brokerage network!

Interested in being a part of the NextHome Real Estate Franchise? Contact VP of Sales Charis Moreno at Charis@NextHome.com.

Each office is an independently owned and operated business.



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About NextHome, Inc.

NextHome, Inc. is an independently owned company with a focus on changing the way consumers work with local agents and shop for real estate online. It owns the NextHome and Realty World Northern California & Northern Nevada franchise networks with over 180 offices and more than 900 agents. The company closes over 5000 transactions annually worth over \$2B in volume.

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