



Press Release

December 5th, 2019

NextHome announces new brokerage in Tampa Bay

Amy and Becky bring years of friendship, next-level professionalism to the Tampa Bay area

Pleasanton, CA — December 5, 2019 — NextHome is proud to announce our newest addition to the franchise, **NextHome Bay Area Experts**. The brokerage represents the 50th office location opened in Florida for the NextHome franchise.

Based in Tampa, NextHome Bay Area Experts is owned by friends Amy Smith and Becky Kuntz. Amy will serve as the office's broker in charge, though both women are licensed broker owners.

Together, the pair brings next-level professionalism and friendly service to buyers and sellers across the Tampa Bay metro area. Although their main focus area is Central Tampa, NextHome Bay Area Experts agents are happy to serve clients across the Tampa Bay area including St. Petersburg, Lutz, Westchase, Land O' Lakes, Wesley Chapel, and the remainder of Hillsborough and Pinellas counties.

Their office of eight agents (and growing) brings a fresh burst of professionalism to residential and commercial transactions.

"Our focus is on creating an environment where an agent can stand out professionally," Amy said. "We are raising the bar and providing value as true professionals. When our agents succeed, our clients succeed and we take great pride in being able to be a part of that."

Amy began her real estate career in Tampa in 1996. In her first role, she worked as a sales manager for David Weekly Homes. Two years later, she got her brokers license and opened Burcaw and Associates. The company became a beacon in the Tampa area commercial real estate for the next nine years.

However, when her second child was born, Amy knew she needed a change of pace. She dove back into residential real estate, joining a team at a nationally franchised brokerage, and that's where she met Becky.

For years, Becky owned a mortgage and title company. Then, in 2007, markets shifted. Seeing an opportunity for career change, Becky sold her company and moved from the east coast of Florida to Tampa, joining the same real estate team Amy was on.

"It was a great opportunity for me to develop a deep understanding of the Tampa area and learn the other side of the real estate business," Becky said.

Their time together through the real estate team built the foundations of a lifelong friendship.

After several years selling together, Amy left the team and started her own brokerage (Shine Bright Realty) in 2011.

Becky also left the previous large brokerage, first working with investors and then joining another nationally franchised team.



However, the two continued to enjoy a great friendship. After more than four years of working apart, Becky and Amy realized they brought strengths to their businesses that would flourish when combined. At the end of 2016, they opened SmithJoy Realty - a nod to Becky's last and Amy's middle names.

Together, Becky and Amy thrived. With five agents joining the brokerage, SmithJoy Realty was able to achieve \$20 million in sales in its first year. Part of that success was because their brokerage gave agents unparalleled support.

"We tried to create a hybrid model of what's out there," Becky said. "It seemed like agents had two options: the contract model where they get very little support or the team model where you don't get to truly promote yourself and you get micromanaged. We aimed to create the best of both worlds. We want agents to have both the training and support they need as well as getting credit for what they do."

For years, Amy and Becky resisted advertisements asking SmithJoy Realty to franchise with big national companies.

"There wasn't a brand out there that resonated with us, that was creating what we wanted to create or had the same philosophy," Becky said.

In 2018, Becky was showing beach properties to a buying client and everything changed. The seller's agent was local NextHome professional, Annie Fleeting with NextHome Beach Time Realty.

"I was just highly impressed with her," Becky said. "Amy and I prided ourselves on our level of professionalism and Annie was the epitome of professionalism."

The group went back to Annie's NextHome office to discuss property details and the NextHome brand stunned Becky.

"The brand was just amazing," Becky said. "Everything from the business street signage to the marketing package was the same way: fresh, inviting, and modern. We eventually talked about the franchise and Annie gushed about the company. Then she said 'NextHome was the best thing that I have done for my life.' And I noticed she didn't say business or career, but she used the word 'life.'"

Soon, Becky and Amy started looking deeper into what NextHome had to offer.

"It was all the things we built our philosophy around," Becky said. "We want a family of agents all working together to navigate this industry. It isn't easy being an agent, and we want a company that promotes a collaborative environment and provides value to agents and clients at every turn. We want to support career-oriented REALTORS® who take their business seriously, but not themselves too seriously. NextHome provides unparalleled support for that."

Both Amy and Becky are active in their communities and are especially passionate about helping local animal rescues.

Amy is the mother of two boys: Roman (14) and Casey (12). In addition, four rescue dogs call the Smith household home. When she isn't selling real estate, Amy loves to camp with her boys and travel.



Becky is mother to Ethan (11) and Jackson (11) and wife to Anthony. Together the family loves their five rescue dogs and they encourage each other to pursue excellence in the martial arts. The Kuntz family also loves the outdoors and each year the Smiths and the Kuntzs make a tradition of going on a summer camping trip.

Please join us in congratulating Amy and Becky on the opening of NextHome Bay Area Experts in Tampa, Florida!

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

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About NextHome, Inc.

NextHome, Inc. is an independently owned national franchisor 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 500 offices and more than 4,200 agents. The company closes over 20,000 transactions annually worth over \$6.4B in volume.

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