

Teri Fruge' Huff

BY HANNAH DAVIS
PHOTOS BY STEVIE LEJEUNE



Licensed with Coldwell Banker One, Teri Fruge' Huff has built a long, steady career defined less by flash and more by consistency. Her tenure spans some of the most turbulent chapters in Louisiana real estate history, including Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the mortgage industry collapse of 2008 and the Great Flood of 2016.

"When Hurricane Katrina hit, you didn't even have to show a house to get a contract," Teri said. "Listings were going under contract sight unseen. Companies were buying up anything they could get their hands on."

She remembers watching a wave of new agents flood into the business

during those boom periods, only to disappear once the market normalized. "They thought selling houses was easy," she said. "Once the market settled, they realized there was actual work involved."

That ability to weather extremes has become a hallmark of her approach.

"I'd like to say I've seen it all," she said, "but life likes to throw curveballs. We're constantly adapting, and that's what keeps it interesting."

When Teri earned her real estate license in 2000, she couldn't have predicted just how many market cycles, natural disasters and industry shifts she would navigate over the next 25 years. What she did know was how to stay calm, show up for people and keep moving forward.

Before real estate, Teri's career revolved around retail and customer-facing roles. After earning a degree in fashion merchandising from Louisiana State University, she managed a clothing store and later ran a jewelry store with her husband for more than two decades. The work suited her personality. "I've always loved interacting with people face to face," Teri said. "Retail taught me how to listen, how to read people and how to build trust."

Real estate, however, wasn't always part of the plan. In fact, the idea came from an unlikely place...tennis courts. "I played on a tennis team for years, and I started noticing that a lot of my opponents were real estate agents," she said. "They seemed to have so much flexibility. I had three young kids and wanted a career that allowed me to volunteer at school, be a room mother and attend field trips." She got her license, and says with a laugh, "I haven't played tennis since!"

Today, Teri works as an individual agent by choice. She prefers the hands-on nature of solo production and values direct involvement in every stage of a transaction. For her, real estate is as much about relationships as results. "One of the hardest things is that you're in constant communication with clients, sometimes intensely, and then everything's supposed to end on closing day," she said. "One of my favorite things is building relationships that last long after the sale."

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She hopes clients view her as a trusted partner rather than a salesperson, a distinction she has worked intentionally to earn. That philosophy has fueled a referral-based business model from the very beginning. “I’ve never liked cold calling, so I never did it,” Teri said. “Referrals are my main source of business. If you nurture relationships, one transaction can turn into a pipeline of referrals. That’s been the biggest blessing for me.” Ask clients what sets her apart, and the same phrase comes up repeatedly. “They tell me I’m calm but fierce when I need to be,” Teri said. “This business is constant problem-solving. I want my clients to feel at ease and trust that I’m handling everything.”

Her mindset is simple and steady: everything is fixable.

“I’m often asked how I stay so calm,” she said. “That approach keeps everyone else calm too. I give myself a challenge and if clients tell me at closing that I made it easy, I’ve done my job.” That sense of responsibility extends beyond transactions. For more than 15 years, Teri has volunteered with and contributed to Pat’s Coats for Kids, reflecting a long-standing commitment to community involvement.

Early in her career, Teri’s approach was recognized when she earned Realtor Rookie of the Year in 2001 with Coldwell Banker Mackey Co. But one of her most meaningful honors came outside the industry. In 1999, she received the Distinguished Graduate Award from St. Thomas More Catholic School, an honor selected annually by Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge. “That one meant a lot,” she said. “It was special to be recognized by the school where my foundation was built.”

After 25 years, the variety of this career keeps her engaged. “Every deal is different,” Teri said. “Just when you think you’ve seen it all, something new shows up. Stay calm, keep moving forward,” and she added, “It helps to love what you do.”

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