

Movers: Josh Altman ramps up staff in Corona Del Mar office

Star broker beefs up staff by hiring more OC agents

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Local expertise still matters as a real estate selling point, even for a jetsetter like Josh Altman, star of “Million Dollar Listing” and co-founder of The Altman Brothers at Douglas Elliman. He recently made headlines for the official debut of his Orange County office.

“In order to succeed in Orange County, you have to embrace the local community,” he said. “One way we showed that is by putting down roots locally.”

In March, Altman opened a temporary office at 3500 East Coast Highway in the exclusive OC enclave of Corona Del Mar. The space most recently housed a flagship for real estate brokerage Agent Inc.

Altman also hired several new Orange County agents. Brad Bankenbush and Brian Davis joined in March. They most recently worked for Eklund-Gomes, also of Douglas Elliman. Bankenbush and Davis will focus on Newport Beach.

Alexandra Rubow, who formerly worked for Hiton & Hyland, joined in February. Newport Beach and Laguna Beach will be the neighborhoods where she'll focus.

Since the beginning of the year, Orange County agents starting work with Altman Brothers include Ivan Moad, Keegan Budden and Lauren Phillips. She serves as director of operations for the Altman Brothers' OC office.

In August, The Altman Brothers Orange County office is scheduled to move to a permanent flagship location at 3700 East Coast Highway in Corona Del Mar.

► Husband-and-wife team of Melissa and Mason Merrins started the Merrins Property Group in late February. They will work out of Douglas Elliman's Brentwood office. The Merrins will focus on Westwood, Century City, Little Holmby, Bel Air, Brentwood, Santa Monica and Pacific Palisades. Mason Merrins' most recent affiliation was with Sotheby's. Melissa Merrins formerly worked at JP Morgan.

► Avi Ghajar has joined John Stanaland Group, a top-producing Laguna Beach firm at Douglas Elliman. Ghajar will focus on Orange County's beach cities from Dana Point to Huntington Beach. She was formerly affiliated with Coldwell Banker.

► Ariana Gaffoglio has joined Official, a new shop co-founded by Oren and Tal Alexander. She'll work in Orange County to establish a presence

for Official in the coastal cities of Newport Beach, Laguna Beach and surrounding towns. Gaffoglio most recently worked with the Eklund-Gomes Team of Douglas Elliman in Orange County. One of Gaffoglio's major deals includes serving as listing agent for a \$33.8 million sale of 4130 Calle Isabella in San Clemente in September 2021.

►Aimee Stern has started working in the Brentwood office of Douglas Elliman. A former entertainment attorney, Stern has worked with clients in entertainment fields and technology industries. She will focus on Beverly Hills, Bel Air, Brentwood, Pacific Palisades and Hidden Hills. She was formerly affiliated with The Agency.

►The Beverly Hills Estates has announced new agents including Michael LaMontagna, who joined from Carolwood Estates in mid-March. LaMontagna will focus on Beverly Hills, Bel Air, Sherman Oaks, Sunset Strip, Studio City and Encino.

Tatia Lee started working with The Beverly Hills Estates after working with Westside Estate Agency. She'll focus on Santa Monica, Malibu, Pacific Palisades and Brentwood.

Dennis DeWalt recently joined The Beverly Hills Estates, where he'll sell in Beverly Hills, Bel Air, Hollywood Hills, Brentwood, Pacific Palisade and Santa Monica. DeWalt's most recent gig was working with The Agency.

Another addition to The Beverly Hills Estates is Ziv Gabay. He formerly worked with Compass, and will focus on cities such as Pacific Palisades, Brentwood, Malibu, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Studio City, Encino and Sherman Oaks.

KJ Marmon also started an affiliation with The Beverly Hills Estates

after working with Aaron Kirman Group. Marmon will focus on West L.A. He also sells real estate in the cities around Tulum, Mexico.

► Josh Ramirez recently joined Aaron Kirman's AKG-Christie's International Real Estate. He will lead AKG's expansion into Montecito and Santa Barbara. Ramirez was most recently affiliated with Compass.

► Compass announced it would work with Carina Castrege at Compass' Pasadena office, where she will focus on new developments and new residences.

The staff of 11 people in Henry Horn Group started working with Compass' Beverly Hills office. Henry Horn Group will be focusing on multifamily and luxury residential in West LA, South Bay, Pasadena and some cities in Coastal Orange County. The group was formerly affiliated with Agent Inc.

The four person Barry Gray Team has joined Compass Beverly Hills from Deasy Penner Podley/DPP. A focus for Barry Gray Team is historic and architecturally significant homes.

Stuart Wann has started working with Compass' Dana Point office, where he focuses on luxe listings around San Clemente. He formerly worked with Keller Williams.

Giovanni Morales will work at Compass' Pasadena office. He'll focus on Pasadena and surrounding areas. Morales was most recently affiliated with Century 21.

Also, Inna Santoso recently joined Compass and will work at its Brentwood office

➤ After a stint at Keller Williams Advisors in Santa Monica, Derek Reilly of Westside Expert, recently changed affiliations and focus. He and his team of two people are currently affiliated with Lyon Stahl Investment Real Estate. They will start Lyon Stahl's West L.A. office. Along with selling single-family homes, Reilly and his team will specialize in selling multifamily projects. "I'm going back to my roots," Reilly said. "I started out in multifamily."