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COVER STORY

## KELLIE KIELEY-PATNAUDE

KELLIE KIELEY REALTY LLC

# KELLIE

KIELEY-PATNAUDE



▶ featured  
real  
producer

By **Megan Taylor-DiCenzo**  
Photos by  
**Michael Gallitelli**,  
Metroland Photo  
Thank you to  
**Mark Schafer**  
(a "Parade of  
Homes" award-  
winning builder)  
and **Melissa  
Schafer** (designer)  
for sharing their  
beautiful home  
for photos.

FROM DIRE STRAITS TO SO MUCH GREAT

KELLIE KIELEY REALTY LLC



"The incredible team at KKR!"

## WHAT IS SUCCESS?

"It is a package," Kellie Kieley-Patnaude explained. "It is taking chances when you are uncertain of the outcome. It is growth. It is having my children's pride. It is being financially sound, having a good reputation, and being fueled by your family. It is having your agents believe in you. It is running a household where your family is thriving, and you are at the center of it. It is taking the time to enjoy life with your friends and family."

Kellie's definition of success speaks to her life, passions, challenges, and integrity. This definition is the confluence of Kellie's life — each part is an integral piece of her story, and this is where her story begins.

Kellie has been in real estate for 16 years now, but she was originally

headed for a career in counseling. Having earned her master's degree, she was a year and a half away from obtaining her doctoral degree in psychology, but Kellie left the program and moved from Virginia back to the Albany area in 2001 with her ex-husband and their daughter. In 2002, her son was born.

“ IT IS TAKING CHANCES WHEN YOU ARE UNCERTAIN OF THE OUTCOME. ”

Kellie was a stay-at-home mom but decided to get her real estate license

when her children were three and five years old. She was motivated to do so after she and her ex-husband tried selling their home "for sale by owner," which turned out to be a nightmare. This was before most people texted.

"Although the sign said, 'by appointment only,' we had people ringing our doorbell at 7 am," Kellie remembered. "I had about 30 people over the course of two weeks (most of them unannounced). Finally, a family came with two small children, one of whom wound up vomiting in my son's bedroom. That was it; we decided to list with an agent after that, and it still took 45 days or so to sell it. The process was draining and stressful. It was then I wanted to get involved in the industry to help people through it."

A few years later, things got exponentially worse. Kellie got divorced, her mother died, and the market crashed.

“It was difficult; I was in dire financial straits,” Kellie recalled. “With two little kids, I was served foreclosure papers, had my car repossessed, and ultimately had to file bankruptcy.”

She took a job with United Airlines at Albany Airport, working 4-8 am, and spent her days and nights working real estate. Then, Kellie was offered a position as a home care representative with Nationwide Insurance.

“At the time, everything seemed so hard,” she shared. “But now, I realize it couldn’t have worked out any better. I would never have known what I could do had I not been put in this position. I met my current husband throughout this process. He’s the rock behind it all. He is my biggest supporter.”

Nationwide allowed Kellie to work from home, though she was in the field much of the time. She learned about the intricacies of homes: heating systems, electrical systems, septic, siding, roofing—everything to do with the build and functionality of a house as a whole.

“I learned a little bit about a lot, and I realized that I could now provide a tremendous value to my clients,” Kellie



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said. “I recognized issues that could become a failed inspection or that could cost my clients serious money down the road.”

Although Kellie loved her job at Nationwide, she realized she had the tools to make her career in real estate a success.

“I resigned, went all-in with real estate, and never looked back,” Kellie shared. “It was sink or swim, and I swam. I had to. I also had the love and support of my now-husband, my love for this industry, and love for my two children whom I had to support and protect.”

Kellie now has 12 REALTORS® and a thriving, boutique-style firm with a customized approach. There is an intake (much like therapy). There is true listening. They think outside the box and consider each client personally.

“We’re trying to build a relationship and a reputation. It’s a different dynamic,” Kellie noted.



"I took a chance opening my own brokerage," she added. "It was a month before COVID-19, though we didn't know that at the time. But my team also took a chance on me, and that means the world to me. We're ranking in the top 10 percent of almost 500 firms on the MLS. We are a small but mighty group packing one heck of a punch. This group is a family."

Kellie is a natural mentor, and she is proud to support her team, but even more proud that they support her and each other.

"What comes naturally to me is helping people through a process," she said. "You raise your children, try to instill in them values, and protect them. You get them to a point where they're independent, but if they need you, you're there. That's how I am with my agents."

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Through the years, Kellie's integrity and expertise have earned her many accolades, including "Rookie of the Year" in 2006; "Women's Council of REALTORS®" 2009-present; The Realty Alliance "National Sales Excellence" 2017-2019; and Homesnap's "Top 5% of Agents" Award 2020 and 2021.

Having endured myriad struggles and come out on top, Kellie has plenty of loving advice to share with up-and-coming REALTORS®. She warns that no one should enter real estate just because they like houses and think it will be easy money, because it's not. Be prepared to learn something every day, no matter how long you are in business. Stay in your lane. If you don't know the answer, someone else does. Never give legal advice. And if something goes south, move north, and keep going.

"I still work with people, but in a different capacity," Kellie shared. "I understand that real estate transactions are very emotional, and I work diligently to reduce the stress from the beginning

to the end. Whether it be divorce, economic hardship, estate sales, relocations, or just plain old nerves from buying a new home, there is always an element of stress."

Through Kellie's own stress early on, her family was always her motivation, her source of energy, and her *why*. Her daughter is now a senior at the University of Tampa, and her son is going to Union College.

"They're good-hearted, good-natured kids," Kellie said. "There is nothing better in the world than the pride and respect they have for me. It's so rewarding to see them at the age they are now, becoming adults and facing life's challenges."

Kellie and her husband have been together for 15 years, and he just retired after 34 years with the state police.

"He has two daughters, and I love them with all my heart," Kellie shared. "His youngest daughter just had our first grandchild. It's been a beautiful



blessing to our family. It's amazing how a baby just brings everybody together."

There it is. A story of success: the pride of her family, financial stability, a great reputation, and growth. Kellie says that she has it all, plus a thriving family and a brokerage with her at the center of it — and a whole lot of love.





**KELLIE KIELEY-PATNAUDE**

Broker/Owner

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