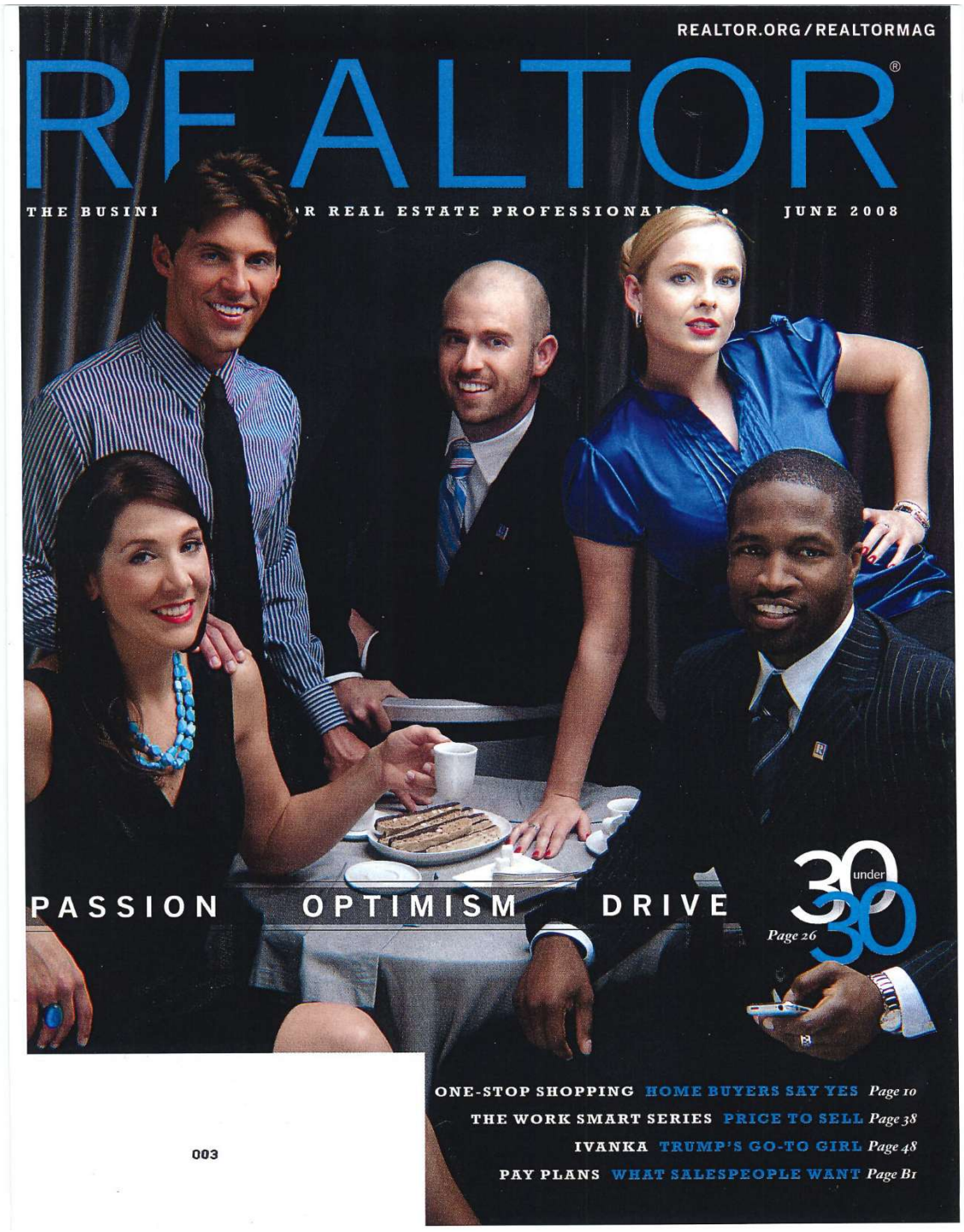
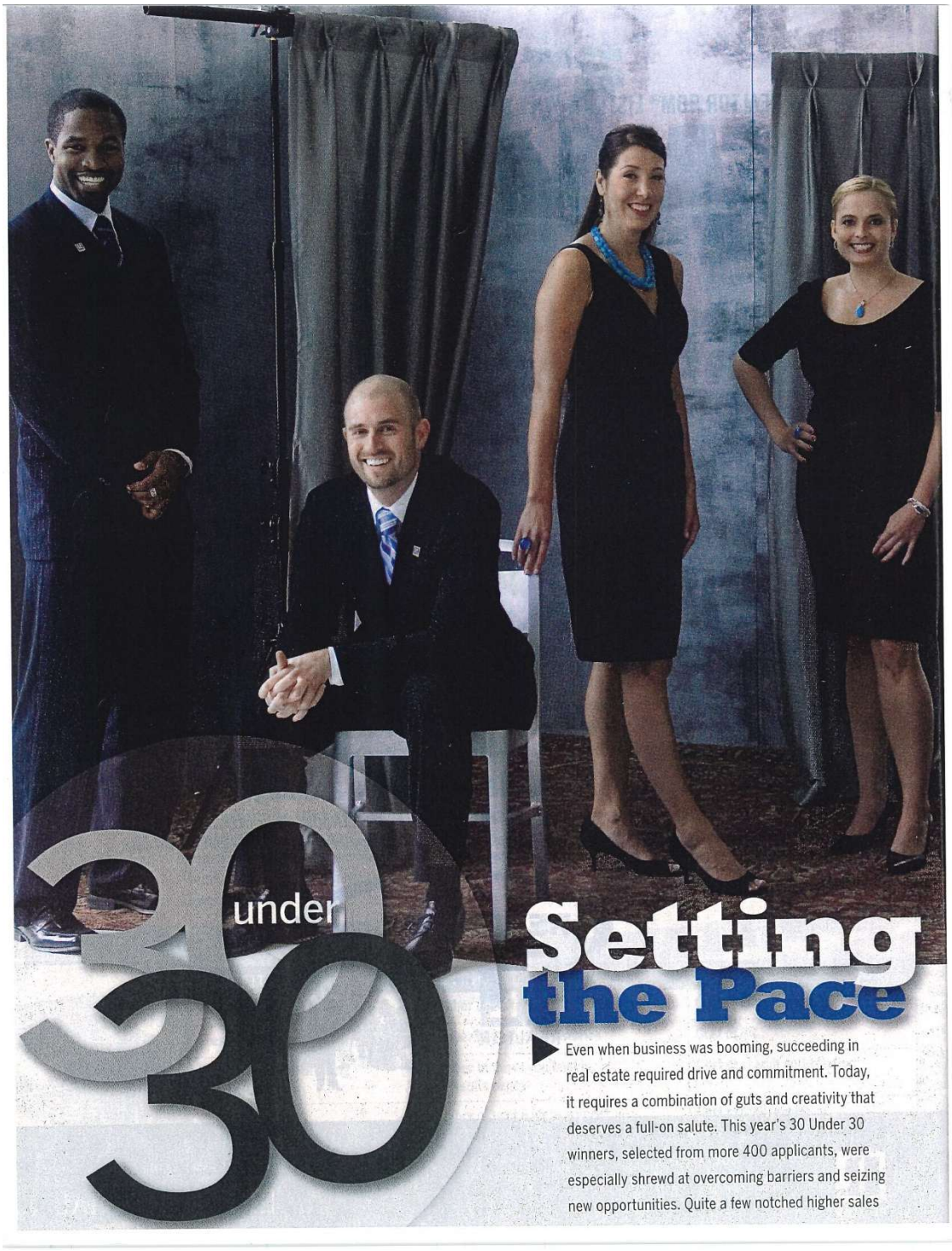

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Setting the Pace

Even when business was booming, succeeding in real estate required drive and commitment. Today, it requires a combination of guts and creativity that deserves a full-on salute. This year's 30 Under 30 winners, selected from more 400 applicants, were especially shrewd at overcoming barriers and seizing new opportunities. Quite a few notched higher sales

>>> ing. He hasn't regretted the move. Brodie now manages a Dallas office that he's grown from about 300 associates in late 2004 to more than 530 today. He's become a star recruiter and trainer. **LEAD THROUGH SERVICE:** A disciple of leadership guru John C. Maxwell, Brodie leads by demonstrating that he wants to help people do well. He routinely walks around his office talking to salespeople to see what they need from him and he encourages them to take a business approach to real estate. **NO PRESSURE:** The son of a successful real estate pro, Brodie says he hasn't felt pressured to emulate his dad, Mike. To other striving progeny from real estate families, he advises: "Stay true to yourself."

MICHAEL DIMELLA

28, managing partner, Charlesgate Realty Group LLC., Boston, *www.charlesgaterealty.com*



DiMella started in real estate at 20, scrounging business wherever he could and trying to make enough money to pay for graduate school. So in 2003, when he and a partner started their own company, he was determined to help other young salespeople. "I wanted to create an environment where you could have great customer service and still have balance in your life," he says. His hockey-playing years at Boston University taught him early on that "personal achievement is impossible without being lifted by team success." Indeed, Charlesgate has grown from three sales associates in 2004 to 15 today, with more than $30 million in sales last year and another $26 million in leasing volume. **GIVING BACK:** Being involved with the community is a key part of his commitment to a balanced life. He's a board member for the Greater Boston Association of REALTORS® and volunteers with a program for inner city youth.

AMANDA DIVITO, ABR®, CRS®

27, associate broker, RE/MAX Alliance, Arvada, Colo., *www.amandadivito.com*



DiVito started her real estate career in junior high, when she'd walk to her dad's office after school to help pull listings, file paperwork, and even make prospecting calls. "I was supposed to be filing or something, but I'd sit there behind my father, watching him with clients and learning the business," she says. **HOME SWEET HOME:** She essentially never left the RE/MAX office in Arvada, Colo., working summers during college and eventually returning with her real estate license in hand. She made the transition from inquisitive child to top producer gracefully, with more than $10 million in sales in 2007. Meanwhile, she's already served as president of her local builder-realty council and, at 24, was the youngest director ever elected by her local association.



JULIE FIRST

28, associate vice president of project management, Sheldon Good & Co. Auctions, Chicago, *www.sheldongood.com*



First knows what she wants and refuses to take no for an answer. She headed to Chicago after college and landed—unannounced—on the doorstep of auction specialist Sheldon Good & Co. "I showed up with my resume and said, 'I'm here to interview for the position you offered.'" She got an interview—and a job. **SOLD ON AUCTIONS:** First earned the Accredited Auctioneer of Real Estate designation and has sold everything from condos to the mineral rights to land. "I really like the fast pace of auctions," she says. "I wear a dozen hats a day, and within six to 12 weeks, I'm on to another project." **TRAVELING WOMAN:** First travels every chance she gets. One four-month trip to an island off Australia—where she worked as a hostess at a beachfront restaurant—came after what she calls her "quarter-life crisis." Says First: "It taught me to follow my heart."

EUGENE FU

29, salesperson, @properties, Chicago, *www.eugenefugroup.com*



Two years into an analyst's job at IBM, Fu knew he'd made a mistake. "The highlight of my day was a conference call, where I actually got to talk to people," says Fu. Walking away from the lucrative job was tough, but Fu wanted more tangible results. "In [real estate], you know you've impacted someone's life," he says. **HERE'S LOOKING AT FU:** He leveraged his unusual last name into a brand, hiring a graphic designer to create a memorable "Fu" logo. He used his research skills to delve into Chicago's myriad neighborhoods, identifying one that appeared underserved. He flooded that market with advertising emblazoned with the new logo, and quickly became the area's No. 1 listing agent, with $11 million in sales last year on 30 transaction sides and a list-to-sale ratio of 97 percent.

STEPHANIE GASPAROVIC

27, associate broker, EXIT Homeplace Realty, Hampstead, N.C., *www.teamgasparovic.com*



Technology is a passion for Gasparovic, so she's invested in it heavily. Her Web site includes a pop-up window, asking visitors to chat with a salesperson via instant messaging. The system alerts Gasparovic and her associates when someone is on the site. That means they can