



DEAN CHIUSANO

From Finance to *freedom*

BY ZACHARY COHEN • PHOTOS BY LACASATOUR

Originally from upstate New York, **Dean Chiusano** first landed in Southwest Florida at 22 years old. After graduating from Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts, Dean received an opportunity to enter the financial industry with a small hedge fund. So he packed his bags and headed south to begin anew.



Dean Chiusano is a REALTOR® with John R. Wood Properties.

Naples was still a growing city in the early 2000s. Much of the population was advanced in age, but that didn't phase Dean; he's always considered himself something of an old soul.

"People always said it must be tough being 22 in Naples, but I come from a close Italian family where I spent so much time with my grandparents and their generation. I welcomed the opportunity. I loved the idea that I could make my own hours, play golf, and be in a beautiful place," Dean shares. "My boss gave me the opportunity to move back to New York, but I settled into the lifestyle and I found I loved it. I met my wife down here, and we built a life."

Career Shift

Dean devoted his professional energy to trading the domestic IPO market for the next decade. However, after more than 10 years in the industry, he was ready for a change. The IPO market became volatile, and the addressable market declined, leaving Dean — and his earnings — at the mercy of the

fluctuating economy. The uncertainty led him to consider a change toward a career in real estate.

"Around 2015, I noticed the IPO market shift. My wife works full-time at a nine-to-five job and wanted me to keep my flexibility. She said, 'How about a career in real estate?' She'd done it in Pittsburgh and thought it could be a perfect fit. I could still do my finance job and ease my way into selling homes," Dean explains.

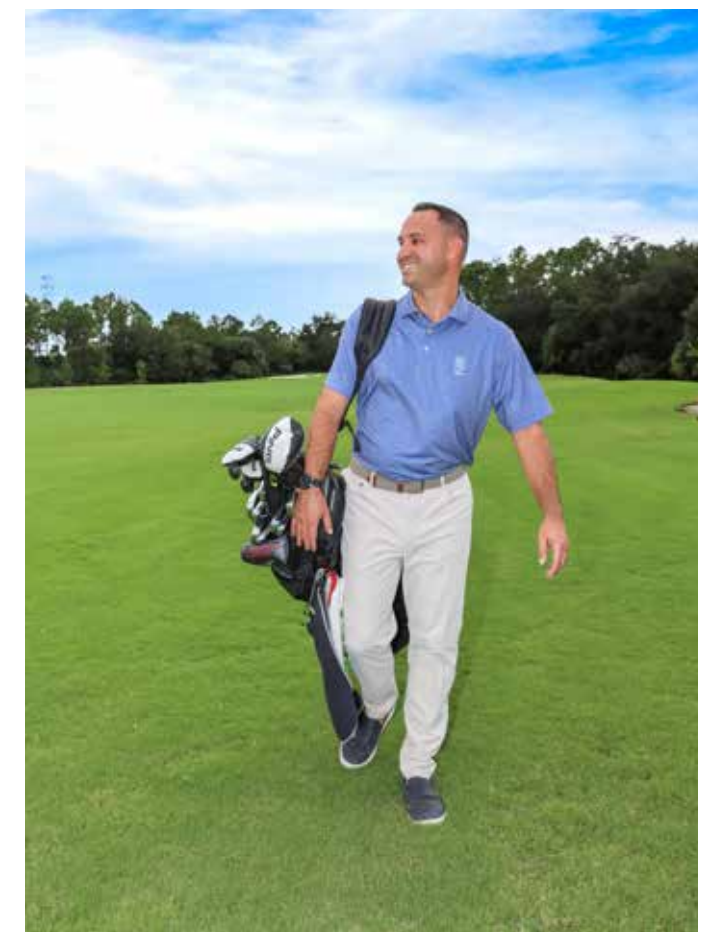
It took Dean a couple of years to make the transition, but he was actively selling real estate by 2017. Over the ensuing years, he slowly reduced his finance work as his real estate business grew. While he still dabbles in IPO trading on the side, his primary focus is now real estate sales.

Making a Difference with Real Estate

Today, Dean is a full-time agent with John R. Wood Properties. He's on a small team led by his mentor, Dave Russ, who has taken Dean under his wings and given him the confidence to



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Words of Wisdom

“If you get into real estate, find yourself a mentor, someone to help guide you when you get started.”
– Dean Chiusano

run a top business. Dean closed just over \$9 million in 2023 and was tracking to finish 2024 in the \$8 million to \$10 million range.

Over the past seven years, Dean has fallen in love with service and relationship building.

“Having the finance position be my first job out of college, I didn’t have a lot of personal interaction,” he reflects. “I was working with brokers in different cities and worked in a small company, so dealing with the general public wasn’t something I was used to. Getting to know people and learning how to work with them was exciting and eye-opening for me. In finance, you’re not really helping people. I was trading a security. In real estate, I’m actually making a difference in people’s lives. That’s what I like most about it. People need guidance as they

move to their next phase of life, and I’m able to provide that service. It’s very rewarding. I’m a people person, and I enjoy the social aspect. Real estate has connected me to so many wonderful people.”

Life in Southwest Florida

Dean currently resides in the beautiful Verandah Club. Outside of work, you’ll find him spending time with his wife, Melissa, playing guitar, golfing, enjoying new restaurants, and traveling. He’s fully embraced the Southwest Florida lifestyle and feels immensely grateful for the life events that led him here.

“I’ve been blessed when it comes to my work, my life, and my family,” Dean smiles. “I’m very blessed.”





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