



## **2024 Ones to Watch Industry Leaders: Robert Heicklen, Stonegate Real Estate**

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Robert Heicklen  
Principal/Owner

“Robert Heicklen is someone who takes his role as an owner, broker boss & mentor as part of his life and not just his job. He is someone who handles the work-life balance with ease and is constantly learning and expanding his knowledge in his craft to make sure his team benefits from it for now and for the future. He makes sacrifices and is always willing to put in the long hours to learn new strategies and parts of the industry for the benefit of his team.” - Damian Andraka, Associate Broker at Stonegate Real Estate.

In the last 12 months what accomplishment are you most proud of? We made a very conscious decision to heavily invest in the markets we are most active on the brokerage side to ensure our agents who are new to the business and facing a more challenging market aren't burdened by limited inventory and more competitive environments. By doing this everyone now has more listings to help rent/sell/manage which had ultimately lead to more leads, more exposure, more content and more agents who will make this a long-term career and not just something they did for fun when the market was booming.

In the last 12 months what was one of the biggest challenges you faced as a leader and how did you overcome it? Agent and client retention. It is becoming increasingly more difficult for new agents to build long-term client relationships with inventory being so low and rates being so high. Our answer to this is diversification. My business partner and I do and teach our agents everything from sales/rental for residential and commercial properties as well as property management, real estate development and retail leasing which keeps them busy and constantly learning as well as becoming more valuable assets to their clients. Same goes for clients except we have spent time learning to adapt to new laws, higher holdover cases, and more delayed evictions. The industry is constantly changing so we need to follow suit.

Best books, podcasts, or apps for aspiring leaders: I don't discredit every accomplished author, podcaster, or industry personality, but I believe heavily in education that speaks to you. I suggest reading/watching/listening to all things real estate because it's all helpful and you never know when the time will come to use it. Real estate is a lifelong commitment and so is your education.

Best advice for new leaders: MAKE IT YOUR WORLD. Shop more so you know what's trending, eat out more so you see how people are spending and what's new and exciting. Drive neighborhoods with your significant other, take trips. Real estate is relevant in all aspects of our lives and the moment I realized that the faster we started to grow.