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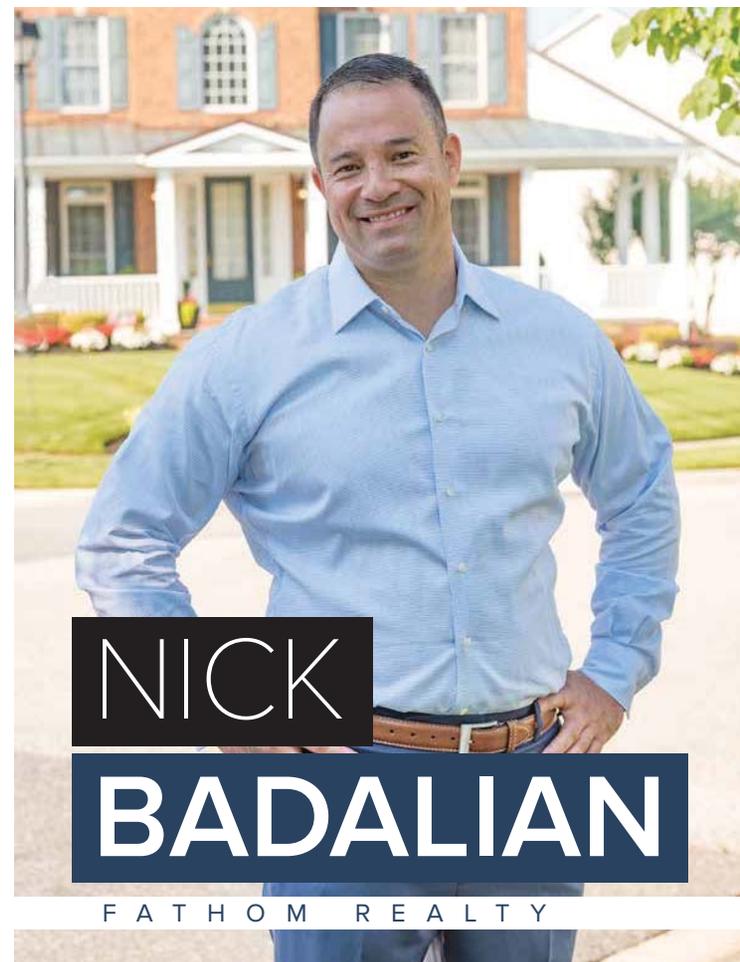


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ANSWERING THE CALL

Written By **Kate Sinnott** | Photos By **Traci Dawn**, Upbeat Photography

Paul Coelho wrote in *The Alchemist*, **“Be brave. Take Risks. Nothing can substitute experience.”** It's one of my favorite lines and it's exactly what I thought when I sat down to interview Nick Badalian in his Odenton office for Fathom Realty.

While most twenty-somethings were out waiting tables or working at camps or retail stores, Nick was learning about real estate from his mother, Tanya. He is one of the few agents I have met who started building their business at such an early age. “I bought my first rental property when I was 19. My mother had a few rental properties she bought with babysitting money and encouraged me to start investing.”

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It took a while for Nick to begin selling houses but in 2004 he decided to start using the real estate license he had earned a few years back and he began working for RE/MAX. After 6 years of learning and networking at RE/MAX, he left and worked for two other brokers. In 2013, he opened the MD/DC office of Fathom Realty. He works as an agent but also helps to mentor the approximately 60 agents working for him.

Nick's passion for helping people doesn't stop at finding them homes. He is also a full-time firefighter for the Montgomery County Fire Department. "Most of my clients don't know that I spend 48 hours a week at the firehouse." Nick has delivered babies, pulled people from buildings and worked the D.C. sniper incident while maintaining a successful career in Real Estate. "In both careers, I am helping people. As a firefighter, it's at their weakest moment and in

Nick with his daughter, Avery



real estate, at their most stressful moment." It takes problem-solving skills and quick thinking to succeed simultaneously in both careers.

How does this agent, broker, and firefighter do it all? "I couldn't do it alone," he said. "I think the biggest piece of advice for young agents is to be available for your clients." As a firefighter, there were times Nick couldn't be available for clients, so he hired assistants and paid other firefighters to cover his shifts allowing him to maintain communication and serve his clients. "I am a resource and tool for their needs" he goes on to say, "It's important to be prompt, return calls, and just like firefighting, response time can be crucial." Nick understands that for most clients this is the biggest, most important purchase of their life and it's his job to support and represent them throughout the entire process. If he can't be there, he makes sure someone is there to answer the call.

After twenty years of working for the fire department, this Master Firefighter retires in August. "I will miss the camaradery from my guys and the action of helping people." Though his firefighting days are behind him, he still thinks it's important to recognize those who serve their community and he has devised a method to show his appreciation. He supports a program called Hometown Hero's by giving back 20% of his commission to teachers, police, firefighters, military, non-profit and medical staff.

Being brave and taking risks comes naturally to Nick, and he has the experience and problem-solving skills it takes to navigate the difficult obstacles realtors often encounter daily. There is no slowing down for this husband and father of two. Now that he has an extra 48 hours a week to give, it will be exciting to see what happens next.