

EPISODE 1267**[INTRODUCTION]****0:00:00.0**

Christine Hsu (CH): I kinda bridge everything together and all the avenues were pointing to investing in real estate and granted that I didn't even know that was a thing that you could do. I just knew about buying properties for myself to live in. I didn't know something about investing in real estate and really growing a lot of wealth.

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Whitney Sewell (WS): This is your daily real estate syndication show. I'm your host, Whitney Sewell. Today, we have an amazing story for you that I hope encourages you in a big way. Sometimes we have challenges that they can do one of 2 things right. They can either knock us down and just make a stay there, or we can choose to do something else with that challenge. And our guest today had a massive challenge come into her lap unexpectedly that changed the trajectory of their family for the rest of their life. Her name is Christine Hsu, and after 13 years in the corporate consumer products and goods industry as a scientist, Christine. changed her career path to investing in real estate, and after realizing the freedom real estate brought her and her family in 2020. She currently owns 6 rental properties in Philadelphia, in Winchester, New York. GP partner and LP invested over 1,000 units across numerous states.

But, now they're syndicating deals. Now, they're doing big stuff. And, it's encouraging to hear her story, to hear what caused them to push through some very challenging times. But, that challenge gave her something that made her unstoppable. And, we talked about that in-depth. But, then also, the madness of this challenge and managing a family, a full-time job, children, and how she made this happen in real estate. Man, how she's doing it now, is a very encouraging story that you're gonna enjoy and earn a lot from today.

[INTERVIEW]**0:01:46**

WS: Christine, welcome to the show. I'm already encouraged just from our conversation before we even started recording. I'm looking forward to hearing more about just the depth of your story, and even some of the struggles that you shared. I know they are going to encourage the listeners, even just how purposeful you all were, even about the name selection of your business. And I'm looking forward to getting into that, because I think there are some similarities, even in my story as well, to what you all have accomplished and done. And so, get us started who is Christine and you know, let's jump into you know why real estate, and maybe what you were doing before that and why you took this leap?

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CH: Yeah, absolutely. Thank you so much, Whitney, for having me on your show. It is truly an honor. Yeah. So I started off, as probably most people do in the corporate world as an

employee, as a W2. I was a food scientist, so I graduated with my food science degree from the University of Florida, and just went on to, you know, get a job after school, after graduation. And just kind of follow the path that we were all told to follow, you know. Go to college, get a job, have a family all of those things, buy a house.

So I followed those things, and when I got married and had kids, I feel like my priorities actually shifted quite a bit where my career was very important to me, and climbing that ladder. But with children, once they come it's like your whole world changes completely, and you see this life that just requires so much of your attention. And for me, I feel like the early years of a child's life, are the most precious, and not just the most precious it's also the most exhausting.

So, trying to balance, having a young child and going to work every day. It was a struggle for me. So more and more as my kids got older, I felt like my career was less important to me and our family.

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WS: It's difficult right? I mean you were, and I think about like you were a food scientist. I don't think I've ever known a food scientist before that's interesting, but that wasn't something that you just did after a few months of training. Right? I mean that took a lot of dedication to make that happen. And s, it's just interesting to hear how that changes right, you know, in someone who has committed so much time, energy, money into schooling and all those things. But then, all of a sudden, you know, it's like there are just other things that are a bigger priority, right?

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CH: Absolutely. Yeah, I mean, once you have a family, I think most people experience this. When a family comes it's really like everything changes, your priorities shift, things that you thought were really important before just are no longer important anymore.

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WS: So that was a lot to give up, though. I mean, a lot of people struggle with that. I struggled at times during that time, it was like "Okay, I'm leaving this so-called security, this job." So what did that look like for you? You know as far as saying, "You know what, I am definitely doing this. I'm definitely leaving this career that I thought I was going to do and changing completely."

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CH: After the birth of my second son, he was born with developmental disabilities, and that just came out of nowhere. We have absolutely no family history of this and I just really didn't know. It was literally just like something that landed in our family and it was definitely a shock to us, and we really didn't know how to handle that. But it was something. It was a challenge that God gave us at that moment. And you know my husband and me, we went through the whole process of mourning. I feel like when you're a parent of a special needs child, you kind of mourn as well. It's like, "How does this happen?" You have anger and denial, and then you just try to make sense of it. And we went through that, and it was just really tough, and even more so, my career was just like, "Oh, forget about it. We have this child, this blessing and gift that God gave us that we really needed to spend all of our energies on." And all the energy that I spent trying to climb that corporate ladder just really didn't matter anymore.

So we had to think about ways, for me to kind of leave my job and just be there for him and support him because I have to be an advocate for him and really support him going through all the therapies. He was going through like 10 to 12 sessions of therapy a week. He was seeing so many specialists, and it was just a lot.

And so I was like, "Okay, you know, work is work. This is not important anymore. My family is the most important, my son, and really supports his needs and his growth and development. That is so much more important." So that was it. That was a transition.

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WS: Yeah, I appreciate your transparency and just being real right, you know about the challenge right of that. And even it is a blessing, you know, just that the Lord used, you know, in your family, and is going to I'm sure many families, and even how it's prompted for you to help so many other people now, and giving back I just it's incredible right.

And, I have a similar story. It's different you know how I started. But what I see that's very similar as well, is that this gave you a why and a mission that ultimately made you unstoppable. That's what I think the Lord did in us as well, and it's different you know different challenges. The Lord uses for those things. But this gave you a purpose that was bigger than yourself, right? Bigger than your career, or your business, or all those things. I just love that because I hope the listener's thinking about like what's driving you, and if it's a dollar amount, if it's a new house, it's just gonna fade right? It's too difficult and those things aren't going to keep you motivated, you know, after you keep getting knocked down.

So you know, you started experiencing challenges. When did real estate come into the picture? What made you think, "Okay, I can go be a syndicator." How did that happen?

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CH: Yeah. So, having a child with special needs, there's a lot of financial support as well. And we start thinking about what are we gonna do when we're not around anymore, or we don't have the ability to take care of him when he's older, and an adult. So, I think we realize that just me being an employee a W2 employee forever, will not financially support him.

So, our motivation really is to build our wealth so that he can have the support he needs when we are no longer here for him. So we looked at different avenues and channels, and also my husband is a business owner himself, and with our incomes combined at that moment, we were getting paid hit with a lot of taxes. And so, we were just looking and researching ways, and we landed on real estate.

I actually also had a lot of interest in real estate. I purchased my first home when I was 21, just because it was cheaper than renting, and then just kind of slowly really loved real estate for some reason is something about properties. Really peak my interest, and I would be looking at homes and properties, even when I wasn't looking to buy. So, I kind of bridged everything together, and all the avenues were pointing to investing in real estate, and granted I didn't even know that was a thing that you could do. I just knew about buying properties for myself to live in. I didn't know is something that you could invest in and really grow a lot of wealth.

And I was researching more about it. You know, 90% of millionaires in this country come from a real estate investing background. So I was like, okay there's got to be something to that, you know we want to make sure that we have wealth for our family and legacy planning in a way

that supports our son with disabilities. I feel like real estate really achieves all of those things, and also with the sense of tax benefits around it.

So, it was literally like a light bulb went off, like all these little bits and pieces of things that we knew, all came together, and it just pointed straight to investing in real estate. So that's kind of how it happened, it's amazing. It's really just like a dove from heaven to us like this is like our North Star, essentially to help support our family.

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WS: Okay, now, you realize that wealth can be created in real estate. There's a lot more to this rental thing than maybe you ever imagined before. I went through that as well, you know. When did commercial real estate or syndication come into the picture? How did you really figure out that hey I could go do that?

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CH: Yeah. So kind of backing up a little bit when I decided to leave my job, we also decided to sell our primary home. We had a lot of equity in it, and we knew there were some risks going into real estate investing. So for me, I'm very analytical. I just kind of want to make sure everything was covered and that we would be okay.

So we sold our home. We bought a 2-family, to house hack to reduce our living expenses, and then, with the equity, we also invested in 4 rental properties that we did the BRRR strategy, and we kept the capital moving and just rolling. So, in that first year of being a landlord of so many properties, it was definitely an adventure, because all the things that most people have negative thoughts towards you know, being a landlord, I kind of experience a lot of those things like, you know. There were leaks, floods, and tenants not paying, tenants being difficult. And you know, really the most fun was in the summer of last year, a car crashed into one of my properties. I went on a day trip with some friends, and that was really quite the experience. It took months to kind of figure out, you know, insurance claims and all of that.

So I was like, "Okay, this is a lot and it's definitely not sustainable, because it's like another full-time job essentially." So, I looked into syndications after that, and we, on top of managing the rentals also invested as an LP in a couple of syndications. And really just kind of wanted to explore that and experience it passively just to see how it is like we didn't know about syndications and really it was a learning opportunity for us to invest passively in it. And saw that there's a lot of benefits around it in terms of economies of scale, and really leveraging a team as opposed to me doing everything from acquisitions to managing rehab to asset management and financing. You know, with syndications, you have a full team, and each person on the team is an expert at each of these things. So, it's really kind of you know doing bigger things together and winning together, and that really appealed to me.

And being a mom, I can't be traveling across the country looking at properties and creating broker relationships like I really need to be here with my family. so that's kind of where my focus now is raising capital and teaching others about this opportunity and investing in real estate, and also kind of partaking in this wealth-building vehicle.

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WS: Speak to, back up just a little bit, speak to managing your schedule, you know, when you were getting into real estate. Maybe you were still working full-time and now you have 2 little ones, and you know a husband you know like there's a lot happening right? Speak to just that a little bit because that's always a question I get often as well.

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CH: Absolutely. So, starting any business is not easy. It takes a lot of work and a lot of time, and it was a struggle for me, and it still is, to be honest. For me, really it's time blocking is key. It's really setting. For me, I have 2 hours in the morning when both kids are in school. And then 2 hours in the afternoon, when my son naps, to work, and then maybe 2 or 3 hours at night after they go to bed.

So, everything is kind of broken up and it's really hard to do a lot. And for me also it's kind of giving myself grace like I see a lot of people moving very quickly and I know for me that I just can't move that quickly because I don't have the outlawing of time. And kind of the next step is really to also you know, delegate and hire out and really get other partners to work with you and to help fill the gaps that are there.

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WS: Oh, that's awesome. And I appreciate you being real about your schedule. I mean that mine was insanity as well, but I love how you talked about time blocking and you said I know these 2 hours and these 2 hours, and these 3 hours and I bet that you are very productive during those 2 hours. Right? Like if you know, and I'm often that way as well like you just perform better with your pants on fire a little bit right, you know, we are so often and that's another reason why you want a time block, so you can see I've got this much time before I do this next thing, even if you have maybe an open day with no appointments, I still encourage people to put it on the calendar like what are you going to do today. It's helpful to see that. But I love the flexibility that real estate provides you, you know, in doing that right. And such a pro in this business where you can decide that. And you don't have to work a strict 8 hours period during the day. But you know, you talked about you know you're giving yourself grace, that maybe you can't move as fast as you would prefer, and I think sometimes that unmotivates some people, they feel like "Well, I'm just not getting anywhere." You know, it just seems like they're not making any ground. How do you come about that? How do you stay motivated when really you feel like maybe you should be able to go faster?

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CH: Yeah, absolutely. And, I have to say some days are better than others, and in terms of motivation. But for me, just kind of doing a vision map and mapping out all of my goals. What is my end goal? And then what are the milestones to get there in terms of like actionable items? That really helps a lot because that's how I tracked where I'm going in terms of the direction towards that goal, and some days I might not be able to accomplish as much as long as I'm hitting those milestones, I'm mostly okay. And really, there are a lot of other small things that we put on ourselves that may not be necessary.

So really it's just achieving those key milestones that get us to the end goal. That that has helped me a ton and it's been through books and podcasts and mentors that have really helped

me with that mindset because before I just felt so overwhelmed like, there's so much to do and no time. But really just focusing on the things that matter the most.

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WS: I appreciate you saying too, like sets your milestones, and what I hear there, too, is like, set your own milestones. What you can accomplish and you can see you're moving forward, but also don't compare yourself to others right? Make sure if you're getting better every day eventually you know you're going places, right? I think that's very wise that you did that, and speak to even delegating. You talked about, obviously the syndication business and it's something I loved about it as well, and love about it now. It's like, "Man, we can build this team of experts that can do all those things better than I could, especially doing them all myself right." I mean, there's just no doubt about it. What are some of the first things you delegated, and how?

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CH: Yeah. So I think, starting this business, even having a business partner, I do have a business partner, her name is Margaret and we have different gifts and strengths. She's really great with talking with people, she gets a lot of energy from being around others, whereas I kind of in more systems and processes. So for us, even just between the 2 of us we kind of delegated the task based on our strikes. And now, as we're growing you know we have a lot of communications to our investors and educational platforms that we're building that take a lot of work to build, so we're even considering hiring a virtual assistant to help with some of the smaller tasks. That just kind of you know, help get us there.

I would say we were still in the beginning stages of building. So, it is kind of challenging, like, it takes time to get to the point where you have employees or virtual assistance to help you. So we're kind of still working through that and building up to that point. But it's definitely something in the next step for us.

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WS: What's been your biggest challenge in getting into the syndication business, you know, over this the last you know this path that you've taken?

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CH: Yeah, so it's very much a people business and a lot of networking. I wouldn't say it's necessarily a challenge, I do enjoy that, and just meeting all the many different people in the business. But in the beginning, it's like I think the biggest challenge is we both individually, between Marker and I, we have a lot of experience in real estate on our own individually, but coming together as a new business, especially in a very competitive market, that we're in right now, I think everyone is moving like a million miles an hour, essentially, and being kind of on the newer side to the business, it's hard to kind of jump in with everyone moving at such a quick speed.

So for us is trying to build that track record. We are just you know, really focusing on our purpose, and our mission, and try to partner with others who have you know that same the same values as us. And it's been a little bit tough, you know, finding partners and finding deals right now, but that's something that we're working hard towards.

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WS: Is there anything you would have done differently looking back over you know your path to getting where you're at in the syndication business?

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CH: Yeah, I think in hindsight I probably would have joined a mentorship group to start. That's an idea that I kind of went back and forth on. I think I took the slower route of kind of nurturing and developing partnerships organically. But just given where we are in this climate, it does help to kind of accelerate all of that through, you know, investing in a mentorship program. So that's something that I wish I had probably done earlier. I mean, I don't regret it because I've met so many amazing people, and I'm learning through all the challenges that I face where I feel like, you know if I just kind of went straight into the first deal like right away, I might not have learned the same things that I'm learning now.

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WS: What's your best source for meeting new investors right now?

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CH: Yeah. So, we are doing a lot of social media engagement. So for me. it's on LinkedIn, I post every single day. Really our goal is to educate, we don't want to sell anything, we're not trying to sell the idea of syndications. We've seen the benefits for ourselves, and we just really want to educate people that this is another way to diversify their financial holdings and grow their wealth in a fairly quick way. So that's it's really around social media right now is kind of how we find our investors.

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WS: How did you learn to do that? How did you learn to tackle the social media component to engage with investors?

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CH: I didn't really know at first. So, right now we are part of the Good Egg Real Estate Accelerator Program with the Good Egg Investments Group, and they have been phenomenal just kind of teaching us how to nurture those relationships with our investors and kind of modeling they're very successful. So really just modeling their track and their journey. And also, I think, really what helped get us off the ground was in December, one of the cost segregation experts Yonah Weiss did a challenge on LinkedIn, a 10-day challenge, and I didn't know anything about it. I just saw it. I was like, "Hey, this might be fun to join." And so it has been phenomenal. In those short 10 days, I've seen so much traction or I saw so much traction, and so many people were reaching out. I had never posted on LinkedIn before, so all of a sudden I'm posting every day so people from my past like from my childhood, even people. I went to high school with, college, and people that I worked with, they were all reaching out, saying, "What are you doing now, like? What is this all about? What are syndications?"

So, I saw really a lot of impact doing that, really just putting it out there what we're working on, and just kind of kept the train moving. And it's been really great and I'm surprised myself like how much impact it has had, and how much it's getting.

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WS: I know all those people very well, Julie and Yonah, yeah. I've known them for many years. That's incredible. They've all helped a ton of people in those specific places that you're talking about. It's great to see that.

So what about some daily habits, Christine, that you have that other than posting on LinkedIn every day, which I think is an amazing accomplishment and just a consistency pays off in almost anything like that, but what are some daily habits that you're disciplined about that have helped you achieve this success?

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CH: Really it's about the mindset, it's waking up in the morning, and making sure that my mind is straight because there are days when I feel like "Oh, things are moving slowly." I feel discouraged. But it really takes, I think for the mindset to be running optimal, it's making sure that I am fulfilled spiritually. Also, you know, eating and exercising, getting enough rest. These are very basic things. I feel like it really helps. Just kind of make sure your mind and your body are running optimally so that you can achieve your goals. It's like everything has synergies and they all tie in together to kind of make sure that I'm in the right mind space to be, you know, moving towards those vehicles ahead of us.

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WS: Yeah, they seem, like small things right but over time they add up in a big way. If you can pick one thing that's contributed to your success, what would that be?

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Oh, it's my son, really because he has taught me strength and resilience, and I feel like, in order to be successful, you have to be strong and resilient and also pick yourself up after you fall. It's like riding a bicycle, they say you will fall many times. So really just getting the inspiration through him and him being in our lives has been really the greatest factor of that motivation.

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WS: Speak to the name, your business name? What does that mean? I have not heard that before. Where does that come from? Give us a little insight there.

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CH: When Margaret and I decided we wanted to partner up, we were like, "Oh, we need to come up with a name. What should we call ourselves?" We kind of thought about it for a couple of days, and we really wanted a unique name that stood for our values and purpose. So, I was really praying about it, and just even figuring out this is the right thing to do, and what our name will be kind of thing. And both Margaret and I were women of faith, that's really important to us. It's the core of our being, and we really want that to also be the core of our business, and we

want to be grounded in those values. So, I was reading and meditating on Proverbs 31, which is the characteristics of a noble wife or a noblewoman. And this woman she is strong, she's wise, and she's so giving, and she's also faithful and we see that she works really hard, not just inside the home, but also outside the home to bring back to the family. So we really want to kind of incorporate all these things and these values into our business. For us, our tagline is to invest nobly for impactful returns. We want to make impactful returns not just to our investors and their families, but really everyone that we work with – our tenants, our partners, and all of their families as well.

So we feel like when you give, the gift just never stops. It keeps on giving. So, we really want that to be the core of our business.

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WS: I appreciate you sharing that. I love that as well and I'm very grateful. Yeah, just encourage us in that way as well. So what about how do you like to give back? And are you sure some that I always like to ask?

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CH: Yeah. So it starts with our church. We love to volunteer with our church. My husband and I are on the praise of worship team, and also for us, you know, just navigating the world with our son, with disabilities. It's still fairly new to us, he's only 3 years old. So it's been challenging. just advocating for him and the education system, and we know that many other families are also going through the same struggles and challenges. So, we haven't done it yet. but really what we would like to do is create a system for a community to really help those who are going through these same struggles, and we want to be able to learn together with other families who have children with disabilities. So that's kind of our hope for the future.

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WS: That's awesome. Christine, I appreciate you just being willing to give back in that way and sharing it with us, just grateful for your time today and giving back. But really, you know, being transparent about your transition, the hardships of challenges. But even you know we talked about, you know, this why, your son, how the challenge that has been or was and yes, I'm sure that made you unstoppable. It gave you a why. It gave you a mission that probably wouldn't have happened otherwise.

And so, it's just incredible to hear that story. I hope the listeners think through that as well, and in their own lives, and how now you've transitioned and you know doing real estate and making big things happen, and busting through those limiting beliefs, and believing that "Hey, I can do this, too." Right? You know, if 90% of millionaires like you said, are created their wealth in real estate, there's a good chance you can make that happen as well. Just appreciate that, and managing the schedule and all those things. And I have to ask, what do you and your husband do on the worship team? What do you all play or do you sing?

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CH: So I sing, and he sings and plays of guitar.

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WS: Awesome. I asked, I don't know if I may have shared this like one other time on the show. I play drums and our worship team so it's great worship for me as well. I love doing it. But anyway, Christine again, thank you so much, pleasure having you on the show. How can the listeners get in touch with you and learn more about you?

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CH: Yeah, it's a pleasure to be here. So you can find us at noblives.com. It's pretty easy to remember, N-O-B-L-I-V-E-S-T dot com. And follow me on LinkedIn. I post every day and I go through all of my experiences and journeys as a real estate investor. So it's fun. Yeah. Follow me on LinkedIn and yeah, hope to be on this journey with you too.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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