

EPISODE WS1639**[INTRODUCTION]**

Evie Brooks (EB): Do you want to look at what portion of your hard-earned dollars? Do you want to allocate to an international investment? I have so many people that are just wanting to get their funds offshore, off to where they currently live. And that's not just us or North America, that's all over the world. They're wanting to have, as we talked about that Plan B. So you're looking at your diversification, and I can't tell you what's right for your diversification. We got to sit down and figure that out yours because it's going to be different than mine is gonna be different than the next job. It's not going to be the same for anybody.

[INTERVIEW]

Whitney Sewell (WS): This is your Daily Real Estate Syndication Show. I'm your host, Whitney Sewell. Our guest today, she's returning guests actually, it's been almost 1,000 days ago since she was on the show. But man, she has brought so much value to us over the next few episodes, three days actually, where we are going to dive into international investing. Her name is Evie Brooks. She's a seasoned real estate investor educator with 27 years of experience. She's built a portfolio both domestically and internationally with over 45 properties and a net value of over \$31 million.

She also has experience as a Rich Dad, Poor Dad educator for 11 years, which exposed her to the international market and having taught in Costa Rica -- the benefits of becoming an expat and investing internationally. I enjoyed the shows with Evie; I learned a lot. I know you're gonna learn a lot as well as we dive into international investing. Evie, welcome back to the show, as we were just discussing, it's been about 1,000 days almost exactly, since you were on the show before but welcome. Glad to have you back.

EB: Thank you, Whitney. I'm so glad to be back with you again. I love doing your show.

WS: Yeah, I've not been to Panama since we talked last but hopefully maybe sometime in the future, I can make it. Well, we'd love to have you. Well, you have become an expert in many areas. But specifically we're gonna chat about today's international investing. And this is something that we have, unfortunately, not had a ton of guests on the show who are experts in this area. But as you and I were talking about as well, it's something that it's almost like a blue ocean, right?

Or, you know, there's not many experts, but there's a lot of opportunity there. If you're going to help us to better understand it today. I know the listeners can go back and listen to show numbers ws 625. And they can hear a lot about you and Panama and different things that we

discussed there. But give them a brief background about yourself though so they can understand who she is. And then let's dive in.

EB: Okay, well, I am a real estate investor and educator I started in this industry a long time ago by default. I was going to extend my education in the legal industry and in the legal field, and I got pregnant with my first child and ended up in commercial real estate management. Corporate America stayed there for four years. And I left there after four years realizing that there wasn't a whole lot of upside, I had reached the top of where I could go for they told me the next eight years, after four years, and so I went out on my own. And I started investing and I've never looked back since 2003.

I was introduced to the Rich Dad Poor Dad organization, as an educator, I of course, knew who Rich Dad Poor Dad was at that time, but I was pursued to become an educator with the organization. And so I did. And I started teaching with them in Costa Rica in the expat field. And that's how I got exposed to Central America, and international investing. And it just became a passion. And I love teaching people what I have learned just in investing in general, because it works anywhere in that industry, with people wanting to look at options instead of their home country. And it's not just North Americans that we work with, we work with people from all over the world.

WS: Wow, it's so neat that, you know, that skill set can be applied no matter what, you know, where you live. So, you know, after you started educating you work for a Rich Dad, Poor Dad, you know, and became an educator there, no doubt that just grew your knowledge base, and probably open your eyes to many parts of real estate, you know, and other people that maybe you hadn't been exposed to before. But then now what are some of your areas of focus, you know, in your, in your business?

EB: My area of focus is truly education. I love teaching people. And as a result of that, the education that I'm bringing to others, and the continued mentorship and support with all of my clients, we have the opportunity to get into different types of real estate deals, both domestically and internationally, of course, internationally is our focus. And when we have something that we just can't turn away from domestically, of course, we'll jump on that. But the international market is such a niche market.

And it's becoming a true buzz of what's happening within the world, not just this United States or North America, but all over the world. And so it's just a fun industry. It's like, you know, helping people improve their life or live the life of Riley, if you will, and have a total change of anything that they've known or experienced in the past, and then helping them to do that without having all the pitfalls that most people do have when they try to do this international investing.

WS: Yeah, well let's dive into some of just that. I, you know, you speak about international investing, I guess, give us some examples of what that looks like, what is that? Exactly? For those that are like, wait a minute, you know, I'm not interested in international investing. I don't know what it is, it seems too complicated. But maybe it's not, you know, but what is international

investing? And why might we choose to invest it, you know, in another market outside of the US?

EB: First of all, you want to diversify your portfolio. And that's a whole training in and of itself. But I have a pie chart. And I know what percentages for me I want to have in each different category. And everybody's categories can be different. But definitely, you want to have some real estate, you want to have some precious metals, you want to have cash, you want to have maybe some stocks and bonds. I'm completely out of the stock market right now. And I've got my money and different areas, crypto, maybe oil and gas. It just depends on what your goals are.

But you need to know what those goals are. And most people don't even know what their own goals are. So that's the first thing I want to do is sit down with people to help them determine what are their goals and what do they want to see from that, then in the international investing piece of it, that falls under the real estate aspect of it, I am a dirt girl, I always have been I always will be I want the land, I want the assets. And so internationally, most people are afraid. But in reality, a lot of places are not like this.

But Panama is very, very, very easy. I can have someone in a deal within 72 hours sign saying, Wow, just pictures and videos, contract signed, sealed, delivered everything done, they own the property. And we've had a lot of that there in COVID. A lot of people purchase sight unseen for a plan B if you will. So when people understand what I've done is I've gone in. I've put together what we refer to as pocket listings. With developers, I work directly with developers. And I'm very selective about who I work with. I do not work with just any old Joe developer, because you don't know what you're getting. You want somebody that's been established that's been around for 20, 30, 40 years, that's never had a bankruptcy issue that doesn't have lawsuits against them that does multiple projects and properties. And so that's what we do, we don't work with one developer.

And if you're working with someone, this is my first, be cautious if you're working with somebody that represents one developer run, because they're going to try to sell you that developer's property no matter if it fits into your goals or not. So you need to know what it is that you're trying to accomplish before you go to do this. But in international investing, you can get into non recourse deals, you can get into no credit financial requirement deals, you can get developer financing deals, if you know where to look. But you need to make sure that you're buying the property right that you're not paying full retail, I can go on and on and on.

But this is just a little nugget of what we do on behalf of our clients. And then we stay with them throughout the duration of their investment in that property. And then when they get out, we'll help them accomplish that. And if they want to roll into more, then we'll do that as well.

WS: You mentioned that being potential Plan B for some people, you know, this property, you know, in another market like that, is it also a rental during the same time? Is that typically what is it the same time, it's always cash flowing or?

EB: Well, a lot of people do a lot of different things. Some people want to live their half the year with someone full time, some want to retire there and get their visa. So you can go to Panama, unlike most countries on your passport, you don't even have to have a visa at all for 180 days. Now, if you're going to draw in the country, you can only draw for 90 days, then you have to leave the country. And then you can come back and drop again for another 90 days. But the base is the same way. You have a 190-day visa, then you can leave for three days and come back for another 180 days.

So it's a very simple process. It doesn't require a visa, but a lot of people are looking to get the residency, they're looking to get a second passport that Plan B is just, of course, it was a big thing during COVID people were looking for options and opportunities. But Plan B is just one of the many reasons that people choose to go overseas to have a second home to invest internationally. Political unrest has been a huge one. Also, the inflation is huge. And I can give you an example, just last week, I was in Panama, and I went to buy does next.

And I got two dozen for \$4.30 -- two and a half dozen actually, not the \$10 per dozen that we're seeing here. I had one of the hosts of a podcast that I was talking with last week. And she said her daughter lives in Long Island, New York and paid \$10 for local burrito and a loaf of bread and Panama still \$2. So inflation is another big one, just a retirement lifestyle. There's so many reasons that people want to do this and they want to go overseas or invest internationally to get their money offshore for a number of different reasons.

WS: Why Panama and we probably covered some of this in that other episode as to I think it'd be helpful just to hit that here. Why do you like Panama so much versus other other markets and do you invest in other markets as well?

EB: I have gone in and evaluated many other markets. In fact, I used to be in Costa Rica during the 2008 crash. Costa Rica crashed and Panama did not, it kept going, GDP was very strong. You've got the Panama Canal, you've got the Cobra compromised, the Cobra copper mines are projected to bring in more revenue in the next 40 years, then the Panama Canal. So you've got growth from that you've got a country that brings in with open arms investors and multinational companies, you've got, you know, the cost of goods and services have gone up, I will not say they haven't, because they have during the whole COVID situation, transportation, labor, all of that.

But you're still talking about pennies on the dollar. For food and housing and investments in real estate compared to what you're looking at for comparable type properties in the United States, you will see anywhere from twice as much to five times as much for same type compare an apples to apples properties, whether it's in Ontario, Montreal, New York, Manhattan, Portland, Oregon, Los Angeles, California, it doesn't matter. When you look at the difference in the cost. There is no comparison, when you're looking at Apples to Apples major cities, and the type of

project high in very high fit and finishes, or mid grade, whatever it is. So it's just a substantial difference in cost.

WS: I was just looking a little bit about Panama. I remember our I mean, it's a very small, small country, right? I mean, it's just like, connector there.

EB: Less than 5 million people in the whole country right now. And that's grown substantially since I've been there in 2012.

WS: Wow, you know, maybe you can highlight this as far as how you diversify your portfolio internationally, you know, as far as Panama versus other places, maybe you hit that a little bit, but dive in a little bit more on that.

EB: Okay, when I started in Costa Rica, I moved over to Panama, I have gone to Belize, I've gone to Ecuador, I've gone to Dominican Republic, I can go on and on and on. I went to Brazil. I've looked at representing and being involved with those countries, but they just do not have all the checkboxes that we have in Panama, the simplicity that is the visa is the cost of getting a visa residency or citizenship. I mean, there's just so much the cost of the properties, you know, there's just so many things, and I have a whole checklist of things that I'm going to look at. And I really just haven't found anything that has all of the checkboxes that Panama have. And so your US dollar number one, it's easy to get to number two, the visa program is very simple. You don't have to have a visa for 180 days.

I mean, there's just so many reasons to do Panama as far as part of the diversified investments. And it just makes it simple. So when I can show somebody how they can basically be a solid investor hands off, but have the kind of returns that they can have. Because we handle everything from A to Z, from helping them find a property whether it's a digital nomad, to live in rent to whether it's somebody that wants to invest all the way through furnishings, and bringing their dog down and bought a car, you name it, we help them with everything to getting their their tow for their car, you know, for the tall pass.

The Panama pass is what it's called, we'll help them with every step of the way, as to any component or aspect of what they're wanting to accomplish. And so it's very simple hands off. And I always say, Whitney, that you're going to get an education, one way or the other, I can help give you that education. Or you can go out and figure it out on your own, which could cost tens of thousands of dollars of lost revenue that you would not have experienced if you tried to go and do it on your own. You can write a book, you can write 10 books, you can read 100 books, writing a book is not going to give you that boots on the ground experience that you're going to get with somebody that knows the market.

WS: Speak to some of those other factors that we need to know about that are very important, you know, if you're considering investing internationally?

EB: Well, first of all, you want to look at what portion of your hard earned dollars do you want to allocate to an international investment, I have so many people that are just wanting to get their funds offshore, off of where they currently live. And that's not just us, or North America that's all over the world. They're wanting to have, as we talked about that Plan B. So you're looking at your diversification and I can't tell you what's right for your diversification, we've got to sit down and figure that out yours because it's going to be different than mine is gonna be different than the next job.

It's not going to be the same for anybody. But by having a diversified portfolio with international real estate, you literally have something that you can go to, if everything you've got just sort of vanishes overnight. We've heard so many horror stories of so many people's IRAs just disappearing or dropping by 50% or they made investments that just poof were gone by having a hard asset number one, no one's gonna be able to go pay Get up and take it away. And number two, you've got something that's going to always have true value by having that hard asset. Now, you've got to determine how much you want to allocate to those offshore investments.

And once you've done that, then I show you how to leverage that and make it work for you in a much larger way than just that X says \$100,000, well, we're not just going to go buy \$100,000 property, we're going to take that 100,000 and go buy two or three properties that's going to have revenue income coming in from them, and we're going to leverage somebody else's money, primarily the developer, that's what we what we utilize.

WS: Nice, I guess, what would be our? No, no, a lot of times it's, it's a Plan B, you know, as far as that type of investment may be for many people, but what kind of business plan would we be looking at for some, you know, a rental or a second home, something like that in a place like that?

EB: Well, it depends on the property and the location of the project. Now we have stuff in the city that I'm going to tell you, although a lot of people who don't want to live in the city are going to produce you a much higher return on investment than something out on the ocean. And the difference in cost is substantial, too, you can get an oceanfront property for 225 to \$250,000. And it's a small bit about 80 meters, 75 meters, and that's going to be around seven 800 square feet. But it's great, I mean, just the views are magnificent.

However, you don't have the revenue or the income that you can get inside the city, no different than New York, you know, or Miami, Florida, by being in the city, you're going to have a much higher occupancy rate, much higher income, rent, but we do say on the average of six to 9%, return on investment, just basic our return on investment. However, I don't look at just ROI. We look at cash on cash return on investment, because that's what really matters. At the end of the day, how much of your money do you have tied up? And what kind of return are you receiving against what you've got tied up?

And so that's that's how I look at it, it's always how I've looked at it, because to me, it doesn't matter that I'm getting 6% on a \$400,000 property, when I only have \$40,000 on the property, that makes a huge difference on what my true return on investment, right. So I have a whole different way of thinking and teaching people to think, but it has worked for me very well over the last 47 years.

WS: Give me other strategies, you know, just on you know, if an investor's thinking about investing internationally that they should be thinking about before we move to another topic.

EB: Any other strategies? Well, realistically, just making sure that if you're going to do this, that you you definitely have somebody that can guide you, somebody local that knows the market that has a connection with you don't want to just just like I tell people in United States, you don't go to the MLS to find a discounted wholesale property. That's not how you do it. So you're not going to go to some realtor in Panama, because they're going to try to sell you a property for the absolute most that they can get.

So you want to be taught with somebody that really has the inroads to being able to find the deals that have true equity, I'll give you an example. We just had a proper project that just launched that took me about 24 hours to sell 10 units, I was given 10 units in this building for \$2,450, a meter squared, where they're starting at \$4,900 per meter square. And the developer guaranteed them that if the whole world blew up, and they wanted to sell it back at completion, which isn't about 36 months, he would give them 10% above what they're paying for now, I don't know why they would sell it for that, because that's still us. That's about \$2,700. And we know that they're starting the sales price at \$2,900 per meter square.

So those are not deals you're going to find on the internet, they're not deals that you're going to be able to go ask somebody or walk into a developer's office and say, Oh, I'd really like to buy in this particular property for \$2,450 a meter square, that's not gonna happen. I had 10 units that were gone within 24 hours. And I have those types of what we refer to as pocket listings all the time, the developer will say, Okay, we're gonna do this program to kick this off, we're gonna give you 510, 15, maybe 20, depending on how large the project is.

WS: Wow, that's so interesting. You've piqued my interest, to say the least, I know you have for many listeners as well, I want the listeners know, Amy's going to be here, we're going to do a couple of different episodes around international investing different challenges, benefits risks, even using your IRA to invest internationally as well, which we're going to get into over the next few days. I hope you will stick around even before we go tell the listeners how they can get in touch with you and learn more about you.

EB: Very simply, if you go to EvieBrooksPanama.com, there is an opt in page and about a 10-11 minute video that really gives you a lot more information on why Panama what's happening in Panama the growth of Panama and kind of gives you just a really solid overview of the Panama market and what would probably interest you and taking a look at that. And then of course you

can go to my website, which has got all kinds of information on it as my panel MyPanamanVacationRealty.com.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[OUTRO]

WS: Thank you for being with us again today. I hope that you have learned a lot from the show. Don't forget to like and subscribe. I hope you're telling your friends about the Real Estate Syndication Show and how they can also build wealth in real estate. You can also go to LifeBridgeCapital.com and start investing today.

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