



# **An Alton Realtor Shares Her Story on the Autism Spectrum**

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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ALTON - When Angel Clark's little sister Arian announced she wanted to become a real estate agent, both Angel and their mother admitted they had a few doubts.

Arian, a 21-year-old realtor on the autism spectrum, is smart and talented but sometimes struggles with communication, which is, as the sisters' mother Burrae Rocha points out, an important part of real estate. But Burrae and Angel weren't worried about Arian's ability as an agent; they were concerned about the society she'd be up against.

“Instead of us learning Arian, Arian has to learn how to deal with us,” Burrae explained. “She’s got to learn how to deal with the outside world, and that’s a real challenge. I think that social cues are very hard for her. I guess, from a mom’s perspective, I would love other people just to know: Don’t judge a book by its cover. You know what I’m saying? She’s a very kind person. She’s just very straightforward and doesn’t know how to be otherwise. And why should she need to mold to us?”

Growing up, Arian and Angel watched Burrae flip houses and eventually go through the process to become a licensed real estate agent. It was an easy decision for the sisters to follow in her footsteps. Angel still remembers how hard Arian studied to pass the licensing exam, with her signature “unmatched motivation that is so inspiring.”

These days, Arian, Angel and Burrae work together at Coldwell Banker Brown Realtors in Alton. Since Arian joined them, the women have become quite the team.



“I stepped out of my box, was consistent and focused, and was able to accomplish my goals with perseverance and hard work. It wasn’t easy, but it was so worth it,” Arian said. “I just hope to be an inspiration to others that the only limitations in life are the limitations that you give yourself.”

Arian noted some people view being on the spectrum as a limitation, but the family agrees that it's her "superpower." That's not to minimize the challenges she has overcome, but Angel and Burrae point out that everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Arian's strengths far outweigh any struggles, especially as she has grown into the young professional she is today.

"Childhood was not always easy for me," Arian admitted. "I wasn't able to communicate as well as my siblings and peers, and had a hard time processing and controlling emotions. As I got older, my mom and siblings were a huge inspiration and helped me to reach my full potential. I observed more than anything, and was always encouraged to apply myself in anything I do with a strong support system always behind me."

There are still a few aspects of socialization that can be difficult. Burrae said Arian is "straightforward," which can throw off some people. After all, they have to sell themselves as agents before they can sell houses.

But as a realtor, Arian's drive and detail-oriented personality appeals to a lot of clients. She has proven that she will fight for her clients and give them honest, solution-focused answers, which are major strengths in her field.

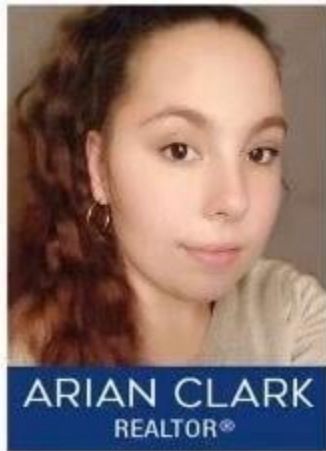
"She is very, 'Let's go, we can do this, I believe in us, this is how we're going to do it.' She's ready to go all the time," Angel said. "She has come up with some really out-of-the-box ideas that have helped us a lot to get where we are...Although these challenges, I'm sure, have been very hard for her, it's a blessing in disguise."

Burrae couldn't be prouder of her two daughters. Her only wish is for more understanding from the world. She wants to remind people that neurodivergent people are in the workforce and require the same respect and patience as anyone else, and it's "hurtful" when she feels like she has to "mold Arian to fit society" instead of trusting the world to give her child the understanding she deserves.

But, as Angel said, "We could not be more proud of her." And Arian won't let anything or anyone stop her from continuing down the path she's paved.

"I am now a part of an amazing real estate team with my mom and older sister at Coldwell Banker Brown," Arian said. "I could not be more thankful for this family and career I plan to excel in."

To learn more about the real estate services offered by Arian Clark, Angel Clark and Burrae Rocha, visit [their official webpage](#) at the [Coldwell Banker Brown Realtors website](#) or stop in their office at 117 West Third Street in Alton.



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