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Broker Spotlight

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AUGUST 2024



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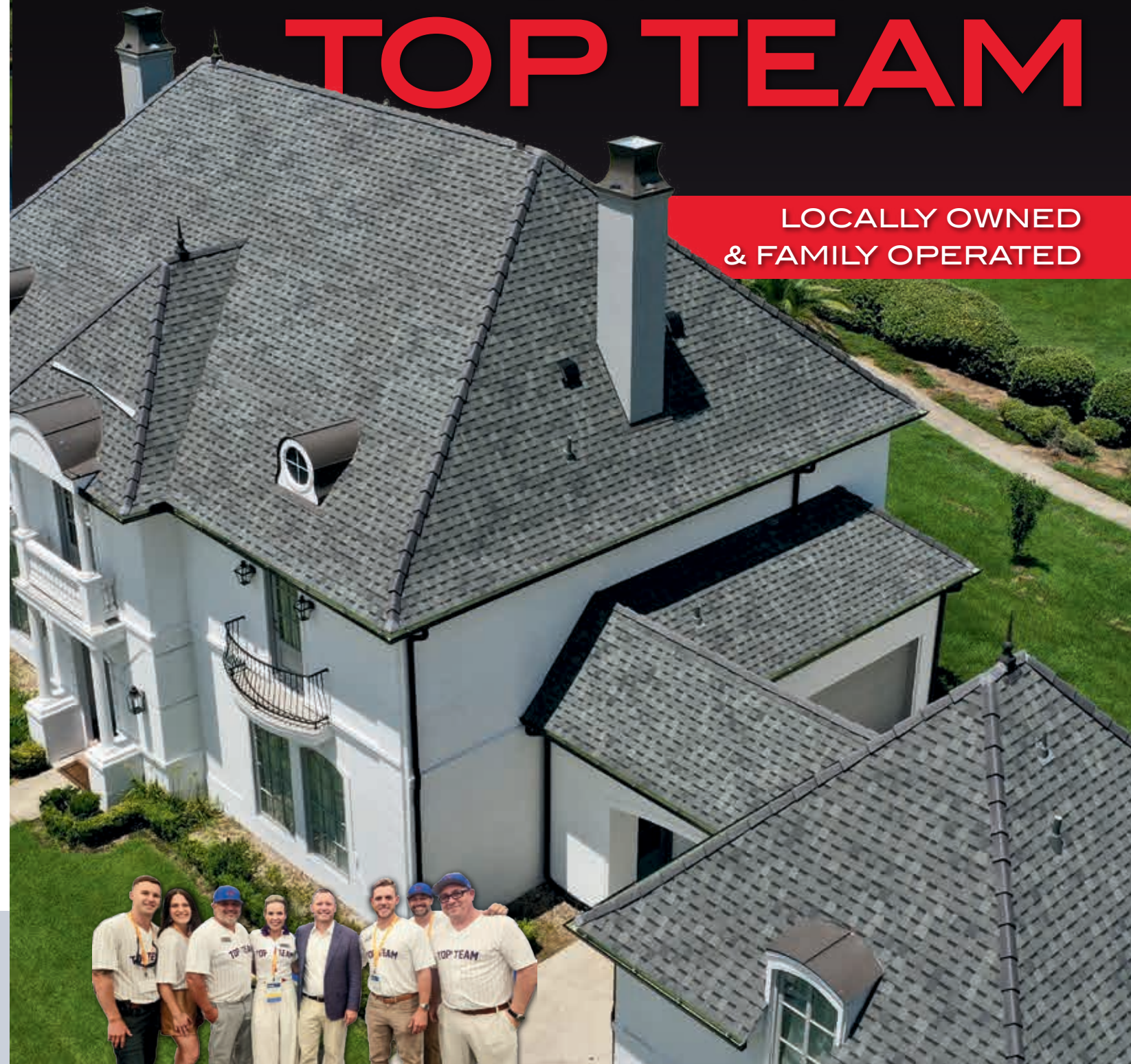
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Rachael TAYLOR

Passion & Poise

Rachael Taylor can't help but crack a smile when clients call her sweet. She prides herself on being a kind, thoughtful and calming presence, but that's only half the story. Most people hardly suspect that lying right below the surface is a fiery, spirited energy ready to burst forth when the time is right.

"I love to go to bat for my people," she says with a grin.

And that's not Rachael's only surprise. Her polished weekday looks show no evidence of her weekends at the track cheering on her husband, Bryce, as he competes with his late model in a good old-fashioned dirt race. She admits that the first time she attended a race, she showed up with her makeup done in blue jean shorts and sandals. "I was *way* overdressed," she laughs. It's just one of the many ways she has mastered the art of adaptation. Rachael is always ready to bring the energy that friends and clients need while remaining true to herself - the perfect blend of passion and poise.

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

Six months after graduating from Southeastern University, Rachael looked at her life, particularly her job as a retail manager, and decided to craft a 10-year plan. Naturally, the first person she wanted to talk to about it was her mom, Lesley Taylor. While she enjoyed helping customers find the right outfit or gift for a girlfriend, she realized that her growth opportunities in the retail industry were limited. And Rachael doesn't like limits.

"I've got to figure it out, but I'm not a nine-to-fiver," Rachael recalls telling her. "I was ready to work really hard, serve others and meet different people."



After explaining her career wishlist, she offered her conclusion. "I feel like real estate is the only thing that has everything I'm looking for," she said. Without skipping a beat, Lesley said, "That's so weird that you would say that...I've been thinking about real estate, too."



rising star

By Breanna Pizzolato
Photos by Stevie LeJeune



Shortly after that phone call, the mother-daughter duo enrolled in real estate licensing classes. Rachael then reached out to her friend Brandon Richoux, a classmate from Southeastern who had started a brokerage. After class, they visited the Smart Move office one day, and “from there, everything fell into place,” she says. That was nine years ago. Rachael and her mom have remained with the Smart Move Real estate brokerage ever since.

“We’re all so close,” she says of her colleagues. “And I love that my mom and I share a love for our clients and real estate. It’s been super special watching our business grow together throughout the years.”

MY PEOPLE
As a textbook extrovert, Rachael effortlessly transforms strangers into lifelong friends by bringing her unique spark to every interaction. Her knack for forging meaningful

connections has turned countless new clients who started as strangers into longtime friends.

It’s only fitting that one of her most cherished friendships began in the midst of a deal. While representing their clients, Rachael and LeeAnna Guedry connected on a deeper level, discovering shared interests and mutual respect. “She called me up one day to invite me to hang out by the pool, and I said, ‘As long as we don’t have to talk about work!’” Rachael recalls with a smile. Their friendship has flourished since that day, becoming an integral part of their lives. “We have a large group of friends and we spend a lot of time together,” she shares.

Everyone says real estate is about the people you meet and work with, but for Rachael, the cliché could not ring more true. Working alongside her mom and other colleagues at Smart Move and turning strangers

“MY CLIENTS AND COLLEAGUES HAVE BECOME MY PEOPLE, AND I MET THEM THROUGH REAL ESTATE. THAT’S SO SPECIAL TO ME.”

into friends has been the cornerstone of her success and fulfillment. She looks forward to more Easter Eves spent “egging” clients’ and friends’ homes for their children, a highlight of her year.

For Rachael, there’s no greater honor than being a genuine friend—thoughtful and sweet but equally ready to fight on your behalf. “My clients and colleagues have become my people, and I met them through real estate. That’s so special to me.”

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A Journey Fueled by Faith and Family

The journey of the Keller Agency is one of resilience and faith. After a 17-year career in business-to-business sales, Keller was laid off during the 2020 pandemic. Initially hesitant about the insurance industry, a deeper exploration of Goosehead Insurance revealed an opportunity aligned with her values and aspirations. "Supported by my family, I took a leap of faith, embracing the challenge of starting something new," Keller recalled.

Overcoming Industry Challenges

The insurance landscape in Louisiana has faced significant challenges in recent years. With several carriers exiting the market and others tightening restrictions, Goosehead Insurance - Keller Agency has remained resilient. Keller said they have professionally navigated these changes, ensuring their clients are properly covered with reasonable premiums and deductibles. "We want our clients to recognize and appreciate our ability to adapt to the evolving market dynamics." Keller added, "This highlights our dedication to client satisfaction and industry expertise."



A Client-Centric Approach

“What truly sets us apart is the unwavering commitment to giving clients the power of choice,” stated Keller. Representing over 30 carriers in Louisiana, the agency prides itself on tailoring insurance solutions that best fit the unique needs of each client. “By understanding our clients’ needs and making informed recommendations regarding coverage, deductibles, and carriers, we can ensure optimal protection and peace of mind.”

At the heart of Goosehead Insurance - Keller Agency are three core values: honesty, integrity, and ethics. These principles guide every interaction and decision, fostering trust and long-lasting relationships with clients. As a business owner, these traits are paramount to Keller, ensuring that clients receive transparent and ethical service.

In the ever-evolving insurance market, it is crucial to partner with an agent who understands the current landscape. Goosehead Insurance - Keller Agency is dedicated to helping families balance coverage and cost, ensuring they are well-protected in any circumstance.

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Pivot Realty Founders: Kristina Williamson, Jonah Mumphrey, Melissa Lovett

PIVOT REALTY

THREE OF A KIND

Just over a year ago, Baton Rouge native, Jonah Mumphrey, made his dreams a reality when he co-founded Pivot Realty with Melissa Lovett and Kristina Williamson. With years of combined experience in the real estate industry, the Pivot Realty team takes pride in building and maintaining relationships.

It is the utmost belief that standing side-by-side with clients is the most efficient way to provide information and help them reach the closing table. They are dedicated to providing honesty, integrity, and a quality experience for clients and agents. “We’re changing the perspective on real estate - pivot with us,” Jonah says is their branded tagline.

BUILDING UP.

An equally important part of the equation is the agents. The team says they offer personalized, one-on-one, support and training to equip and build up agents and assist through every step of every transaction. At Pivot Realty, agents have the support they need to navigate complex transactions. Additionally,



they offer a competitive split, competitive cap rate, and all with no fees. Agents walk away with more money in their pockets and are confident, knowing from the very start, that their clients and listings stay with them. “We truly believe that when the client and agent win, then we as a brokerage win,” Melissa states.

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

In 2016, after almost 10 years in politics, it was clear that Jonah was motivated by helping and serving people and thereby discovered real estate was his true passion. While making an imprint in the local real estate market, Jonah saw some industry flaws and felt some changes could be made to serve agents and clients better. “We need better advocacy for agents system-wide,” Jonah highlights. He ultimately felt a calling from God to create a



Pictured left to right:
LaShonda Anderson, Carol Shadoin, Melissa Lovett, Jonah Mumphrey, Kristina Williamson, Simon Shuler, Donnice MacDonald



I WANT A PLACE WHERE AGENTS ARE HEARD AND UNDERSTOOD, AND THAT ALLOWS THEM TO GROW AND SUCCEED.

business that is shaped around catering to the agents. “I want a place where agents are heard and understood, and that allows them to grow and succeed.”

Jonah has always had a heart for teaching and serving. Determined, he obtained his broker license and worked with top-producing agents Melissa Lovett and Kristina Williamson to help create Pivot Realty. Jonah wanted like-minded partners in this endeavor and he believed no one was better suited than the two of them.

Kristina became licensed in 2018 and Melissa began her real estate career in 2017 after her two children graduated high school. Building something from the ground up is never simple. Together, they spent hours planning and preparing. “Seeing our vision come to fruition was empowering and fulfilling.” Kristina states. “As the various elements of starting a brokerage fell into place, we felt really proud of what we’d created and we are thrilled to serve our clients under our new brand.”

For Melissa and Kristina, the decision to partner with Jonah in the creation of Pivot Realty was an easy one. They both agreed he is a phenomenal, hard-working broker who knows the ins and outs of the market as well as the dynamics of the industry as a whole. “More important is his heart to teach and train agents,” Melissa shares. Both Melissa and Kristina profess their reason for joining his team is because of his integrity and the values he believes in. “His positivity and proactive leadership style equips me with the resources and the confidence I need to serve my clients at the highest level,” Kristina shares.

OPEN DOORS

Early May 2023, Pivot Realty opened to the public and quickly acquired eight agents, four of whom are top agents in Baton Rouge. Jonah claims the brokerage provides a white glove service, meaning they offer premium assistance delivered with close attention to detail and extra care.

The team claims what sets Pivot Realty apart from other brokerages is their passion for seeing people succeed, their charge to put agents first, and their desire to face challenges head-on. “At Pivot, we foster an atmosphere of camaraderie and authenticity while pursuing excellence together as a team, while we each remain individual agents,” Kristina expresses.

Pivot focuses on always going above and beyond for its clients and agents. Jonah said this business can oftentimes be consuming and our families have all been very supportive. There is no better feeling than seeing the satisfaction on your client’s face at the closing table, knowing that they have the utmost confidence in their real estate transaction.

Jonah says Pivot Realty has big plans and goals for their second year. “We’re just getting started.”

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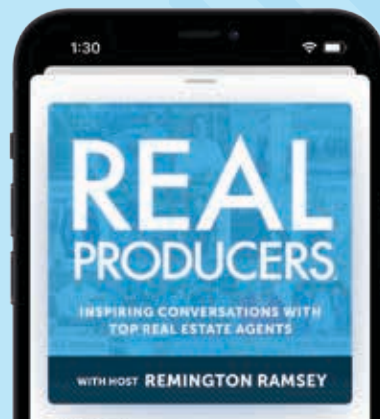
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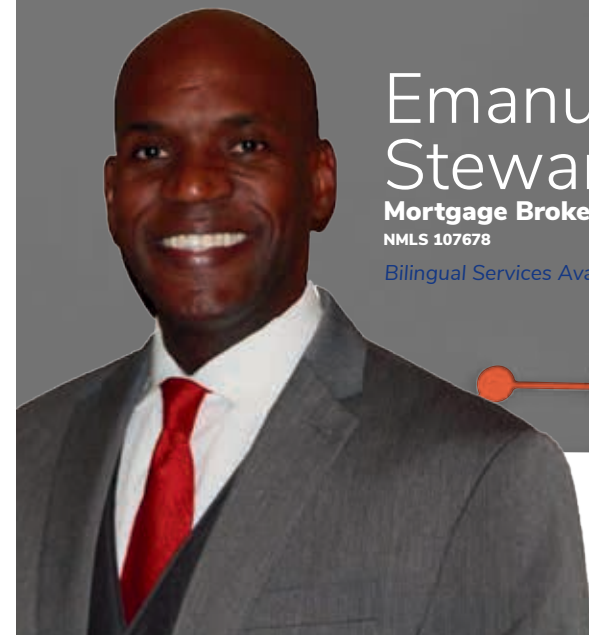
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LIFE IS GRAND

To know Stephen Williams is to experience unbridled optimism and energy, whether he's across the table from you in a negotiation or on the dancefloor at a party. He's present for every moment because these are the days he prayed for and worked toward since he was a boy.

"When I'm at work, my boots are on the ground, but when it's time to have fun, we're gonna have fun," he says, smiling. The saying goes, "If you can see it, you can achieve it." But the arduous journey of making your vision come true is left out of the adage. Knowing what you want in life is one thing, but having the drive to work toward it daily is rare. Rarer still is the combination of a relentless work ethic and a deep desire to help others achieve their

dreams. Add an air of positivity that energizes the room, and you have what sets Stephen apart as a leader, friend and family man.

THE VISION

At just six years old, a drunk driver killed Stephen's father. His mother, Carolyn Williams, stepped up to take on the role of mom and dad. She poured her all into raising Stephen and his two brothers, Tremayne



» cover story

By Breanna Pizzolato
Photos by Ace Sylvester

Johnson and Vito Johnson, to be men of character. “She taught us how to be men,” he says. “I watched her make sacrifices, and I’ve seen her work a ton.” Thanks to her, Stephen saw his life’s potential early, and through leading by example, she cultivated in him a spirit of generous giving and a strong work ethic. When a young Stephen tagged along with her during trips to her client’s homes to clean or house sit, he caught a glimpse of what life could be and held tightly to it.

“I grew up in an environment that was... beautiful inside of the home,” he says thoughtfully. “But my mom brought me to these houses with grand pianos and lots of natural lighting in safe areas with people biking and running. Experiencing that opened my mind and gave me a different perspective. It was one of my saving graces being able to see what my future could become.”

Stephen says his mom still cleans and housesits for many of the same clients and always makes time to give back to the church or help someone in need. “She’s shaped a big part of my mentality – how I continue to strive and search for the next best version of myself to overcome obstacles.” Once he had the vision, nothing could stand in his way but his own limiting beliefs. “I had to overcome the limiting belief of having to stay small and realize that I was called to inspire, challenge and develop people,” he says.

THE JOURNEY

When Stephen began his career in real



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estate, he also worked full-time at AT&T. He spent his lunch breaks and evenings sending Facebook messages until he hit the platform’s messaging limit—one most people don’t know exists. By the end of 2018, he was all-in on real estate, making a name for himself in the industry and building his tribe at Keller Williams. In August 2021, *Baton Rouge Real Producers* featured him as their Rising Star, and that honor now seems like an understatement. Since then, Stephen’s career has exploded, and his impact has multiplied.

“When I started, it was just me, myself, and I,” he recalls. “I’ve grown



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from a one-man show to a businessman.” Today, he leads S. Williams and Associates Real Estate brokered by Keller Williams, a thriving team of nine agents and two full-time administrative staff members. He prides himself on being a “true leader” who encourages, problem-solves and holds others accountable, he explains. This combination of support and accountability is his formula for helping others craft their success stories. A shining example is his wife, Taralyn, who recently launched her own marketing and branding company after leading Stephen’s marketing efforts for several years. Stephen finds great joy in walking alongside others on their journey to success, just as much as he enjoys investing in his own ventures. His passion for mentoring and collaborating with others is evident in everything he does.

THE PLAN

He and the team have ambitious plans for the future, all focused on growth.

Right now, Stephen is on the lookout for administrative and marketing professionals to continue building the team’s in-house operations and marketing departments. “I think I just met the right person while getting fitted at Men’s Warehouse,” he laughs. Instead of the traditional route to finding talent, Stephen knows it when he sees it.



“I’ll always be open to and here for new agents,” he explains. “But the focus of my team has been helping established agents who are doing well become great. At Keller Williams, we talk about moving from entrepreneurial, which is fast-moving and talented, to purposeful and growing your talent with intention. I’m proud that everyone on our team is working purposefully.”

Stephen still feels awe at the journey from a one-man operation to a business that supports multiple families.

In the next 18 months, he aims to expand his team to over 40 well-polished agents. Within three years, he envisions expanding the company into neighboring states. He plans to establish five vertically integrated businesses in five years, offering clients a comprehensive experience. “Our overall goal is to build an organization known for producing or elevating agents to a superb level of local real estate knowledge as well as personal growth through our Systems, People and Tools, allowing them to live a Life By Design,” he explains.

THE MAN

As he always has, Stephen starts each day with Gospel music and motivational podcasts by thought leaders who “speak to the brain.” He’s maintained the same morning routine since before he knew what real estate was. These days, his early mornings also include reviewing business stats and asking, “How can I serve my team today?”

“I’ve always seen myself as a true leader, but now, with a team, I take that very seriously,” he says. “I’m responsible for ensuring everyone can provide for their families and enjoy life while doing it. That responsibility is something I don’t take lightly. We have to make things happen and impact lives.”



Stephen celebrates life with optimism and positivity that wells from deep within his soul and touches everyone he meets. Loving life is second nature for the man who has grown from that awestruck young boy admiring big homes with grand pianos to a leader, entrepreneur and businessman.

S. Williams and Associates, Taralyn and their daughter Ava Raye are a testament to the power of hard work,

determination and the unwavering support of a loving family. When he’s not analyzing his next business move or problem-solving with a colleague, Stephen enjoys time with his family, traveling, calling friends to see where the party is and playing the piano.

“God has our steps ordered,” he says. “We never know what we can learn from different experiences.”

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Gleaux Up



Our summer kick off event was held at Louisiana Aesthetics & Skincare, and just like always, we had a good time getting together with our industry peers. Joined by Distilled Hair Co and Distilled Luxe Boutique pop up shop, and Texana Taceauxs & More. Attendees were given education on the skin services provided and appreciated the opportunity to learn from the different product representatives that were on site to share valuable information.

Giveaways were presented to the first 20 individuals to early RSVP, and Danni Downing won the door prize.

Our next event will be held at Distilled Hair Co on Wednesday, August 28th.

Hope to see you there!



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