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LOVING EACH MOMENT

Alexa Blackburn has achieved much in her life already. And that definitely has continued during her time as a REALTOR® with Banister Real Estate, LLC.

DEFINING SUCCESS

It's easy to get swept up in goals, plans and hopes for the future. Yet, as Alexa explains, she does her best to love each moment along the way.

"I think 100% true success is enjoying where you are in the moment," she says with a smile.

"Not reliving the past or stressing about the future. Everyone is content. You are abundantly content - financially, with your health, your relationships... those

brief moments when you realize this right here is perfect. Those moments when you want to pause time because everything is just right. That's success."

MUSIC IN HER HEART

Alexa earned her license in 2022. Prior to that, she served as an orchestra teacher, performer, and she also had her own private studio for all string instruments and piano.

Today, Alexa still has a strong love for teaching music. But her real estate career has helped her achieve an important sense of balance.

"After COVID it became too mentally and emotionally draining for

me to continue," Alexa remembers. "I was using all my energy for my students and didn't have anything left for my own family. So, when we had our fourth boy, I decided it was time for a change."

She started her real estate career with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Penfed Realty as a solo agent. In time, she met Kaylee Nungesser, a REALTOR® with Banister Real Estate. They hit it off right away.

"Kaylee and Andrew Reese were looking for another team member to help sell new builds. So we met in December of 2022 and I joined the Andrew Reese Team with Banister Real Estate," she remembers.



“ WHOEVER SAID THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN REAL ESTATE IS LOCATION, LIED. IT’S RELATIONSHIPS, JUST LIKE IN EDUCATION. AND THEY HAVE TO BE GENUINE. ”



PARALLELS BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

Alexa was born in Overland Park and grew up in Wichita. As she came of age, she attended college at Friends University and Wichita State University—earning her degree in Music Education in 2015.

She remembers the way music always came naturally for her.

“I have been a violinist my entire life (since the age of 4) so it was natural to have a career and lifestyle in music whether it’s teaching or performing. It comes so naturally to me like reading a book. Teaching lessons, performing, and teaching in public schools comes so easy to me because music is part of who I am.”

The move into real estate challenged her a bit. As she remembers, she doubted herself at first.

“I felt like I had imposter syndrome in the beginning because real estate didn’t come as naturally to me. I didn’t grow



up in the business world. So, I truly believe that just believing in myself was the most difficult transition,” she explains.

“However, I have realized one thing that both teaching and real estate have in common—relationships. Whoever said the most important thing in real estate is location, lied. It’s relationships, just like in education. And they have to be genuine.”

LIVING WITH HEART

Alexa is quick to shine the spotlight on those who have helped and mentored her through time, including REALTORS® Andrew Reese and Kaylee Nungesser, and her former violin teacher, Valerie Sullivan.

Away from work, Alexa looks forward to time with her family, including her husband, Landon, who is a Program Manager for TechData Synnex; and their four sons—Harlan, Damen, Cruze and Ace.

In their free time, they enjoy time with their cats—Neko, Nora, Lily and Mao ... and their dogs—Mack, their Doberman; Mazie, their beagle; and Pepper, their German Shepherd.

They also stay busy with a wide range of activities, including violin lessons, band concerts, wrestling, football, soccer and golf. Another favorite is a family outing once a month that the kids choose. They look forward to sharing time in their boat and exploring local restaurants.

“Landon and the boys also enjoy riding four-wheelers and dirt bikes from time to time,” she says.

They also have a big place in their heart for family—spending time with both of their parents.

As Alexa says, “They are very involved with the boys’ lives and we all love it. I couldn’t imagine raising my kids without their grandparents around. We have

always been and will always be big on family.”

Alexa also likes to give back and support groups such as Juniper Arts Academy. She has served on the Board of Directors in the past and still donates resources and volunteers. She also has a special place in her heart for non-profits that support animals.

Alexa supports the needs of her clients and community. She also offers helpful words of encouragement to others wanting to make real estate their career.

“You will never know everything. Be open to learning every single chance you get,” she says. “Also don’t take everything personally—especially with other people. If you need to, vent and cry and then move on.”

That’s good advice from the lady who works to stay present—working for the future while she savors each moment along the way.



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That's the feeling you get when you look at the work of Alena Sellers.

As a REALTOR® with Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate Alliance, it's easy to realize that her achievements have been accumulated in the interest of others.

HERE FOR ALL

One of the signs of that dedication to the dreams of others came to Alena through two awards that she has earned at her real estate office—an award presented to her for recording the largest sale in her firm, as well as recognition for the smallest transaction.

In turn, it's easy to see that she provides the same valuable brand of service and real estate results to everyone that she serves.

"I love helping everyone," she says with a warm smile.

TAKING A NEW DIRECTION

Alena earned her real estate license in 2017. As she remembers it, her entry into the business came about on what she calls "a whim."

"I've done hair for 24 years. The thing was my arm was starting to give out from all of that work that I had done with my hair clients through time."

Faced with the prospect of moving on from what she had known and loved for so many years was obviously not an easy task. But she started thinking about other options she could pursue that would give her that same satisfaction she got from serving the needs of others.



“My husband and I had accumulated some rental properties through time,” she says. “So I thought it might make sense for me to get my real estate license, since that could help us with what we did on our own.”

She remembers coming home one day and having the conversation with her husband about switching up her career and moving into real estate.

“I told him that I thought getting my license would really help us,” she remembers. “He supported my decision. And once I got into the business, I knew I was hooked.”

THE REWARDS OF HER WORK

Alena finds many aspects of her work rewarding. But one of those that stands out is the behind-the-scenes work.

“I love the paperwork aspect of it. It feels really good getting everything organized,” she says. “I also love diving in and finding out about a house and doing the research part of it along the way. An example of that is an older home on Main Street that we got involved with. It was so much fun and very interesting to learn about the house.”

She also has that same sense of curiosity when it comes to the people she works with.

“That’s an inspiring part of what I do. It’s fun to learn about the people I’m serving,” she points out. “It’s very interesting to discover what their lives have been like, and what vision they have for their future.”

“
I ADVISE PEOPLE TO BUILD THEIR SYSTEM AND GET THINGS IN PLACE EARLY ON. IT’S REALLY HARD WHEN YOU ALREADY ARE BUSY TO GET SOME OF THOSE THINGS LINED OUT.



That interest in people is one that Alena actively pursues. In fact, on Mondays, it’s not uncommon to find Alena meeting with folks for coffee or lunch ... staying in touch with old friends and making new ones along the way.

Her efforts have produced rewarding results all the way around. In fact, she has recorded \$21 million in sales volume in her career.

FAMILY FULFILLMENT

Away from work, Alena’s spirit is further powered by her family, including her husband, Scott, and their children—their son, Zach; and their daughter, Rianne.

In her free time, Alena enjoys kayaking and playing golf with Scott. They also have a hands-on love for real estate.

“A couple of years ago, Scott and I started rehabbing homes,” she says. “It’s a lot of fun identifying a house and then diving in to work on it.”

When it comes to staying engaged with the needs of the community, Alena has stayed very active with the local REALTOR® association, where she has served on the Community Involvement Committee, and now is part of the Professional Development Committee.”

Alena also offers words of advice for others who are considering getting into real estate for themselves.

“It’s always important to remember that it takes time when you’re starting out in the business,” she points out. “I advise people to build their system and get things in place early on. It’s really hard when you already are busy to get some of those things lined out.”

She also encourages finding a mentor as new agents find their footing in the business.

With her dedicated and professional demeanor and approach, Alena makes a vital difference in the lives of her clients and community.

Congratulations to Alena Sellers for building achievements each day ... in the interest of others.





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JOEL MORRIS



BUILDING LASTING BONDS

What goes up must come down. And what is down today may find its way to the top tomorrow. Indeed, it seems that change is the one thing we can count on through time.

Properties change hands through time. Real estate trends come and go. Interest rates rise and fall. But those aren't what sustains a career through time.

IN THIS TOGETHER

Above all, the bonds we build are the things that support each of us through life and business.

Joel Morris is one who continues making a difference that way.

As a Commercial Associate with JP Weigand & Associates, Joel excels with the strong relationships he maintains.

"It's not what you know, it's who you know," he points out, emphasizing the value of trust and reliability in building lasting partnerships.

GETTING HIS START

Joel's journey into the real estate realm began over a decade ago when he first earned his license in 2007. He attended and completed auction school in 2008.

Initially, Joel specialized in hotel and motel sales alongside Steve Sonneman at Sonneco Realty Group.

Joel's early career was marked by a blend of entrepreneurial ventures, including owning a contracting company.

His path took a twist when he discovered a new passion—managing farm and ranch properties, which led him to establish Kansas Wildlife Management.

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

Under Tom Boyd's mentorship, Joel's management business grew, expanding rapidly across Kansas and neighboring states.

"I was on the road over 100 nights a year," Joel says. "I needed to make a change at the time."

Joel remembers the challenges of balancing a thriving business with family life.

His decision to temporarily let his real estate license lapse underscored the demands of his management endeavors but ultimately paved the way for a renewed focus on real estate in 2017.

▶▶ commercial corner

Photos By Aaron Patton
Written By Dave Danielson

After that, Joel's career evolved through various roles at firms like Trophy Property and Auctions and Sundgren Realty, where he picked up more experience and expertise in both residential and commercial sectors.

In time, he joined Weigand Commercial, where his commitment to excellence and client-centric approach propelled him to achieve substantial sales volumes, reaching \$19.2 million in 2023 alone.

WIDE-OPEN SPACES AND POSSIBILITIES

Joel smiles as he thinks about the work he gets to do each day enjoying the Kansas landscape that he loves.

"The diversity of Kansas is amazing," he says. "And that holds true whether I'm looking at a piece of tillable land or the ground is meant for hunting."

Today, Joel also has his Accredited Land Consultant (ALC) designation. He received that this year as the culmination of a three-year journey involving extensive education and meeting sales volume requirements.

FAMILY REWARDS

His life is made much richer by his family, including his wife, Caelie, and their three sons—Paxton, Cooper and Kasen.

In his free time, Joel looks forward to opportunities to spend more time with his family—coaching his sons' baseball teams and enjoying the outdoors together hunting and fishing.

When it comes to giving back, Joel has been involved in supporting organizations such as Delta Waterfowl and Ducks Unlimited.



“
IT'S NOT **WHAT**
YOU KNOW, IT'S
WHO YOU KNOW.
”



As he looks ahead, Joel is excited about the prospects for continued commercial real estate in the market.

He cites ongoing development projects like the 150-acre, 620-home community in Andover and Wichita's newest entertainment district as indicators of the region's vibrant real estate market.

Joel's career underscores the vital impact of dedication, integrity, and his deep-seated love for the land.

Congratulations to Joel Morris for his continued rise in the business that reflects the dedicated way he builds strong bonds and serves his clients to the best of his ability.

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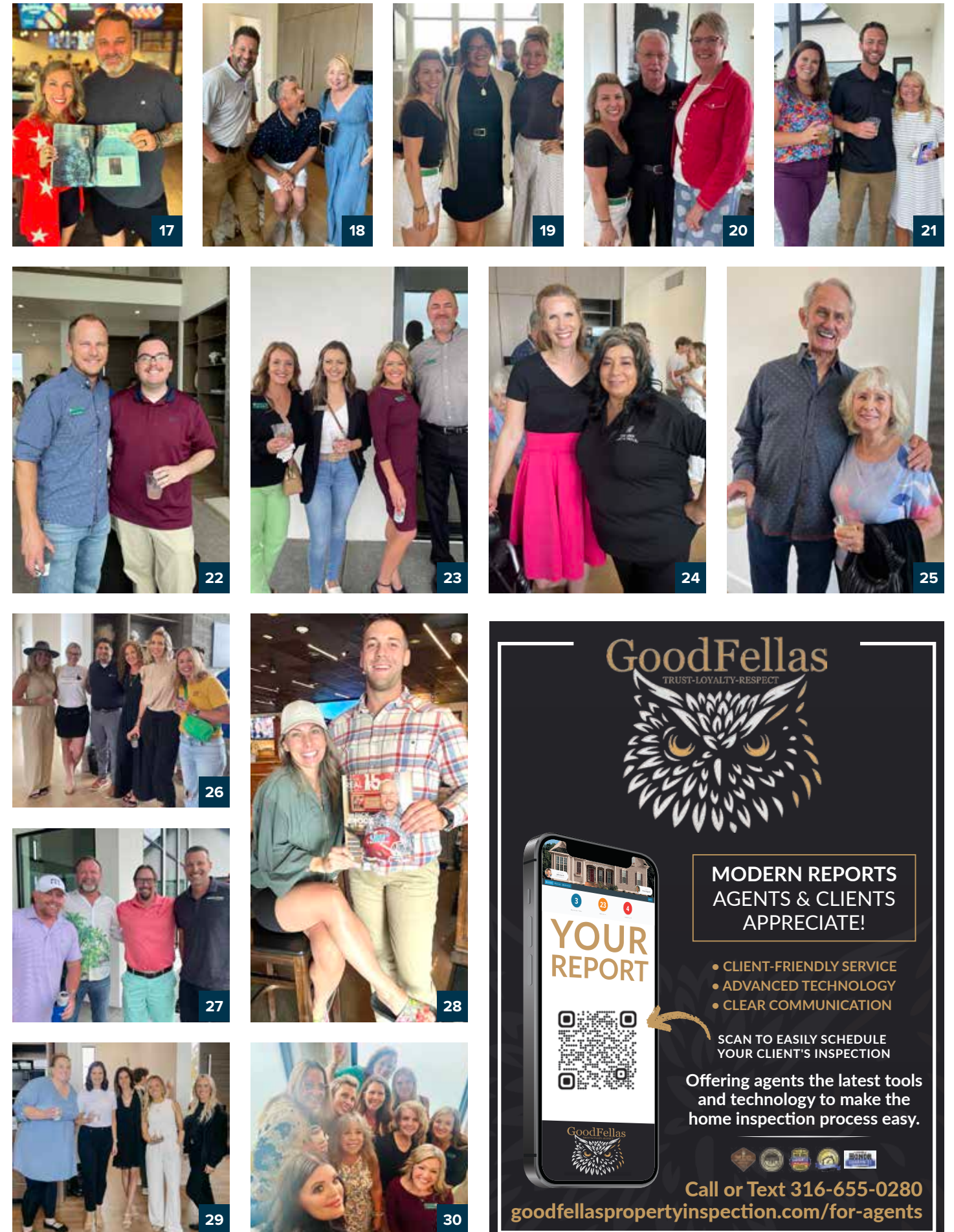




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14. Nick Singer & Rick Rangel
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Leslie Wessel

The path of a leader in real estate is filled with milestones—each of them representing a family who was helped during a time of real need in their lives.

That's what you would see if you were able to see all of the signs of success that Leslie Wessel has put in place during her career.

As a REALTOR® with Coldwell Banker Plaza Real Estate, Leslie is known for her dynamic drive—a tireless and relentless force that she puts into motion on behalf of residents across the region.

A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

Leslie has recorded over 20 years of dedicated service in the business she loves. It's an extension of the connection she feels for the people she meets.

"It's rewarding working with clients who you just know will become lifelong friends. Over the course of my career, I've been able to work with them and their friends and family many times over," Leslie explains.

"It's also expanding the opportunities for my team, Hannah Ackley and Eric Papon, and our four children to grow into the business and learn how to work alongside us."

IGNITING HER PASSION FOR THE PROFESSION

Leslie's journey in real estate began before she even completed her degree in Business-Entrepreneurship with an emphasis in Real Estate from Wichita State University in 2006.

Working part-time as a New Home Sales Consultant during her junior year in college, Leslie's passion for real estate was ignited.

Her early career flourished under the guidance of mentors like Melinda Cryer-Peffly and Cindy Carnahan, shaping her work ethic and instilling a deep understanding of the industry.

GAINING GROUND

After graduating, Leslie swiftly transitioned into full-time sales, eventually founding her own team, Wessel Team Home Sales, in 2015.



Since then, her team has consistently ranked among the top, earning accolades such as the Top Small Team at Coldwell Banker Plaza for consecutive years.

Leslie consistently qualified for the Master's Circle since 2015 and was recognized as a Wichita Business Journal's 40 Under 40 awardee in 2017. Her commitment to excellence is undeniable.

In the process, Leslie has amassed over \$150 million in sales volume since she first started selling individually for her clients in 2007.

GRATITUDE AND TEAMWORK

Along the way, Leslie has been grateful for those around her, including Hannah, who has been Leslie's Assistant and Transaction/Marketing Coordinator through the past five years.

"She quickly became so much more than an Assistant ... a best friend, an aunt to my children and someone who cares as much about the clients and business as I do," Leslie smiles.



▶ top producer

Photos By Jennifer Ruggles
Written By Dave Danielson

“
It’s rewarding
working with
clients who you
just know will
become lifelong
friends.”



“Her friendship, quality work ethic and listening ear have been invaluable to the success of our team.”

HER WONDERFUL WORLD

Beyond all of the professional success, Leslie treasures time spent with her family, including her husband, Eric (who also plays a pivotal role in her professional success); and their four children—Katie, Konnor, Kaston and Dominic.

In their free time, Leslie and her family enjoy sports, movie nights and other adventures on their 10-acre property.

She also stays engaged in the needs of the community, supporting groups such as Junior League of Wichita and Designing Women of Mark Arts, where she serves as the Executive Chair.

As she looks to the future, Leslie also provides helpful advice to uplift others who are getting into the business themselves.

“Real estate is a long game, so it’s important to find a good mentor. Take your time to learn the business and always live below your current means as market fluctuations are out of your control. Keep your head down to work hard and consistently, and take good care of the clients,” she says.

Leslie Wessel’s success is not just about sales figures or awards; it’s about the lives she touches and the community she serves.

When you talk with Leslie, it’s easy to see why those who know her appreciate the way she works for the benefits of all.

Truly, she bases her life and success on solid priorities that guide her steps in the world.

“By my children and husband, I want to be remembered as the best mom and wife who was real, vulnerable and made their life more enjoyable,” she says with a smile. “I chose this career intentionally to be family oriented. I hope we’ve designed a life that we all love.”

Congratulations to Leslie Wessel for bringing her dynamic drive to life for her community each day.

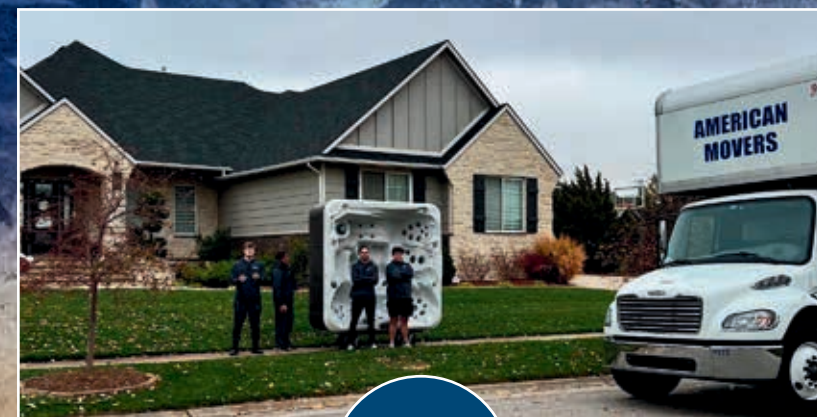




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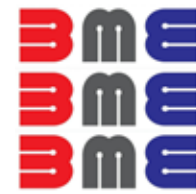


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LEADING WITH COMFORT

When you're in the heating and cooling business, it may be a given that you set out to deliver comfort to your partners and clients. And Owners Adam Morris and Brent Jewell take that a step further in all aspects of their business.

Established in 2017 through a serendipitous encounter at a distributor, their partnership has blossomed into a cornerstone of reliable heating and cooling services across residential and commercial sectors.

TEAMING UP AND MAKING AN IMPACT

Adam Morris reflects on his journey into entrepreneurship

"I had been in the heating and air industry for 15 years before deciding to start my own company. Life threw a few challenges my way, which made me realize there's no perfect time to start something new," he says. "Brent and I crossed paths while contemplating our own ventures, and soon, our collaboration began."

Brent Jewell, with a background in aircraft and a knack for mechanical intricacies, found his calling in heating and cooling after his own home AC broke down.

"I've always been fascinated by how things work. It's that curiosity that led me to pursue this field and eventually team up with Adam," he explains.

POSITIVE COMMITMENT

Their shared passion for problem-solving and commitment to quality shines through in every aspect of their business.

"We take pride in doing the job the right way, not the cheapest way," Brent emphasizes.

This philosophy underscores their approach to service—from residential home inspections to complex commercial installations.

Adam discussed the elements that set BME apart.

"One of our highlights is our affordable home inspections for HVAC systems, priced at \$99," Adam says. "We understand the importance of providing an ethical assessment of a home's heating

and cooling setup, especially in real estate transactions where clarity can make or break a deal."

Their dedication to honesty and quality often sets them apart in a competitive industry.

"We've had customers initially balking at our prices, but later they realize the value when they see the longevity and efficiency of our work," Brent adds.

That commitment extends to preventative maintenance.

"We urge people not to wait until a breakdown to call us," Adam advises. "Regular maintenance can catch issues early, saving time, money, and frustration down the road."

GOING THE DISTANCE

Their comprehensive service agreements include seasonal tune-ups, ensuring that systems run efficiently year-round.

In addressing common misconceptions, Adam is keen to educate customers about the long-term savings of efficient systems versus immediate costs.

"Utility bills can be significantly reduced with a properly functioning HVAC system. It's about investing wisely in your home comfort," he explains.

Beyond their technical expertise, both Adam and Brent emphasize the importance of customer education.

"We don't just fix problems; we explain the 'why' behind our recommendations," Brent notes. "Understanding your HVAC system can empower homeowners to make informed decisions."

Their dedication to service extends beyond the job site.

"Residential customers are our priority," Brent mentions. "We often find that homeowners are uncertain after home inspections, and we're there to provide clarity and reassurance regarding their HVAC systems."

As they look to the future, Adam and Brent envision expanding their footprint while maintaining their personalized approach.

"We're rooted in Kansas, and our goal is to continue serving our community with integrity and excellence," Adam concludes.

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Will King

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A Game-Changer

Known as the Kansas Loan Man, Will has brought his deal-saving and game-changing brand of problem solving to the equation time and time again.

"That's what I love the most about what I do ... figuring things out and winning. I enjoy the challenge," Will explains. "I'm known for being a numbers geek. I use that to my advantage. It allows me to reverse engineer a situation."

He also appreciates having the opportunity to serve his partners and clients in a winning environment at U.S. Mortgage Corporation, where he serves as Branch Manager.

"I work for an absolutely great company," he smiles. "I've been here for nine years. The company is loan officer-driven and provides us with the tools we need to serve people."

Continuing a Legacy of Leadership
US Mortgage is a family owned company of 30 years.

"The President and Founder is still an active loan officer and personally licensed in every state. They have put into place checks and balances to avoid layoffs and maintain and excel way past the average production," Will explains.

Will remembers how he got into the business. A friend referred him to a position where he worked with banks to help them step outside of their normal lending box. He also excelled at phone sales. Soon he moved into loan origination.

Those who work with Will appreciate his blend of skills in working with people and in coming up with the numeric solutions that help clients reach the closing table.

There's more.

"As a company we have a system of checks and balances to make sure every borrower walks out with a solid pre-qualification from us," he emphasizes.

Wonderful Life

Life away from work is equally fulfilling for Will. He cherishes time with his children—Zach, Anna, Joshua and Rachel.

In his free time, he enjoys karaoke at a couple of his favorite spots—A&J Music Room and Vorshay's Lounge.

Those who have a chance to know and work with Will appreciate his fun nature, his sincerity and, of course, his relentless drive to find solutions.

"When I think about what I do, one of the things that continues to drive me is protecting my partners' and clients' time ... and helping them accomplish their goals—carrying it all the way to the end of the deal," Will emphasizes.

"I always want to make sure that I'm providing a level of service that improves their quality of life."

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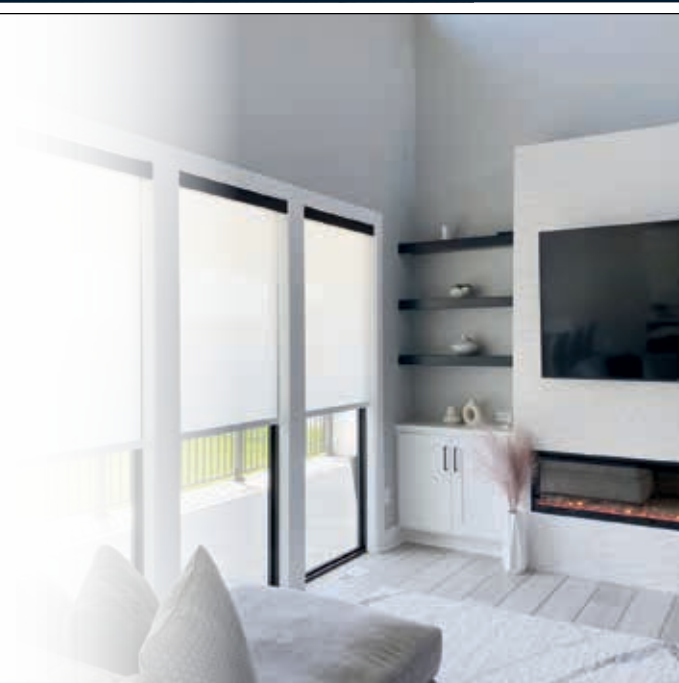
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Wichita Construction & Concrete

PUTTING GREAT THINGS IN PLACE

Photos By Aaron Patton Written By Dave Danielson

As the region continues to build for the future, it does so based on the solid footing provided by quality partners like Mark Kittrell and Robert Fluke—Co-Owners of Wichita Construction & Concrete.



Mark Kittrell, a seasoned professional with a background in industrial distribution, joined forces with Robert Fluke, who brings his expertise as a skilled operator.

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

Their partnership began as a business arrangement, but quickly evolved into a friendship rooted in shared values and a passion for providing top-tier products and services to their clients.



“We started with the goal of diversifying our offerings and delivering high-quality solutions to the market,” Mark explains. “Our focus is on solving problems—whether it’s repairing damaged concrete, enhancing driveways and patios, or tackling ambitious commercial projects.”

At the heart of what Wichita Construction & Concrete does is their genuine love for what they do.

“Meeting new people and understanding their visions is what drives us,” Mark reflects. “Everyone has a unique idea of what makes a home special. Our job is to turn those dreams into reality and create spaces where families can truly enjoy their lives.”

GAINING GROUND

In recent years, their portfolio has expanded significantly, with a notable increase in commercial projects.

“We’ve been fortunate to collaborate on major ventures like renovating commercial buildings and enhancing parking lots,” Mark shares. “One of our standout projects involved working with Kroger on their Dillons stores in the area, a partnership that underscores our growing presence in the commercial sector.”

Behind every successful project are the dedicated teams at Wichita Construction & Concrete.

Despite their growth, Mark and Robert prioritize a small, tight-knit crew to maintain the personal touch their clients value.

“Our team is like family,” Mark emphasizes. “Their dedication and expertise are crucial to delivering the level of service our clients expect.”

STRONG COMMITMENT

Their commitment extends beyond business success.

Wichita Construction & Concrete is deeply involved in community initiatives, partnering with organizations like Legacy Ministries and Habitat for Humanity.





We want our work to speak for itself.



“Giving back is part of who we are,” Mark states proudly. “From teaching kids practical skills to donating our services to building driveways for families in need, these efforts are our way of creating a positive impact in Wichita.”

One of their most ambitious community projects involved renovating a 17,000 square-foot commercial building for Jorns & Associates.

“It was a challenging yet rewarding endeavor,” Mark recalls. “Seeing the transformation was truly fulfilling.”

Family remains at the heart of their motivation.

“Our families have been our biggest supporters,” Mark says with a smile. “Their encouragement fuels our drive to succeed, allowing us to achieve a balance between work and personal life.”



FUTURE FOCUS

Looking ahead, Mark and Robert aim to solidify their reputation as Wichita’s premier construction and concrete specialists.

“We want our work to speak for itself,” Mark asserts. “The greatest praise we receive is when clients refer us to their friends and family, knowing they trust us to deliver exceptional results. We’re here to put our mark on Wichita, not just through our projects but through our commitment to excellence and community. That’s what defines Wichita Construction & Concrete.”



When you’re looking for a partner to help you put everything in place, look to Mark, Robert and the team at Wichita Construction & Concrete.

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