

THE A LIST

Get to know these
accomplished
entrepreneurs,
business owners,
and leading men
and women
of Wilmington and
the beaches.

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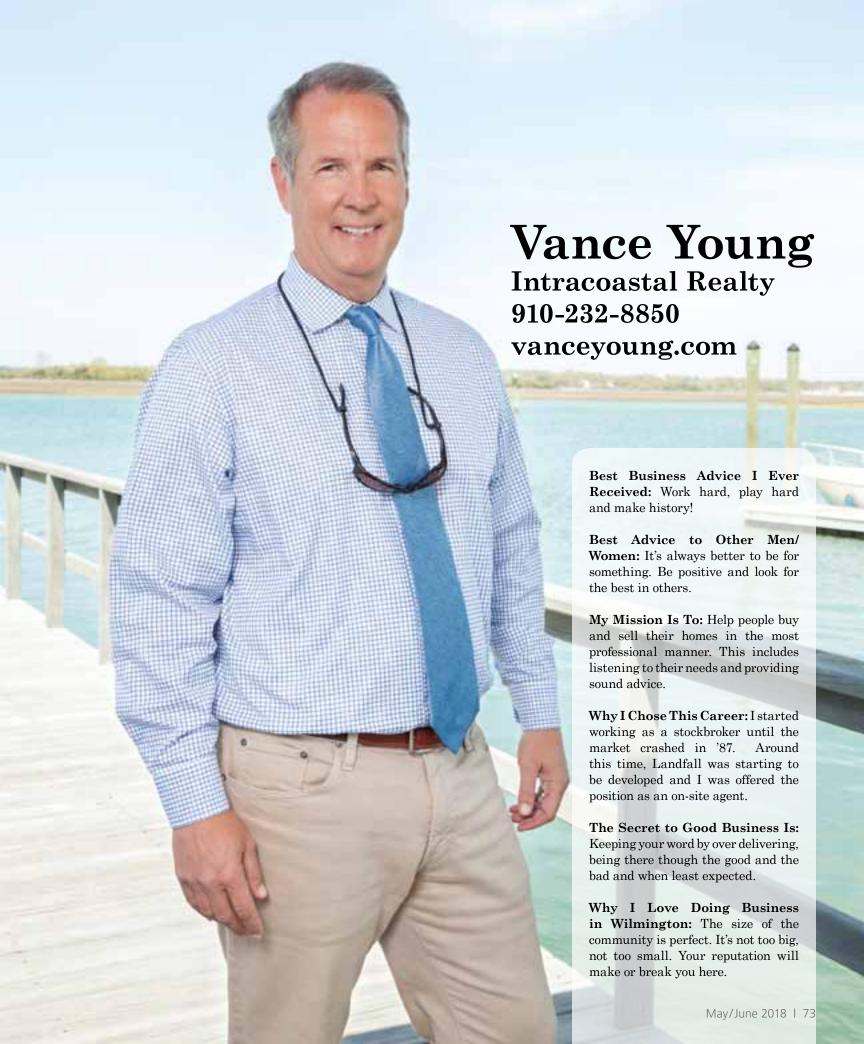
Received: Treat all people fairly and with respect. Treat others as you would like to be treated!

Best Advice to Other Men/Women: Life and technology is fluid - it is constantly changing. Move forward with the world and with technology. Invest in yourself, your business and your life. By doing this, you will be for your staff and you clients.

Why I Chose This Career: Being an audiologist and providing hearing health care enables me to make a difference in the lives of those with hearing loss, children and adults.

The Secret to Good Business Is: Providing exceptional customer those we serve.

Why I Love Doing Business Wilmington: Wilmington a wonderful community with exceptional residents from a variety of backgrounds and lifestyles. I learn something new everyday from the Wilmington residents that come to my office!







My Business: Is a Home Interiors Boutique with full service interior design.

Best Advice to Other Men/Women: Try to keep a positive attitude, because owning a business can be very hard at times.

My Mission Is To: Bring an eclectic mix

of beautiful and unique pieces of home decor for clients to enjoy.

Why I Chose This Career: It's my passion. In the morning, I just get excited to do it all over again.

The Secret to Good Business Is:

Having a great team that works together towards a common goal and providing excellent customer service to our clients.

Why I Love Doing Business in Wilmington: We are so lucky to have a wonderful, enjoyable client base. We look forward to new clients, 100% always.







The Secret to Good Business Is: Always treat the customer as you want to be treated and surround yourself

> Best Business Advice I Ever Received: The best business advice I have received is to complete any task you are given to the best of your ability. Commit to your work, prove your work ethic, and creatively problem solve any challenges you may face.

> My Mission Is To: Bring value to our community. Our goal is to take someone's lifelong investment and prepare it in a way that will bring the maximum value for their dollar. The ability to produce more offers, quicker sale and a higher sale price, creates a residual effect within that neighborhood, benefiting everyone.

> I've Learned The Hard Way: That the only thing you can control is yourself, your work and what you stand for. Some days you will feel defeated - and that is okay. Nobody can take away your proven work ethic or your commitment, and it is important to remind yourself of that.

> The Secret to Good Business Is: Always keep an open mind. Seek advice and always try to consider different viewpoints. This gives you options you may have never considered. Don't be afraid to ask for guidance, especially from those who have been there before!

with a great team!



My Mission Is To: Offer an outlet for people to consign and buy classic/highend merchandise at reasonable prices.

Why I Chose This Career: I was able

The Secret to Good Business Is: Reputation. Reputation. It takes a long time to build one and NO

Why I Love Doing Business In Wilmington: I went to college in Wilmington. I love the area. This is a great place to raise our children, and hopefully, for us to retire.







My Business: It is hard to believe Wilmington Dermatology Center was founded 10 years ago this summer. As a comprehensive practice, we are skilled in Dermatology care for patients of all ages and we are passionate about the leading edge cosmetic treatments we provide that help our clients look and feel their best.

Best Business Advice I Ever Received: I worked in a bank when I was in high school and they had inspirational

quotes hanging in the office. I walked past one that has remained relevant. "Complacency is devastating." I think about that frequently and have always strived for excellence during school and as I started my own business. I think it is also important to know that striving for excellence is not the same as perfection.

My Mission Is To: Continue our goal of being Wilmington's trusted skincare experts, using leading edge treatments with a focus on great results.

Why I Chose This Career: I knew from an early age I wanted to help people feel better. I love dermatology and cosmetics because building peoples self esteem can have a huge impact on the rest of their lives. Whether it is a psoriasis patient who is always asked about their rash, a kid with really bad acne, or a mother getting ready for a wedding, it's important for people to feel comfortable in their skin.



Best Business Advice We Ever Received: Never take a customer for granted! We don't have a monopoly on appliance or hardware sales in our region, so we have to separate ourselves from our competition by our product knowledge and our customer service before, during and after the sale is completed.

Best Advice to Other Men/Women: Integrity is the name of the game! Competitors will come and go, but the best way to insure longevity in business is to always be upfront and honest with everyone, including your employees, your business associates (vendors, etc.) and especially your customers.

Our Mission Is To: Provide the best selection of exceptional quality products and a best-in-class purchasing experience for our customers. We know that we're not the only option in the area, so we have to excel at everything that we do.

Why We Chose This Career: To carry on the tradition and hard work our fathers and grandfathers started 70 years ago. Hampton, Mark, and Kevin are second-generation owners of the business, and Wade is the first member of the third generation.



Best Business Advice We Ever Received:

"Create your own opportunities." My dad drilled that into me when I was young. That mindset inspired me to start the business in 1997 and continues to drive Big Sky to create new ways to grow our business and be a more dynamic design resource for our community. We recently had a shopper say, "I looked for this kind of unique light fixture where I lived in NY. I moved to Wilmington, found your ad, came by, and found a remarkable fixture in your shop!"

Why We Chose This Career: I (and I think my team shares in this) love going from one project to the next and enjoy the diversity of clientele, dreaming about varying aesthetic directions, and the opportunities to bring different resources together toward an artistic end.

Why We Love Doing Business In Wilmington: Working in Wilmington has allowed the Big Sky Design team to have diverse project experience; working on large and small commercial projects, amazing custom homes, and all kinds of residential projects as well.



Best Business Advice I Ever Received: It's a quote from Albert Schwietzer: "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful."

My Mission Is To: Exceed our clients' expectations throughout the entire real estate experience, and beyond. Our clients know they are in excellent hands and that we want the process to

go as smoothly as possible. We are their resource during, as well as after the transaction is complete. We will be your agent today, and your friend for life.

Why I Chose This Career: I chose this career because I love helping people. There is so much involved with buying or selling a home, and it can be very emotional. Our goal is to take the stress out of the transaction for our clients so they can focus on the excitement of a new home or next phase of their life.

Why I Love Doing Business In Wilmington: The people in Wilmington are so wonderful! Some have lived here their entire lives, but most have come from all over to call Wilmington home. You never know who you're going to meet each day, and there are some really fascinating residents here.



Best Business Advice I Ever Received: I recently met Sid Mashburn, American clothing designer and retailer. Amongst the many topics we touched on, I received one piece of advice that has stuck with me. Mashburn challenged me to never lose the passion behind my business, especially that which drove me to create Bloke in the first place.

Why I Chose This Career: My interest in the fashion industry was a catalyst for why I chose my career in the business of retail. I figured that attaining a career in a field I already had interest in would be wise, and hopefully yield a positive future. I recognized a market within Wilmington for men's clothing and decided to take a risk in opening a contemporary men's store.

I've Learned The Hard Way: After nearly 8 years in business, I'm still learning things the hard way. However, adapting and growing with your business is integral in staying relevant within any market. I did learn that Bloke should become more "lean". Our space downtown doesn't allow for much excess, so we've literally concentrated our business and it's working well.





Our Business: Features the best in fabrics, trim and home accessories with affordable pricing, a wide selection and knowledgeable staff.

Best Advice to Other Men/Women: Be a team player, encourage others, and never stop learning. Our Mission Is To: Our mission is to provide customers with ideas, fabrics, and accessories to customize their dreams into reality.

Why We Chose This Career: We chose this career to pursue our love of fabrics and design and to work alongside talented

We've Learned The Hard Way: To measure twice and cut once!

The Secret to Good Business Is: Communication, customer service, and follow through.



Best Business Advice We Ever Received: "There is no reward without risk." We have been in business for over 10 years and continue to adapt and make changes. For example, we recently went through an expansion and change of location at our downtown Wilmington location. We closed for two months so that we can serve more customers and now offer river views and a sidewalk patio.

Best Advice to Other Men/Women: Be true to yourself and your brand. Customers appreciate authenticity, so find you niche and be exceptional at it.

Our Mission Is To: "Show each guest a Good Shuckin' Time through fresh seafood, high-quality spirits and exceptional service." There are a lot of great restaurants out there and we work hard everyday to be the exceptional for our customers, so they will choose to continue coming back.

Why We Love Doing Business In Wilmington: Wilmington is the perfect town to do business. The weather, people, and historical charm attract a great mix of visitors and locals, allowing small businesses to succeed. The town and local organizations are extremely supportive; it's a great community.

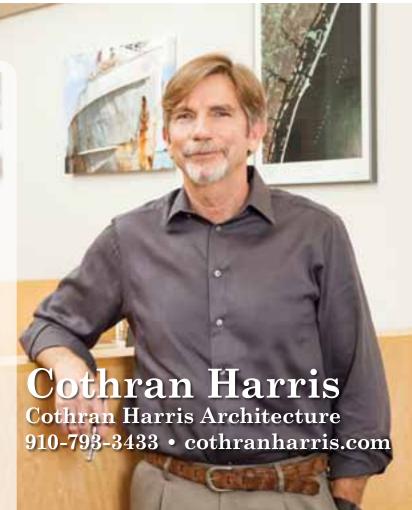
My Business: Cothran Harris Architecture is a full service Architectural office with experience in commercial and residential design. We practice architecture in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Kentucky. Projects have received recognition for design and have been featured in local and national publications.

My Mission Is To: Make Wilmington a more beautiful place to live, one project at a time.

Why I Chose This Career: To be honest, (and giving John Lennon full credit), this career chose me while I was busy making other plans.

I've Learned the Hard Way: There is no such thing as "arriving". Success is like walking the wrong way on a moving sidewalk. Sometimes you make headway; sometimes you rest and fall back. But you never arrive.

The Secret to Good Business Is: I don't think there is a secret. For us, good business is hard work, talent and luck, but mostly showing up on time. I think Yoda says it best, "Do. Or do not. There is no try."



My Business: My niche is the new construction market and working closely with our local builders and new build clientele. I work to help market our local builders and their product to other Realtors and new clients, as well as helping build-clients find the perfect builder match. Today, clients want an expert in the industry helping them understand what's next and what to expect when building a new home with a particular builder, and so much more. Helping my friends, past clients, and referrals with their specific real estate needs has always been most important, so along with new construction sells and marketing, it is also mixed with all styles of home sales.

Best Business Advice I Ever Received: Choose something you are passionate about and become an expert on what interests you most. Don't try to be an expert in everything. Find your niche and flourish.

Best Advice to Other Men/Women: Be confident and forge relationships with other powerful and successful people in your business. Learn from other experts in your industry and don't be afraid to ask questions.

Why I Chose This Career: It's a people business; it's real estate and sales. It is more of an emotional sale for most, so it's like matchmaking, but with property. No day is ever the same, and you never know what will be thrown your way, keeping you on your toes.

Jennifer Young

Nest Realty 910-547-2106 nestrealty.com







My Business: Debby Gomulka Designs is a lifestyle brand that specializes in meticulous style and quality and customized design services that fit each client's vision. My team and I provide a distinctively enriching and luxurious experience to sophisticated clients looking for an extraordinary quality of life.

Why I Chose This Career: From the time I was a child, I knew that I would

become a designer. The real joy in this profession is being able to improve my client's quality of life. Lifelong friendships have flourished from interior design clients. It is definitely a fulfilling career.

I've Learned the Hard Way: Time management is key. Knowing when to speed up and when to slow down, getting that sense of pace from the client. Each project is unique, and each has its own budget and deadline. Listening to the client and then taking control of the project comes with years and years of experience.

Why I Love Doing Business in Wilmington: This is an exciting time in Wilmington. Creating beautiful spaces that function well for all the newcomers to our area is the most rewarding part of my profession.

Our Business: Exclusive Bramble and select upholstery lines along with home décor and gifts.

Best Advice to Other Men/Women: Make today so awesome that yesterday gets jealous.

Our Mission Is To: Make niche. an experience as well as a beautiful store where all feel welcome and valued.

Why We Chose This Career: We are nurturers who love to give and we believe in the importance of home.

We've Learned the Hard Way: There's a lot of hard work involved to actualize your vision. We are so thankful for the support of our Custom Home family. Their patience has been unwavering.

The Secret to Good Business Is: We expect that providing a personalized shopping experience for our guests will set the stage for success.

