

JEREMY LICHTENSTEIN

SPREADING KINDNESS IN BUSINESS AND THE COMMUNITY



Jeremy Lichtenstein, of RE/MAX Realty Services in Bethesda, MD, is a well-known figure in Montgomery County – not only as one of the premier

Realtors® in the region, but as a generous businessman making a profound difference in the lives of children throughout the community.

Getting Jeremy to talk about his successful 24-year real estate career is not easy. He would rather gloss over the numerous awards bestowed upon him and turn the conversation back to the subject he is most passionate about: his charity, the KIND organization, which stands for Kids In Need Distributors.

“Success is finding the proper balance between work, play, and free time. My success in real estate enabled me to provide the initial funding to start KIND and now gives me the platform to expand it. The most rewarding part of being successful is being able to give back to the community. You do well so you can do good,” he says.

Jeremy conceived the idea to start KIND in 2012 after learning that 35 percent of children in the Montgomery County school system are on the Free and Reduced Meal program (FARM), which equates to more than 55,000 food-insecure children. Even though children in this program receive breakfast and lunch at school, there are no provisions for after school or weekends. Many of these children

go home to empty cabinets and refrigerators and sometimes don’t eat for an entire weekend. Jeremy was astonished that the numbers could be so high, especially in Montgomery County, one of the wealthiest counties in the country.

KIND is an all-volunteer program that distributes food to these disadvantaged children. Every six weeks, at least 50 to 60 volunteers from a list of more than 150 mobilize to coordinate the transport of up to 90,000 food items purchased from Costco in Wheaton. Once at the school, more volunteers help sort items into individual bags which are discreetly slipped into needy students’ backpacks each Friday.

“The whole community, both young and old, rich or poor, wants to make KIND work. We started with one school, 37 kids, and a budget of \$3,000. Today, we’re feeding 2,200 kids at 26 different schools with a budget of over \$300,000. Every Saturday, I wake up and know there are more than 2,000 families within our community that are better off because of our efforts. That’s enough motivation to keep me going and growing,” Jeremy says.

Jeremy shares that he is now on the verge of being able to launch the KIND program nationally. “This is going to be a huge year for us,” he exclaims. “I’m not just talking about expanding our program here, but training other agents in other towns to start their own KIND programs in their communities. Real estate is the perfect platform to make it all come together.”



Jeremy and his dog, Milo

Photos by Ryan Corvello Photography

...

His down-to-earth personality and sincere smile quickly draws people in and makes them comfortable. "I used to be the most competitive person out of anyone I knew — chasing down deals and trying to be the wealthiest guy out there. But, it's not for me anymore. I have a better perspective on what's important and understand life a little more. I don't need that crazy anxiety. I feel that too many people take themselves way, way, way too seriously. They're more concerned with what others think about them, but you just have to be yourself. If people like it, great. If they don't, they'll find another agent. I don't think enough people do that."

Jeremy's easygoing approach to life is also reflected in his style of dress. He says one of the biggest challenges he faced starting in the industry was conforming to the real estate dress code. He is not one to wear business suits or ties and doesn't care for tightly fitting clothes. "It was intimidating because I have sensory issues, and it made business attire very uncomfortable. So, I just created my own signature dress code: a nice casual shirt, something fun like Tommy Bahama, and in the summer, maybe shorts and clogs," he smiles.

Before getting into real estate, Jeremy was a landscaping contractor for 20 years. However, being in such a labor-intensive field finally took its toll. After spinal surgery and enduring fluctuating temperatures throughout the seasons, he decided it was time to switch gears. He says he saw an opportunity to make more money in real estate and welcomed the challenge. His intuition paid off. Last year, his total volume was \$40 million. His overall career volume is over \$700 million. Jeremy has achieved this success as an individual agent, not as the head of a team of agents.

He is now one of the highest ranking RE/MAX agents in the country. His awards are numerous: Titan Club (2016, 2017); Diamond Award (2006, 2011, 2012, 2015); Circle of Legends (2013); Chairman Club (2003, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014); No. 1 RE/MAX Individual Agent in Maryland (2003, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017); No. 1 RE/MAX Individual Agent in Central Atlantic Region (2006, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2016); and one which he is especially proud of, the Good Neighbor Award from the National Association of Realtors® (2018).

When dealing with challenges, Jeremy often reflects on one of his favorite quotes by Henry Ford: "Don't find fault, find a remedy." He says he frequently ran into obstacles while running his own landscaping business. "I learned not to worry about the problem, just to find the solution," he explains. "Think very simply, not complicated. Don't be afraid of hard work and the time it takes to do it right. Taking this strategy into real estate made the work significantly smoother."

He recommends that new agents take a marketing seminar on how to brand themselves and stand out from others. He also said one of the essential tools to promote yourself is a professional website, but make sure it is user-friendly and straightforward. "The best advice I can give to up-and-coming agents is to find a niche in this over-saturated business and work on specializing in that niche. It is tough to simply be a generic agent these days," he adds.

As Jeremy reflects on his career, he says he would like to be remembered for doing great things in the community and for being a good businessman who treated others fairly. "A lot of times I see new agents getting stomped on by agents who have been in the business for a long time, and it just makes me sick to watch it," he expresses. "I would never do that to anybody or make them feel bad about what they're doing."

Jeremy says that meeting new people every day and building camaraderie with his sphere of influence is one of the most rewarding parts of his business. "What's important to me now is the enjoyment I get out of giving back to my community and being able to make a comfortable living at something I truly enjoy doing."

Jeremy has discovered that spreading KINDness is contagious — and even a little goes a long way.



Photos by Ryan Corvello Photography

"Success is finding the proper balance between work, play, and free time," he says.





Michaels Title & Escrow is a full-service title company proudly offering real estate closing services in MD, DC and VA.

Celebrating 10 years!




WHY DC METRO REAL PRODUCERS CLOSE WITH MICHAELS TITLE?

- ▶ Seasoned International Settlement Team. We speak Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Hebrew, Korean, Mandarin Chinese and Taiwanese.
- ▶ Boutique Service
- ▶ Jill Pogach Michaels, Esq. is an award-winning woman owned small business.
- ▶ Settlements conducted in MD, DC & VA.

170 Rollins Ave, 1st Floor, Rockville, MD 20852
240-425-0008 | www.michaelstitle.com

Why US Inspect?

In addition to our team's more than 250 combined years of experience in the industry, our guaranteed inspections with 24 hours' notice, and our easy to use agent dashboard for scheduling – we offer Infrared Scans at no extra charge with each inspection!

The use of Thermal Imaging Technology allows us to identify air and moisture leaks that are invisible to the naked eye, which makes our inspections one of the most thorough around!

Our goal is to protect your clients' interests by utilizing the best technology available. Our knowledgeable inspectors will provide a thorough inspection of the property and educate your clients on home maintenance and any defects found. With friendly faces, years of experience, and the best technology – why not call us today???






Get to know us here

 US Inspect or US Inspect (Maryland/DC)
  @usinspect
  @us_inspect

Our reputation is built on decades of honesty, integrity and excellent service to our customers at one of the most important decisions in their lives – **buying or selling a home.**

usinspect.com
888.USINSPECT