



Paul Massey, CEO and founder of Massey Knakal Realty Services, is "a lucky guy"

August 29, 2008 - New York City

In speaking with Paul Massey, CEO of Massey Knakal Realty Services, it's immediately clear he has a lot to be proud of. The founding partner of Massey Knakal (along with Robert Knakal) started one of the city's most prolific investment brokerage firms, which is quickly approaching its 20th anniversary. At the same time he has raised three active children along with his wife of 20 years, Gretchen, in Larchmont, N.Y. All the while Massey has served the real estate industry and the N.Y.C. greater community as a leader involved in various charitable and industry organizations.

Characteristically, Massey credits those around him and "plain old good luck" when it comes to many of his achievements. Professionally, he credits longtime partner Knakal for being "the brains of the organization," both as a top salesman and as an author of the company's operating platform and mission statement-both of which are legendary and unique in the industry. The firm solely focuses on seller representation of investment property owners and operates on a geographic territory system, linking the agents with local owners. Massey Knakal's dedication to neighborhood knowledge and relationship building is a source of continuing pride and success, evidenced by the fact that the agents have partnered with sellers throughout the five boroughs and Westchester and Nassau Counties to close over 2,000 transactions with an aggregate value of over \$8 billion since 2001.

Massey also points to partners John Ciraulo, Christy Moyle, James Nelson, Shimon Shkury, and Tom Donovan as some of the most talented sales professionals in any industry, never mind just real estate. Massey counts himself lucky to be able to come to work every day at a place like Massey Knakal, where a vision of future growth opportunities are known and understood by all 200 employees. Massey particularly gets excited about the company's recent decision to move across the Hudson River to New Jersey, a vast market the size of Brooklyn with equally amazing potential. Brooklyn is currently the firm's largest office in terms of the number of agents.

Massey was born in Boston, Mass. where he attended Roxbury Latin School. He graduated from Colgate University with a bachelor of arts degree in Economics in 1983. After graduation, Massey began his career at Coldwell Banker Commercial Real Estate Services in Midtown Manhattan as head of the market research department. He then worked as an investment sales broker before branching off with Knakal to form Massey Knakal. It's evident how much pride he has in the real estate industry as a whole. He has many close friends at other brokerage firms around town, with whom he has known and done business with for years. It's a tight-knit industry where people get along more than one would think, he said. "You have to remember that New York City is a very big place, so there is plenty of business to go around for everybody."

Massey is extremely proud of his three children. Paul "P.J." is 18, Sarah is 16 and Greta is 12. He believes that his wife's focus and discipline have more to do with their happy home than anything he

has contributed. A joy for him has been the opportunity to coach each of the kids in their local soccer league. "Without soccer, I wouldn't know nearly as many kids and parents in our town," he said. Massey didn't play soccer as a kid, so he has relied on the help of the other coaches and parents for the technical knowledge, especially the French parents. "Larchmont has a popular French school that attracts families with superior soccer skills," he said.

When it comes to affiliations, Massey's list is long. He likens his recent appointment as chairman of the Real Estate Board of New York's (REBNY) Ethics and Professional Practices Committee to working as a Maytag washing machine repairman, reminiscent of the old commercials. "REBNY president Steve Spinola runs that organization so well, there's almost nothing to do," he said.

Massey also sits on the board for a number of not-for-profits including The New York Pops, The Lower East Side Tenement Museum and the James Lenox House, an enriched elderly housing corporation. He also takes great pride in the Massey Knakal Charitable Foundation (MKCF), which makes grants to local grass roots organizations that serve children in local communities. "The MKCF self-generated itself as an offshoot of many outreach activities the firm was already undertaking," Massey said. Most Foundation board members are non-partners at Massey Knakal, which affords the partners to work on other charitable boards. One goal of the foundation is to build on an endowment that will make the organization self-perpetuating.

In his spare time Massey does have some fun hobbies. He loves to ski with his friends and family, is a black belt in Tae Kwon Do, an avid sailor and also took up boxing with some of the younger guys in the office. He spends two to three days a week at a boxing gym with a coach, who usually allows one day a week of live sparring. When asked how it feels to mix it up in the ring with his co-workers, Massey couldn't help but smile. "The younger guys usually show me some mercy," he said. "But I do get a sense that they enjoy taking a few good shots at the boss."

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540