



Katy Mortgage lender helps people come home to Katy

This informative article was paid for by Guild Mortgage.

By George Slaughter

KATY (Covering Katy News)—Richard Hardy returned home to Katy in a roundabout way, from Houston to Tennessee to the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Now he wants to help others discover the joys of homeownership here.

Hardy is a Katy High School graduate who graduated with a marketing degree from the University of Houston. His wife, Alana, was two years behind him and earned her degree from the University of Texas in Austin. This was in 2003, and she landed a position in Memphis, Tennessee, while he considered his career options there.

He was looking into going into bar and restaurant management—he had even been speaking with some recruiters about possibilities in that field—when he took another phone call.

“One of my buddies called and said, hey, there’s this job, you don’t have to have too much experience, but if you’re good at sales, you could come in and become a loan officer,” Hardy said.

It was, Hardy said, the heyday of fast and furious growth in the mortgage industry.

“Everybody and anybody could get a loan,” Hardy said. “If you could just talk, then you can probably come in and get a job in this business.”

Getting into the business is one thing, but staying is something else. He discovered he had a knack for it and was promoted into a regional position manager in a few months.

The industry began going through a consolidation in 2005. The Hardys moved to Lewisville, near Dallas, where they lived for eight years.

“I grew into management there,” Hardy said. “I learned how to work with folks on the other side of the aisle. I was really figuring out the mortgaging business.”

That knowledge would prove useful. In 2007, the subprime mortgage crisis began. Home prices plummeted, many people lost their homes, and times were rough.

“Our company was one of those that imploded,” Hardy said. He was among many managerial layoffs. The industry was changing in that people didn’t come off the street to work as lenders, as was the case in the past. Now, now training and certifications were in. Between his experience, skills, training, and certifications, Hardy rebuilt his career at Wells Fargo.

“I basically started over,” Hardy said. He was promoted again, and eventually one of his managers was looking for some help in the Houston office. Hardy seized the opportunity, and in July 2012 the Hardy family returned to Houston. Richard helped set up an office in Spring.

“It was always a goal to get back to Houston, and this was a way for me to do it,” Hardy said.

He joined Guild Mortgage last year, where he oversees the Katy office at 5415 E. 5th St.

Hardy’s title with Guild Mortgage, production manager, means that he leads his branch office and recruits candidates to work as loan officers. He also provides what he called “start-to-finish” service in helping his clients solve their home financing issues, whether it be purchasing a new home, refinancing an existing home loan, or making home improvements.

Hardy said the biggest misperception about his industry is that the mortgage loans process is a difficult one. The recent widespread damage caused by Hurricane Harvey obviously hasn’t helped matters. But homeowners and would-be homeowners have options.

“It’s not as hard or as bad as you think it is,” Hardy said. “We want to share information, and make the process as seamless as possible. It’s not as overwhelming as one might think.”

People have lots of options, he said.

“Now’s a good time to ask questions,” Hardy said.

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