



Press Release

February 13th, 2020

NextHome announces newest Virginia office

Smith's bring values-driven real estate to a luxury market in Virginia

Pleasanton, CA — February 13, 2020 — NextHome is pleased to announce the newest addition to the franchise, **NextHome 1st Choice**, based in Bracey, Virginia. The brokerage represents the ninth office location opened in Virginia for the NextHome franchise.

NextHome 1st Choice is owned by Dora and Mike Smith and, alongside well-known agent Kim Wallace, they are ready to serve the area's luxury, residential, and commercial markets.

Located near the Virginia and North Carolina border, Bracey is the closest interstate access point to Lake Gaston - an area where Dora has helped many clients find the perfect luxury home. Since the 1970s, Lake Gaston has been a popular retirement and vacation destination. Its 350 miles of shoreline attracts people from across the world, and today more than 150,000 call the area home.

Licensed in both Virginia and North Carolina, the brokerage also serves Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Lunenburg, Warren, Northampton, and Halifax counties as well as the Granville, Wake County, and the Louisburg and Raleigh areas.

Dora and Mike's first foray into real estate took place more than 20 years ago when Mike started his construction company - RCS Construction Incorporated. Mike's passion for building continued a tradition of general construction excellence in his family that had been passed down through three generations. The company works mostly in new residential construction, although the Smiths have also built some commercial properties. In his early career, Mike served his country as a Ranger in the U.S. Army and holds a hydraulic engineering degree. Dora also has a professional background in industrial engineering.

Although she was involved in the construction business, Dora knew it was wise to diversify her skill set. In 2007, she obtained her real estate license and began working with Century 21 Clary in South Hill, Virginia.

"I enjoyed the culture and the broker remains a dear friend and mentor," Dora said.

Dora continued to work for the company even after it was bought by a large, national franchise in 2016. However, the NextHome brand had already caught her eye and Dora thought that opening a NextHome brokerage would be a great choice as she grew professionally.

"At the time, NextHome had really just started and its refreshing perspective and strong culture was attractive," Dora said. "NextHome cared about people. 'Humans over Houses' wasn't just a trite expression; I could tell that the company cared about its people and its agents."

She began to look into opening her own NextHome brokerage around 2016, but life had other plans. One evening, Mike and Dora were attending a volleyball game at the University of North Carolina when Mike went into cardiac arrest.

"His heart stopped, and by some miracle we were already across the street from one of the best hospitals in the country," Dora recalled.



Although Mike recovered, his health scare prompted the career-driven couple to look carefully at their priorities and values. Sometime later, Dora's family experienced another tragedy when her brother died in a motorcycle accident.

"When something traumatic like that happens, it makes you really look around at what's important to you," Dora said.

Over the next few years, Dora prioritized caring for her husband and spending time with the couple's teenage daughter. Her focus became family and faith rather than profits and prestige.

Once their daughter graduated from high school and went to college, Dora decided the time was right to finally open her own NextHome brokerage.

NextHome 1st Choice opened in February and the NextHome difference has already caught the attention of local home buyers and sellers.

"It's the 'Humans over Houses' philosophy that sets us apart," Dora said. "For us, that isn't just a catchy phrase or marketing slogan. It's the way we have tried to conduct ourselves for years. We've been here 20 years and we have an excellent reputation because we always do our absolute best to exceed expectations. People who know us know that we will do everything within our realm of possibility to please our clients and get them what they want. They know we will go the extra mile."

Their values-based approach to business also continues to attract talented agents.

"We want to attract the right people," Dora said. "I don't want to just focus on numbers, I want to focus on quality. We would love to work with ethical agents who do the right thing when no one is looking - agents who really care about their customers and who are going to follow through."

Dora is also passionate about helping professionals in her community achieve their best potential. She has served on the Lake Gaston Chamber Board and is currently a member of the Roanoke Valley Lake Gaston Real Estate Board.

Dora and Mike will celebrate 35 years of marriage in September. They are the proud parents of their daughter Marissa, who they had the privilege of adopting when she was seven years old. An accomplished student who recently started her freshman year of college, Marissa hopes to one day build a career as a surgeon.

Please join us in congratulating Dora and Mike on the opening of NextHome 1st Choice in Bracey, Virginia!

Interested in being a part of the NextHome Real Estate Franchise? Contact VP of Sales Charis Moreno at Charis@NextHome.com.

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About NextHome, Inc.

NextHome, Inc. is an independently owned national franchisor with a focus on changing the way consumers work with local agents and shop for real estate online. The NextHome franchise network ended 2019 with 400+ offices and over 3,600 members across 46 states. The company closes over 23,000 transactions annually worth over \$6.2B in volume.

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