

Interview with Kristen McDade



Kristen McDade

When Kristen McDade started her career in real estate back in 1999, she had no idea that she was learning from a legend in the Houston industry. To her, he was just “Dad;” to everyone else, he was Bill McDade, the man who has brokered or co-brokered transactions totaling more than \$1 billion.

BY BRANDI SMITH

“I went to work with my dad at McDade Smith Gould Johnston out of necessity,” said Kristen, vice president of brokerage services at CBRE Houston. “I spent most of my life saying I would never do it, thinking that it would never work.”

Work it did. Over the years, the senior McDade helped his daughter learn how he put deals together and develop a business instinct of her own. She moved from handling marketing and listings to land research and client relations.

“I quickly developed a rapport with the brokerage community and the buyers and sellers we worked with,” Kristen said.

Still, the field was very much a “Good Ol’ Boys Club” 17 years ago when she got her start, which created an obstacle of sorts.

“A woman in real estate was more rare then,” said Kristen. “I would say to women getting into the field: ‘Be you. Be smart.

Be patient. Be honest. Be respectful. You will quickly earn the respect of the brokerage community and the clients you work with.”

As Kristen did just that, she found she enjoyed stepping up and taking on new challenges, especially when it came to brokering land deals.

“I love digging out opportunities,” she said. “It is also very rewarding to work on a tract of land with unlimited potential. Whether it becomes a mixed-use development, a specific use, etc., it’s all up to the imagination of the buyer/developer.”

One of those tracts that has Kristen fired up right now is a site in La Marque, an area experiencing a residential boom. She’s hoping to connect with a developer who’s able to visualize the potential that lies within those 44 acres.

“I can’t wait to see the project completed one day!” she said.

Despite slumping oil prices and the bite they take out of Houston, Kristen says there’s a lot to be positive about in the market right now.

“I am extremely busy, but in slightly different ways,” Kristen said. “We continue to have high-quality real estate and irreplaceable sites - I handle a few of them myself.”

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She offers the site at 22 Waugh as a prime example. The buyer closed on the property last year, creatively using the existing building, and now Kristen is handling several listings in the area, specifically the very desirable corner of Waugh Drive and D’Amico Street.

“This city will keep growing and changing,” Kristen said. “Investing in Houston is smart.” ●



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