

AS A YOUNG MAN, Tony Ashworth floundered for awhile, unsure of what he wanted to do with his life.

He tried a variety of jobs — from building houses to managing retail stores — before deciding to pursue real estate. He worked as an unlicensed assistant for a friend in 1996, hanging for-sale signs and performing other tasks. A year later, he got licensed and became a real estate agent at Coldwell Banker Burnet, where he stayed for several years.

Then RHS Realty recruited Ashworth to become the agency's president. He was still just 30 years old and single, so he decided to take a chance.

Since Ashworth took over Apple Valley-based RHS Realty in 1999, the company has grown from one office and 10 agents to five offices and 190 agents. Revenue has soared from \$634,000 in 1999 to \$10.3 million in 2005.

Ashworth attributes RHS' success to staying focused on its strongest markets (the southwest metro) and maintaining an "agent-friendly" company.

"If I have happy agents, chances are, they have happy clients because we're doing what they need," he said.

Ashworth's commitment to his agents has helped attract good employees to RHS, said Louis Olsen, president of River City Mortgage & Financial, RHS' Eagan-based parent.

"It has created a fervor of people who want to come to work here and do business with RHS Realty," Olsen said.

That recruitment edge has, in turn, helped RHS thrive even as the real estate market softened.

It is building bigger offices to replace locations in Apple Valley and Lakeville and plans to add a sixth office in a year.

Ashworth strives to stay focused on the things that matter most to him: his faith, family and friends. He tries to work just one evening a week, so he has more time to spend with his wife and two daughters, and he makes a point to never miss church or his weekly Friday night date with his wife.

He also finds time to give back in the community. He serves on the board of the HIKE Foundation, a nonprofit organization started by Minnesota Vikings center Matt Birk to help at-risk children in the Twin Cities.

## Tony Ashworth

Title/Company:  
**President, RHS Realty Inc.**

Year of birth: **1969**

Family:  
**Wife Lori, daughters  
Madelynn and Mallori**

Education:  
**Evangel University**

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