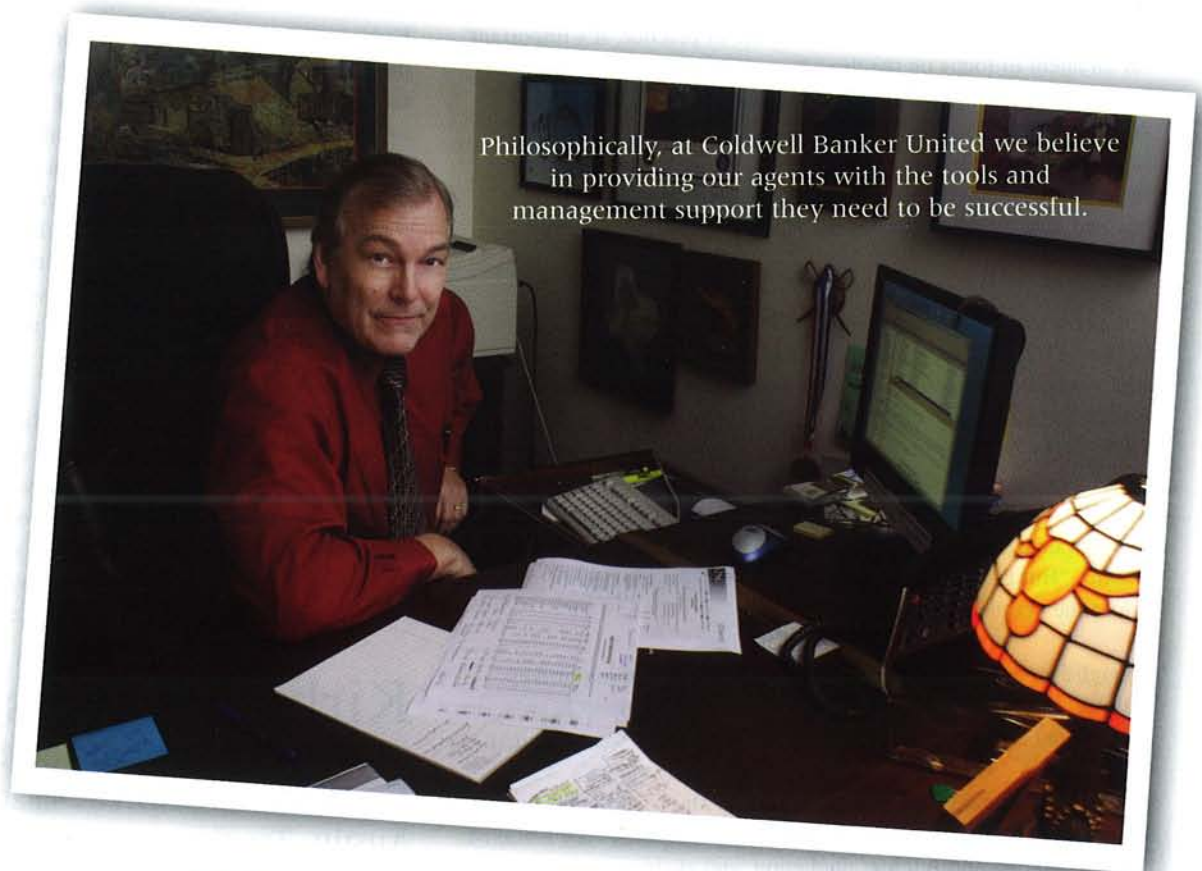




professional
profile



Philosophically, at Coldwell Banker United we believe in providing our agents with the tools and management support they need to be successful.

Kirby Parsons

by Amber Edwards - photography by Katie Jo Dixon-Blaboe

Ask agent turned vice president of Coldwell Banker United, REALTORS® Kirby Parsons what the most important lesson he's learned in over three decades spent in real estate, and the normally gregarious veteran will turn thoughtful. "Real estate is about people," he began, "the people that need help buying or selling houses and the people who devote themselves to making those transactions as painless as possible through good service."

Kirby began to shape his definition of service in 1976, when he first entered real estate with the Robert Newkirk Company in Houston. There, he gained an understanding of the commitment required of agents. "I had imagined real estate as meeting people and driving them around, you know," said Kirby. "But there was so much more to it, from prospecting to market research to coordinating the transaction. There is hardly ever a time when you shut off being a REALTOR®, it becomes that much a part of you."

In the late '70s Kirby's mother, Betty, was the top agent for McLester and Grisham, REALTORS® in his hometown of Austin. Betty convinced Kirby and Mary Battaglia, his future wife, to pursue agent positions at McLester and Grisham and move to Austin, which they did in 1979. His strong work ethic and integrity earned him the opportunity to become builder manager for two years before being named sales manager.

Kirby continued as manager through two acquisitions, first by the Henry S. Miller Company, which eventually became part of Coldwell Banker United, REALTORS®. Coldwell Banker United is the largest national franchisee of Coldwell Banker with 78 offices in seven states, and is ranked eighth in the United States, by closings. "The programs available through Coldwell Banker are extremely attractive to new and experienced agents," said Parsons. "Through our ongoing education programs and the efforts of our in-house training director, the agents receive exceptional training. Today, my ongoing focus is to provide the agents with the best tools and support possible to ensure their greater success."

Kirby's branch office in Suburban Northwest Austin is home to more than 60 agents in more than one sense of the word. "Our office is truly a family. There are many firms where agents are loosely affiliated with one another, but we make it a point to work hard and play hard as a team. We share the successes and challenges of our lives with one another and together reaffirm on a daily basis the reason we are here—to improve the quality of life for our clients through great service."

When visiting with a potential new agent, Kirby considers a number of criteria starting with attitude. "I always let them know that I need their best attitude and their best effort, which is

fundamental to their success. As a matter of practice, it's important for an agent to focus on the three Ps—prospecting, participation and productivity—for themselves and the company.” Parsons continues, “Philosophically, at Coldwell Banker United we believe in providing our agents with the tools and management support they need to be successful beginning with a respected brand name coupled with training, current market information, marketing and technology.”

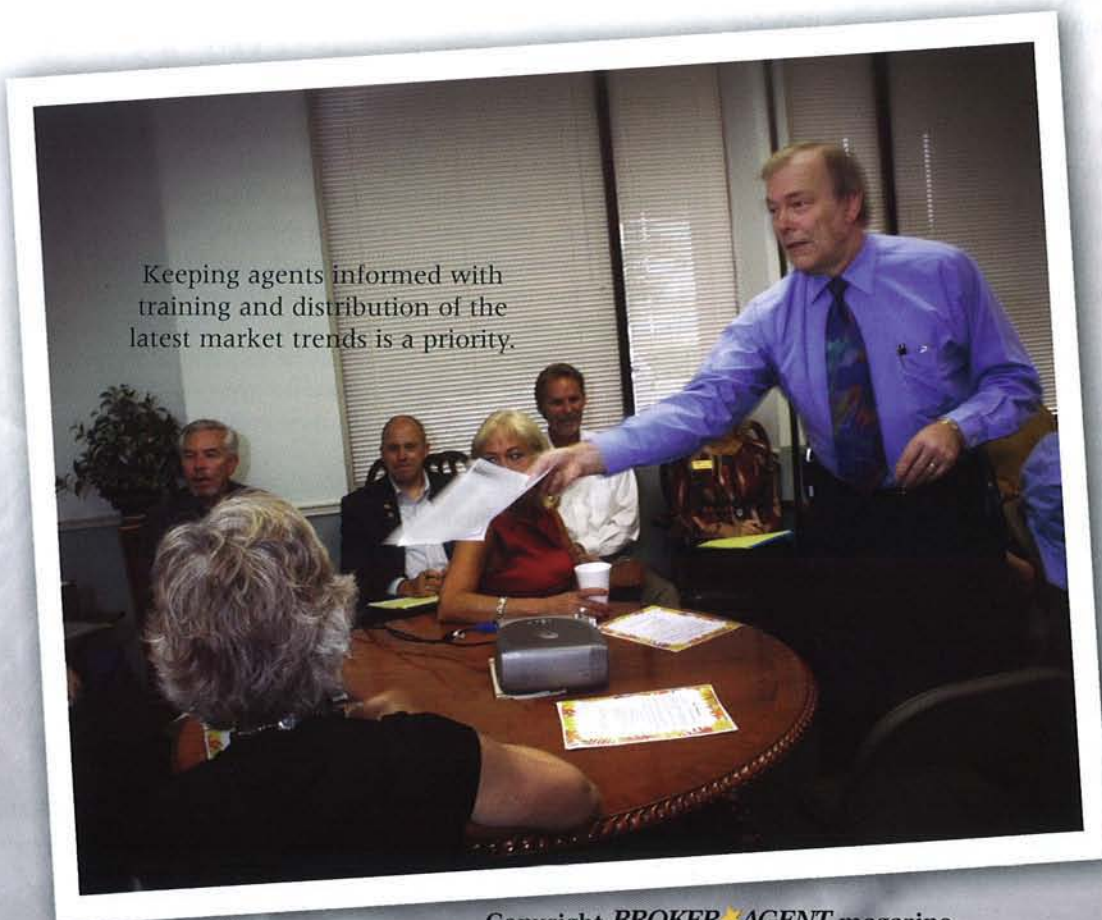
The participation element is also reflected in the extensive efforts of Coldwell Banker United in the community. Company agents and staff are involved in over 65 local organizations including the American Cancer Society to which the company gave over \$275,000 in 2008 for breast cancer research. For agent Jeff Dillard, the dedication to helping others is a big reason for his affiliation with Coldwell Banker. “In real estate there is sometimes the idea of an agent being out for himself, like a used car salesman,” said Dillard. “But this company goes to great lengths to show that it values the people in this community.”

Though Parsons has no time or desire to be a competing broker with his agents, his track record of guidance and support is an inspiration to his team. Broker-associate Don Crow was recruited by Parsons in 1981. “Kirby is an amazing manager—he’s knowledgeable, fair, motivating and just an all-around good guy.” Dillard agreed. “Kirby knows the business well; he is very involved with technology and Internet marketing, and gives you current information you can really sink your teeth into. You can understand why we all feel we are in such good hands.”

Kirby has also given his time to the industry, first as MLS president then as president of the Austin Board of REALTORS®. He also served as a National Association of REALTORS® director, and was recognized by the Austin Board as their REALTOR® of the Year in 2000. Kirby is a family man both in and out of his office. He and his longtime wife, Mary “B,” a successful agent with Coldwell Banker United, share a love of traveling, the outdoors and spending time with their son, Shawn, who is in the Mays Business School at A&M. “I’m so fortunate to have wonderful agents and a job that I love along with a great family to go with it; you just can’t beat that.”

As his passion for life continues to blaze, Parsons has no trouble identifying ways to improve the lives of those around him. “I intend to continue to grow our team, help my existing agents achieve greater success, and work with them to deliver exceptional service to our clients. I’m never content to sit still and I try to pass that desire to grow to the agents. The moment we think we are good enough is the moment we lose a chance at being great.” ★

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Keeping agents informed with training and distribution of the latest market trends is a priority.

