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Jeff Hauptman, president The Oxford Co., Ann Arbor

Posted by [Greg Migliore](#) | [Ann Arbor Business Review](#) October 18, 2007 02:05AM

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He was nearly Dr. Jeff Hauptman.

The founder and president of one of Ann Arbor's largest property companies slogged through a year and a half of pre-med studies at the University of Michigan before he realized he was more interested in bodies of land than the human body.

Hauptman shifted gears quickly, cutting his teeth working for the Dietz Organization while still in college. He also founded Corporate Interiors Construction at age 22; it later became Oxford's design and building division.

He worked his way into the Ann Arbor commercial real estate network, starting with Swisher Commercial in 1993. After making partner, he left the firm in 2002 to focus on his growing business with Oxford.

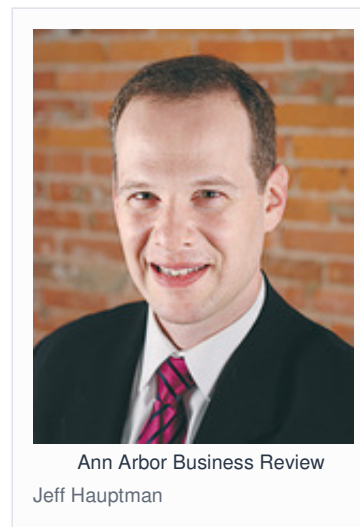
Today the firm has about 880,000 square feet under management, and recently expanded beyond its Ann Arbor stronghold by buying three buildings in Livingston County as part of a five-site, \$7.13 million deal.

At 37, Hauptman has crammed a career's worth of deals into less than two decades of work. But he said he's not ready to rest.

"There's always challenges," he said. "If there's not always challenges - then you're becoming complacent."

To that end, Hauptman teamed with former Grubb & Ellis broker Neal Warling in 2005. The two Ann Arbor dealmakers combined Oxford's brokerage operations with Warling's commercial real estate client list to form Bluestone Realty Advisors.

That firm is led by Warling, and Hauptman serves as chief financial officer. It



Background

Education: Bachelor's degree, the University of Michigan.

Family: Wife Catherine, daughter Charlotte, son Jack.

Residence: Ann Arbor

oversees the sale and leasing of more than 3 million square feet in Southeast Michigan.

Hauptman said Bluestone has been one of his more satisfying ventures because of the immediate recognition the firm has gained in the real estate community.

"People thought that Bluestone has been around forever, and that was a very good feeling," he said.

Though Hauptman is quick to point out he's always looking for the next test, his life has become fuller as he's matured.

Real estate is still important, but the father of two has tried to curtail his former marathon work habits and is now focusing on family life. To that end, he bought the former home of Fielding Yost, the legendary U-M football coach who guided the Wolverines to a victory in the first Rose Bowl in 1901.

Hauptman moved into the home in April 2006 after two years of work and is putting the finishing touches on it.

"It's been a long project," he said. "It's a great challenge because this is a historic house."

Like his career, the house is a work in progress, and he has ambitious plans for both. Though he's reluctant to admit it, Hauptman is satisfied with the way things have worked out so far.

Because as he put it, "I always thought I was going to be a doctor."

INSIGHTS

Guiding principle: Always do what you say you will do.

Best way to keep competitive edge: Don't stop learning.

How to motivate people: Find great people and never stop challenging them.

Mentors: I have had many great influences in my life, but the mentors that have had the most impact on me would be my parents.

Measure of success: How happy are you?

Next goal: Acquisition of a major property or portfolio.

CONFESSIONS

Best career decision: Dropping pre-med for real estate.

Worst career decision: Not dropping pre-med sooner.

What keeps you up at night: Vacant space and toddlers.

Guilty pleasure: Scotch night, "The Simpsons" and sugar.

Something most people don't know about me: I collect U-M yearbooks - over 120 so far.

TREASURES

Person most interested in meeting: Sam Zell, Fielding Yost.

Favorite Book: "Confederacy of Dunces."

Favorite movie: "Fifth Element"

Favorite restaurant: Home - my wife is a fantastic cook.

Vacation spot: Home.

Favorite music: Swing.

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