

The Story of DMB, Inc.

Written by Written by: Melissa Larsen / Photographed by Cassandra Tomei
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What started as a chance meeting by three strangers has turned into a thriving company with nearly three decades of decking the Valley with its long list of high-end residential communities and commercial projects.



In the 1980's three men by the names of Drew Brown, Mark Sklar and Bennett Dorrance met by chance. What would happen next would change the way people live, work and play in the Valley for years to come. "Drew, Mark and Bennett didn't know each other early in their adult lives," says Charley Freericks, the newly named president of DMB Associates, Inc. "They decided they should strike out for Arizona and what looked like a great opportunity to be a part of an emerging city. They had a lot of shared values and philosophical approaches...and thought they should make a real estate development company. They wanted to do good work and focus on values that they shared: work ethic, integrity, doing the right thing and having fun." The result was Scottsdale's DMB Associates, Inc., a real estate development firm with residential and commercial projects throughout Arizona, as well as Hawaii, California and Utah, founded in 1984.



If DMB sounds unfamiliar, a project from its mighty portfolio is sure to ring a bell: the live-work-play communities of DC Ranch, Power Ranch, Silverleaf, Verrado, Marley Park and the emerging Eastmark (all located in the Valley) as well as California's Martis Camp and Hawaii's Kukui'u'ula, to name a few. Commercially, DMB is responsible for One Scottsdale and Centerpoint on Mill, among others. Even through the trying recession, Freericks says that DMB has been able to thrive because it focuses its energy on community development, keeps strong relationships with its land owners and has a properly structured business plan that can succeed through certain cycles.

However, keeping adrift during trying times isn't the crowning achievement of DMB. For Freericks, he is most proud of the people he gets to work with each day. "We have some of the best and brightest talent in the industry," he says. "They do great things in the community and are a great team of people." And it is the DMB team that has made the Scottsdale company even bigger and better than the trio of founders imagined nearly 28 years ago. "And yet, [the founders] committed for years to find a company that outlives their time," Freericks says.



So what's next for DMB? Though the company has successful projects in California, Hawaii and Utah, there truly is no place like home. "We continue to look outside of Arizona but, for one reason or another, we always find ourselves in our backyard," Freericks says. He cites One Scottsdale and the redevelopment of Centerpoint on Mill as ongoing, and says DMB will focus on infill and small, more urban properties locally.

Easy Being Green Apart from creating quality properties, sustainability is a huge benchmark for DMB. And according to Freericks, being eco-minded and a good business person goes hand in hand. "We have always been unashamed that we are a business and we are profit-seekers," he says. "We really take salvaging plants very seriously—not just because it is the right thing to do but because it is appropriate for the location and economic." For example, much of the DC Ranch and Verrado communities are landscaped with rock and desert materials salvaged from the site. Not only is this practice eco-friendly and promoting native species of plant life, but it saves in purchasing and transporting rock and plants from elsewhere and paying to ship extricated material off-site. As a bonus, DMB lessens its carbon footprint.



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Through the Years:

A DMB Timeline

1984: DMB Associates, Inc. is founded by Drew Brown, Mark Sklar and Bennett Dorrance.
1988: The commercial development of Centerpoint on Mill begins in Tempe. |
1995: DMB starts work on DC Ranch in Scottsdale. The master-planned community will go on to sell nearly 4,000 lots and units combined.
1996: The company heads west, partnering to build Ladera Ranch in Orange County and Lahontan in Truckee, Calif. Forest Highlands is underway in Flagstaff as well as Power Ranch in Gilbert.
1997: DMB Realty is launched.
2001: Back in the Valley, Marley Park opens in Surprise. Santaluz begins sales in San Diego, Calif.
2002: Glenwild is in progress in Park City, Utah, and Silverleaf launches in Scottsdale.
2004: Verrado, DMB's iconic small-town community in the West Valley, debuts.
2005: The luxury community of Martis Camp is proceeding in Truckee, Calif.
2007: The idyllic community of Kukui`ula begins development in Hawaii.
2011: Eastmark, with 15,000 units planned on 3,200 acres, is underway in Mesa.
2012: Starting with only three, DMB now has more than 1,000 employees (including DMB Corporate and its affiliated companies including The Village Clubs, golf clubs and spas).