



Willie Miranda

Capital Region Mentor

COVER STORY

By Jenna Caputo

Photos by Super Source Media

Willie Miranda is always moving, always learning, always teaching and always looking for ways to give back. He knows that there are ways to improve not only your own life, but others' lives as well, and he constantly strives to be a guiding force for others, even while advancing his own business.

Growing up, Willie enjoyed hanging out with his friends and playing various sports. But he was a born entrepreneur and quickly started small businesses for himself on the side, like having his own newspaper route and landscaping work, among others. He graduated from SUNY Oneonta with a degree in Business, Economics and Finance.

Deciding to follow his dream to become a New York State Trooper, he passed the written and physical exams, but they weren't hiring for at least another six months, and he needed to work. So he completed his insurance license and began selling insurance instead. After a few years, he opened his own agency – Miranda Insurance Agency, Inc., a franchise of Allstate. Knowing that Clifton Park was an open area, he decided to base the office and move his family to the town of Clifton Park so they could work, live and raise a family all in the same community.

Willie met his wife Shari during ninth grade when they both attended Mont Pleasant High School. They were friends throughout high school but never started dating until their first year in college. "The rest is history," he says.



They have now been married for 25 years and have two daughters – Christine (22) and Julia (19). Shari is a second-grade teacher for the Schenectady City School District.

Unfortunately, both girls were diagnosed with Lupus at different times in their lives. They had been to numerous places trying to find answers but no one could tell them what was wrong. Finally, they ended up at the Bernard and Millie Duker Children’s Hospital at Albany Medical Center and within four hours they had a preliminary diagnosis. After testing for a few days, they had a definite diagnosis and instantly began treatment.

“The care we received for both of our daughters was exceptional,” says Willie. “We were given the correct information and each staff member kept us in the loop throughout the whole process. The doctors are amazing. They seek out other professionals in other parts of the country to collaborate and confirm the diagnosis and treatment. All of the departments work cohesively helping treat their patients. No one ever wants to bring their child to a hospital; it’s probably the scariest thing that can happen to your family. However, the doctors, nurses and staff took such great care of both of our girls. The plan of action was explained in terms we could understand, as we are both not in the medical field, and everyone was on board. When you encounter a situation like this in your life, you want to have the right people in your corner to help navigate the journey – that’s what The Children’s Hospital did for us.”

The Mirandas were so grateful for their experience at The Children’s Hospital that every year they hold a golf tournament to raise money to benefit the Bernard & Millie Duker Children’s Hospital at Albany Medical Center. This year will be the 14th year of the tournament and is open for all to attend. They have raised almost \$300,000 for the hospital to date and are looking forward to building that

number every year. The day includes a round of golf, lunch and drinks, as well as dinner and raffles.

The girls are now doing well. When they were in school, Willie coached Christine in basketball and soccer. He coached Julia’s softball team as well. Christine graduated in May from Bentley University with a degree in Corporate Financing and Accounting, and Julia just finished her freshman year at Sacred Heart University, where she is studying nursing.

Never one to become complacent, Willie is constantly looking for ways to improve his business. He always listens to his customers and their needs to see what he can do to help – even if it means starting a new business. “I met a customer who told me they had a bad experience with a real estate agent,” he says. “In fact, they had wished I was their agent. So, I took it to heart, got my license and learned all I could in the real estate industry. I opened Miranda Real Estate Group, Inc. in 2002.”

His brother, Brian, came on as his General Manager and has been working with Willie for the past 13 years. Together they built the business up and are now the #1 independent brokerage based in The Capital District. Willie’s hard work has paid off, earning him numerous awards over the years, including Albany Business Review’s, “Forty Under 40” and “Best Places to Work,” as well as the Craig Proctor “Quantum Leap Award” and “The Official 2018 People’s Choice Awards Best of the Best Real Estate Company.”

His favorite part of his job, though, is mentoring. He coaches and masterminds with agents all across the country,

not just in his own office, to help them take their own businesses to the next level. "The goal is always to help people keep growing and stay ahead of their competition," says Willie.

In addition to his mastermind group, Willie is also a teacher at the Manfred Real Estate School. "I feel it's so important to give back to the real estate community," he says. "I am so thankful for the mentors who have helped me along the way, so I want to make sure I am giving back to those who are just starting out in this business."

Giving back is important to Willie and something he instills in his businesses as well. "I always tell my agents each year, 'We want to make more money, have more fun and give more back!' It's imperative that you give back to your community and those that have supported you." In addition to the annual fundraiser for The Children's Hospital, they have also supported many other local charities and organizations throughout the year.

Willie works hard between running his businesses, mentoring other agents, charitable work and his family, but he knows that to be successful, you must always keep learning and keep improving yourself to stay ahead of the game. "I started my business from the ground up," Willie says. "Nothing was ever handed to me. I had to work hard, surround myself with good people, put in the time and money, but I never gave up. This has helped me lead a successful life; however, I have never forgotten where I came from."



Now that the girls are in college, Willie and Shari enjoy spending time with their family and friends, visiting the kids at school, watching Christine's rugby team, and in their off time, golfing, traveling and staying active by skiing or hiking. They enjoy hitting up all the local restaurants and can often be found at 677 Prime or Pasta Pane and Wheatfields.

Willie's favorite quote in life actually came to him when he was eating out at a Chinese restaurant with his family. The fortune in his cookie that night read, *The Road to Success is ALWAYS Under Construction*. "This quote has always resonated with me and it's how I run my business. You never really reach success, it's always something you keep striving

for," he says. And Willie strives every day to not only reach for success for his own family but to help others reach for it as well.

For more information about The Children's Hospital Golf Tournament or to see how you could help, visit www.MirandaGolfEvent.com.

For more information about Miranda Insurance Agency or Miranda Real Estate Group, Inc., visit www.WillieMiranda.com or agents.allstate.com/willie-miranda-jr-clifton-park-ny.html. ■

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