



North American Hardware and Paint Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Entrepreneur Receives 2024 Young Retailer of the Year Award

INDIANAPOLIS—Tyler Garrett, president, CEO and co-owner of Moscow and Pullman Building Supply (MPBS) in Idaho and Washington, was recently named one of the independent home improvement industry's 2024 Young Retailer of the Year honorees by the North American Hardware and Paint Association (NHPA).

The Young Retailer of the Year program, now in its 28th year, identifies and promotes the next generation of aspiring independent home improvement, paint and decorating retailers. It recognizes individual achievement by industry retailers age 35 and younger throughout the U.S. and Canada. Selected from three separate retail categories, honorees are chosen based on a number of criteria, including professional milestones, community engagement, continuing hardware industry education and extracurricular activities.

Sponsors of the 2024 Young Retailer of the Year program include: American Hardware and Lumber Insurance (AHLI), Arrow Fastener, Intertape Polymer Group (IPG), Midwest Fastener, Pony Jorgensen, PPG and The Wooster Brush Company.

"The Young Retailer of the Year program highlights the bright future of the independent channel," says Scott Wright, executive director of advanced retail education programs for NHPA. "It is a privilege to recognize these outstanding young retailers who are making positive impacts in their operations and communities."

Tyler is a third-generation owner of MPBS, and while he grew up helping his father Pat Garrett in the business, he didn't immediately join the operation when he finished high school.

Instead, Tyler took business economics classes at the local college before getting a full-time job in commercial construction. A phone call from his father in late 2010 put his future with the family business into perspective.

"I was driving back from a job about three hours away, when my dad called," Tyler says. "It was a Friday afternoon, and he said, 'I need to have a serious conversation with you.'"

Tyler met with Pat later that evening and the conversation changed Tyler's future.

"My dad says, 'I don't have a good way of saying this, but somebody walked in today and offered to buy the business, and I didn't have a good answer for him. I didn't know where you stand. Do you want to come back to



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the store or are you happy doing something else? If you aren't coming back, I'm going to sell," Tyler says. "I said, 'No, I want to come back. That's what I've always planned on doing.'"

In December of that year, Tyler returned to work at Moscow Building Supply, working in the contractor sales division, running the inside sales desk and learning the POS system. When an outside sales role opened, he transitioned into that role.

Two years into his return to the family business, Tyler and Pat started the conversation about expanding their Pullman facility. When a plan for Lowe's to come into the community fell through, they took the opportunity to start the research to make their idea a reality. They met with other retailers who had success operating pro-focused home centers and crafted an aggressive plan to go after more of the home improvement market in Pullman.

The new building was an important project that required Tyler's full attention, so he transitioned out of his outside sales position and focused on handling all of the facility design management for the new Pullman Building Supply. Tyler's previous experience in commercial construction paid big dividends as he worked tirelessly for two years with architects, engineers and merchandisers to bring the new store to fruition. He was onsite every day managing the project.

When the new Pullman Building Supply opened in 2015, it immediately became the second-largest retailer in town (second only to Walmart). The entire building spanned 165,000 square feet with 40,000 devoted to retail; the rest of the structure housed a covered drive-through lumber facility and warehouse.

Tyler had designed a full-service home center that was a huge upgrade for the Pullman market. But he didn't just include items typically found in a lumber yard. He also included niche categories, like higher-end housewares and giftware. During the holidays, they have a huge selection of Christmas trees on display. Due to the lack of many clothing retailers in town, Tyler added a full apparel area with Carhartt clothes. He also added a full nursery with live plants and green goods. The nursery continues to be a big hit with customers. Between the two stores, MPBS sold more than \$1 million in green goods in 2022 alone.

Sales for MPBS climbed by \$3.1 million in 2015, a 12% increase from the previous year. Total transaction count rose by 50,000, a 20% increase. In 2016, the first full year the new Pullman store was open, the company topped \$30 million in sales for the first time since its founding in 1958.

At just 25 years old, Tyler took over as general manager for the Pullman location.

"I didn't want to walk into something without earning it," says Tyler. "I never thought I deserved anything here just because I was the owner's kid. I've always had the attitude that I have to earn it and prove myself. We have



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a lot of staff here that have seen me grow up, and they've seen me work my way up. I'm not afraid of hard work. I think anybody who knows me would say that I busted my butt to get to where I'm at."

Shortly after the Pullman store opened, the Moscow location lost its general manager, so Tyler served in the role for both. As he oversaw operations at both locations and helped find a replacement for the manager in Moscow, he continued to keep the business on a trajectory of growth. Sales increased another \$3.2 million in 2017, an 11% increase, and Tyler was promoted to vice president of operations.

In 2018, Pat started the ownership transition process with Tyler and his sister Katie, the company's chief financial officer. In 2019, Tyler became the majority owner. As a testament to Tyler's management skills and the respect he had earned from the staff, everyone on the team stayed on when Tyler took over.

"We've always been a pretty tight-knit, family-owned company, so it's always been in our blood to have a lot of long-term employees," Tyler says. "We have tremendous longevity on our team, and we emphasize career development. We have a lot of people who started as cashiers or yard workers, and now they run and manage stores or are part of our management structure. We do a lot of promoting from within and grooming employees for future growth. That's a big thing for us."

Tyler has continued to deliver an impressive record of growth since he took over as owner. He has grown sales at MPBS by \$18.3 million to nearly \$55 million in 2023, an increase of more than 50%.

Continued growth is on the horizon for the business, as Tyler is currently planning an expansion for the Moscow location. He is exploring buying more land and creating more space for more of the products customers want. The Moscow store accounts for about two-thirds of the company's sales. He plans to add areas that have been successful in Pullman, particularly the addition of their flooring design center, where they both sell and install flooring.

Tyler and the MPBS team prioritize giving back to the local communities, including donating \$50,000 to the local ice rink to invest in remodeling. The company also supports local 4H events and Habitat for Humanity, including a recent \$20,000 donation of windows in partnership with Andersen Windows.

Tyler also lends time when he can to help several advisory boards he is a part of in the area, such as the Chambers of Commerce in Pullman and Moscow and the North Idaho Zions Bank.

Looking ahead to the future, Tyler says with new residents coming into the communities from the West Coast, there is stable economic growth. Combined with the universities in each town, Tyler anticipates the business will be up between 5% to 8% over the next few years, well above industry projections.



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In addition, he's looking forward to seeing his two young sons, who are 5 and 8 years old, get more involved in the operation. Tyler says he will let them make their own life plans just as his father did for him, but his elder son is at the age he was when he started working in the business.

"My eight-year-old already comes in and says, 'Dad, I saw something in the store you need to go work on,'" Tyler says. "It's fun to think about them working around the store like I did. When those boys are here sweeping the floors, picking up sawdust or sorting 2x4s, it'll definitely be a proud moment."

"Receiving this award is a profound honor, but it's important to note that such recognition is not solely a reflection of my individual achievements. This award is a testament to the collective success of MPBS, including my mentors, colleagues and the team that surrounds me," Tyler says. "When acknowledgment comes my way, I see it as an opportunity to express gratitude to all who have contributed to our achievements and I am excited to share this moment, this story of success, with my team."

The 2024 Young Retailer of the Year honorees will be recognized in a ceremony at the 2024 Independent Home Improvement Conference in Marco Island, Florida, on Aug. 28. For more information on the awards program, honorees and more, visit YourNHPA.org/yroty.

About the North American Hardware and Paint Association

Founded in 1900 by a group of retailers, NHPA is a not-for-profit trade association whose mission is to help home improvement, paint and decorating outlets in the U.S. and Canada become better and more profitable retailers. Governed by a board of independent hardware and paint retailers, NHPA fulfills its mission by providing how-to management resources, product discovery, training programs and networking opportunities for the industry it serves. Learn more at YourNHPA.org.

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