

## PROFILE

BY CHRISTOPHER SHEFFIELD

ALAN HOWELL | MBJ

Jay Healy has had two passions in life: music and money.

He spent the first 15 years of his professional career pursuing the former, climbing the ranks to become an engineer and record producer at one of the top recording studios in New York City.

For the last eight years he's been applying the same deft touch as a money manager.

Healy's firm, Century Wealth Management, was recently named by Financial Planning magazine as the second fastest-growing firm in the U.S. in the Under \$100 million category. Wealth Manager magazine also recently put the firm 35th out of the top 500 firms nationwide based on average client size. Next month, he's expected to be named one of Worth magazine's top advisers.

It's been an interesting journey for a New Jersey boy who lost both his parents by age 6 and was raised by his single, maternal grandmother.

By the time he was a young teen he was taking care of his grandmother.

"As a teenager, I grew up fast," Healy says.

In high school Healy found time to play drums in a couple of bands; he also could tap out a few chords on the keyboard. Music was already a big part of his life, an escape from premature responsibilities.

Though he entered Houghton College as a pre-seminary student, Healy says once at college his true self came out.

"If I was honest with myself, from the age of 12 I wanted to be a record producer," he says.

He later transitioned to communi-



### Jay Healy

President, Century Wealth Management

**Age:** 45

**Family:** Wife, Regina, children, Celia, 13, Francesca 10, Ian 8

**Education:** Houghton College

**Hobbies:** Travel, running, golf

**Community:** Chairman RISE Foundation; board member, Financial Planning Association of the Mid-South

**Favorite quote:** "Do or do not; there is no try." — Yoda, Jedi Master

## Sounds of success

Healy leaves career as music producer to pursue second passion — managing money

cations and "majored in the radio station," he says. Short on money, Healy left college and began trying to break into a studio.

By pure determination he landed a job as an unpaid intern at the newest and most up-to-date studio in Jersey. The studio attracted talent from the best studios in New York who came there to work on side projects.

Some of that talent came from the one studio Healy had specifically set his sights on, The Hit Factory. He eventually parlayed his connections into a receptionist job. Over time, Healy started to get noticed.

"Every time they gave me a shot at moving up the ladder, I moved up a rung and a half," he says.

After achieving success as an engineer working with artists REM, Billy

**'Every time they gave me a shot at moving up the ladder, I moved up a rung and a half.'**

Joel and John Mellencamp, he moved on to producing, where his success was more modest. His biggest hit was producing the 1997 album "Secret Samadhi" for the group Live, which topped out at double platinum.

Healy's modest success in the music business, where he was now making a comfortable six figure income, had

given him the resources to test his own investment acumen. It was a skill that was all self taught through observation and reading.

“Stereo Review, Rolling Stone and Money magazine, those were the three magazines I subscribed to as a young adult,” he says.

In 1998, Healy got the opportunity to manage money for his father-in-law, who had recently sold the family business and needed someone to help manage the investments.

By 2000, Healy left music and decided to try money management full-time.

The goal was to build a firm with a high end, institutional approach with access to funds and money managers not available to many retail clients. He also wanted a transparent fee structure and a platform with conflict-free

advice. The first five years, Century Wealth Management’s clients were largely friends and family; two years ago he began taking on outside clients.

One of the first was Dave Nelson, former president of AIMS Logistics, Inc.

Nelson, who sold the business last October to U.S. Bank, found Healy by way of a mutual friend. They connected almost immediately. Nelson liked Healy’s small office and focus on just a handful of high net worth individuals.

“What I liked about it is he doesn’t try to mass market himself,” Nelson says. “He deals with a small number of clients, but it’s some very ‘who’s who’ clients in the Memphis area.”

Also appealing was Healy’s holistic

approach of addressing estate planning, tax management and charitable giving.

After working from a home office for almost eight years, Healy moved into an office last fall and hired his first employee.

As an engineer, Healy had to combine technical skills with a creative flair. He’s found that being a money manager requires the same skills.

“Client relationships are very right brain. That’s the soft side,” he says. “Especially when talking about how to make an impact on the community with money. That requires real client-centered communications. At same time, implementing that requires a left brain bent.”

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