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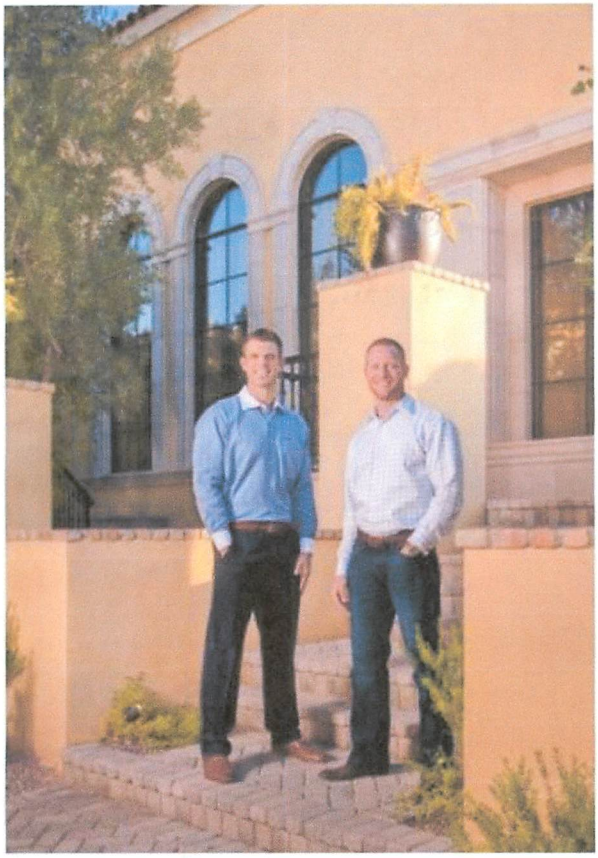
East Valley duo carves out niche in housing industry



Tanner Luster, Nathan Day

Tanner Luster, left, and Nathan Day met when they both moved to the Agritopia neighborhood in Gilbert. The two have since built a business partnership focused on housing. [Submitted]

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By **Stacie Spring**, Tribune | **0 comments**

By pricing their energy-efficient homes aggressively, two East Valley men have developed a business partnership in combination with their friendship.

"Tanner and I met when we lived in the same community," said Nathan Day, 29, the president of Sterling Collection Development Group, a housing developer.

Both Day and Tanner Luster, 29, a home builder and owner of Luster Custom Homes, were unmarried at the time, but when their eventual wives hit it off, the two families retained their friendship despite moving to new homes.

Day moved to Agritopia in Gilbert with his wife Amaris and their two daughters, Lola, 2, and Thalia, 4 months. Luster settled in Chandler with his wife Tess and their 7-month-old son Cash.

Their friendship developed into partnerships, which involved real estate ventures, Luster said.

"It's been great working together," Day said. "We come from diverse backgrounds. I come from a financial background."

Day handles the marketing research and financial backing while Luster manages the physical construction of the homes, Day said.

Since beginning last November, the development has sold more than $7 million in real estate.

The two began building homes at Sterling at Silverleaf, a community of 16 villas in Scottsdale.

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"We wanted to get ahead of the market," Day said. "We wanted to get buyers out of the real estate snafu and get them to see the value of what they're buying. "

The luxury homes, designed by architect Bing Hu, start at $1.36 million and have been awarded gold-level certification by the National Association of Homebuilders green building program, NAHBGreen.

"We think it was the opportune time," said Luster. "A lot of people worried about sitting on the sidelines."

Their solution to getting into the housing boom early was to install new amenities, such as the latest features and green technologies. The homes have Crestron home automation systems operated by iPads, Isokern full masonry fireplaces, Trane FreshEffects air filtration systems and Wolf and Sub-Zero appliances.

"It's a new generation of home building," said Luster.

By building homes efficiently, it can lower utility costs and air filters improve indoor air quality, which translates to the greener homes many people are looking for, he said.

"Home building is an industry that uses really antiquated technologies," Luster said. "By building the most well-equipped homes, they're homes for the future."

Homes at Sterling at Silverleaf, Luster said, appraise for 9 percent to 15 percent higher than similar homes without the same amenities.

The two will finish the first phase of the development by March, with construction underway for two of the remaining four homes of the 16-home first phase.

Despite lingering feelings about the economy, it appears that the luxury custom homes niche is reviving.

Sellout for the Sterling homes is expected by the end of the year and the planning of phase two has begun.

The homes feature a Mediterranean design and a combination of Italian Renaissance and Spanish Revival architecture. Instead of the typical backyards, the villas have courtyards with mountain and city views.

"They're more suited for the empty nester," Day said. "It's low maintenance with a small backyard."

The courtyard is great for entertaining, Day said.

The two plan to continue their partnership as they build more homes at Sterling at Silverleaf.

To view additional information about the homes, visit www.sterlingatsilverleaf.com.

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