

Taking home sales high-tech

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Bulletin Staff

Jay McHugh, a West Roxbury resident and a successful realtor, chartered out on his own a year ago to become a franchise owner of a high-tech real estate agency in Brookline.

McHugh, 38, and his business partner, Elias Papadopolous opened Re/Max Unlimited, a real estate agency at 420 Harvard St. in Brookline and said his Brookline-based business is booming.

"Last year we sold over \$24 million worth of property. We began with four agents and we currently have seven with a goal of 25 by the end of August," McHugh said. "Between myself and Elias, we have taken a plan of attack (for 2006)."

When scouting properties, McHugh and Papadopolous were looking for a place they could comfortably bring buyers and sellers together in a high tech facility. They found what they were looking for in the former Khfoury Funeral Home.

The funeral home was a dated and tired looking building, according to McHugh, but they saw opportunity and created a contemporary work environment.



The new Re/Max Unlimited opened in a former funeral home



Reception area to the high-tech real estate firm.

"We have transformed an old funeral parlor into this gorgeous state-of-the-art hi-fi wireless real estate operation with parking and conference rooms," McHugh said. "It's just a real special place for us as brokers to come to work and increase our business and to make sure the business is set for a long term growth. We wanted to make sure when brokers join our office, they'd want to be here for a long period of time."

Re/Max Unlimited, a four-floor facility, is fully equipped with wireless capabilities.

"Wireless Internet enables our agents to be anywhere inside our building and be able

to surf the Net for listings," Papadopolous said. "Plans are underway for a roof deck patio area that will enable us to meet with our clients in a more relaxed outdoor setting. We are also working on an indoor lounge area for our clients and agents, which will feature a state-of-the-art Viking kitchen."

With help from Re/Max International, the company also has access to the industry's only Network Satellite television channel, which broadcasts both live and pre-recorded training seminars to help agents get better at what they do.

Those features, along with two formal conference rooms, high ceilings, large windows and 23 parking spaces, provide an easy place for buyers and sellers to meet and conduct business.

"What Jay and I envisioned, and are making a reality, was an office where the space was unlimited so that our options and services would be unlim-

ited. Hence Re/Max Unlimited was born. We did not want to own just another cookie-cutter real estate office," Papadopolous said. "We bought this building because of its location, its size and the parking lot it came with. All the neighbors we have talked with have been quite supportive of the changes and improvements."

According to McHugh, Re/Max Unlimited has been well received by the neighborhood and more than 100 neighbors have stopped in to check out the construction and wish them well with the business.

"We were the only real estate office to co-sponsor Brookline's 300th celebration held at the former 406 Club this past summer," McHugh said.

Papadopolous and McHugh, who both worked at Re/Max Affiliates, decided they wanted to go into business for themselves three years ago.

"We wanted to offer better services and have a top of the line business with a top of the

line environment to work in," Papadopolous said. "Jay and I are both very high on building relationships and our main source of clientele comes from our database of satisfied clients. We're very high on receiving referrals. We try to offer value before, during and after the trade happens."

McHugh, a Dedham native, has lived in West Roxbury for several years.

"I went to Dedham High was recruited by Stonehill College for my soccer prowess," McHugh said.

After attending Stonehill, McHugh worked as a paralegal for a number of Boston law firms where he worked on foreclosures.

"While I was working and covering over 54 foreclosures a month, I decided I wanted to do something as an entrepreneur, which caused me to get my real estate license and go into business for myself," McHugh said.

Papadopolous, 39, attended Boston University and started working part-time at Century 21 Treon Realty 20 years ago. He joined Re/Max Affiliates Inc. in West Roxbury in March 1996 and was ranked the number four agent out of 3,500 agents in New England for the Re/Max Affiliates Inc. in 2003. He left his position in West Roxbury Feb. 1, 2005.

He moved from Roslindale to Brookline a few years ago.

"After I graduated, I decided I liked working with people much more than within my degree, which was computer science. I like helping people achieve their dreams of homeownership," he said. "Afterwards I went on to Re/Max, because I saw the opportunity to become an entrepreneur in real estate."



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