Ocala native Thad Boyd has led the Boyd Real Estate Group since its inception in 1996. While still a youth, under the tutelage of his late father, R. Thad Boyd Jr., he assembled the building blocks of manufacturing, construction, sales, and marketing skills that would form the foundation for his later success in commercial and residential real estate development. Thad also honed his considerable ability to establish enduring, quality relationships with local and regional business leaders—a key factor that would create a profoundly positive impact on the economies of Ocala, Marion County, and the central Florida region.

Throughout his career Thad has garnered several distinctions, including being the youngest CEO of one of the 50 largest privately-owned Florida corporations. Boyd Development Group has grown over the years to encompass commercial, industrial, retail, and office space as well as residential properties in Ocala and central Florida. These collective enterprises today are: The Boyd Group, Boyd Real Estate, Boyd Property Management, LLC, Boyd-Mox Industrial Development (with Rachel Gibbs), and Sellstate Next Generation Realty (with Joe Vorwerk) that has over 130 agents to date.

Over the years Thad’s team has developed in excess of 20 million square feet and 3,000 residential lots. That means everything from buying the land to obtaining all the entitlements to creating plans, constructing roads and sewer systems, and selling the end product to builders. They have done theatres, restaurants, office complexes, Walmart Supercenters, single-family homes, apartment complexes, and many others. It’s a multi-layered and satisfying, sometimes years-long process that Thad has enjoyed being part of from start to finish.

A committed Christian, Thad has always felt the call and commitment to give back to the community. His past and present board member affiliations include the Children’s Home Society, Habitat for Humanity, College of Central Florida, Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership, Salvation Army, University of Florida Gator Boosters, United Way, Marion County Sheriff’s Advisory Committee, Honoring Thy Father Ministries, XtremeSoulutions, and the Kimberly Center. The latter is a women and children’s advocacy and protection program in Ocala, built by a community coalition that he spearheaded and named in honor of his late sister. Thad is married to wife Julie and has three adult children, a son and two daughters.

Roy Thad Boyd, III (“Thad”) is an Ocala, Florida native who attended St. John Lutheran High School and Central Florida Community College. His father, Roy Thad Boyd Jr, founded a local company in the late 1970s called Mark III—a van and truck conversion manufacturing operation—that was, at one point, Marion County’s largest employer.

Thad recalled, “During summers, from eighth grade through high school, I worked with Dad at the plant. My first job out of college was as a quality control technician there and then I moved into sales.” By 1986, he was in charge of all direct marketing and sales promotions to over 1000 car dealerships in the US.

Thad remembered an early management meeting for a proposed new building project when he was just 21. “The room was full of seasoned senior managers,” he said, “but when my dad asked who wanted to be in charge of overseeing the design, planning, and building of the facility, I raised my hand. He acknowledged my youthful ambition but declined the offer. When I persisted, however, some of the senior managers said they would help me, so he eventually gave in. It turned out to be a wonderful learning and growth opportunity that involved working with architects, engineers, and contractors, which I truly enjoyed.”

The result of those collective efforts was a state-of-the-art manufacturing company consolidating three different vertically integrated operations into a newly designed, 300,000 square foot plant on interstate 75. Between 1987 and 1993, Thad served as its chief executive officer, overseeing a market share increase from 9 to 24 percent. In 1992, he was named one of Florida’s Top 100 CEOs by Florida Trend Magazine.

Concurrently in 1992, personal tragedy struck the Boyd family when Thad’s father died suddenly at the age of 45, leaving him in charge of the family business. The profitable Mark III enterprise was sold a year later. Thad went on to found a component manufacturing company that went from a startup to over $5 million in annual sales in less than three years.

In 1996, Thad turned his numerical- and people-oriented skills to real estate through a new venture called Boyd Development Corporation. In the ensuing years the company has expanded to encompass commercial, industrial, retail, and office space as well as residential properties in Ocala and the central Florida region.

Today Thad Boyd’s enterprises have grown to encompass The Boyd Group, Boyd Real Estate, Boyd Property Management, LLC, Boyd-Mox Industrial Development (with Rachel Gibbs), and Sellstate Next Generation Realty (with Joe Vorwerk) that has over 130 agents to date.

Thad commented, “Over the years our team has developed in excess of 20 million square feet and 3,000 residential lots. That means everything from buying the land to obtaining all the entitlements to creating plans, constructing roads and sewer systems, and selling the end product to builders. We’ve done theatres, restaurants, office complexes, Walmart Supercenters, single-family homes, apartment complexes, and many others. It’s a multi-layered but very satisfying process that I enjoy being part of from start to finish.”

One of Thad’s favorite developments is Deerwood Professional Park, comprising 300,000 square feet of office space and 334 apartments on 72 acres in Ocala. He said, “It’s an outstanding mixed-use property where we, as a company, chose to house our own headquarters.”

This success, however, hasn’t all been smooth sailing. The nationwide economic downturn in 2008—lasting at least five years in the Florida real estate market—was a nightmare of negative energy for Thad. He said, “We were immersed in unrelenting, brutal financial challenges that saw some of our best colleagues and competitors go under. Thankfully, God gave us the grace and mercy to survive and eventually come out the other end of it a stronger entity.”

When it comes to matters of faith, Thad happily shares that he has been a committed, dedicated Christian since his teenage years. He recalled, “During that tough period of recession, four friends of mine and I formed a men’s prayer and Bible study group. Thirteen years later, twenty-five guys get together every Wednesday morning to read a chapter each week. It’s so important to feed our spiritual selves while we’re striving to make successful personal and business and decisions and to give each other support.”

Thad’s community outreach is also an essential part of his life. “God has blessed me with enough resources to give back and be of use to others in need. I’m so fortunate to be able to meet all kinds of people in the work that I do and the relationships I’ve been privileged to maintain here in Ocala.” His past and present board member affiliations include the Children’s Home Society, Habitat for Humanity, College of Central Florida, Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership, Salvation Army, University of Florida Gator Boosters, United Way, Marion County Sheriff’s Advisory Committee, Honoring Thy Father Ministries, Xtreme Soulutions, and the Kimberly Center.

Of the last two, Soulutions is a prison ministry and rehabilitation program with which Thad is very active. The Kimberly Center is a women and children’s advocacy and protection program named for his sister who was killed in a car accident when she was only 21. There wasn’t a women’s advocacy center in Ocala when two women came to Thad in 1996 to ask him to help create one. Feeling a strong sense of conviction, he donated the land, enlisted builders, and got the initial 3,500 square foot center built for free in 2002. The Center has now grown to a 14,000 square foot facility and, with its 35 staff members, helps at least 1400 families a year.

For a number of years, Thad has been involved in mission work. Among his fifteen trips to date he’s visited Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, and Nicaragua with various groups, among which is a men’s group doing construction work. He’s also acted as a chaperone with local youth through a nondenominational entity called United that takes between ten and twenty-five young people along per trip.

Thad has been married to his lovely wife Julie since May 9, 1987. They have two daughters and a son: Kimber Hamilton, 23, Miranda, 21, and Brady, 20. The family enjoys trips to the beach and ski vacations in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. Thad and Brady try to get in their fair share of fishing and quail hunting, mostly in the Thomasville area of southern Georgia. The Boyd’s are also members of Southpoint Church in Ocala.

Thad Boyd is endowed with a passion for work, for problem solving, and for undertaking and accomplishing tangible goals that have a beneficial impact on his growth-oriented community. Real estate development has been his “calling,” one that fully utilizes his ability to envision projects and bring together talented individuals to bring them to fruition. It also helps that he genuinely likes people and has a talent for opening up career paths for others. He reflected, “At this stage of life, I don’t even think about retiring because I’m so energized by collaborating with my business partners, associates, and employees. Without their tremendous efforts, none of these things would’ve been possible.”