

THIS IS RIVER EDGE:

RYAN GIBBONS

By **Melissa Griegel**
Photo by **Melissa
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**HOW DOES A FORMER
HOCKEY COACH
TRANSITION TO
BECOME A
REALTOR®?
RYAN GIBBONS
CAN ANSWER
THAT QUESTION.**



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His past is different from that of most people getting to real estate. For that reason, he looks at things differently. He explains, “I am not focused on being the biggest agent in Bergen County, although I do have big goals. I focus first on our community. I firmly believe that is what will build my business to where I want it to be.”

Ryan’s office, North Jersey Partners brokered by eXp Realty, is in Oradell, right on the edge of his hometown River Edge. He specializes in residential real estate and with a focus on River Edge and surrounding towns.

“For River Edge I have become the go-to person for all things River Edge,” he says. “In 2019, I started a Facebook group for the town, and it has grown to 3,000 members in a town of 11,000, so a good portion of the community is there. I evolved that to Facebook and Instagram pages, a YouTube channel and a website, www.thisisriveredge.com. My goal is

to provide as much information about the town and the surrounding area, so residents know what’s going on. It is also a great resource for anyone looking to buy in River Edge to learn about the town and what we offer.”

Besides selling homes in town, Ryan is an active participant in town events and activities, with a big focus on sports. Ryan grew up playing ice hockey and soccer competitively through high school. Most of his hobbies revolve around sports and coaching. His 9-year-old daughter Emma inherited dad’s affinity for sports and plays year-round. Ryan coaches River Dell Blackhawks soccer, REGal rec softball, REGal rec basketball, and REGal volleyball. He also enjoys woodworking and has built many items around his house.

Ryan has been married to Claire for 16 years. They met at the University of Scranton on a retreat. Claire is the

Director of Physical Medicine and Rehab at Hackensack UMC. Emma is a 4th-grader at Roosevelt Elementary School in River Edge, and loves to play soccer, softball, volleyball, and basketball, and playing with their rescue dog, Maggie.

“These days our family life revolves a lot around sports schedules and family outings,” Ryan says. When they are not at school or work, the Gibbons family spends a lot of time together.

“Ocean Beach 2 at the Jersey Shore is our happy place,” Ryan said. “We have been going there my entire life, and we spend at least one full week there every summer. One time we woke up at 4:30 in the morning in December to see the sunrise at the shore and had a fun adventure during the off-season. We also love to visit North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina,



where the family has a condo. They enjoy impromptu trips to NYC, riding their bikes through town, and visiting Veterans Memorial Park, where they could kick a soccer ball around or work on Emma's softball pitching.

Being a family man comes easily to Ryan. "I have worked with my entire family at one point in my life. In high school and college, my dad owned a landscaping company called Gibbons Landscaping. At about 14, I started working for him and directly for my older brother Pete. It was a good summer job and kept us busy most of the year. I worked for him even after college, helping out when I could. My dad Peter also worked for NY Sanitation, so he was a very busy guy when we were growing up. He

worked extremely hard at two jobs so my mom could be home with us after school. My dad's parents emigrated here from Ireland before he was born, landing in the Bronx where both my parents grew up. As a result, I have dual Irish and American citizenship."

Ryan's mom, Elaine, is also a REALTOR® and works with Ryan at eXp. "I am a second-generation REALTOR®. When I was growing up, my mom didn't work too much so she could be around for us. But once we went off to college, she became one of the best REALTORS® in the area. Not a day goes by without someone saying she sold them a house, or they would never work with anyone else but her. She has a great reputation in our community and in the REALTOR® community."

Even though he admired his mom's job and ambition, Ryan didn't start his career off in real estate. He was an assistant hockey director, hockey coach, and tournament director at Ice House in Hackensack. Ryan helped run one of the largest hockey programs in the country while running tournaments that attracted teams from all over the United States, Canada, and even Russia. Ryan also coached travel hockey and was an assistant at Bergen Catholic where they won two state championships, and hosted three USA Hockey National Championship

It was a great 15 years of his life but when his daughter was born, Ryan realized he needed a change. "I didn't want to work the crazy hours and travel every weekend to games," Ryan says. "I thought about getting into

teaching since I had a background in coaching, but that didn't work out. Since I grew up in real estate offices, real estate made sense to me. I had the best mentor I could ask for. For the first two years, I did hockey in the morning part-time and real estate in the afternoon/evening. Once I knew I could make real estate a living, I made the jump in 2014 and went full time."

Ryan and his mom created Gibbons Team Real Estate when he got his license in 2012. They were at RE/MAX at the time. In 2018, they made the move to eXp Realty and realized they needed to make a few changes. The first one was a name change to North Jersey Partners brokered by eXp Realty.

"We wanted a name that didn't focus on us but on a partnership with other agents. Since joining eXp, our team has grown to six agents. In 2020, we opened our own branch office with eXp, and I am the broker. We are different because five of us live in the same community, River Edge. We love our town, and we do a lot of volunteering and raising funds for our town."



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When the pandemic hit, Ryan says their team looked for ways they could help. “Christine Alexiou and I came up with the idea of selling lawn signs to support first responders. It became a part-time job dropping hundreds of signs around town, but we raised thousands of dollars to give back to our local ambulance corps and the area hospitals. The money went straight to the people who needed it. We also run a coat drive to benefit Jersey Cares, a school-supply drive for the Boys and Girls Club, sponsor sports teams, and help with whatever we can in our community.”

Ryan is also the secretary for the Municipal Land Use Board. “Christine is on the beautification committee, Anna is on the recreation board, and my mom has been on the zoning board and has been a liaison to the library,” he says. “We all do what we can for the town, which makes us unique in our market.”

Ryan’s coaching background comes in useful when finalizing transactions. He makes sure that everyone knows their roles, and what his role is, so everyone is on the same page.

“I learned the right way to succeed in this business,” he says, “and I bring that to every interaction. I am honest with everyone



I work with and work hard for them. I am also determined to keep up with new technology, new ideas, and new methods that I can incorporate into my business. Keeping up with what is going on and how I can best serve my clients ultimately helps them get the best deal possible.”

Part of his process is integrating himself into the community and focusing on what makes it tick. “I am everywhere!” he laughs. “I am very approachable and available to my community. And I am very active on social media with our Facebook group.”

Ryan really enjoys the marketing aspects of the job. Working on a new listing to get it out to the right buyers is important to him. His marketing degree from the University of Scranton comes in handy in finding the right way to advertise his listings and find new clients. “I love getting a home to the right person, so one of the hardest things I have to deal with is telling a buyer for the 10th time that they got

outbid. In a seller’s market, we sometimes have to be the bearer of bad news, unfortunately. It’s never easy making that call, but when you do get the house, it’s that much better.”

Ryan is there for the odd things that pop up as part of the job. “Once I had a seller who was very late getting their stuff out of the house. So, I jumped in and helped. I ended up with a carload of stuff and two cats in my car for the trip from their old house in Teaneck to their new house in Dumont!”

As much as he loves his job, family always comes first for Ryan. “I love my work, but I love my wife and daughter more. I block my time and prioritize family activities. Obviously, it doesn’t always work, but family always comes first. The last 18 months have been tough on business but have also been

a blessing. With the pandemic, I had a second-/third-grader home for remote learning. My wife was working more than ever at the hospital dealing with pandemic issues, so I was left as the daily caregiver. It meant my work was 90% at home as I helped Emma through school and keeping her entertained. It was an extremely difficult time for our family with new stress, but I got to spend a tremendous amount of time with Emma just being together, going on walks and bike rides, and playing games. It definitely brought us much closer.”

Ryan is happy that things have normalized. He is now back in his office working alongside his mother, and back to coaching, and doing all things River Edge.