

VERSATILE CONSTRUCTION & KARIM MOMENI

BUILDING A LIFE IN LOUISVILLE

BY STEVE BREWER - PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAM DAVIS IMAGEMAKERS PHOTOGRAPHY

In Louisville's East End, Versatile Construction is developing a reputation for building homes with unique aesthetic touches at a reasonable price. These well-crafted luxury homes reflect the superlative work ethic and unique sensibilities of owner Karim Momeni, who melds his cultural experience, his lifelong penchant for engineering, and his passion for the human relationship into building people's dreams.

Construction is a fitting occupation for Karim, who has found technology interesting all his life. He says, "I've always been a technological person. At age eight I built my own radio from scratch. Even as a child I dreamed of being an engineer." It was education and the chance to play college soccer for the University of Louisville that brought Momeni, an Iranian immigrant, to Kentucky.

While maintaining a scholarship playing soccer, then a burgeoning sport in America, Karim earned his undergraduate degree (class of '81) in the Speed School of Science.

History intervened in his plans on a large scale, however, when the Iranian revolution of the late 1970's swept over his country. As the incentives increased to make the U.S. his adopted homeland,

Karim pursued the twin passions of his life, soccer and engineering. He stayed at U. of L. to earn a Master's in electrical engineering ('82), and continued as a soccer coach after college and eventually as a referee in collegiate soccer for NCAA games, a part-time job he maintains to this day. He also serves as president of K.S.O.A. (Kentucky Soccer Officials Association) and has served as chairman of the Greater Louisville Soccer League. In 1983 he was the state selecting soccer coach for Kentucky's contribution to the Olympic trials.

In the mid '90's Karim, along with his friend, Farid Razavi, launched APAX International, a commercial builder best known for its MAC Computer Store, which won the Louisville and Jefferson County's Planning Commission's 2000 Cornerstone Award for historically sensitive design and construction. While managing APAX, Karim received an offer from G.E. to work as a contract design engineer, a job he held for almost three years.

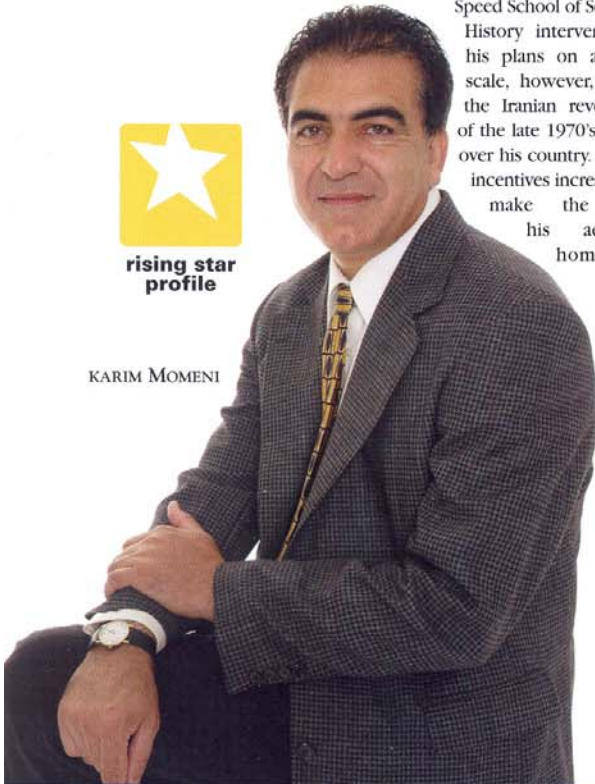
Now, with Versatile, Karim Momeni has set out on his own, channeling his creativity into residential construction in the East End. In addition to his custom homes, Momeni is developing land near the Tucker Station area. Proud of his work and acutely aware that his buildings become his reputation, Momeni emphasizes two keys to his success: his use of some of the best subcontractors in Louisville and the attention he pays to every project. "I'm responsible for all that I build, and I love the one-on-one aspect of the work."

Does he ever miss Iran? "You never forget your roots," he says, but for him and his family, Louisville is home now. He has also discovered that helping customers build a home they'll love compensates for the occasional moments of nostalgia he feels for his birthplace. How did he learn to "fill the gap" of loneliness that sometime set in during his transition to life in his new homeland? Creative vision, work and service. "Whether with a soccer player on the field or a customer designing a home, I work hard." Part of that work is a unique skill of his, imaginative empathy. "I feel for players just as I feel for customers. My goal," he adds, "is to be good and to serve everyone the best I can." ★



rising star
profile

KARIM MOMENI



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