



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

## Stellar MLS

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247 Maitland Ave. Suite 2000  
Altamonte Springs, FL 32701



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# ACCOUNTING

**Total Employees:** 8

**Management:** Director of Finance – Lynda Rabel

**Executive:** Chief Financial Officer – Mark Schafer

## Accounts Receivable

- Successful implementation of new billing system, Stax Bill and new payment processor, Stax Pay in two months
- Successful implementation of additional functionality within Stax Bill (more automated processes)
- First Assistant and Data Feed billing completed out of Stax Bill
- Assisted with the onboarding of new shareholder, New Smyrna Beach
- Onboarded new accounts receivable team member, Daisy Diaz
- Completed cross training with other departments
- New team members trained with compliance, membership, and support

## Accounts Payable

- Successful switch from Great Plains A/P to Docuphase (Automated A/P)
- Using OCR technology invoices are ingested into Docuphase (rather than hand keying)
  - Invoices are reviewed, routed for approvals, and sent to Docuphase for payment
- Docuphase issues and monitors checks

## Overall

- Clean audit for FY23.
- Completed exterior renovations for medical designation
- Added additional parking spaces, trees, lighting, and security
- Obtained Medical designation for Stellar Center
- Secured new tenant, Upperline Health for downstairs vacant space
- Occupancy scheduled for ~May 2024
- Huge win since this effort has been a multi-year project
- Entire team completed Willhouse Culture of Belonging series
- Added two new companies into our portfolio, Stellar Technology and Universal Consulting
- Implementation of Stellar Cares in conjunction with Heidi Watzak

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**Total Employees:** 4

**Management:** Business Development Manager – Chris Lumia

**Executive:** Chief Growth & Relationship Officer – Jennifer Thompson-Kersting

## Growth

- Signed on Stellar MLS's 19<sup>th</sup> shareholder, the New Smyrna Beach Board of REALTORS®
  - This took several years of relationship building and overcoming objections and misinformation
- Continued to build a pipeline in multiple markets throughout Florida
- Through extensive phone and email communication with leads from the Stellar MLS join page, converted over 300 brokers and agents from outside of Stellar MLS's coverage area into new Participants and subscribers **(2,213 calls and emails to leads from Join page)**
- Sponsored, attended, and networked at **23** industry events across the state
- Conducted **35** meetings with influencers and leaders in prospective markets
- Upgraded and expanded commercial offerings (Moody's platform upgrade and enhanced RPR partnership), in preparation for a commercial growth campaign in 2024
- Leveraged corporate sponsorships with the Florida Real Estate Business Institute (REBI), Residential Real Estate Council (RRC) and Women's Council of REALTORS (WCR) to speak to statewide audiences and position Stellar MLS as a trusted partner to brokers and associations

## Shareholder Relations

- Sponsored and attended 66 events hosted by our shareholder associations
- Assumed responsibility for the MLS Advisory Council and revamped its format to create more engagement and two-way communication between shareholder associations and Stellar MLS
- Launched a Commercial Advisory Group, providing representations on how to grow and improve commercial offerings
- Developed a new process for reporting feedback from monthly calls and visits to AEs and to proactively identify issues and trends

## Broker Engagement

- Conducted a series of 15 in-person broker coffee hours around our coverage area, featuring in-depth discussions around issues and trends in organized real estate
- Launched a broker advisory council, representing brokerages of various sizes, affiliations, and locations. Councilmembers will also serve as ambassadors to help Stellar MLS expand to new markets and will advise Stellar MLS on any policy changes that may arise in the current regulatory environment
- Extensive calls to brokers with unpaid annual billing invoices resulting in 381 additional payments

# CUSTOMER SUPPORT

**Total Employees:** 27

**Management:** Support Center Manager: Desmond Goodwin

**Executive:** Vice President of MLS Services – Eben Moran

## Communication Stats

- Total Calls in 2023: 215,089
- Total Support Calls Answered in 2023: 102,805
- Average Call Time: Four minutes and twenty-four seconds
- Total emails: 19,378
- Total Chat sessions: 8,364
- Average Chat session length: 8 minutes and 35 seconds

## Other Accomplishments:

- Overhauled the Stellar boot camp for better new hire training
- Updated the Support Wikipedia and integrated AI for easier search and better information return
- Hiring qualifications updated to ensure more qualified applicants
- Quality Assurance processes updated to be timelier with feedback for the team
- Updated Stats display and algorithm
- Updated Support Standard Operating Procedures

# EVENTS

**Total Employees:** 2

**Management:** Director of Administration – Heidi Watzak

**Executive:** Vice President of MLS Services – Eben Moran

## Overall

- Successful Stellar Directions, Installation, Florida Realtors Expo, and various staff events
- Successful development and launch of Stellar Cares, Stellar MLS's charitable initiative, donating \$125,000 to various organizations supporting our funding priorities, affordable housing, disaster relief, and community engagement
- Successful update and reorganization resulting in clarity, consistency, and the streamlining of the Stellar MLS Travel Policy for volunteers and staff
- Successful onboarding of our new Events Manager, Emily Becker-Cintron
- Continued weekly training to increase awareness of any issues, new products, industry updates, etc. of the MADI/Support teams on Friday mornings prior to turning on the phones

# FACILITIES:

**Total Employees:** 1

**Management:** Facilities Manager – Denroy Bryan

**Executive:** Chief Financial Officer – Mark Shafer

- Secured new tenant – Upperline
- New buildout for medical Use for new tenant
- Hired full-time facilities manager
- Implemented new signage and outdoor lighting
- All new landscaping around building and property

# HUMAN RESOURCES

**Total Employees:** 4

**Management:** Senior Director of Human Resources – Tracy Rogers

**Executive:** Chief Operating Officer – Shayne Fairley

## Overall

- PTO donation policy
- I-9 Audit
- Temps for Annual Billing
- Reviews/Merits/Bonuses
- Updated and Completed SOPs Onboarding Process for New Hires.
- Updated and Completed SOPs Payroll Processes
- Updated PayScale salary and job descriptions
- Implemented Bennie App and Bennie Specialist
- Setup file feed for AbsenceProSM – FMLA also updated information for all staff
- Willhouse Global – All staff training for DEI and Managers training both *Culture of Belonging*.
- New Hires completing *Culture of Belonging*
- E-Verify – Law and set-up and implemented for all new hires and recruiting postings
- PWFA – Pregnancy and Pump Law
- Created tracking sheet for Call out metrics
- Developed and Implemented 30 and 90 Onboarding Survey for new hires
- HDHP (High Deductible Health Plan) is covered at 100% after deductible is paid
- Increased group life to 2x's salary, all except 4 staff members enrolled
- Updated Workers Comp Coding in Paylocity
- Assisted with DNA – Code
- Updated Merit Sheet
- Made a deal with staffing agency for temps saved approximately \$150-\$200K
- Created Excel Tracking Sheet for Managers absence and coaching
- CUNA Notices – Term w/balance and Rollover notices
- Developed Restroom etiquette
- Updated payroll with new benefit information
- Gross payroll expansion
- Created forms for Internal and external applicant flow
- Census Reporting and the Annual Business Survey Census Reporting
- HR Support Access site with Paylocity
- Hired Corporate Trainer
- Expanded HR team
- Top Employer 2023 – 2 years
- Workers Comp Audit
- Assist with SOCII Cert
- Implemented website names to First Name, Last Initial for non-management.
- Wage increases



- HR closet was cleaned and organized.
- Jack met departments.
- Pulse survey
- HR Team Build
- Hired Admin Assistant for COO
- Gift card and gift reporting and gross ups
- Additional confidential HR projects (5)

## Ongoing Each Year Projects Completed

- Open enrollment
- Engagement survey
- PTO – Reset
- Fred Pryor update staff
- Wellness packages – gift for all staff
- Staff meeting presentations

## Customer Experience

- Performed individual department check-ins with Managers regarding the department's success metrics identifying wins, trends, opportunities, and/or adjusting them as needed
- Identified training (professional/ dev /skills) opportunities, what resources are needed, and shared kudos from company surveys, leadership, and customer feedback
- Focus on Quality to create the best experience for our customers and staff
- Met with leaders of departments about what was currently happening in their departments and what they thought about Quality, their vision, their goals, etc
- Identified the trend that departments were at different levels with their department structure/development. Created a department best practice standard.... (policies/procedures, training, team engagement, etc.) implementing in 2024
- Fire Safety Initiative – Bi-annual fire drills

# TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

**Total Employees:** 12

**Management:**

Senior Information Technology Manager – Michael Spiegler

Manager of Development – David Cox

**Executive:** Vice President of Technology & Innovation – Mathew Kallumadil

## Technology:

**Completed:**

- LearnUpon (Stellar University deployment)
- Laptop Refresh
- Network Overhaul (Replacement of switches and wireless access points)
- Stellar AI (ai.stellarmls.com) Chatbot - Phase I
- CRM/ERP RFP Process
- Rules & Regulations Migration to Zendesk
- Climate Management in HQ Server Room
- Canva - Enterprise Deployment
- Calendly Deployment
- DocuPhase Deployment
- CART process in Zendesk
- Act-On automated suspensions
- Verizon 5G Hotspot upgrade/refresh

**In Progress (Kicked off in 2023, Ongoing or planned for 2024):**

- Reworkd AI - AI Automated IDX Audits
- Headset Refresh
- Browser/OS Testing
- CRM/ERP Deployment
- Qualys Replacement - Tenable
- ActivTrak Replacement - Teramind
- Visitor Management (for SOCII)
- SOCII Certification
- Contact Center Re-Evaluation
- Secure Email (EncryptTitan)
- Global Signature Management (Exclaimer)

## Development:

- Automated Customer Suspension

- The system was enhanced to issue a \$175 reinstatement fee on education suspension, send reminder emails about pending suspensions, and web pages were created to list customers pending suspensions for Office DR (Brokers) and LSC staff
- Learn Upon Implementation
- The system was enhanced to accommodate the "Starting Out Stellar" class requirement and the existing training module was disabled once the Learn Upon implementation was completed
- NSB Data Conversion
- NSB Lamps data was converted and imported into the Stellar MLS CRM system
- Starcard Internal Application Enhancements
- Features were added to allow users to select multiple employees for a gift card submission and email notifications about Starcard submissions
- Stats Dashboard Enhancements:
  - Data monitors were built to make data anomalies like duplicate CRM customer records, multi record customers, and Appraiser data visible for the team
- StaxBill Integration
- API and ETL processes were built to transfer data between CRM and StaxBill for customer invoicing

## Business Intelligence

- The BI department developed new reports for Annual billing
  - (The vendor-provided reports were not adequate for our purposes)
- The BI department was required to utilize CSV files from the vendor to get the needed data to build new reports for each metric used for annual billing
- Worked closely with the accounting department to develop methods to provide the required data for further reporting
- BI worked with the Dev team to audit the CRM Database table structure
  - (To find deprecated fields)
- Find redundant fields in related tables
  - (To assess the CRM system's overall data structure, server, and storage requirements)
- BI worked on an MLS grid project with the Data services and OPS teams
- Developed queries to find what data was incomplete in MLS grid DB
- Developed queries to find missing MLS grid data within Stellar records
- Provided data result sets for backfilling MLS Grid with Stellar-provided data
- BI worked with PMO to provide the Scope of work requirements for the new CRM system project
- Performed analysis of existing data collection methods
- Analysis of existing DB, views, and reports of the current system
- Provided analysis of the new system's needed requirements
- Provided scope of desired improvements for retention of historical records and new data reports
- BI worked with the Dev team to develop data monitor queries for duplicate Database records
- Analyzed DBs to find duplicate records within tables
- Conducted research into causes of duplications
- Worked with Dev to create queries to identify duplicate records in the DB table
- Developed methods to find duplication and how to remedy the duplicate records in the table
- Helped onboard new BI team members
- Trained new previous hires on existing reports and job duties
- Helped conduct search and interview process for new team members

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

**Total Employees:** 5

**Management:** Marketing & Communications Manager – Camille Lai

**Executive:** Vice President of Marketing & Communications – Marion Weiler

## Emails

- 252 emails sent (**excluding** automated billing, education, and onboarding emails).
  - An average of 21 emails per month
  - Open rate: 64.5%
- Reviewed and updated 31 automated email templates
- Created 8 new automated email templates

## Website Development – New Pages

- NSBBOR
- Commercial
- Reciprocal Listings
- Education
- Data Sharing and Integration
- Stellar Cares
- Compensation

## Standout Projects

### Florida Realtors Convention and Expo 2023

- MarComm Campaign
  - Social Media Reach: 68,178
  - Join Page Activity: 16,980
- Digital Ad Campaign
  - Broad Exposure: We reached a substantial audience, with 7,023,236
  - Engagement and Interest: We generated 21,560 clicks from the impressions
  - Compelling Video Content: The VCR (Video Click-Through Rate) was 16.67%

### Billing

- Introduction of a new billing platform (Stax) and a fee increase
- Updated Agent Suspension Process – Notifying Brokers and LSCs of Agent Suspension
  - Annual
    - Roadshow
    - Broker Billing
- Unlicensed Assistants

- Data Feed
- NSBBOR

### **NSBBOR Onboarding**

- Achieved over 70% Class registrations before 60 days due date
- Developed landing page
  - Views: 4639
  - Unique users: 1295

### **New Training Platform**

- Reviewed and updated 33 education email templates
- Developed landing page
  - Views: 113,626
  - Unique users: 44,478
- Consulted on design and UX of LU platform
- Created new graphics

### **RISMedia Partnership**

- Total number of Stellar MLS Premier Subscribers: 8,491
- Continue to publish monthly thought leadership articles

### **The International MLS**

- Developed PowerPoint pitch deck
- One pager brochure
- Digital booth
- Social media promotion
- Translated International MLS pitch deck and promotional documents into German
- Created custom IMLS pitch video

## **Noteworthy Miscellaneous**

- Gulf Coast MLS Partnership
  - Communications campaign to introduce and educate about the new data share partner
- OMNI MLS Partnership
  - Communications campaign to introduce and educate about the new data share partner

# MEMBERSHIP, ADMINISTRATION, & DATA INTEGRITY

**Total Employees:** 18

**Management:**

Senior Manager Administration and Data Integrity – Connie Kazakowitz

Director of Administration – Heidi Watzak

**Executive:** Vice President of MLS Services – Eben Moran

## Overview

- Total Calls in 2023: 65,515
  - Average Call Time: Three minutes and thirty-two seconds
  - Total emails: 84,234
  - Total Violations Reported: 64,235
  - Violation Fines Issued: 4,626
- 
- LDC and emails are caught up to 48-hour turnaround time.
  - Following the close of annual billing, the Compliance Audit Review Team's workload skyrocketed
    - We advocated for the increase in composition of CART and at the October 2023 Board of Directors meeting, the board approved the increased in members of to allow for the flexibility to create independent groups of 3 within CART to expedite the ever-increasing number of fine waiver requests. Thus, we alleviated the backlog of refund requests by the end of 2023
  - The expansion of CART from 4-9 has been a huge help in getting the requests turned around faster
  - Transitioned CART to Zendesk to help streamline and track requests
  - Implemented Friday team meetings
  - Brought over some team members from support and accounting to help the cross-training process.
  - Successful onboarding of New Smyrna Beach
  - Survived the 175 reinstate fee, team has been amazing with the backlash we've received - there haven't been too many complaints from them
  - Working on chat option for LSC and opening membership phones for customers (this may be for 2024 as we are still working on it)
  - Added 2 new positions on the team
  - Added a reciprocal landing page for agents to get info and email us the reciprocal form, this has helped streamline the process and eliminate a lot of back and forth
  - Started live QA process, team seems to like the real time feedback
  - MADI/Support ½ day soft skill training with Denyce

# PRODUCT & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

**Total Employees:** 10

**Management:** Director of MLS Services – Kim Crawford

**Executive:** Vice President of MLS Services – Eben Moran

## Stellar Internal Ecosystem

We are replacing our current systems with a more updated and agile database. The replacements will support Growth, Innovation, Knowledge, and Business Ecosystems.

The updates will feature a strategic rollout of (3) key function areas:

### CRM

- Scoped with internal departments to define end goal
- Request for Proposal (RFP) distributed in Q2-2023
- Vendor/platform Selected

### Accounting Systems

- Stax Bill is an invoicing solution (customer invoice /payment portal). Launched Q1-2023
- Stax Pay is the payment processing. Launched Q1-2023

### Learning & Development System

- LearnUpon- replacement for Moodle and streamline the customer experience
  - Launched Q3-2023

## Data Sharing: MLSs Outside of Florida

Strategically adding value to Stellar. Integrating with other MLSs allows cross-over between markets, collaboration, and value to potential new shareholders.

- Featured a rollout of (2) new data shares in 2023:
  - OMNI MLS
  - Mobile, AL

## ReDistribute

Distribute data licensing revenue to brokers while controlling the distribution of our brokers' data.

- 12 MLSs that have signed up to contribute data
- 17 with verbal agreements
- 16 in discussions

## RISMedia

- Provide a premium news membership that offers exclusive information and insights necessary for real estate professionals to achieve success

## SkySlope Offers

Buyer's agents can submit offers through the MLS, receiving automatic notifications upon the listing agent's receipt and opening of the offer. Listing agents benefit from automatic organization of all offers by listing, enabling easy access and the creation of side-by-side comparisons for multiple offers to share with their sellers. Updates to buyer's agents can be managed individually or collectively. Brokers can efficiently monitor all offers in a centralized location integrated within the MLS for widespread adoption.

## SkySlope Forms

Brokers and agents now have access to experience SkySlope Forms, a streamlined solution to complete digital real estate forms quickly and efficiently. The exclusive broker features include:

- File-Sharing: Give individuals the ability to create, complete, and manage files on behalf of your agents
- Brokerage Templates: Create, share, and manage form templates within your brokerage
- Brokerage Form Libraries: Provide custom forms for your brokerage
- Brokerage Clauses: Streamline repetitive entries with custom clauses, easily accessed by your agents

## Appraiser Institute

Stellar MLS Partners with the Appraisal Institute to Launch Their Online Program for Appraisal Students - Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (AI PAREA). The partnership focuses on integrating AI PAREA's renowned education and credentialing programs into Stellar MLS's platform, thereby providing real estate professionals with direct access to some of the most comprehensive and advanced appraisal resources available.

## New Smyrna Beach Onboarding

- 766 New Stellar Customers
- 23 New fields included into Matrix for NSBBOR customers
- 92 lookup values added to Matrix
- 64,461 listings added
- 567 customers successfully trained to date
- 43+ touchpoint engagement plan created a comprehensive onboarding experience



# TRAINING

**Total Employees:** 8

**Management:** Training Manager – Denyce DiCaprio

**Executive:** Vice President of MLS Services – Eben Moran

## Training Course Development:

**Implemented 7 New Task-Specific Training Courses:**

- Courses focused on real estate tasks using MLS tools, like "Foreclosures: What You Need to Know."

## Educational Material Distribution:

- **New Class Brochure Creation:** Will be distributed to all LSCs, Brokers, and Agents, showcasing available training opportunities
- **New Member Orientation Presentation:** Provided in both English and Spanish for broader accessibility including all new updates on products and services

## Training Sessions and Attendance:

- **Required Courses:** Conducted 490 sessions:
  - MLS Basic – 166 Sessions with 9,885 Attendees
  - MLS Compliance – 162 Sessions with 12,382 Attendees
  - MLS Adding & Editing Listings – 162 Sessions with 8,266 Attendees
- **Elective Courses:** Conducted 316 sessions with 8,260 attendees
- **On Demand:**
  - MLS Basic – 9,044 Attendees
  - MLS Compliance – 9,242 Attendees
  - MLS Adding & Editing Listings – 6,610 Attendees
  - Compliance Refresh – 38,079 Attendees

## Product Launches and Collaborations:

- **Created Q and A:** Created questions and answers for both curriculum development and customer support
- **SkySlope Offers Launch:** Collaborated with SkySlope for a successful product launch, refining the product based on customer feedback

## Annual Billing Support:

- **Educational Videos and Support Materials:** Created instructional videos aiding support team members and customers in navigating the new Stellar MLS Payment Portal
- **Internal Staff Training:** Implemented comprehensive training sessions company wide
- **Onsite Support Implementation:** Introduced interactive training modules for staff training:
  - Puzzle game for proper steps on how to pay their annual bill
  - Soft skills training on answering questions via phone or emails
  - Role playing scenarios for confrontational calls
  - PowerPoint presentation with built in Knowledge-Check using Ahaslides

## LearnUpon Platform Implementation:

- **Stellar MLS University Launch:** An all-new education platform accessible to all subscribers
  - All Customer Focused Training Videos and Course Notes implemented into the new Platform for easy convenient access for our customers
  - Built Platform to include all course offerings, course notes, training videos, email correspondence, metrics report capability to track course completions, and certificates for completing courses
  - Created courses on demand in the new LearnUpon Platform alleviating past problems with customers getting stuck while taking the course
  - Source of ongoing Training Team / interdepartmental collaboration with a focus on both the customer experience and efficiency
- **Courses on Demand:** Over 27,990 courses completed since launch (as of 2023-12-22)
- **Multilingual Support:** Spanish versions of courses implemented

## NSBBOR Onboarding:

- **Course Creation:** Collaborated with NSBBOR and PMG to create content for the required courses for NSBBOR members to Create 2 hour required Course "Diving Into Stellar"
  - PowerPoint and Hands on Training
  - English and Spanish
- **Diving Into Stellar:** Training sessions offered in multiple formats:
  - On-demand – 97 attendees
  - Webinar (16 sessions) – 309 attendees
  - Onsite at NSBBOR (5 sessions) – 43 attendees
- **Matrix Field Convergence and Overview | Overlapping NSBBOR/Stellar MLS Subscribers Only:** Training sessions offered for overlapping members of NSBBOR
  - Webinar: 7 sessions

## Engagement Initiatives:

- **Facebook Live Series:** Featuring industry experts:
  - Eben Moran - "Under the Hood" - Exploring MLS subscription benefits
  - Cyndee Haydon - Discussion on ChatGPT and Real Estate