

A BORN CONNECTOR

by Laura Barrera

Everyone thinks Rogers Healy '03 is a real estate guy – for good reason: In the 23 years since Healy became a licensed real estate agent while studying at SMU, he's launched and grown an independent real estate company into one of the largest in the country. Today, Rogers Healy and Associates Real Estate has over 500 agents and reached over \$1 billion in sales transactions in 2022.

But if you ask Healy, his strength isn't real estate – it's his ability to connect with people. "Everyone's got a superpower, and mine is giving people confidence," he says. "So that means I've got a decent eye for seeking talent."

Which is why Healy knows he's found his true calling with the new venture capitalism firm he launched in September 2022: Morrison Seger Venture Capital Partners.

Healy first got a taste of venture capitalism thanks to SMU. A few years after he graduated, SMU put together a group of alumni and partnered them with undergrad students to provide mentorship. Healy was partnered with Kevin Lavelle '08. They became close friends and years later, Lavelle approached Healy about an idea he had to make a men's dress shirt out of dry-fit material. Healy loved the idea and became the first seed investor for the business, Mizzen+Main.

"I fell in love with connecting the dots," Healy says. "Finance really is about who you know and who knows you. If you can earn their trust and help them create revenue, then that's really the qualification."

Healy quietly invested in more than 100 startups since 2011,

“SMU BUILDS WINNERS, AND IF YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THE WINNERS, IF YOU CAN FIND A WAY TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, THEN BY PROXY, YOU'RE GOING TO WIN, TOO.”

but his decision to launch his own venture capital fund came after a serendipitous evening.

About seven or eight months before launching Morrison Seger, Healy's wife, Abby, who was pregnant with their first child, gently told him one evening that he was bringing home too much negativity. At dinner with his high school friends that night, one of them mentioned another friend started a company called Winwood Collins, after Steve Winwood and Phil Collins. Winwood Collins was never a real company, but it inspired Healy. He declared he was going to launch Morrison Seger, in honor of two of his favorite musicians, Van Morrison and Bob Seger.





At that moment, Healy didn't know what Morrison Seger was going to be – he added Venture Capital Partners to the name later – but he knew it was the next step in his career. Since launching the fund, Healy has essentially retired himself from a role in real estate to focus on venture capitalism full time.

“It felt natural, which is really not my story with real estate,” he says. “It was like God telling me I've got to really bet on myself differently.”

Since Morrison Seger launched, the company has raised over \$30 million and invested in over 25 companies, including Siempre Tequila, G.O.A.T. Fuel and Tiff's Treats.

Just like his reason for launching his real estate business – “I just wanted to be proud of the people I was surrounded by versus just being around people who were making money” – Healy's focus with Morrison Seger is all about partnering with great people that the fund can add

OPPOSITE PAGE: Healy – who has built his professional career around his passion for connecting with people – takes part in a roundtable discussion with his team.

value to.

But Healy takes it a step further and aims to build connections between his startups by introducing the founders to each other and getting them in the same room with the investors. He says this creates a more interactive experience and brings dimension through everyone's personality.

Healy's ability to connect people stems back to SMU.

“SMU gives you so much access to people,” Healy says. “SMU builds winners, and if you can get access to the winners, if you can find a way to build relationships, then by proxy, you're going to win, too.”

Healy gives SMU a lot of credit for his success. With his mom being an alumna, Healy knew from a young age that he wanted to attend SMU. When he was a high school freshman, he went to the SMU admissions office every week and told them he probably wasn't going to have the best grades or test scores, but if given the chance, he thought SMU would change his life and help him change the lives of others.

“SMU is the first place that I think really gave me the chance and just said ‘I believe in you,’” Healy says. “I think it gave me the ability to hone in on being a leader and appreciating the potential about people that others can't really see – because SMU did that to me.” 🐘