

Flipping Out

Former Olympic gymnast **Jair Lynch** sets his sights on commercial real estate. By Chuck Green

ONLY A STRANGER would even suggest that Jair Lynch could be content to follow a predetermined path. “What motivates me is a desire to trail-blaze and be the best,” says the amicable 35-year-old, with underlying but unmistakable passion. He credits his unflinching drive and eagerness to buck the norm with the success he’s achieved both as the first male African American to win an Olympic medal in gymnastics and now as president and CEO of the Washington, DC-based Jair Lynch Companies, a firm that specializes in real estate development—a field in which the competition is also Olympian.

Not surprisingly, Lynch, who grew up in the District, believes there’s a distinct correlation between his athletic talent and his professional prowess. “When I was very young, I knew that getting involved in gymnastics—a nontraditional sport for African Americans and urban kids—[meant] I was seeking excellence on a lonely path. But I also saw the opportunity to redefine the sport.”

He’s primed to do the same for real estate in DC, where he believes his tenacity, discipline,

The new Solea condo on 14th Street and Florida Avenue NW from the Jair Lynch Companies. BELOW RIGHT: Jair Lynch is all smiles.



and resolve will aid in the development of urban neighborhoods. “After walking a nontraditional path and coming back to a neighborhood and city I love, it was

fascinating to reimagine what life could be if certain connection points and levels of appreciation were there,” says Lynch, who is a member of the US Olympic Committee and recently attended the Pan American Games in Brazil.

Real estate, like gymnastics, he adds, is “about taking calculated risk, having an original plan and

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[carrying it out] in a virtuous way.”

Lynch will leverage those characteristics as he presides over the evolution of his company “from a start-up to an institution in Washington. There’s a burgeoning entrepreneurial spirit here. I want to prove that the company is a leader of that new generation.”

—PHILLIPS PARK | DEVELOPMENT—

Estate of the Art

Word is getting out about **Phillips Park**, the luxury development in Foxhall. By Nick Simeone

WHAT WAS ONCE the Foxhall Road estate of philanthropists Marjorie and Duncan Phillips will soon be known as Phillips Park, the site of 46 custom-built luxury homes, where buyers will not only choose their own architects but will also own a piece of city history.

According to the developers of the enclave, about half the lots carved out of the 16-acre estate are currently under negotiation. The homes, which will range in size from 4,500 to 9,000 square feet, will be built to preservation-oriented guidelines on lots measuring from about 9,000 to more than 17,000 square feet; lot prices start at just over \$1 million.

Developer William Pryor, managing member of the Phillips Group, says there was some initial resistance to the community from neighbors, “but that dissipated when they saw the project” and how it will reflect the standards of the Foxhall Road area.

The location has a storied past: Duncan and Marjorie Phillips moved there early in the last century, allowing their art-filled former residence to become what is now the Phillips Collection. In the 1980s, the Foxhall Road estate was bought by Rafik Hariri, the former prime minister of Lebanon, who was said to be planning

to build a home of epic proportions; however, he was assassinated in 2005.

Pryor says that although there have been some direct mailings to select zip codes, most sales have resulted from word of mouth. All 46 properties are expected to be completed by 2011.



photograph by Kay Lynch (WNCN)