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Lucas McCurdy

Bridge the gap in three two. Welcome to Bridge the Gap Podcast is Senior Living podcast with Josh and Lucas. A beautiful day and a wonderful guest. We're very excited to have Tim Bryant, President of StoryPoint Group. Welcome to the podcast

Tim Bryant

Thank you for having me. I'm so excited. And look forward to this opportunity to talk to you all both. So thank you so much for having me.

Lucas McCurdy

You know what, Bridge the Gap has been around for eight years, and I always find it fascinating when I dig back into the archives. So Tim came up to me as a potential guest from another mutual friend. They said, hey, do you know this guy named Tim? And I said, no, I don't know, Tim. Let me look him up. Well, I couldn't find him, but I knew that story point. I said, hey, we have had StoryPoint on our program before, and Josh, we just relived this.

StoryPoint made a viral video during the kind of the Covid era, things that we don't want to remember about Covid, but we do want to remember the joyous times. Because, you know what? You got to make lemonade out of lemons sometimes. And your staff did just that. A great, cool video that hit TikTok and became mega mega viral. The older adults enjoying going down the hallway in these tubes. And that was our first real exposure to your company. And now we get a chance to talk to you. Do you remember that video, and what was that like?

Tim Bryant

Hey, you know, I do. Listening to you speak. Obviously, when we talk about Covid, the emotion goes not great, right? Because there are a lot of people that went through difficult times. I think we all did. But my mind goes to the good times that we've had. You know, those of us who survived and were here, including our residents, employees, there are a lot of meaningful moments that we remember, bringing joy to those residents and families and our employees.

If you notice in that video, our employees had a fantastic time, too, as well, too. So when I think about that time, I remember the perseverance that our team had, the spirit that they had, and our residents who still talk about it to this day. And thank you all, too, for recognizing that and allowing us to share our stories on your podcast, too. So we really appreciate it.

Lucas McCurdy

Of course. Of course. Well, Tim, you know, we enjoyed that time, getting to know your staff and talking about that one video. But I would love for you to give us some history around StoryPoint, and we'd love to get some history around how you entered into senior housing. Let me see.

Tim Bryant

I'll make sure that I try to give you sort of the Reader's Digest version. Sure. But, from a story point perspective, over 40 years of serving my 40 years of loving and caring for people, and

when I started, I myself been at StoryPoint for 22 years now. I started at a community and worked hard, and not to offend anybody, I'm faith-based, so I prayed hard to get to where I am, to serve.

I believe that we're all meant to serve. So when I started, we had about eight communities now and, then and currently, we serve over 160 communities across nine different states. So a lot of growth. But it's been fun. It's been calculated, and we've got a lot of longevity. Here, not just our corporate team or our home office team, but also at the communities where it matters.

Right? We have a lot of line staff who have shared their lives with us for this entire time that we've been together, too. So started largely. And, independent and now we have independent assisted living, enhanced, and memory care communities, and a lot of active adult as well.

Josh Crisp

It was evident to us when we went back to that moment when we saw this viral video, you know, that's not just manufactured overnight. You know, I think it showed the dedication that your team had brought out the best in a lot of people and showcased that. But I've heard it said that even though you guys have scaled, it's very impressive, the number of communities, the residents that you serve. But every life counts. Every life matters. What's been sort of the way that you've led the team and been part of that culture to make that actually happen?

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Josh Crisp

It's one thing to actually say that, but there's got to be, you know, daily effort and grind to make that happen. So what would you attribute that to the people?

Tim Bryant

First and foremost, I love what we do. I believe in and with all my heart, but I suck at a lot of things too, right? And so what I've been blessed with to surround myself with people who are smarter than me. But we care equally as much. And throughout our scale, we kept staying focused on what we do best. We're the best, loving and caring for people. We're the best at it. I firmly believe it. And, we are an employee-first organization. So we spent a lot of time just building our people up, empowering them.

And you, you spoke about moments, and they matter. I think having a strong foundation, solid principles is key for us. And I speak about our pillars and our mission because they changed my life. I'm a better man. I'm a better person. I'm a better servant because of our pillars and our, 1440 this 1440 minutes in the day.

And, we say 1440, and it's a mantra. It's living in our organization. And to us, it means to create the absolute best experience in every interaction, for every person, every minute, every day. I get goosebumps. I say that to you all because it's alive. And our organization, our pillars to dream big, to have courage, to take initiative, to give back, to enjoy it.

At the end of the day, it just be kind, right? Help. Never give up. Fight for what you believe in, and you can start a business. You can start a family. On those pillars, too. So our pillars have been the foundation of our organization, and we haven't wavered from it. I spoke earlier today. There's things that are non-negotiable, right?

We don't have to believe in everything, but to be with us and to serve with us. You have to believe in what we believe in. We believe that there's no higher privilege than to serve each other and to serve the people who are dependent on us.

That's awesome. Well, we want to unpack a little bit of that because we're here at ASHA. I think you just came off that speaking engagement. So we'll talk a little bit about that. But we've been able to Lucas and I are blessed. We get to talk to so many people and hear about great opportunities, great challenges, and get great perspectives on the on the our space that we get the opportunity to work in. But what would you say at StoryPoint, what's kind of two sides of the coin. What's the greatest challenge you guys have or that you see ahead of you or that you're experiencing now? And what's the flip side of that? What's the greatest opportunity you have?

Tim Bryant

It's interesting, right? Because I can talk about things that are happening in the world, obviously, and what the outcome could be in the market, and those types of things. But our greatest joy, the gift is the people. Right. Listen, I love it. There's no greater joy than helping people, right? But in the same breath, the biggest challenge of burden can be people, as well, too. I believe that everybody wants to be great, but people don't know how. I believe that we all want to be a part of being a part of something bigger than ourselves.

So I, you know, for us here, the joy is just. And we're employee first organization, as I mentioned before. So allowing our team to come together to help them become a better version of themselves is the greatest joy that we have to be able to help every single one of us, us here, sitting here today. We want better for the people that we serve. We want better for our families, and we're obsessed with doing that, as well. But, you know, in the same essence is doing that, too. It'll require something of you, right? 1440 is not just all unicorns and rainbows. It's changed. It's a change. You have to change. Hey, change is hard, right? But change is necessary in our lives.

So for people who want to continue to grow, to continue to get better, to continue to serve, this is the best place to be. This is our time for people who are not at that point in their lives. And you enjoy other things. Or full disclosure, it's a, and I say this humbly but kindly. If you're lazy and you know you don't, you don't love serving. And this is not the best work for you. This this, is hard work, right? Our path is hard because our calling is higher. And then also, I do think, you know, serving residents as well, too, is the greatest joy. We have an opportunity to be amazing to the very last breath. I get so excited about that. But, you know, it's a it's it's also a challenge to make sure that you're there. You serve people in every capacity and also family members, right? Because it's adult children who often make the decision for family members to come live with them. And they're a family too. So we want to spend time with them.

09:29 - 13:28

Lucas McCurdy

What do you see going forward as this demographic, really, there's huge motivation in the space of age and income. Qualified people are moving in. Occupancy is going up. Is there a difference in the residents that are coming in today, or in the next couple of years, that you are catering toward the type of services that you're offering, the choices that you provide, or you're talking about that strategically, internally?

Tim Bryant

Yeah, we spend a lot of time I give a huge shout out to Curtis Avison, who leads our Life Enrichment Department to as well as our all of our executive directors, is to we obsess about that, obsess about, the now though and the next and I do think is interesting because I heard ten years ago. But by now everybody will just be on iPads and, you know, we'll be doing all these things.

And that's not really the case. I do think, I don't think I know that we're spending time trying to not just see how weak you can just live longer, but how you can live healthier and happier longer. And that's through engagement. So, you know, technology, there's that buzz words. I hate to play into that, but I want to be able to use that to enhance people's lives, to help us understand and find better ways to be able to serve you.

So, from technology engagement in the apartments, you know, all the way to using it to show appreciation for our teams. But we do spend a lot of time on that. I don't know if we should talk about the next 5 or 10 years. I don't see anything, in my opinion, drastically changing. I do think geography plays a part in it, too. You know, we're largely in the Midwest. You go out on the West Coast, there are obviously some things that are moving faster and different things that are happening in that segment. But for us in the Midwest, I don't see a ton changing. And at the core, well, doing what we do, love it and care for people, that'll never change.

Josh Crisp

So you seem to be very intentional with your time and how you spend your time. We spent some time here at this event. You obviously prepared for your engagement. What do you hope? You know, coming off the stage and what these leaders in senior housing here that we were blessed to be around. What do you hope they take away from what you all talked about today?

Tim Bryant

For me to really answer that, I'm not sure. You never know what's in people heart. So I'm not sure what everybody came here to do. Hey, I know what we came here to do today, right? We came here to connect with the people, but to talk about what we do right where there's a strong conviction. And I would be lying to you both if I.

If I said this wasn't personal. This is personal to me. And, and, and my team and the way we do. So I hope that the people who listen to us speak well, listen to me speak specifically, felt they

felt the conviction and passion when I speak right. And, we do choose our time. Time is of the essence, right?

And so we don't want to waste time. And so coming here was intentional. I did prepare, but I hope you ask that question. I hope that people heard us today. Whatever they signed up for, whatever is in their heart, I hope they walked away and thought, wow, those people. Amen. They love what they do. But if you got that from hearing it in my voice, then hey, job well done.

I do think that there's an obligation with ASHA and some of the other operators for us to come together to really come together and, from a resource standpoint. But also knowledge. I'm a part of a roundtable later on today with some other leaders, and we want to put our heads together to see what we could do to create a better experience from a workforce standpoint for our teams. I'm looking forward to that.

Josh Crisp

That's awesome. Well, so we've been hearing people's perspective because it seems like even talking with groups like NIC MAP data, the data is showing that we've recovered as an industry out of some tough years. A lot of excitement was generated around this event, and people were talking about growth goals. So for you guys, what is what's on your radar, like what do you hope to accomplish?

13:28 - 20:21

Josh Crisp

As far as growth, what areas are you looking to grow in from a community standpoint?

Tim Bryant

We are we're built for growth. And I say that humbly for disclosure way we are. We are built for growth. And we made a commitment to each other. Is that, if we don't if we fail, we stop serving and we don't do the job right, then we'll stop.

We won't. We will continue to do it, you know, not because we deserve it. So growth to us is earned. But we want to be able to grow in the markets that we serve. We're at 166 communities now. You know, there's a commitment to get you know, I would make my own commitment is to get about 300 communities. And if we continue to serve the way that we do, continue to produce, I'm confident that we will be able to get there, too.

So we do utilize a lot of data, which is condensed in some of the markets, and for us, regional density is important. Right. And so you'll notice that in every market that we're in, there's density for us. And there's an advantage to serving our employees by giving them support. We're very active. Right. And so we're at communities, I inspect what I expect.

And trust but verify, I met the community helping solve problems. And that's the only way I know any other way to be right. We should be winning together. And so we're active in that regional density allows us to show a career trajectory for our team as well, but to pounce on with urgency

any issues that possibly occur, and also control the market. Right. I want to make sure that if we're in that market, we're controlling it too, so that we can control the experience regarding care and everything in it, involving serving seniors.

Lucas McCurdy

So speaking to, our audience, that oftentimes we've, we've found we've had this growing, audience of people that are not in our industry that are curious, and they may be Google or something, and we pop up and, we've had a great opportunity to talk with some emerging what we think will be future talent, because they seem to have the passion and the curiosity, and they are listening to our podcast very intently to kind of gain wisdom, understanding of this big thing called senior living that they don't understand. So what would you say to some of the young leaders that if you were talking to yourself 20 years ago, you'd breathe some wisdom into them as they start to pursue a career in senior housing?

Tim Bryant

That's a great question. My background is in hospitality. So I started in the hospital and in hotels. And I would say maybe first and foremost for anyone listening here, spend time figuring out your purpose in your why, right? And, understanding, you know, I believe that we all have a gift. And your thing, your gifts, is the thing you do the absolute best. Best with the least amount of spirit, effort, or whatever you love to do with your gift.

And if you love to serve. I love doing this. And I would encourage you to pursue a career in senior living, right? To be able to do it from any avenue. But if you're serious about serving at a higher level, this is an opportunity for you. When you look at those markets here now, senior housing is really here to stay. You can have a career. Hey, look at me. I started in the kitchen at our Plymouth community. Right. And we have tons of story like like this in our organization. None of us is in a position that we started in. So if you want to come and you want to have fun and you enjoy serving people, then you should consider a career in senior housing and do your due diligence.

All right. Look at companies and understand what you stand for. You know, I bounced around before I came to senior living because you know what you want. You know, you don't want. You don't do that until you ground yourself and clear goals when it's written, this really stands for your purpose in life. And it's hard to be able to do it.

But recognize that and then align yourself with an organization that's doing what you want to do. And, be humble, be open-minded, and be curious.

Lucas McCurdy

I can see Tim during his communities and going into the kitchen putting, you know, putting the tools to the, you know, the hot stove and helping out. I bet you do that.

Tim Bryant

Yeah. You know, I don't listen, we have some of the best culinary talent in the country, and I'm serious, you know, too, I'm confident we probably have more metals in this industry than anybody else. I mean, listen, no plug against any other, any person, but I think any leader that comes in your podcast and doesn't think that they're the best, it's a problem with the absolute best at what we do.

Nobody outworks us. Nobody loves us more than nobody out loves us. So I'm confident in what we do. But we have the best culinary team so they don't let me in the kitchen. But I do tours of the communities I spend time and, and, and thank people, look them in their eye. We're all presidents. He goes around like, we have a choice.

You get up and do what you want to do every day, and you come here because you want to, not because you have to. And so do I. So I walk around the communities and thank them for showing up and doing what they do and then challenge. Right. I expect that it's a privilege to do what we do.

I expect our leaders to perform. I expect them to support. And, I go out, and I inspect that. And I think every single man and woman, every soul, for the work that they do, because they don't have to come and do this for us.

Josh Crisp

Well, Tim, we appreciate you taking the time for us; it means a lot. And your passion, your enthusiasm, it's contagious. And so we're you know, we're hopeful to just spread that word, spread that enthusiasm to the industry that Lucas and I love, we've been putting in a lot of years at spreading the great word about this industry and the great work that people like you do. So, thanks for taking the time for us, Lucas.

What a great opportunity for our listeners. Right.

Lucas McCurdy

It's a great opportunity, Tim. Final word. What's your final word?

Tim Bryant

Hey, one, I want to thank you guys. Being humble, right. The fact that you invited me, I'm humbled to be here and excited about the work that you do and what we stand to gain the opportunity, any time that you're in the area, that we have a community would love for you to come and maybe do your podcast.

I don't know if you ever done that before, but come and do it in one of our communities, right? And make a segment about employees or residents. And we'd love to work with you all to get you on some of the communities. And feeling I feel a great feeling from you all to and your team here, I think that you would enjoy it and benefit from it.

So, hey, just keep that offer open. To, to doing that outside of that, again, I'm truly thankful and, to everybody who's listening, I wish good hope, prosperity for you and your family, be well, and God bless.

Lucas McCurdy

Amen. To that. Well, we appreciate your time, Tim. And for those who want to connect with StoryPoint and Tim and his team, scroll down in the show notes. There'll be a link there for you to connect with and go to btgvoice.com. Connect with this content. So much more. Tim, thanks for your time today.

Tim Bryant

Yeah appreciate it, gentlemen. Thank you so much.

Lucas McCurdy

And thanks to all of our listeners for listening to another great episode of Bridge Gap.

Outro

Thanks for listening. To Bridge the Gap, a podcast dedicated to informing, educating, and influencing the future of housing and services for seniors. This show is powered by our sponsors Aline, NIC MAP, Procure HR, Sage, Gibson Insurance, Hamilton CapTel, ServiceMaster, the Bridge Group Construction, and Solinity, and produced by Grit and Gravel Marketing. Connect with the network team and use your voice to influence the industry by visiting btgvoice.com.