

5 MINUTES — WITH —

JENNIFER MOSS

By Teresa McPherson



Jennifer Moss is director of sales and marketing at Moss Greenhouses Inc. in Jerome, Idaho and a GPN Magazine 40 Under 40 alumna.

Could you share a little about your background?

I'm fourth generation family ownership. I'm the oldest and my brother Dewey is my business partner. We were both literally raised right outside of a greenhouse, and I would follow my dad around every day when I got home from school.

I went to University of Idaho and graduated in 2008 with two degrees — public relations and communication studies. I had worked in restaurants and hotels up until I graduated college, and the biggest thing I learned was what my integrity meant to me.

That's actually what brought me back to the family business; I found that my morals and ethics did not align with the people I was working for, so I went back to the family business. My mom literally went through her job description and decided what she didn't want to do, so I ended up taking on some of those responsibilities.

My dad's perspective is that you need to know how to do every single job on the farm, so I started as the retail assistant manager. We're about 85% wholesale and 15% retail, and when I started doing that I learned retail is kind of a quick-and-dirty Gardening 101 — because you are dealing face-to-face with customers with gardening questions who look to you as the expert.

Then I really just started to work in every department through the off-season and figure out how we do what we do. To date, I've been at the greenhouse for, I think, 10 seasons now, and I am now one of the owners as well as the director of sales and marketing.

What do you love about your job?

Inspiring other people to grow. I really find that all of us have some hesitation in our own strengths, and having the right person to encourage you along the way and mentor you is worth more than money can buy.

But from the hort side of my job, I really wasn't a gardener, and now I really am. Learning how to garden and my trials, my errors [let me] really encourage and cultivate a new gardener. You get to celebrate their victory with them. Bringing that next gardener in, helping them succeed is extremely fulfilling for me and for them.

What keeps you up at night?

All the typical business ownership stuff. Because we were raised in the business, I didn't realize how valuable it is to be raised by business owners to become a business owner. I worry about the same typical stuff (budget, weather, etc.).

On the worst nights, I am literally doing paperwork in my sleep. That always happens for a period of time in the spring. It's definitely a bad night when you've done paperwork in your sleep all night.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I'm a gardener. It's tomato season right now, so I'm definitely canning and making sauce, I absolutely love to cook.

I'm a huge skier; I've been skiing since I was a little kid, and now I'm teaching my stepdaughters how to ski. I'm really into being outside — hiking, running, you name it.

And my absolute favorite thing — that I miss so much — is concerts and live music. COVID has killed it. I usually do anywhere from six to 15 concerts a summer. It's a pretty big thing.

Favorite plant to grow? Why?

Probably tomatoes; I'm a huge vegetable grower. I think the marriage between the garden and the kitchen gives us more satisfaction than any flower garden does truly for me as a cook, and I know I'm an anomaly as a 35-year-old who home cooks everything from scratch. I really love vegetable gardening. 🍅