

# HOMEGROWN ENTREPRENEUR CHANGES LIVES

with Award-winning Outdoor Designs  
and Landscapes

BY HEATHER CLARKE

*By using a combination of products on this project G2 was able to create a natural setting while keeping a formal environment. Palm trees complement the Mediterranean style of the home.*



Barely 30 years old, Garret already has 19 years experience in the nursery and landscaping industries.



*G2 constructed this 1800 square foot pool pavilion with a timber framed structure to create a naturally influenced setting which included plasma TVs, Wood fired pizza oven, gas and charcoal grills, bi-folding doors and full kitchen amenities.*

**H** HE BUILT HIS FIRST GREENHOUSE AT 11 YEARS OLD, GOT HIS FIRST BUSINESS LICENSE AT 13, STARTED LANDSCAPING AT 14 AND HIRED HIS FIRST CREW AT 17.

Meet Garret Hergert, now age 30, and owner and operator of the award-winning design/build company G2 Outdoor Living, Inc.

Located near Ridgefield, Washington, G2 Outdoor Living is more than just a landscaping business, more than just a contracting business – it’s about creating outdoor living spaces that bring the indoors out and the outdoors in. Whether it’s a fire pit, a retaining wall or a waterfall, it’s about designing and building spaces that enhance people’s lives.

Hergert grew up influenced by commercial construction and agriculture.

“The business is in my blood. My father was a general contractor, built houses and also raised commercial raspberries and fryer chickens. I’ve always loved being outdoors, working with plants, growing things and landscaping – it’s formed who I am and what I do today,” says Hergert.

Today Hergert stands on the same principles he did when he started his business 15 years ago – a high quality product and top of the line workmanship.

“We definitely are not the lowest pricing structure, but the end result is far above what you can get from



“I spent the first ten years of my business building my reputation with the highest quality work and the last five years it has really paid off because people know that they are getting the best there is.”



*This Frank Lloyd Wright influenced home overlooks a beautiful lake setting. Using natural stone products we created a wall of water cascading toward the home. Terraced stamped concrete patios and natural gas fire pit complete this "Lakeview Estate."*

anyone else," said Hergert. "I spent the first ten years of my business building my reputation with the highest quality work and the last five years it has really paid off because people know that they are getting the best there is."

Each project is unique, with the customer's specific needs, wants and dreams in mind.

"I put my heart into every project we design," says Hergert.

He grows 20-acres of nursery stock for his projects and other clientele on the fourth-generation family farm.

Hergert currently employs 12 people in construction, landscape maintenance and nursery operations. "I pride myself on hiring experienced staff and having a quality line of equipment to deliver landscape works of art."

Hergert's commitment to quality was certainly recognized last year when he won 13 awards for his projects. Eight of those awards came from the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals annual design competition and included seven category-topping Grand Awards and a rarely-awarded Overall Judges Award. His award-winning projects range from a three-acre mountain retreat to a religious interpretive center behind an industrial office building.

"The awards are a huge accomplishment for me. I never imagined I'd win seven out of eight Grand Awards and the Judge's Award is an honor all of its own," said Hergert.

Winning awards from WALP is evidence that Hergert has achieved the reputation he wanted among his

colleagues and peers.

"He's setting a new trend in our profession by combining design, architecture, excavation, construction and landscaping to create the quality spaces that help people truly enjoy the outdoors," said Jeff Carroll of Jefferson Landscaping in Woodinville, which specializes in garden landscapes.

"Every project Hergert touches shows the inspired passion he has for creating a space that belongs in its surroundings and offers unsurpassed beauty. He also inspires other designers by raising the bar," continued Carroll.

That inspired passion shines through when you talk to Hergert about his work.

When asked what the favorite thing about his job is, he doesn't even give it a second thought, "My favorite part about my job is helping people's dreams come true. It's about designing unique projects, each one special and also becoming friends with the people you work with. It's about enhancing people's lives," says Hergert.

Hergert is not only making a difference through G2 Outdoor Living, but also through his work with the Washington Farm Bureau's Young Farmers and Ranchers program. Geared specifically for those in ag industries between the ages 18 and 35, the group provides opportunities in leadership development, legislative awareness, educational conferences, and networking with other farmers and ranchers around the world.

Although a young farmer and rancher himself, he's already experienced and



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*In this project G2 designed multiple outdoor rooms by incorporating natural stones, different levels of stamped concrete patios and new composite deck areas.*



*Enter into this swimming pool by sliding through this wall of water while two other cascades await your swift entrance. Natural basalt columns and split stone masonry were installed to create this mountain retreat.*

learned a lot about the business and has found his role within the group to be one of mentoring others who are pursuing a future in agriculture.

"YF&R is made up of a variety of people – some have been in the business a while, some are taking over their parent's businesses, and some are just looking to get started. It's a great group of people for support," said Hergert.

Hergert recently traveled with 14 other Washington members to the Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The theme for the conference, "Stand Up and Speak Out," was geared toward getting the word out to the general public about all the good things happening in the agriculture industry.

"With recent documentaries and dire news coverage, the American public hears an agricultural story that is often full of false truths. It's important to spread the word about the hard working farmers and agricultural workers who are bringing safe, reliable, food and fiber products to the American people," shared Hergert.

Hergert has this advice for other young business owners and entrepreneurs in the agricultural industry, "Anything is possible. The sky is the limit if you put your heart and soul into it. I've had my share of troubles, stumbles and lessons, but you brush off and you move forward. You have to have an entrepreneurial mindset and think outside of the box."

Although he's already come so far in only 15 years, Hergert has big plans for

the next 10- to 20- years.

He recently became licensed in Oregon to further pursue challenging projects throughout the Pacific Northwest. He has plans to expand the farm to include more native species, expanding into wineries and event facilities and someday completing landscape projects around the globe.

"I would love for G2 Outdoor Living to be a national and even international landscape design company. I don't want to have thousands of employees, but I want to have a specialized team that can deliver high quality projects all over the world, whether it's for celebrities, specialty businesses, or whoever," says Hergert. "I also see G2 giving back, such as designing and installing streetscapes or parks for municipalities or even gathering business sponsorship for international projects."

Hergert's work ethic and drive, combined with his desire to enhance lives and give

back to others, is certainly a recipe for success in the agricultural industry.

Expect to continue seeing great things from Hergert both in the Pacific Northwest and globally.

*For more information about G2 visit [www.g2outdoorliving.com](http://www.g2outdoorliving.com) or call (360) 727-5975. ■*

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