

# TRANSCRIPT: **ROBERT H. GOODWIN INTERVIEW**

Mr. Robert H. Goodwin · Owner of Oldham Goodwin Group

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## **TRANSCRIPT**

An interview with Mr. Robert H. Goodwin, NFL player & currently owner of Oldham Goodwin Group. Goodwin is a 1996 graduate from Texas A&M and an inducted member of the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry.

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Mr. Robert H. Goodwin | Transcript  
Tyus R. Timm Honor Registry | Department of Agricultural Economics | Texas A&M University

Could you please introduce yourself and tell us a little about your career?

My name is Robert Hunter Goodwin, Class of 1996, and I guess my career is kind of multifaceted former Texas A&M fightin' Texas Aggie and went on and had a nine-year NFL career. I own two companies: the Oldham Goodwin group, which is a real estate company. We do property management, acquisition, disposition, development, and I also am part owner in a company called TexAgs.com, which covers A&M athletics.

Could you tell us a little about your experiences at Texas A&M?

You know, grew up in a longhorn house and really had a disliking for Texas A&M as a young kid, but I think the first time I stepped foot on campus something just clicked and resonated with me. Fell in love with the school, fell in love with the culture, just fell in love with, with the traditions, and I think it might not appeal to everybody, but those that it connects with it's a great institution, and, you know, to try to pin down memories that are meaningful— there were so many both on the field and I guess in the classroom. I was a major in ag economics and just a great affinity for the leadership. They always have a saying in business that's more about the man than it is the plan, and I think that bodes well here at Texas A&M. Great institution but the institution's only as good as those people that are there every day — the people make it and one, I guess, college I can speak to is the College of Agriculture. Just from the top down, great leadership, great professors. They don't treat you like a number. They really care. They hold you accountable, but like a good parent I think they that give you enough rope to, to hang yourself but at the same time enough encouragement to succeed, and just a great experience here, so many I can't really pinpoint one. Best times in my life right here in Texas A&M.

Can you describe your early career?

Well, was drafted here in the 1996 draft and obviously that career path took me to some big cities. Was a bit of a culture shock, but this will probably... some will find this funny, but I think my preparation in ag eco really helped me to handle an influx of money early. As a 21-year-old kid, you know, making a large income and having that responsibility, it was really great to have the foundation in academic excellence here Texas A&M that was given to me via, you know, the College of Agriculture, and also there were just some really great mentors, some of which are inductees into the Ty Timm registry. Bill Carter's a name that jumps out at me — was, he's a financial advisor, and it was really a great, you know, foundation for me, a place to bounce ideas and really help cultivate me early in my career to not screw it up and to, to not lose the money that I was making, and then I think within that, having that nest egg, it was a, it was a great, you know, capital event that allowed me to pursue some other things after football. Passions that are real estate. I really enjoy the dynamics there, and I think as our company has migrated heavily into the management side of things, I find there's a tremendous parallel between football and the management of people. While you're not trying to win games day by day, you are, there are victories, and you've got to find those and measure those, and it's competitive, and I think it's all about motivation and reaching people and getting people to aspire to be their best, and I love that component. I think that my time here at A&M, my education here at A&M, and I've got to give my, my football background, have all played major parts and my ability, I guess, to transition from the NFL into the private sector and achieve some success in business.

What advice do you have for students of Agricultural Economics?

I think the good thing that I've seen, the College of Ag has really blossomed, specifically the curriculum of economics, and they've really opened it up, and it's no longer as rigid as you used to be where it's ag— the conventional products of agriculture: corn and farming and... They now embrace development, land development. They embrace retail. If you sit in on the classes that Dr. Rister puts it as an academic adv — "Professor for a Day", and you grade some of these programs, they've really opened it up, and economics is economics is economics. At its core, whether it's trying to pro forma out how a corn crop is going to do in a 100-acre field or how a mixed-use development is going to do in that same 100- acre field, it's all about understanding modeling, understanding risk, and being able to forecast out production with a lot of variables. The variables are different, and farming, it's rain and some things you can't control, but I find in

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the, in the business world, especially real estate, there's a lot of interest rates are out, really out of your control, cap rates, the market bein' bearish or bullish, the reactant — reaction of capital in the marketplace — all those things are very out of your control. They're variables that really are constantly moving, and I think what... regardless of what the product is that you're trying to put out in the field, I think that what I learned in ag eco really has helped me be successful.

How were you able to manage time for family, work and other priorities throughout your career?

That's, that's probably the challenge, challenging thing is trying to achieve balance, and I'll answer that with this. There's a lady one time, and I won't say her name, but she was elderly but looked fabulously young, and I'll never forget. I went up to her and I said, "What's your secret? Tell me how you're able to look the way you look and have the health you have at your age," and she looked at me and said, "I'm fanatically moderate," and I think the takeaway is don't eat too little, don't eat too much, don't work too late, don't work too much, and truly it's, it's balance, and I think striving to always find that balance in your life... if you can find happiness in your home, that's going to segue into happiness at work, and it is hard. I think in this day and age, it's, it's commanding, it's challenging. Add kids into the dynamic — I have two lovely children — and it does. It really, I think you have to become a very effective time manager, which I'm not great. I'm not the best, but I'm working to get better, and in those areas where you're not good, I have people that hold me accountable to a schedule. My administrative assistant helps me stay on task and on time, but as a student, kind of going back to your former question, I think that's one thing that you can lose sight of and become so driven to achieve a certain goal that you, there's a lot of collateral damage in that achievement, and trying to find balance is one of the hardest things that I don't think you ever perfect. It's kind of like a golf swing; I think you, you work at it constantly and try to achieve it, and as long as you're fighting the good fight and trying to work towards it, I think you're doing the right thing.

What are your thoughts on being selected to the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry?

You know, I watched some of the former inductees talk about Dr. Timm. I did not know him personally, but I watched Bill Carter's one interview that really stood out. One thing that jumps out when you read his bio, honor, integrity, high degree of character, and it said almost verbatim that he was really good at trying to find, surrounding himself with people that were better than he was, and so, at any given field, and that, by surrounding himself with really highly talented people, it, it enabled him to achieve great success, and I think within that, that says a lot about the man: tremendous amount of humility, tremendous amount of unselfish service. So, it's a great honor, great honor.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Just, I think... I don't know if I deserve to be part of this group. I think as I was kind of waiting to find out the, or thinking about the right thing to say tonight, I think it's kind of like the first day that I entered the NFL. I didn't really feel like I belong, but I had a commitment that I would work really, really hard to justify being there, and I kind of feel the same about this. Very, very astute gentlemen in this group; I don't think I deserve to be a part of it, but I'ma work damn hard to justify it.

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