

Note: C12 is about community, and that is why we meet in our groups. However, there is a broader community of C12 members throughout North Texas. Look for a series of introductions that you can use to get to know others that share the bonds of C12. – Tom Hawes, Joe Galindo, Mike Gullatt, Tom O'Dwyer, Kevin Pate, Michelle Moore, Andrea Rodarte



Meet Shawn Yates

Shawn and his wife, Tammy, have been married for 18 years. They met in high school but did not date until college. When they got engaged, they said they wanted to have four kids: two boys and two girls. Shawn maintains that the most amazing thing is that God gave them the family they always wanted. His greatest title in the world is "Dad." They have four kids: Avery (16), Kennedy (14), Ruston (9), and Easton (3). The two oldest are girls, and two youngest are boys. Tammy is a stay-at-home mom who educates their children. They attend First Baptist Church in Spring, TX. Shawn is the Regional Manager for the Houston branch of The Perfect Light, where he manages the operations of the landscape lighting division of the company. His role is a hybrid role of both sales and operations.



<https://thepperfectlight.com/>

Where did you grow up? Where are your roots?

I was born in Mississippi and lived there until high school when I moved to South Louisiana. After high school, I joined the Army as part of the Louisiana National Guard. I went to Louisiana Tech University, where I graduated with a BS in Marketing. After graduating college, I moved to Houston, where my wife's family resides. While in the Army National Guard, I spent one year in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Our unit was there serving in a support role, building schools and roads. My mother was also in the Army and served in the Mississippi National Guard. She was a full bird Colonel and was the highest-ranking military officer ever in the state of Mississippi at the time of her retirement.

What are some of your favorite things?

As a hobby, my favorite things are reading and writing. Storytelling through writing is what drove me to pursue a Marketing degree. Before switching to Marketing, I was pursuing a degree in journalism. I am an avid reader, and my bookshelves are filled with all things theology.

How do you like to spend your spare time?

I love spending time with my family and doing things together. Camping and time outdoors are favorites. My wife comes from a large family (nicknamed "The Herd"), and we often get together on the weekends. We try not to miss a family birthday party or other fun occasions, so we enjoy traveling between Waco, Dallas, and Houston for time with our tight-knit extended family.

What was the last 'outing' or trip you took with your family?

We went to Branson right before Thanksgiving and went to see The Ark exhibit in Kentucky. It was the longest road trip we have taken as a family. We are more of the weekend warrior type of people and usually don't travel long distances.



How did you start your business/ how did you get to where you are now?

My journey into my current position came through a wonderful connection within my C12 group. Straight from college, I began a career in operations as a Healthcare Administrator for 13 years. While still in the healthcare industry, I was giving my Core Business Presentation at one of our C12 meetings one day. During the presentation, I indicated I wanted to leave healthcare and make a career change. My fellow member, Mike Rentz, recruited me and has entrusted me to run TPL's Houston branch for the last three years. I learned to be a designer by researching the industry, connecting through different trade organizations within the industry, reading many books, and a lot of practice. I had 120 employees in healthcare and dealt with a \$20 million budget every year. Now I am in residential services with a less corporate, more hands-on feeling. I love it and run it as if it were my own business.

What service does your company provide?

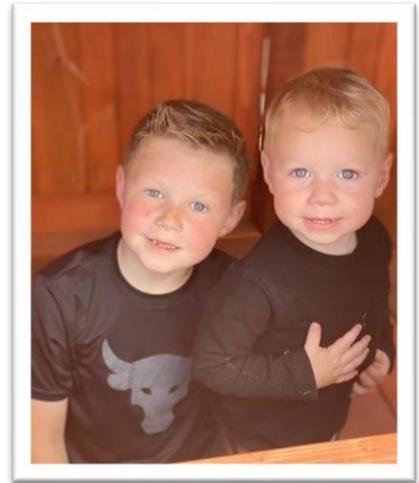
We provide outdoor lighting for residential and commercial settings. As a designer, I paint a person's home and landscaping with light. Bringing an artistic view to a customer's home is extremely rewarding, and the joy it brings to our customers is priceless.

How do you describe your mission and values?

We exist to bring exceptional joy to our customers. We accent a customer's home and landscape with ambient lighting. Our values are trust, convenience, empowerment, and joy.

Who are your primary customers?

Our customers have a great appreciation for design, illumination, quality, and service. Our customers trust us to make the absolute best vision of their home come to life. After 20 years in business, most of our business comes from referrals.



How and why did you come to C12?

In 2013, I was sitting on a school board with a guy who was a C12 member. He asked me some questions, which led to a C12 introduction. My first C12 group was in San Antonio and was led by none other than the current C12 CEO, Mike Sharrow. When I moved to the Waco area, the closest option to me was Dallas, and I have been traveling back and forth ever since. There are plenty of other groups closer to my home that I could go to, but I love my group.

What do you value about your group?

The camaraderie of my group is second to none. I have developed such strong friendships, and that has been life-altering. I look forward to my group each month and would move Heaven and Earth not to miss my group meeting. Focusing on my business instead of just in my business refreshes my love for it, my employees, and the kingdom God is building through it. I would not be where I am now without C12, but I would not be in an organization where I could not be in C12. It's that important to me.

What challenges as a business owner have you experienced, and how has your C12 group or chair helped with these challenges?

The wisdom, care, and guidance that my chair, Tom Hawes, provides is a treasure that I hold with great respect. Whether it is a strategic move within the business or a personal challenge within the faith and the world, Tom, has become a sounding board that is beyond anything I can get elsewhere. I would consider Tom one of the greatest mentors I've ever had. Our group is like a band of brothers. If someone is not there, you miss them. Our

interaction is honest, vulnerable, transparent, and encouraging. Our time together is very prized by me. I rearrange my schedule around that and wouldn't want to miss for anything.

How could you help other C12 members? This can be either professionally or personally.

I have a passion for building God's kingdom through business. I pray that I can be of some influence on those around me to continue to fight the good fight. I pray that I can encourage others to bring everything in view for God's glory. My heart for sound biblical doctrine can help those facing specific dilemmas. We share prayer cards in our group. I received one of those cards from a member who had a big presentation coming up. I had prayed for him, and I sent him an encouraging text message. That was three years ago, and he still tells how much that text meant to him. It came 5 minutes before he had to step onto the stage. Ever since he gave me that feedback, it has impressed on me the value of how much our small words can mean to other people. They could be life-changing in a way. I try always to remember how important it is to encourage people.

How do you use your business as a ministry?

Being a representative of our company to the public, I try to use every encounter with our customers to bring light to those who may live in darkness. We ask for prayer needs when we are at an appointment, and we maintain a prayer list for our customers. Our name is the Perfect Light, and our logo includes a cross, which spurs many conversations. I am currently writing a book, 'Light of the World,' that I will be able to hand to



customers as we complete an installation. Its purpose is to point people to Christ. One of my goals is to have it published before the end of the year. My favorite Bible verse has become my personal mission statement: 2 Corinthians 4:6 says, "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of the darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ came as the light in the darkness to illuminate the world for God's glory.