

## Albright Draws on Career Highlights To Help Realtors Through Uncertain Times

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ERIC SMITH | The Daily News

[Jon Albright](#) is a household name to many basketball fans, and not just those who live here and remember his days as a sharpshooting guard for then-Memphis State University.

Albright played for the Tigers from 1980-1984 – the “short shorts era” as he calls it – but he also worked for 20 years as a hoops analyst for ESPN, broadcasting up to 60 games a year locally and nationally between 1985 and 2005.

Albright traveled all over the country, often out West, but he even did color commentary or analysis for one of current Memphis coach John Calipari’s games when Calipari was coaching at the University of Massachusetts.

During Albright’s stretch as a national analyst for ESPN, however, he also was forging a successful career as a commercial real estate broker. He worked for Weston Cos. before forming a similar company and running that for 10 years.

In 2007 he became partner of [Investec Realty Services LLC](#), and this year he will achieve another professional milestone as president of the Memphis Area Association of Realtors, the state’s largest trade organization for real estate professionals.

### Long-term planning

Despite his basketball pedigree and longtime “night” job as an analyst, real estate always seemed like a perfect fit for Albright, who sought a career with long-term stability and without limits.

“Real estate certainly fit both of those criteria,” he said. “There’s no limit to what you can do. I’m not trying to be unrealistic here, but you can find a niche and find something that you truly enjoy and there’s going to be a need for it. Whether it’s commercial, development, whatever it might be, there’s always going to be a need for it.”

Albright – who in 2006 served as president of MAAR’s Commercial Council – said his need to give back to the profession was the reason he became active in the association, and why he served on the board of directors and eventually ascended to the presidency.

In this role, he is challenged with being the face of an industry that’s embroiled in a serious slump. Albright said his role as MAAR president will be one of encouragement, not unlike a basketball coach giving his team a pep talk in the locker room at halftime.

“Sports is the greatest teacher I know for continuing to plug on no matter what happens. ... It’s not how many times you get knocked down, it’s how many times you get back up.”  
– **Jon Albright**

#### JOHN ALBRIGHT

Position: Partner

Company: Investec Realty Services LLC

Basics: Albright, who spent his early career as a basketball player and later as a widely known sports commentator, wants to help other real estate professionals weather the current economic slump with aplomb.



“For me, the most important thing is morale in this coming year,” Albright said. “Most of our residential members have been through a couple of years where it’s been tough. If you know what’s around the corner, you’re OK. It doesn’t matter how far the curve is if you know what’s around the corner.”

## **Making it better**

Albright said he thinks the market will improve this year, perhaps by second or third quarter, with inventory levels bottoming out and sales starting to pick up. Albright said he will emphasize education and professionalism among Realtors this year to elevate their value in the community and help them weather this storm until it passes.

“My challenge is to get people to that point,” he said. “In uncertain times, there’s always going to be opportunities. You’ve got to be smart enough and committed and focused enough to find where those opportunities are and then pursue them.”

Albright the ex-basketball player and broadcaster has a natural proclivity for sports metaphors. He points out that the greatest baseball players don’t get a hit seven out of 10 times at the plate and the greatest basketball players miss half their shots.

For him, those lessons also apply in the business world, especially real estate, and they are apropos for this down market.

“Sports is the greatest teacher I know for continuing to plug on no matter what happens,” Albright said. “Sports teaches you to keep picking yourself back up. It’s not how many times you get knocked down, it’s how many times you get back up. Eventually, if you keep persevering, you will be successful. That’s a theme I like about sports. It parallels life so closely. I believe in that wholeheartedly.”