

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Steve Plantz, iMS **Director of Communications**

November 11, 2014 304-586-2863, ext.168 splantz@sleeponthebest.com

Sleep Outfitters CEO Kim Brown Knopf -- UK grad, Louisville native – celebrates 31 years of growth in mattress business

WINFIELD, W.VA. – Sleep Outfitters owner and CEO Kim Brown Knopf says when she was in the sixth grade in Louisville, she was given an assignment to write about the American Dream, but she wasn't sure what it was. "I had to look it up in the encyclopedia. I'd have to say I have lived that American dream. But it's not over."

This year, Knopf's company, Innovative Mattress Solutions (iMS) celebrates 31 years as a mattress retailer. IMS operates 155 stores across six states -- West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana and Alabama – under the Sleep Outfitters, Mattress Warehouse and Mattress King (Alabama) names.

IMS was founded by Knopf, a Louisville native and University of Kentucky alumna, 30 years ago in South Charleston, W.Va. when she opened her first store, under the Mattress Warehouse name. Trade publication Furniture/Today last year cited Innovative Mattress Solutions as the country's eighth largest mattress retailer.

Knopf grew up in Louisville, the oldest of five children. She and her siblings attended Catholic schools, but had to pay a large portion of their own tuitions. That, she says, taught them at a very early age the importance of a strong work ethic.

Knopf won a state basketball championship at Sacred Heart Academy in 1977, and was elected president of her senior class. But that summer, when her classmates went off for their last big summer flings before heading to college, Knopf went to work.

"Neither of my parents went to college, so I didn't know how to get into college," she told the Charleston Gazette earlier this year.

So, she went to work in a grocery store, working midnight to 8 a.m. Later, she would get a job in a bed and bath store, helping offload trucks and stocking shelves. Before long she was a salesperson, enjoying the interaction with customers. And she was not yet 18.

Knopf says she was able to save enough money to enroll at the University of Kentucky, where she met her future husband, Ken Knopf, a law student from Charleston, W.Va., when they both served on the student board.

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PRESS RELEASE

Kim Brown Knopf 2-2-2

When Knopf graduated from U.K., she wasn't sure what she wanted to do. She eventually answered a newspaper ad for a mattress store manager. There she met Bill Brown, who became a father figure to her. She told Brown that she was getting married and would likely be leaving for Charleston, her future husband's hometown. Brown thought Charleston, W.Va. would be a good place to open a mattress store.

He was right. In 1983 in South Charleston, W.Va., Knopf opened her first mattress store, Mattress Warehouse.

"I was one of the first females in our industry. It's still totally male-dominated. I was 23 and breaking into this new world. I was trying to get vendors to give me credit. I would go to the market, and they would ignore me. I would sit there until they finished talking to all their other clients, and then they would talk to me. At some point, they finally started taking me seriously."

In her company's first 20 years, Knopf opened 20 stores. In the last 10 years, she has opened or acquired 135 stores.

Knopf's company is headquartered in the small town of Winfield, W.Va. Knopf lives in nearby Charleston, but she often says she lives on I-64, the interstate that links Charleston, Huntington, Lexington and Louisville. She travels regularly to distribution centers in the Kentucky markets, which also house various of the company's marketing team. Daughter Karrie, who lives in Louisville, serves as the company's digital marketing director. Husband Ken is a pilot who often flies Knopf to meetings and appointments.

In addition to the well-known Sealy, Stearns & Foster and Tempur-Pedic mattress products, the company is the exclusive distributor in its markets of the British-made Dormeo Octaspring mattresses, and its very own Kim Knopf-designed uDream lines of mattresses.

Sleep Outfitters also carries many sleep technologies and products, such as memory foam, gel and innerspring mattresses, adjustable bed foundations, and sleep accessories such as pillows and bed bug protectors.











PRESS RELEASE

Mattress Recycling Leader

Discarded mattresses are becoming a nuisance in America's landfills. Partnering with Spring Back Recycling of Nashville, Tenn., Sleep Outfitters recycles an average of 400 old mattresses a week by deconstructing them and selling the materials for new and different uses.

In 2013, iMS recycled nearly 17,000 mattresses taken from customers' homes, diverting more than 1.2 million pounds of mattress waste from community landfills. As of Oct. 31, 2014, Sleep Outfitters and iMS have recycled 18,008 mattresses, constituting more than 1.3 million pounds of mattress waste that never arrives at a landfill.

This year, three states, Rhode Island, Connecticut and California are implementing mandatory mattress recycling programs passed by their legislatures in 2013. They are the first states to pass such laws. Knopf's company recycles voluntarily.

About Mattress Warehouse, Sleep Outfitters, Mattress King and Innovative Mattress **Solutions**

Innovative Mattress Solutions, headquartered in Winfield, W.Va., operates more than 155 retail mattress stores under the Mattress Warehouse, Sleep Outfitters and Mattress King brands in six states: West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee and Alabama.

Founded in 1983 by CEO Kim Brown Knopf, the company and its team believe a restful night's sleep is the foundation of a healthy lifestyle. Their comfort and price promises help customers rest easy, knowing they have 120 days to make a change if they are not comfortable sleeping in their new bed.

For sleep tips, lifestyle motivation, and to learn about specials, visit and like Sleep Outfitters Facebook Page and follow Kim Knopf's daughter, Karrie Knopf, at her Pillow Talk Blog.

For more information on Kim Knopf and the company's history, visit our newsroom at Sleep **Outfitters Newsroom**









