

17th Annual Young Professionals 2024

TRI-CITIES AREA
JOURNAL of BUSINESS

Nicholas Mercer

Wealth Advisor
Piton Wealth



Courtesy Rich Breshears Professional Photography

Age: 29

Current city of residence: Kennewick

Briefly describe your company:

Piton Wealth is a comprehensive financial advising and investment company. We help people plan their estate, retirement, business and other long-term goals that they wish to accomplish. As a fiduciary for our clients, we are dedicated to providing comprehensive advice that better their lives. As a member of the Thrivent Advisor Network, we are dedicated to service so that we and our clients embody the mantra of Thrivent, “live generously.”

How long have you worked there?

Eight years.

Education: Please list any degrees and professional certifications.

- Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration, Morehead State University
- CFP (Certified Financial Planner)
- CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) candidate

Briefly describe your job and how you got into it:

My job consists most importantly of providing comprehensive financial planning, so that financial resources support the goals that clients have for their lives. Earlier in my life, I thought of the world of finance as fundamentally trading on Wall Street, and only for the most wealthy. While in college, however, I worked at a country club in Manchester by the Sea, where I was blessed to meet a number of people in different finance jobs who showed me that although Wall Street is a prominent part of the financial world, there are many opportunities to serve people directly. From this experience, I knew that I wanted a career directly helping people with finances and advising them so that they lead fulfilling lives.

Tell us about your first job.

In my early years in pursuit of my dream of becoming a tennis pro, I played as a practice partner at my local tennis club. Sometimes I would stay all night at the club and play with anyone willing. Occasionally someone would pay me to practice against them.

What advice would you give to your younger self about achieving success?

So much of society teaches us ways to benefit ourselves. Now I firmly believe that if you can make someone else’s life better, easier or more efficient, you will be successful. Whether it’s for a career or just something fun, if you do something that benefits someone else in one of those ways, you can’t go wrong.

What was your dream job as a child?

To be a professional tennis player.

What or who most influenced your career path or leadership style? This could be a book, class, person, etc.

My parents and childhood tennis coaches have influenced my path the most. Although not being directly related to finance, and even though I didn’t recognize it at the time, my parents and my tennis coaches instilled a sense of resilience, humility and perseverance. They were adamant that completing something prop-

erly, regardless of the outcome, is much more important than immediate gratification. This has had a marked impact on my leadership style and career. It’s practically impossible to offer fiduciary advice when you are concerned with the outcome for yourself. Instead, completing the task with the outcome for the client in mind is the only thing that should matter, knowing that if you do this over and over again, good things will happen is ingrained in me.

What would be your top three priorities to make our community a better place?

- Bringing the cities together to share wisdom and resources. This would enable bigger projects that would bring in more stable jobs and offer better services and activities for the community.
- Expand our community parks in an affordable way for people. As a parent of two young girls, I would love to see our community embrace parks and recreation that offer many safe spaces for children to explore, play and learn in.
- Advocate for our local nonprofits, so we can grow sustainably while not pricing out our longtime community members.

Tell us about your community involvement/ community service:

I strive to bring all the skills and energy that I have to serve the community most effectively. From my background in tennis, I currently volunteer as a board member with the Mid-Columbia Tennis Association, which provides equipment and opportunities to play the sport to youth and local schools in the area without the resources to do so. Over the years we have helped provide thousands of balls, rackets, nets, coaching hours and other resources to schools that do not have the funding to fulfill their after-school programs. We also recently started a scholarship fund for low-income families who would like to get active and join group lessons but cannot afford to pay fees.

As a team member of Piton Wealth, I have worked with local nonprofits like Habitat for Humanity Tri-County Partners for many years. At related events and through my church, I seek out ways to participate and support as much of a range of activities as I can.

If you had unlimited time, what volunteer work would you be interested in doing?

I am very interested in combating homelessness and mental illness, which commonly go hand in hand. With unlimited time, I would take a deep dive into understanding both problems and developing ways to alleviate them in tandem. With my expertise in finance, I would love to be able to help those stuck in a cycle of poverty overcome simple, yet overwhelming, issues, such as getting valid IDs or an email address to apply for jobs.

How do you achieve work-life balance?

My only objective in life is to be the best husband and father possible. Sometimes this involves demonstrating hard work and community involvement and sometimes this just means being home to cook dinner or play with my two girls. At the moment, one of our favorite things to do is the Gesa Carousel of Dreams. Both girls love the ride, and we can easily spend two hours there.

List any awards/honors you have received:

For 2023, I was recognized as a Voice in Philanthropy Honoree by Thrivent Charitable Impact & Investing (for facilitating a certain level of charitable donations during the year 2023).

Do you have family? Pets?

My wife and I have two daughters now, and no pets yet. The oldest daughter (3 years old) however, has interacted with our friends’ dogs, so I anticipate that she will be asking for her

own soon. Our youngest just turned 1 and is actively trying to keep up with her big sister.

What brought you to the Tri-Cities? Did you grow up here?

I grew up in England and then attended college in Kentucky, where I met my wife, Leah. When we graduated, we returned to her hometown, Richland, with the idea that after a year, we would decide on something more permanent. We both ended up finding great careers, putting down roots and loving the Tri-Cities.

What’s your dream vacation?
I have always wanted to visit Israel and Egypt. I love history and think anywhere with a rich history is a great vacation.

Planner or procrastinator?
Planner.

Introvert or extrovert?
Extrovert.

First car?
A Toyota Yaris that was way too small to do more than 60 mph, but it got me where I needed to go. I passed it along to my brother-in-law, and it now has 150,000+ miles and is still going strong.

Favorite thing to do in Tri-Cities?
I love going out in the summer and playing golf with clients, friends and, hopefully soon, family. I am actively looking forward to teaching my girls to play (and it won’t take much to teach them everything I know!).

Favorite Tri-City restaurant?
Soi 705 or Kagen Coffee & Crepes.

Favorite day of the week?
Monday: I am always refreshed and get some of my best planning done.

What would people be most surprised to learn about you?
I have played tennis since I was 5 years old and played all through college at the Division 1 level. Most people are surprised when I tell them I only play once a year now and that I have traded tennis for pickleball and golf.

Text, email, phone call?
Phone call: if I can talk to you, I know we can get the problem solved much quicker than texting.

Would you rather travel back in time or to the future?
I like living it day by day. I would rather travel back in time and learn about history and how it shaped today’s world. I don’t think I want to know what happens in the future. I have been known to say don’t worry about a problem that doesn’t exist yet, because knowing about it would just give me a lot more to do.