



ADVENTURE TIME

Former Pittsburgh Steeler **Brett Keisel** tackles a new business venture that combines his two loves: the great outdoors and bringing people together

As soon as former Pittsburgh Steeler Brett Keisel decided to hang up his cleats for good in 2015, he received countless offers to get into coaching or sports media. Instead, he wanted to embark on a completely new career path.

"When I was playing, especially later in my career, one of my favorite things — and one of the toughest things — was bringing the team together," says Keisel, who served as the defensive captain for the Steelers during his time as defensive end. "Getting them to bond and go out and fight for one another is not as easy as it might sound. But I loved that. I have a passion for that. I wanted to bring that into the corporate world and bring people together in a unique way to grow as a company."

And he did, with the launch of Mighty Oak Adventures. Seamlessly blending his passion for creating unity within a group and his admiration for anything involving the great outdoors, the program serves as a unique outlet for colleagues who are looking to connect on a different level and boost team morale.

A typical Mighty Oak Adventure is one or two days, where groups spend time with Keisel at places like Nemaacolin Woodlands Resort or HomeWaters, a fly fishing destination in Altoona. Companies that would prefer a longer trip can go through Frontiers International Travel, which offers adventures outside of Western PA. As they take in the

beauty of the outdoors, they also take on activities they might not be too familiar with. "Shooting, fly fishing, hiking, bonfires — all of the things that I love doing," Keisel says. "I grew up in Wyoming, and my family would do these types of things all of the time. You start to notice that it brings you together when you do things together outside."

Bonding with nature and one another, the participants grow with each goal that's accomplished through teamwork. This growth remains present in the workplace afterwards, as does the clarity that comes from embracing a new environment and shaking up the normal 9 to 5. With all of these factors combined, companies will notice more positive interactions and higher productivity at work in the future.

For Keisel, the greatest effect of Mighty Oak Adventures is the happiness that comes from trying something new. "I saw that happen with my teammates, too, when we'd do the annual pheasant hunt or go fishing with fans. Especially the novices, who don't really know much about building fires or putting a fly on the line or even loading a gun," Keisel says. "But when you teach them and you see them catch that fish or hit that target, the joy that comes over their face is unbelievable. To know that you had a little something to do with that really warms my belly." **Mighty Oak Adventures**, mightyoakadventures.com.