burn bright for another 86 years," he said. “Merle Norman has a highly successful brand and a story for the ages, and the opportunity to help expand and grow it in the spirit with which it was founded was very appealing. It’s a marketer’s dream company.”

Merle Nethercutt Norman was a true entrepreneur who was ahead of her time in a male-dominated business world. In the late 1920s, she began tackling her own skin challenges by testing formulas made right in her kitchen. They worked so well that she began sharing them with family and friends, believing if she could get the cream “on their faces,” that’s all it would take to convince them that the product worked. It was this concept – “Try Before You Buy” – that Merle Norman was and is known by.

Merle opened her first studio in Santa Monica in 1931 with the help of her nephew, J.B. Nethercutt. Merle was a pioneer, giving hundreds of women the opportunity to achieve success by owning and operating their own studios. “Merle was one of the first women pioneers in the beauty business, along with Coco Chanel, but she was the first to empower other women to become small business owners,” Travis said. “Merle invented what we now call franchising. We are so proud of her legacy.”

Travis’ parents, Jack and Helen Nethercutt – generous donors to faith athletics as well – have grown Merle Norman into a force in the cosmetics business, and have laid the foundation for the forthcoming expansion. The company has 500 employees and some 1,200 franchises. All Merle Norman products are made in America.

Part of Travis’ plan to keep Merle Norman viable is to partner with existing name brand corporations like Hallmark – what he calls “a store within a store. With our new design we require very little counter space, and it helps both stores by offering more to the customer. We are also expanding into professional grade spa products and services – such as facials and massage – which is the future of the brand.”

That type of revolutionary approach has also guided the Richards in how they have raised and nurtured their three sons. Cam was at Gorman his first two years in high school “and just wanted a fair opportunity to compete to be on the football team,” Travis said. However, he felt beaten down “and just wanted a fair opportunity to compete to be on the football team,” Travis said. However, he felt beaten down "and just wanted a fair opportunity to compete to be on the football team," Travis said. However, he felt beaten down. "and just wanted a fair opportunity to compete to be on the football team,” Travis said. However, he felt beaten down. "and just wanted a fair opportunity to compete to be on the football team.” Travis said. However, he felt beaten down by the coaches and that he wasn’t given a fair chance, and became depressed to the point that he wanted to give up football.

“We had heard such great things about Faith and Coach (Vernon) Fox and gave Cam the choice to transfer,” he explained. “Bret (Walters), Mr. (Scott) Fogo and Coach Fox all took him in with open arms, and not only was he given the chance to play at Faith but he racked up school records for sacks in a season. The pinnacle, though, was in his senior year, when he was named All-State at defensive end. Coach Fox helped restore his faith in his playing ability, and equally important was the fact that Daniel Smith in the resource department took him to levels where he believed he could succeed academically. Cam just soared on the field and in the classroom. We are so indebted to all the staff at Faith. They helped make Cam the young man he now is.”

So grateful was Cam to the school that gave him new life and the chance to continue his football career at the next level that he chose Faith Lutheran to sign his national letter of intent to play at Northern Arizona University in 2017, despite the fact that he had graduated from Faith a year earlier. Cam had spent the year after high school at a junior college to work on his grades, and at the same time big-name schools like Nevada and USC were recruiting him. In the end, he chose NAU, and wanted to sign his letter surrounded by all the coaches and staff who helped get him there.

Cam’s experience at Faith was so transformative that the Richards decided last year to move their two younger sons, Carson and Caden, over to Faith from Alexander Dawson. Carson is now a junior and Caden is a seventh grader – and both love being at Faith.

“We can’t say enough good things about this school,” Christi said. “It’s got everything we could possibly want for our kids to be well-rounded academically, athletically and spiritually.”

“I will tell any coach at any school in America: ‘If you have the opportunity to recruit a 5-star athlete from Gorman or a 4-star athlete from Faith, you’re going to want the 4-star from Faith, because you will get an athlete, boy or girl, with both heart and character. You’ll also get the best student-athlete to represent your program.’ Cam is a living example of that,” Travis said.