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DESIGNER NICHOLE BLOUGH DISHES ON USING COLOR, FABRIC, LOCAL ART AND NEW AND VINTAGE ACCENTS TO CREATE AN UNFORGETTABLE SPACE

WHEN ENTERING THE MODEL HOME IN CARY'S WILLOW OAK NEIGHBORHOOD, PREPARE TO BE BOWLED OVER BY THE BOLDLY DESIGNED STUDY RIGHT OFF THE FOYER. It features an emerald green wall, bright floral print drapes and gold-upholstered chairs. This is just one of many inspiring rooms in the new Level Homes project designed by local interior designer Nichole Blough.

Every room in the home, conveniently located off Davis Drive, was designed to both wow and function for a family. Every room is bold and colorful individually, but there is continuity among the different spaces.

"I knew I had to have a plan when approaching the design to ensure a cohesive flow throughout," Nichole says.

She started the design in the open living room since it is the center of the house. Nichole chose a color palette for the room then branched the design out to the rest of the home, which includes memorable features,



Photo by Katherine Johnson



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big and small, like a huge island in the kitchen and a built-in dog bed in the drop zone near the garage.

Nichole has always been a designer at heart. Her creativity was noticeable from a very young age, she says, and by the age of 10, she was choosing colors and fabrics for her childhood room, then eventually for her entire childhood home. After becoming a mother, Nichole's love for interiors became clear and her goal to become a working designer a priority.

"When my son was born...it inspired me to finally go after my dream of being an interior designer," Nichole says.

Nichole says she loves working in Cary. It is where she grew up. And at the Willow Oak project, she found a canvas on which to flex her design muscle. A bold mix of art, color and fabric is the hallmark of Nichole's work.

"I think part of a good designer is knowing how to push the limits and still create a timeless design," she says.

Nichole likes to use local art with a story whenever possible, make surprising color and fabric choices, and use a mix of new and vintage accessories and furnishings. Her biggest tip for mixing it up in home design is to harness the power of a great paint color.

"Paint is an affordable yet impactful way to create a new feeling within a space," Nichole says.

She also recommends adding a great neutral rug, in an otherwise colorful room, to anchor the space.

She says the right mix of color, furnishings and texture can create a sense of comfort within a space.

"Fresh and tailored, yet comfortable," is how Nichole describes the overall effect.

When she's not designing gorgeous spaces, Nichole enjoys dining at Cary hot spots like La Farm Bakery, Kale Me Crazy, Gonza Tacos y Tequila and Herons Restaurant, and traveling to new places to collect inspiration.

Contact Nichole at Nichole Blough Interiors at olivia.n.blough@gmail.com and follow her on Instagram [@nichole_blough](https://www.instagram.com/nichole_blough).

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