

# MILLENNIUM

MAGAZINE

Lifestyle & Entertainment

## TRAVEL

UNIQUE  
EXPERIENCES  
WINTER GETAWAYS

## MUSIC

EMERYLD  
Bloodline EP  
Release

CELEBRITY

# LEAH VAN DALE

A HEALTHY BODY OF KNOWLEDGE



MILLENNIUM MAGAZINE

January/February 2023 | Number 106 | [www.millenniummagazine.com](http://www.millenniummagazine.com)







# LEAH VAN DALE

A HEALTHY BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

By Elyse Glickman

Photography by Kate Fesik





Leah Van Dale is a standout among the many celebrity athletes who have proven themselves champions in fields far beyond the arenas and stadiums that made them superstars. However, the powerhouse athlete (also known as “Carmella” in the WWE Universe) believes that working out her mind and her business pursuits ensures her legacy will go the distance years in the years to come. Although she’s in the prime of her athletic career, she’s pumped about her work creating businesses that will be meaningful to people beyond her target audience.

Van Dale may be best known for her fierce presence in the ring and a physique to match, but three million followers on Instagram alone underscores there’s a lot of substance to go with style. And while she’s fearless in her sport, everything else she’s laid her hands on shows the mindset has taken her far. Before making a name for herself in WWE, she was a cheerleader in the NFL and NBA (New England Patriots and Lakers). However, not content with staying on the sidelines, Van Dale stepped into the WWE ring in (year) and earned her first success in WWE as the final pick for the 2016 draft to fill out SmackDown LIVE’s Women’s division.

After making her mark in WWE, and marrying fellow champion, jack-of-all-trades and kindred spirit Matt Polinsky (a.k.a. Corey Graves, now a WWE Commentator) to boot, all of Van Dale’s pursuits are fueled by her goal to inspire women from all walks of life to feel strong, empowered, and unapologetically themselves. Her current dance card includes producing content for WWE’s YouTube channel, “Corey and Carmella,” and continuing forays into the world of fashion and fitness. She’s living proof that any rewarding goal is something worth fighting for, and hopes the message behind her various activities will continually inspire her audiences and bring in new fans.

**Millennium:** When you were growing up, did it ever cross your mind that WWE would be the ultimate career path?

**Leah Van Dale:** I always knew I wanted to be in the entertainment industry. I loved performing as a kid. I started dance classes when I was three years old, and I never stopped. My dad was a boxer and even wrestled in the WWE in the early 90s. I NEVER in a million years imagined it would be something I would end up in. Not because I didn’t like it, but because I was always petite and I was a dancer, not a fighter. I didn’t think it was something I’d be able to do. With my background as a dancer and my dad’s history with the sport, it all aligned and led me to where I am now and I’m so grateful it worked out the way it did.





**Millennium:** Some say it's a challenge to achieve the perfect life/work balance. How do you balance your "me" time with all of these different businesses going on?

**Leah Van Dale:** I literally have to force myself to prioritize my 'me' time. I book appointments for myself; acupuncture, massage, chiropractor, physical therapy, yoga, etc. This is how I started making time for myself. If I book the appointment, I have to go. So it forces me to take the time I need for myself to unwind and recover. I always feel so much better after an appointment and I'm able to be more present in my everyday life.

**Millennium:** When you first embarked on your career as a WWE Superstar, did you expect it would eventually open up to other business opportunities?

**Leah Van Dale:** I appreciate that WWE has afforded me the opportunity to grow a platform on social media. I enjoy connecting with our fans in such a personal way. It's also given me the opportunity to dive more into the fashion and beauty space which has always been such a huge part of my life. It's exciting to be able to show other facets of my life other than being a WWE superstar. With that being said, it's important for me to use my platform in a positive way to show young women that what you see on social media, is not always what it seems. I'm very big on talking about filters and making sure women know that we all have flaws, and nobody looks like their Instagram photos when they wake up in the morning.

**Millennium:** How does working with your husband as a partner strengthen your marriage?

**Leah Van Dale:** I love that my husband and I work together. This business can be very demanding. We have a grueling schedule with events and opportunities popping up at the last minute. It's nice to have someone who completely understands the grind. We have each other to lean on when things get tough. The biggest gripe I have with being in the same industry is that we sometimes forget to turn that side of our brains off when we're not at work. One of us has to eventually say, "Ok, enough work talk. Let's just be home."

**Millennium:** Tell us a bit more about your reality television show as well as the podcast that inspired it.

**Leah Van Dale:** "Corey and Carmella" is based off of our podcast "Bare with Us" alongside Matt. Although both have provocative titles, what we're really exposing is the importance of good communication between couples. Honesty is key, and it is front and center as we all dive headfirst into challenging











relationship issues that people are often too afraid to discuss as well as day-to-day struggles people don't know we experience when they just see us casually on social media. We want couples to relate to us by normalizing some "taboo" topics as we navigate our lives as a couple. Nothing is off the table, and all couples should take on that mindset to get through the tough times and endure the long haul.

**Millennium:** How do you feel your and Matt's businesses, separately and together, set a good example for your children?

**Leah Van Dale:** It's so important for us to separate what we do for a living from who we are at home. The kids couldn't care less that we're on television. Although, when the employees at Auntie Ann's pretzels at the mall gave us our pretzel bites for free, my stepdaughters were stunned. Haha! But in all seriousness, especially when it comes to my stepdaughters, it's imperative for me to show them the importance of having your own career and being able to provide for yourself and be self-sufficient. My mom always instilled that in me, never relying on a man for financial needs. I hope to pass that standard on to them. They see how hard we work and how much sacrifice goes into what we do, but with sacrifice, comes reward. We hope we show all three of them that you have to work hard for anything you want out of life. 