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BizWest

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Meet BizWest's 40 Under Forty honorees for 2016

BizWest publishers Christopher Wood and Jeff Nuttall present 40 Under Forty for 2016, our program that recognizes emerging young leaders in Boulder and Broomfield counties who make a difference in their companies, industries and communities.

Those being honored had to be younger than age 40 by Dec. 31 of this year.

This is the 13th year for the program in Northern Colorado and the second

consecutive year for the Boulder Valley.

As always, we are grateful to our sponsors including, Best Western Plus Plaza Hotel and the Plaza Convention Center, Boulder Blooms, Boulderopolis, Gold's Gym and GRAFX Group. Our 2016 corporate partners include the Boulder Chamber and the Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce as well as their young professionals groups and Daylight Productions and Rentals.

Thanks also go to the members of our selection committee, who spent

many hours poring through the nominations. Along with *BizWest's* Wood and events director Kimberly Willard, they are Emily Davis of Emily Davis Consulting, Meca Delgado and Susie Strife of Boulder County, James Farrell of Union Leasing Corp., Michael Laszlo of Laszlo and Associates, Nicole Mansour of FirstBank, Chris McVay of High Plains Bank, Amanda Miller of The Place Setting Co., and TR Swanwick of Wright Kingdom Real Estate.

BizWest's Chad Collins shot the pho-

tos of this year's honorees.

Year-round access to the digital edition of this supplement can be found at fortyunderforty.com and bizwest.com.

We at *BizWest* and our sponsors salute the winners for their enthusiasm and dedication in helping enhance the Boulder Valley's reputation as a great place to live.

— Dallas Heltzell,
40 Under Forty special-section
editor and writer

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Meghan Altman

Director of operations
Natural Capitalism Solutions



“Cycling brings together my goal of remaining healthy and active with my love of the natural world,” said Meghan Altman. “This passion is why I launched Chain Reaction, the most recent project of Natural Capitalism Solutions, which empowers the youth of today — one bicycle at a time.”

Altman started in August at NCS at a time when the small Longmont-based nonprofit was going through a major change in staff, dealing with fundraising issues and simply trying to return to stability. She manages its internship program, looks for funding opportunities and aids Hunter Lovins, the founder and president of NCS who nominated her for the 40 Under Forty award.

Fueled by her study of ecology, evolutionary biology and environment at the University of Colorado Boulder, Altman has been a wildlife team volunteer for the Sierra Club’s Rocky Mountain Region, studied wildlife ecology and conservation while traveling in northern Tanzania, and volunteered in Steamboat Springs with nonprofit Yampatica, which works to inspire environmental stewardship through education.

As a wildlife technician with Boulder County Parks and Open Space, her duties included assessing prairie dog colonies and studying tracts for occupancy by burrowing owls and Preble’s meadow jumping mice. Her work has included stints with a research institute at Acadia National Park in Maine and the Storm Peak Laboratory in Steamboat Springs.

She also is starting her own organization to focus on the area’s underserved youth.

“I dedicate the majority of hours in my week to improving the local and global community,” Altman said.

Josh Ashton

Senior director of people operations
SendGrid



“I love trail running and stretching my limits of endurance,” said Josh Ashton. Maybe that helps explain his success at some of the area’s hyper-growth tech companies that also stretch the limits, including DigitalGlobe and, now, SendGrid.

In human-resources and recruiting leadership positions, Ashton has attracted, hired, engaged and developed hundreds of professionals.

He also has held human-resources and recruitment positions with companies including Rainbow Rewards Inc., TEKsystems Inc., and American Coin Merchandising Inc.

For the past four years, Ashton has held a volunteer leadership position with the National Center for Women and Information Technology. He is proud that SendGrid, a cloud-based communications-engagement service, is one of only a couple dozen companies nationwide — and the only company in Colorado — to publicly release its diversity figures and inclusion strategy.

“Via my professional relationship with SendGrid, the majority of my community-service efforts have focused around championing diversity and inclusion initiatives,” Ashton said, adding that he is “proud to realize the impact that this has had on local groups such as NCWIT, Girl Develop It, the Colorado Department of Human Services’ vocational-rehab division and Flatirons LGBTQ.”

A graduate of Colorado State University, Ashton also volunteered with OpenWorld Learning, a fun and challenging educational program focused on advanced computer technology. Since its inception, Ashton said, the program “has provided innovative educational opportunities for students, and we have expanded the scope of our program.”

Andre Becklund

Vice president and commercial lender
Citywide Banks



“If you want to have fun and stay active in the frigid Minnesota winters, you play hockey,” said Minnesota native Andre Becklund. While playing hockey since he was 4 years old, he said, the sport taught him lessons about speed, teamwork and intensity that have served him well in business.

In his role as vice president and commercial lender at Citywide Banks in Boulder, Becklund is responsible for soliciting, developing and retaining profitable account relationships with business customers that have annual growth sales of \$1 million to \$50 million.

“Working for a family-owned community bank allows me to think outside the box and support businesses in ways that other banks cannot,” Becklund said. “I have had an impact on my organization by helping to grow our Boulder branch and increase our market share by providing financing for businesses, nonprofits and individuals.”

Becklund feels honored that Citywide has paid for him to attend the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at the University of Pennsylvania.

He came to Citywide Banks after holding similar roles at Guaranty Bank and Trust Co. and Wells Fargo Bank.

Becklund has served on the Boulder-based boards of the Women’s Wilderness Institute, Boulder Young Professionals and Voices for Children CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocates).

“All of these great nonprofit organizations help to enrich the lives of members in our community and make our community a better place to live,” he said. “I’m proud to serve on their boards and utilize my professional skills to help in their continued success.”

Rachel Beisel

Vice president for marketing
Gorilla Logic



Rachel Beisel really needs that bicycle helmet, because she’s a woman in motion. As co-founder of the Colorado Women’s Cycling Project, she’s passionate about bike racing and getting women interested in cycling. She also has just moved into married life — and into a new job as vice president for marketing at Gorilla Logic after having served in the same role at Boulder-based software consultancy Quick Left.

“I have a rough time with idle time,” Beisel said. No kidding.

She also consults through her own company, LeadOut Sales LLC, teaching and speaking about marketing strategy, generating leads and enabling sales. She is a frequent guest lecturer at the University of Colorado’s Leeds School of Business and a volunteer teacher at Galvanize. She also has keynoted several events highlighting the wage discrepancy between men and women.

Beisel co-organizes the MTN Marketing Meetup Group, Wednesday Morning Velo and Boulder Startup Week, and serves on the women’s committee of the Bicycle Racing Association of Colorado. Then there’s Opera Colorado, the Colorado Mountain Club and more.

Beisel has been recognized as GenXYZ’s top 25 most influential young professionals in Colorado and won a Tremendous Twenty-Something award from ColoradoBiz magazine.

Being a racing cyclist means more than medals. Her team won a USA Cycling award for its role in Ride for Reading, delivering thousands of books by bike each year to children in underprivileged areas.

“As it pertains to helping the community, you can only get back what you put in,” Beisel said.

Matthew Bonoma

Partner and
general manager
Red Idea Partners



Matthew Bonoma adopts animals such as Rudy from humane societies in Boulder and Longmont, takes them home and helps them grow and thrive.

Growing and thriving are also his goals for the businesses he mentors as director of Red Idea's food and beverage consulting practice. He has worked with about 100 businesses in Boulder County and beyond on issues such as strategic growth planning, legal documentation and structure, financial planning and pro forma projections, capital formation, funding rounds cost analysis and margin improvement, board formation and governance, organizational evolution and due diligence. Some notable clients include Bhakti Chai, Creative Alignments, JJ's Sweets and Missy J's.

He also works at Red Idea's co-launched business efforts, is a board observer for Natural Foodworks Group and Olomomo Nut Co., and is joining the advisory board of Rowdy Mermaid Kombucha.

"I will also be joining the Red Idea Ventures team when our formal venture-capital team launches" early this year, Bonoma said. "RIV will deploy a significant amount of growth capital for businesses both in Boulder/Denver and beyond."

He and his wife are supporters of OpenWorld Learning, a Denver-based nonprofit that taps the power of digital technology and peer teaching to ignite children's love of learning. They also support the University of Colorado Boulder and the University of Denver. Bonoma participated in the Patriots Day Golf Tournament at Boulder Country Club to support CU student veterans. He supports his wife's work to secure open space as executive director of the nonprofit Clear Creek Land Conservancy.

Michelle Brietzke

Owner
La Momo Maes Bakery



When Michelle Brietzke isn't serving up pastries from the little Kimbark Street house with the broad front porch in Longmont that's home to La Momo Maes Bakery, you might find her skiing with her two daughters or traveling to far-flung destinations such as Lisbon, Portugal.

When she's at work, it's also a family affair, right down to the bakery's name. "La" comes from the first initials in her sister's name, LeAnn, and LeAnn's daughter Amelia. "Momo" is what Michelle's daughter, Alexis, called her grandmother. "Maes" is an acronym for the names of Michelle and her daughters, Alexis and Emily.

Michelle Brietzke and her mother, Cathy Fiegenschuh, who ran a bakery in Omaha, Neb., for many years, started La Momo Maes in 2011 and quickly earned it the Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce's Rookie Business of the Year award.

"Opening the bakery has been my greatest accomplishment," Brietzke said. "I've enjoyed growing a loyal customer base and partnering with local business, all while giving back to the community" including serving as chair-elect of the Chamber and chairing its group for young professionals.

Giving back also includes a program in which customers can designate 10 percent of their purchase to an organization of their choice.

Her recipe for success contains more than flour and sugar. Her background in accounting and administration has helped her grow revenue, expand the number of weddings the bakery serves, and land exclusive contracts with the likes of Wild Basin Lodge in Allenspark and Wedgewood on Boulder Creek.

Jordan Bunch

Associate
Holland & Hart LLP



"I love being outside and being in the mountains," said Jordan Bunch. "I also love athletics, so snowboarding is the perfect combination of two things I love."

Mountains aren't the only high-level venues in Bunch's life. As a practicing attorney in the Boulder Valley since 2011 and an associate at the renowned Holland & Hart law firm, she works on complex, high-level real estate transactions. She also generates new business for the firm by teaching continuing-education classes for attorneys and real estate brokers.

Bunch was asked by the Colorado Bar Association's real estate section to teach a class called "What Real Estate Lawyers Need to Know About Divorce" to attorneys in Boulder and Broomfield.

Bunch worked nearly four years at Franscona, Joiner, Goodman & Greenstein PC in Boulder before joining Holland & Hart last July. She participates in several projects sponsored by the firm's charitable foundation.

She also serves as vice president of the board of directors of Boulder Voices for Children CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocates). "The fact that I am an attorney allows me to better serve the Boulder CASA program," she said. "My knowledge of the court system allows me to provide valuable insight for the board to consider when making crucial decisions."

CASA trains and supports volunteers who act as voices for children in dependency and neglect cases. "It is easy to assume that child abuse and neglect does not occur in a place like Boulder but, in reality, hundreds of children suffer each year. CASA provides these children with support when they need it most."

Emily Burks

Senior counsel
Community Energy Solar



A community solar garden in Antonito is a shining example of Emily Burks' commitment to the environment.

"I care deeply about creating renewable alternatives to our reliance on fossil fuels to combat climate change and global warming," she said. "Our children's futures depend on it."

That commitment extends to her work as legal counsel for Boulder-based Community Energy Solar LLC.

"I've created solar markets where they did not previously exist through the legal and business side of innovative utility off-take approaches, new financing structures, land management and public-policy support," she said. While at Community Energy, she's been involved in more than 20 utility-scale solar installations across nine states that represent some of the nation's largest solar projects.

In Colorado, she leads the legal effort for the Comanche Solar Project, which will be the largest east of the Rockies when completed. The 156-megawatt project will generate 6 billion kilowatt hours of clean energy, enough to power more than 31,000 homes, and represent 3.5 million tons of CO₂ reduction over its 25-year lifespan.

Burks also is a mentor through the Greenhouse scholars program, which provides scholarships and advice to high-performing, under-resourced college students. She and her husband volunteer at their daughter's Boulder Valley schools, and support organizations such as Community Food Share, Chautauqua, Community Cycles, Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks and YWCA.

Burks came to Community Energy in 2014 after working at law firms in San Francisco and Sanford, Maine, and then owning her own firm in Boulder for three years.

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JORDAN BUNCH



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Jordan Bunch is an attorney in the firm's Boulder office. She represents buyers, sellers, and lenders in commercial and multifamily real estate and finance transactions.

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Adrienne Tracy, Senior Vice President, Commercial Lending, at our Boulder location, has been named as a 2016 40 Under Forty honoree!

Adrienne was selected as one of the 40 young professionals and emerging business leaders in the Boulder Valley.

Adrienne is active in our vibrant community and shares inspirations and possibilities!

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Matthew Burks

VP for strategy and products
E Source



“Energy efficiency” — such as the LED light bulb he’s holding — “is an essential component in solving the climate crisis and making sustainable renewable energy a reality,” said Matthew Burks, who has worked at E Source in Boulder since 2008 and was promoted to vice president for strategy and products last March.

Burks oversees E Source’s corporate strategy, existing products and services, and new-product development and partnerships. His teams drive E Source’s core business, representing all its current revenue, and the strategic plan and products to deliver consistent double-digit growth. The company advises nearly every U.S. and Canadian utility. In the past 19 months, the company released more than 15 new products, launched a new consulting division and shifted its strategic focus, resulting in roughly 20 percent growth in 2015.

With a bachelor’s degree from Cornell University and a master’s from Duke, Burks has written for several industry publications, and his articles have been cited in *The Wall Street Journal*. He has spoken at more than 30 conferences across the nation and was elected co-chair of the Association of Energy Service Professionals’ marketing committee in 2010 and 2011. He served the Colorado Cleantech Industry Association as a department head for its Energy Fellows Institute, which helps train successful executives to launch Colorado-based clean-tech startups.

Burks and his wife volunteer at their daughter’s Boulder Valley schools and work with other local organizations.

“The energy-business trenches aren’t glamorous,” Burks said. “However, clean and efficient energy use is absolutely essential for our children’s future.”

Matthew Burnett

Financial adviser
UBS Financial Services Inc.



“Golf embodies my two greatest passions — spending time with friends and enjoying the outdoors,” said Matthew Burnett. He fills his life with “people that I admire, trust and enjoy spending time with” — whether it’s forming a foursome or building his client base at UBS Financial Services.

“My role is to unburden my clients from the stress of managing all aspects of their financial lives by bringing professional guidance and accountability into the relationship,” Burnett said. A big part of his job is learning what is meaningful to them.

Often, he said, “what’s important to my clients has little to do with traditional investing. For example, many of my clients are entrepreneurs, so I became a Boomtown Accelerator mentor.”

His outreach efforts include hosting a networking happy hour for people in various industries, and it’s paid off. In 2015, Burnett grew the assets under his management by 126 percent, which represents a 70 percent increase in revenue. He’s currently ranked seventh out of the 154 UBS advisers in Colorado for new high-net-worth relationships brought under management.

Burnett came to UBS in March 2013 after more than three years at Edward Jones in Boulder.

Burnett is in his fourth year on the finance committee of Via Mobility, a nonprofit that provides low-cost transportation for disabled, elderly and impoverished Boulder County residents. He also has helped find sponsorships for an annual fundraiser for There With Care, which provides assistance to families with critically ill children. The event, not surprisingly, is a golf tournament.

Hana Dansky

Executive director
Boulder Food Rescue



“I care about eliminating food waste and providing access to healthy food,” said Hana Dansky, co-founder and executive director of Boulder Food Rescue, a nonprofit responsible for redistributing healthy food to people by bicycle. “For me, this work boils down to building relationships, and food is our language.”

Dansky started Boulder Food Rescue as a full-time volunteer while working two other day jobs.

“We have had huge impact,” she said, “including building and maintaining collaborations with over 50 different nonprofit partners in Boulder, redistributing over 1 million pounds of food with the help of 150 active volunteers at any given time, 89 percent of which has been done by bicycle.”

BFR conducted a citywide food-waste audit to help the city determine best policies for waste reduction. Dansky said national exposure through reports in the *Huffington Post* and on NPR has helped Boulder Food Rescue to grow its Food Alliance program, a peer-learning network of food-recovery organizations.

BFR works primarily in Boulder but expanded to reach Jamestown, Ward and Nederland after the 1973 floods.

“We also build relationships at senior homes by having monthly meals at the sites,” she said. “This enables our younger volunteers and senior recipients to build relationships.”

Dansky, who accepted the Boulder Chamber’s 2015 Women Who Light the Community award, also co-founded Boulder Food Not Bombs, an activist collective and safe space for the LGBTQ community, and volunteers for Left Hand Books, the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center, Out Boulder and other area nonprofits.

Laurie Chin Sayres

Director of Media Literacy
Education
Labragirl Film Project



Laurie Chin Sayres finds triathlons “both addictive and rewarding. Endurance training is one of the things that drives me in life,” she said, “and I enjoy the focus and determination that racing requires.”

She also wants to encourage focus and determination in students. As founder and director of media literacy education at the Louisville-based Labragirl Film Project, Sayres said, she supports teachers “who want to help their students move from unconsciously consuming images to thinking critically about the way media images shape the way they see themselves, others and the world.”

“We also help teachers hold onto or regain creativity in an increasingly standardized educational system.”

Labragirl integrates media-literacy education across the K-through-12 curriculum and focuses heavily on helping students understand the way visual images convey information.

Sayres hosts a community luncheon series designed to combat cyberbullying and foster community conversations about media literacy, and conducts professional-development sessions for teachers.

She received Excellence in Teaching awards two years in a row as an instructor at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, an adjunct position she held before coming to Labragirl.

Through donations and volunteer work, Sayres and her family support the Boulder Valley Humane Society, Emergency Family Assistance Association and the Sister Carmen Community Center.

Sayres also lectured at California State University at Long Beach and was a domestic television research analyst for Paramount Pictures in Hollywood.

Caitlin Finn

Director of finance and administration
concept3D Inc.



“Skiing has been a part of my life ever since I could walk,” said Caitlin Finn. “We went every weekend growing up. ... I also used to teach adaptive skiing with the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center” for mentally and physically disabled clients.

Finn’s career, however, has been anything but downhill.

After graduating from the University of Colorado with a degree in finance, she began working for Lacuna Gap Capital, a Boulder-based venture and hedge fund, while also working part time at Boulder Shelter for the Homeless. She stayed with Lacuna and several of its portfolio companies while studying law at the University of Denver, then became director of finance at one of those companies, concept3D, where she also is responsible for human resources.

“I have enjoyed being part of the growth and evolution of the company” since 2008, she said.

Seeing the need for addressing the civil legal needs of those living at the poverty line during her three years at the homeless shelter, Finn worked with other attorneys to form the Colorado Poverty Law Project, and became its executive director. It holds a monthly legal clinic for the homeless, facilitates a Denver County court eviction program and holds continuing legal-education events for attorneys.

“We seek to address many of the issues that are forcing people into poverty,” she said, “whether it is through addressing a landlord-tenant issue, a driver’s license revocation, restructuring a child-support agreement or dealing with one of the many civil legal issues that are unaddressed.”

Joshua Goldberg

Community and events manager
Left Hand Brewing Co.



Building community through craft beer has consumed the last nine years of Joshua Goldberg’s life.

His major accomplishment as community and events manager for Left Hand Brewing Co., he said, is “developing a special-event series that activates the community, raises tons of money for charity and makes Longmont the raddest town in Colorado.”

Goldberg, BizWest’s 2015 Community Service Award winner, last year directed a team of 300 volunteers who executed five signature events with revenues exceeding \$380,000, generating more than \$116,000 for charity. He manages the brewery’s nonprofit foundation and supports other nonprofits with grants, merchandise and beer donations.

A Leadership Longmont graduate, Goldberg was elected vice chairman of Longmont’s planning and zoning commission, nominated to the boards of the Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce and Visit Longmont and named chair of the chamber’s public policy committee. He founded and directs the Craft Brewing Event Planning Conference.

Goldberg has fond memories of handing a check for \$70,000 to the Longmont Community Foundation for flood relief, arriving at a community barbecue in Rist Canyon with a check for \$16,000 made out to the local volunteer fire department, and being told that a Left Hand event had sourced bone marrow matches for three children dying from leukemia.

“Success, for me, is measured by our ability to inspire and mobilize the greater Longmont community,” Goldberg said. “As I have strived to make Left Hand Brewing integral to the Longmont experience, I, too, have become a part of the story. I am forever grateful.”

Bianca Griffith

Chief executive
Agua Inc.



A Boulder company that developed a sustainable water-treatment technology is making a splash around the world, led by an entrepreneur with a passion for international development.

Since Boulder native Bianca Griffith co-founded Agua Inc. in 2013, the infrastructure-development company has found success in countries such as the Dominican Republic and the west African nation of The Gambia. Agua provides energy-free and chemical-free water and wastewater recycling. As chief executive, Griffith leads the company’s operations both locally and internationally.

Griffith also is the founder of Sante Natural, a nonprofit dedicated to sustainable development and health that primarily operates in West Africa and has done projects ranging from building clinics to teaching local communities about sanitation and implementation of low-tech green technologies.

In 2012, Griffith organized the Green Africa conference, which brought together green-industry experts, non-governmental organizations, international consultants and senior government officials from African nations to create a dialogue on sustainability issues and offer a practical demonstration of the possibilities for sustainable development and green technology in Africa.

She also served as director of external relations for the Clean Technology Challenge, a London-based business competition for clean-tech spinoffs from graduate- and Ph.D.-level research around the world. She built strategic partnerships with third-party organizations and helped judge more than 200 clean technologies.

Griffith majored in architecture and environmental design at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Beau Haralson

Chief commercial officer
Clymb Marketing



“My son Eli was born two months early this past fall, rocking and changing my world all at once,” said Beau Haralson. “As our first kid, it’s been a year of firsts, and he has been the highlight.”

That wasn’t the only world-rocking event of his autumn, said the avid mountain biker, noting that his helmet saved him from breaking more than just his arm.

Haralson’s road to business success has been much smoother than that mountain trail. Since co-founding Clymb Marketing two years ago, he said, the company has grossed more than \$1 million in revenue.

“Our core goal is to provide approachable, high-quality agency services at right-sized prices and focus chiefly on our clients’ return on investment,” he said. “Our success has enabled us to serve as a mentor to businesses and volunteer in various venues. My role as a co-founder in a now eight-person agency is as head of business development, account support and all content efforts.”

Establishing consistent revenue “has allowed us to hire and provide consistently for our contractors and respective families,” Haralson said. “This is what gets me up in the morning.”

Of the 87 clients with which Clymb has worked over its more than two-year history, he said, 90 percent have been ROI positive in their engagement with the company.

About 10 percent of Clymb’s annual profits go to various charities, and Haralson said spending Sunday mornings in his church nursery with 1- to 4-year-olds served as “great prep for me as a new father.”

Scott Kanemoto

Commercial insurance producer

TrueNorth Insurance and Financial Strategies



Like a lot of people in business, Scott Kanemoto finds golf to be a source of lifelong enjoyment but also a great venue for business meetings.

As a commercial producer at TrueNorth Insurance and Financial Strategies in Longmont, Kanemoto helps businesses manage their inherent risks. A survey of TrueNorth's staff rated him highest for the way he handles business, treats co-workers and creates win-win scenarios.

Kanemoto's sales success has helped him build a book of business that generates nearly \$5 million in premiums. He also has achieved the Certified Insurance Counselor designation, achieved by only 10 percent of insurance agents.

A graduate of Regis University, where he played on the men's varsity golf team, Kanemoto came to TrueNorth in 2013 after selling personal insurance for Country Insurance and Financial Services in Boulder and then being co-owner of First Mainstreet Insurance in Longmont.

He has been involved in redeveloping the mentorship program for human-resources students at the University of Colorado, helping them gain real-world experiences that often turned into jobs once they graduated.

Kanemoto's charitable work includes involvement with the Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce, the University of Colorado, A Woman's Work, TLC, Mile High Ministries, Open Door Ministry, local humane societies and United Way.

"Not having children of my own yet, coaching youth sports teams has been quite an experience," he said. "To be around kids, it helps reiterate that life isn't all about work and no play. I am helping them learn the game, while they are helping me to stay young at heart."

Emilie Kintner

Regional campus director
Galvanize



Learning takes time, according to Emilie Kintner.

"Most days, I learn from 6 a.m. to the time I go to bed," she said. "It's the uncomfortable times that teach us the most, even though the seconds may seem to tick on forever. I get extremely bored without constantly being challenged."

Kintner moved to Boulder in 2009 after five years in California, where she honed her skills as a leader in informal education. She worked for about three years at Opera Colorado and the Boulder History Museum before shifting into her current role as regional campus director for Galvanize.

"I recall seeing that job posting for Galvanize and thinking, 'I don't know much about technology, but from an organizational and pedagogical standpoint, I know I can do that job!' Almost two years later, I can say I have challenged myself intellectually, contributed to the tech and entrepreneurial ecosystem of Boulder and along the Front Range, helped to scale Galvanize from 15 to over 200 employees, and supported hundreds of students and entrepreneurs," she said.

Kintner also spearheaded Computer Science Education Week in 2014. Working with organizations and startups such as Techstars, Zayo, SendGrid, Sticker Giant and the Boulder Valley School District, a volunteer-run group for the past two years has organized a weeklong celebration and educational opportunities for students, educators and parents.

"I sincerely look forward to continued contributions to Boulder," Kintner said, "as I lead the charge to launch Galvanize's second Boulder campus on Walnut Street in June of 2016."

Kate Larson

Senior water programs manager

Center for ReSource Conservation



Meet Kuma, Kate Larson's dog.

"He is my favorite thing, partner in crime, and he makes me smile every day," Larson said.

Larson also can smile at the work she's done for the past six years at the Boulder-based Center for ReSource Conservation.

"I oversee a variety of water-conservation programs that are operated with 30 water utilities, including all the major providers in the Boulder Valley," she said. "In my tenure at the CRC, our programs have grown substantially, both in water-saving impact as well as participants."

Larson is proud of her work on Garden In a Box, a retail product meant to save millions of gallons of water that has grown from 800 gardens sold in 2010 to more than 2,600 sold in 2015.

Larson is developing custom software that streamlines one of CRC's largest programs, Slow the Flow irrigation inspections. Her goal is to save 30,000 sheets of paper and hundreds of hours of data-entry and staff time each year by moving to a tablet-based, paperless model, the largest and most successful investment in CRC's 40-year history, which now is being shared with other cities and states.

Larson serves on the board of Colorado WaterWise, a nonprofit that supports water-conservation professionals in the state.

"Through my direct work, thousands of square feet of landscapes have been converted into lush, sustainable Colorado-friendly gardens," she said, "and hundreds of Boulder Valley residents know more about how they use water and are empowered to conserve it."

Sean Maday

Program director
Patriot Boot Camp



"I am proud of the work Patriot Boot Camp does, and love symbolizing a great cause on an awesome shirt," said program director Sean Maday.

He should know about shirts. While still a student at Michigan State University, he founded RetroDuck.com, a novelty T-shirt company that generated \$250,000 in annual sales with four employees.

But there's nothing retro about the nonprofit Patriot Boot Camp, which helps military veterans and their spouses build technology companies. Maday and his Boulder-based team have staged three-day Patriot Boot Camp events for more than 155 participants in New York, North Carolina and Detroit. Participating companies have gone on to raise more than \$31 million in venture capital.

Maday is an intelligence officer in the U.S. Air Force Reserve based at Buckley Air Force Base in Aurora and was promoted to major in June, but also was the first full-time employee of Patriot Boot Camp.

"An individual's transition from the military to civilian life can be a long and difficult process," Maday said. "This transition can be even more challenging when a veteran or military spouse has aspirations of breaking into a niche domain like technology entrepreneurship. As a military veteran who has successfully held civilian technology jobs, I am familiar with those challenges and strive to help others navigate this professional labyrinth."

Maday's resume includes work as a geospatial sales engineer at Google, a product manager at Gnip, and founder of Superior-based SigActs Inc., developer of a technology to process and map daily news reports.

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Brandi Mason

Vice president
for philanthropy
Friendship Bridge



For Brandi Mason, empowering 30,000 women in Guatemala is more than just a mission for Friendship Bridge. “Working to empower women and cross-cultural education is the best way to set an example for my daughter,” she said.

Mason is in charge of luring charitable giving to the nonprofit organization with offices in Boulder and Lakewood. Friendship Bridge helps impoverished Guatemalan women create a better future through microfinance, education and women’s preventive health care. Mason raises money to aid that effort through marketing, donor cultivation, corporate sponsorships, grant management and earned-income streams. Friendship Bridge relies on supporters in the United States for donations and social-impact investments, and claims more than 1,000 supporters in the Boulder Valley.

Mason worked to create the Boulder Chamber’s Community Partnership Council, which works to build relationships between nonprofit and for-profit chamber members. Before moving to Boulder in 2011, Mason worked for Deutsch Bank in London and New York, and served on the boards of the Microfinance Club of New York and the Junior Committee of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy.

“Empowering individuals in my local community is just as important to me as supporting empowerment abroad,” Mason said. “Therefore, I serve as an Oak Dreamer sponsor for the “I Have a Dream” Foundation of Boulder County, which helps to create a brighter future for low-income communities.”

She also helped manage the Boulder County AIDS Project and participates in Boulder YWCA Angel Tree along with her husband and daughter.

Chad Melis

Marketing director
Oskar Blues Brewery



Telling the stories of Longmont-based Oskar Blues Brewery’s new products, eateries, expansions, companion businesses, sponsorships and philanthropic efforts is all part of Chad Melis’ job as director of marketing. But sooner or later, it always seems to come back to Dale’s Pale Ale.

“I’ve committed to building this flagship brand for Oskar Blues Brewery for over eight years,” Melis said.

The red, white and blue can is the center of an expanding universe of brands that sprang from the first brewery to offer craft beer in a can. There are CHUberger restaurants, REEB bicycles, HotBox Roasters coffee and more, as well as a new brewery and eatery in North Carolina and entry into Austin, Texas, on tap.

But the fun turned serious two-and-a-half years ago, especially around Oskar Blues’ original brewery.

“When the floods hit Lyons in 2013,” Melis said, “I worked with founder Dale Katechis and executive director Diane Ralston to develop the CAN’d Aid Foundation to bring support and relief to our community.” It raised more than \$500,000 for flood relief in just three months.

When Melis started at Oskar Blues, it was producing 13,000 barrels of craft beer distributed in 30 states. By 2015, it was nearing 200,000 barrels, and its beers were available in 45 states and four countries.

Melis has ridden the wave. He served for three years as marketing chair of the Colorado Brewers Guild to spread the fame of Colorado’s craft beer industry. He also promotes Oskar Blues’ steady stream of charitable initiatives.

Alina Nisenzon

Associate general counsel
Zayo Group



Exploring other cultures and perspectives through travel is important to Alina Nisenzon. So is the culture at Boulder-based telecom Zayo Group, which Nisenzon said “has provided me with the unique opportunity to work in numerous different divisions of the organization. As a result, I have gained more experience in my time at Zayo than most attorneys would during their entire career.”

During nearly seven years at Zayo, Nisenzon has held a variety of legal and commercial roles. “I have worked on customer deals, vendor relationships, numerous mergers and acquisitions, human resources, and managed the entire real estate portfolio,” she said. “In short, I have jumped in wherever needed and added value to the process.”

Nisenzon in 2013 was named associate general counsel of Zayo’s then-separate business unit, Zayo Colocation, and in the process became the most senior woman in the company. She continues to be given lead roles in important initiatives in the organization.

Her responsibilities extend outside the business’ walls as well.

“I have been given the opportunity through Zayo to hold office hours with programs such as Galvanize, during which I help guide young entrepreneurs on their journey,” Nisenzon said. “It is exciting to see what a vibrant community of entrepreneurs Boulder is attracting.”

Before coming to Zayo, she worked as a law clerk at Crocs Inc. in Niwot and at the Kutak Rock LLP law firm in Denver. She received a bachelor’s degree from California Polytechnic University and her law degree from the University of San Francisco.

Rebecca Novinger

Director of client relations
Imagine!



Running is far more than exercise for Rebecca Novinger.

“Running is my serenity,” she said. “I love the discipline and challenge of preparing for a distance race. Running also creates a space where I can do a lot of reflection, problem solving and planning.”

Problem solving and planning are big parts of her role as director of client relations at Boulder-based Imagine! As the Community-Centered Board for Boulder and Broomfield counties, Imagine! provides services for individuals with developmental disabilities. “I ensure our CCB activities are in compliance with the regulations of our oversight agencies and that we operate in good fiscal stewardship of the local and governmental funding Imagine! receives.”

Under Novinger, Imagine!’s care-coordination activities were noted for demonstrating how to successfully manage state resources at the local level.

Last year, she completed the year-long Mountain States Employees Council’s Nonprofit Leadership Institute, an annual executive program for 14 leaders in the nonprofit sector.

“My passion is to create opportunity for others where there is little or none, which stems from my own life spiral,” she said. “At the Marion Downs Hearing Center, I openly shared my life story to give hope to parents with newly diagnosed children and to educate providers.”

Novinger volunteers as public relations chair for MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) in Lafayette. Her family donates to area nonprofits, including the Sister Carmen Center, the Colorado Avalanche Information Center, PBS and Colorado Public Radio. She also writes grants for the American Hearing Impaired Hockey Association.

Tim O'Shea

Co-founder
Engage Colorado



"I enjoy the freedom and adventure of exploring Colorado by motorcycle," said Tim O'Shea. It has the allure of "going beyond one's boundaries and taking risks," he said — and then noted that being an entrepreneur carries the same attraction.

As co-founder of Engage Colorado, O'Shea helps contribute to the growth and success of what he calls the state's "entrepreneurial ecosystem." He said the organization "allows me to build a stage for others shaping our community to stand on, in promotion of their efforts."

O'Shea helps coordinate events including the NewCo Boulder festival, the launch of the Vinetta Project that accelerates investment into technology companies led by women, and the Boulder chapter of House of Genius, a monthly entrepreneurial collaboration that began in Boulder in 2010 and now spans the globe.

O'Shea chaired Boulder's "Yes on 2C" campaign, which exempted the city from state Senate Bill 152 and paved the way for development of a municipal broadband service. He now serves on the city's broadband advisory committee. He also serves on the board of Boulder Tomorrow.

In the wake of the September 2013 deluge, O'Shea helped organize Boulder Flood Relief, which has sustained long-term recovery efforts in the more than two years since the disaster. He also serves on the Boulder Library Commission and the Boulder Chamber's Community Affairs Committee.

O'Shea founded Technology Made Obvious in 2012 to offer consulting, advocacy and guidance to organizations seeking help with planning for technical implementation. He previously worked at iSupportU and Sun Microsystems.

Nick Rancis

Chief technology officer
Clear Comfort Water



"Our future depends on clean-water technology," said Nick Rancis, chief technology officer at Boulder-based Clear Comfort Water LLC, a venture capital-backed water-treatment company.

"Specifically, my role here in Boulder County has allowed me to raise significant 'impact' venture capital, manufacture products here in Boulder County and drive intellectual value through our collaboration with the University of Colorado," Rancis said. "All products are designed, tested, manufactured and shipped from our manufacturing facility in Boulder County, distributing to U.S. and international customers."

Rancis has been a commercialization adviser to the National Center for Atmospheric Research, National Science Foundation and National Renewable Energy Laboratory. He has won awards from the Colorado Cleantech Industry Association, Cleantech Open and Launch Silicon Valley.

As a board member of CU-Boulder's Deming Center for Entrepreneurship, Rancis said, "I have had the opportunity to travel with faculty and students anticipating commercialization of their early-stage technology."

Rancis helped a group of faculty acquire funding for a revolutionary, efficient farming method and start a company that now is funded and creating jobs in Colorado. He gave technical and business mentoring to Upslope Brewing as it grew algae using waste CO₂ from the brewing process, and advised a young CU faculty member who invented a method to produce a more sustainable paper ink.

Rancis previously worked at the Rocky Mountain Institute in Boulder and BioVantage Resources in Golden.

Jennifer Rosenthal

Attorney, partner
Kendall, Koenig
& Oelsner PC



Jennifer Rosenthal dons biking shoes to pedal in the outdoors, but climbing shoes might be more appropriate for her work life because she has just ascended to a partnership in the law firm of Kendall, Koenig & Oelsner PC.

Rosenthal mentors junior attorneys at KKO, emphasizes work with startups, and started a law-clerk program in which her firm employs people fresh from law-school graduation and trains them for a couple of years to help them get jobs.

She came to KKO in 2012 after two years at Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher, where she represented public and private companies in corporate-finance transactions, including securities offerings, mergers and acquisitions.

At the University of Colorado Law School, where she received her juris doctorate in 2009, Rosenthal now is an adjunct professor who teaches students how to draft venture-capital documents. She is a supervising attorney for the Entrepreneurial Law Clinic, which provides free legal services to startup companies, and is a member of the dean's advisory council.

Her power of persuasion, honed while earning her bachelor's degree in media studies at CU, helped her draft investment recommendations for the Foundry Group in 2009 and teach the speech and debate teams at Monarch High School in the 2005-06 school year.

Rosenthal is a board member for the Silicon Flatirons Entrepreneurship Advisory Board, which acts as the hub for the startup community along the Front Range and runs a number of educational and practical courses for those who want to get involved in Boulder's startup scene.

Ashley Rumble

Assistant director
of development
Emergency Family
Assistance Association



"There is nothing better than being in the mountains," said Ashley Rumble — unless it's "supporting donors in connecting with the causes they love."

As assistant director of development for the Emergency Family Assistance Association, Rumble engages local companies that want to make a meaningful impact through their philanthropic activities.

"Whether it's hosting a blood drive, volunteering at one of our housing sites or organizing a workplace-giving campaign, making a difference looks different for every company," she said. "I work to facilitate and support the efforts of over 90 companies who want to help EFAA's clients and advance our nonprofit mission. By educating businesses about the benefits of corporate social responsibility, I influence the way business in Boulder Valley is done."

Rumble donates time to serve on the board of Boulder Food Rescue, helping it raise funds to redistribute nutrient-rich produce from grocers to individuals who struggle to access healthy foods.

Rumble said she hopes her work with EFAA and Boulder Food Rescue helps build a culture of philanthropy in the Boulder Valley. "Of 64 counties in Colorado, Boulder County ranks 44th in giving," she said. "For a community renowned for being prosperous for so many, this is a heartbreaking statistic when so many of our neighbors continue to be unable to meet their basic needs."

Before coming to EFAA, Rumble was grants coordinator for Live Violence Free, formerly the South Lake Tahoe Women's Center. She received a master's degree in geography from the University of Colorado Boulder.

Shannon Sackmann

Membership director
Social Venture Partners



"I love helping others with interior design," said Shannon Sackmann. "In college, I considered majoring in design — but decided I wanted to save the world even more."

Thanks to that decision, Sackmann now has designs on helping others in the nonprofit community as membership director for Social Venture Partners Boulder County.

She helps facilitate "a high-quality, engaged and impactful experience" for SVP's partners, she said, while also contributing to its financial sustainability.

Sackmann was named 2014 Volunteer of the Year by the nonprofit Colorado Planned Giving Roundtable. She became a member of CPGR in 2010 and joined its board two years later. During her three years on the board, she co-chaired the marketing and summer symposium committees and led the redesign of the organization's website.

She also has worked with Dental Aid, Engineers Without Borders USA and Planned Parenthood.

"I know that through my hard work, children have received dental care that made them healthier and improved their quality of life," she said, "and that women were able to access affordable reproductive health-care services."

Sackmann said she became a board member of Forest Park Montessori School because, "as a parent, I believe it is my responsibility to support the school and community that is helping to nurture the mind and spirit of my child."

She received a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska and a master's from the University of Massachusetts. She was a field examiner for the National Labor Relations Board and an organizer for a sheet-metal workers union.

Dan Secrist

Commercial Relationship
Manager
First National Bank



Dan Secrist has participated in three marathons and is looking forward to his fourth in May. Running "challenges me to always keep pushing to get better," he said.

Secrist feels that same drive as commercial relationship manager at First National Bank in Boulder, where "I help business clients with their challenges as if they were my own."

In his previous role as vice president for branch banking, Secrist said, "I was able to stand out as a leader amongst my peers by directing manager meetings, mentoring other managers and driving the team to increased performance. I developed a statewide process for our new employees to improve their success and onboarding experience. I also led our market meetings to help hold bank business partners accountable for referring business to one another."

Secrist started work at First National as an assistant manager of customer service in 2005. In 2012, he was one of nine branch managers chosen to be part of the first class of the Retail Ambassador Team, nicknamed the RAT Pack. "As a part of this team, I was able to help guide the course of many special projects that shaped how we do business at the bank," he said.

Outside of the bank, Secrist is involved with Boulder County Farmers Markets, Greenwood Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, Partners Mentoring Youth, the Humane Society of Boulder Valley, I Have a Dream Foundation and the Boulder Community Hospital Foundation.

Secrist earned a bachelor's degree in music from the University of Colorado Boulder.

Jeremy Shevlin

Director of client
advisory services
Crestone Capital Advisors



You might find Jeremy Shevlin riding his Enduro-style dirt bike. More likely, though, you'll find him advising prominent local business leaders and entrepreneurs about their investments.

As director of client advisory services at Crestone Capital Advisors in Boulder, where he has worked since 2004, Shevlin serves 59 client families representing businesses including health care, technology, real estate, consumer goods, and food- and energy-related sectors. He became a partner and shareholder in the firm in 2008 and serves on its investment committee. He manages and oversees the firm's advisory team.

Shevlin designs and manages global multi-asset portfolios, connects client families with venture capital and private equity sources and local service providers, and guides clients on strategies for philanthropic giving.

His own philanthropy includes serving as an associate board member of the nonprofit ACE Scholarships, which provides scholarships to children of low-income families so they can attend high-performing schools of their choice. He works with First Descents, which provides experiences for young adults affected by cancer, and the University of Colorado, where he is a guest lecturer on the practical uses of derivatives.

A Chartered Financial Analyst and Certified Financial Planner, Shevlin is a former member of the nominating committee for the Esprit entrepreneurial awards, which showcase the diversity of innovation in the Boulder economy.

Before coming to Crestone, Shevlin advised clients and managed information technology at Whittle and Skok Financial Services in Melbourne, Australia.

Amy Sigrest

Director of digital marketing
Metzger Albee
Public Relations



"I love old video games, and I'm very competitive when I play with friends," said Amy Sigrest. "I'm also competitive in my professional life, but having fun is the main objective."

Sigrest brings professionalism, competitiveness and fun to her job as director of digital marketing at Metzger Albee Public Relations in Boulder. Her clients are primarily Boulder-based high-tech business-to-business firms, and her role is to help build their global recognition through traditional and digital media.

"I started at MAPR six years ago as an account coordinator," Sigrest said. Within a year, I was offered the opportunity to co-found the digital marketing practice at the company. I have spent the last five years working on digital marketing campaigns and projects for our clients, and expanding the agency's digital-service offerings from simple website design to full-service search-engine optimization and web development."

A good example, she said, is the agency's work with Mile High United Way in 2014. After a redesigned website, SEO and content reorganization, the client reported an average daily traffic volume increase of 37 percent.

Sigrest organized the agency's donation to the Denver Rescue Mission's annual Thanksgiving turkey drive. On her recommendation, MAPR will provide an annual public-relations campaign to the winner of the Boulder Chamber's Esprit Venture Challenge. In addition to the cash prize from the chamber, MAPR will provide up to \$50,000 in services for the winner.

Sigrest earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of South Alabama and came to MAPR from WorldWays Social Marketing in Denver.



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Laura Smith

Programs and grants coordinator

BVSD School Food Project



“Athletics have always been a huge part of my life,” said Laura Smith. “I grew up playing sports and eventually returned to school to study physical activity and the promotion of healthy lifestyles.”

That’s her focus as well as programs and grants coordinator for the School Food Project in the Boulder Valley School District. She runs lunchroom-education programs to introduce seasonal produce and locally procured foods, new menu items and healthy eating habits to students through Tasting Days, “Make a Rainbow at the Salad Bar” Days, Iron Chef competitions, a Harvest Festival and more. All meals served through the project are made from scratch and hormone and antibiotic free, and Smith works to make sure they’re also nutritious and delicious.

All that takes money, and Smith oversees most of the project’s grant-procurement and fundraising efforts, as well as promoting it in social media and through recruiting parent and community volunteers.

Her work has earned recognition from such organizations as the Colorado School of Public Health, Boulder County Public Health and Boulder Rotary Club.

Smith joined a Rotary chapter in 2011 “in an effort to bring young professionals into Rotary,” she said. As founding president of the Boulder New Generations Satellite Rotary Club, she helped implement an award-winning women’s empowerment project in Peru. She has volunteered on more than 30 projects, including the Rotary Mental Health Initiative, Community Food Share, Crayons to Calculators, Share-A-Gift, and a collaboration with a local nonprofit for a water and sanitation hygiene program in Kenya.

Kirsten Snobeck

Senior associate

Rodwin Architecture and Skycastle Construction



Kirsten Snobeck loves to travel and “be immersed in different cultures, languages, cuisines and histories. Nothing to me is more worthwhile and exciting than traveling,” she said, “and the best way I remember my travels is through sketching.”

Some of those sketches may inspire her building designs at Rodwin Architecture. She has been project manager and senior designer on several notable projects in Boulder, and every project comes through her desk as she trains staffers to become well-rounded future architects.

Snobeck developed and co-teaches “Understanding the Rules for Building in Boulder,” and more than 500 Boulder-area real-estate agents have taken the course.

Several of her projects have been featured in local magazines.

She recently served on the city of Boulder’s Landmarks Board, where she worked for code changes, and worked closely with Historic Boulder on several projects, including its tour of historic houses.

Snobeck said she considers her main professional accomplishment to be “designing several beautiful homes and successfully bringing them through the design-build process.”

She has volunteered for Habitat for Humanity build days, Growing Garden’s benefit playhouse competition, the Center for ReSource Conservation and international student volunteers.

Before coming to Rodwin, Snobeck worked for Nantucket, Mass.- firms BPC Architecture and Chip Webster & Associates.

Some of her Boulder County projects include the tenant finish of the Bohemian Biergarten, the complete remodel of the 12,000-square-foot Brewers Association headquarters, and the Gunung Ranch in Gold Hill.

Claire Tindall

Senior director

of marketing and PR
Sphero



Not long ago, in a galaxy very close by, a little round droid became a marketer’s dream come true.

Revenue is rolling in at Boulder-based Sphero, maker of the toy version of BB-8, the robotic co-star of “Star Wars: The Force Awakens.” Claire Tindall, Sphero’s head of marketing and public relations, is happily riding the wave.

“I absolutely love what I get to do at Sphero,” she said, adding that the company is “at the forefront of connected play. We’ve created something unlike anything, and we’ve never stopped.”

Tindall directed the global PR effort surrounding BB-8’s Sept. 8 rollout. With 100 million media impressions and counting, she said, BB-8 was named “The Best Star Wars Toy Ever Made” by Forbes magazine and nearly sold out globally at its launch.

The industry accolades coming Tindall’s way aren’t her first; the University of Colorado graduate has enough recognition from PR Week and the Colorado chapter of the Public Relations Society of America to fill the Millennium Falcon’s cargo hold. Some of the kudos came before her arrival at Sphero, when she was brand manager at Nivot-based Crocs Inc.

Her position at successful companies has helped her be a Force for giving back as well. At Crocs, she spearheaded the SolesUnited shoe-donation program that has become CrocsCares. During her short stint at Love Grown Foods, she got to educate area elementary-school students about the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. She now participates in Sphero’s SPRK program, which promotes STEM and computer-science education.

Adrienne Tracy

Senior vice president
Centennial Bank



Helping people reach their goals doesn’t require a magic wand. A good banker generally can do the trick. Someone like Adrienne Tracy.

“Whether I am helping an established business owner attain his dream of building a Velodrome or helping a small-business owner expand her deli on Pearl Street, my commitment to local business has helped Centennial Bank Boulder become a successful de novo bank in a heavily saturated market,” said Tracy, the bank’s senior vice president.

“In just four years,” she added, “the Boulder bank has grown to over \$80 million in assets.”

A 15-year veteran of the finance industry in the Boulder Valley, Tracy manages a diverse loan portfolio of commercial and real-estate customers.

“I believe that my commitment to helping my co-workers, my customers and my organization has helped grow my portfolio to one of the largest in the bank — and over a relatively quick timeframe,” she said. “It has also allowed me to advance quickly in my career, having been promoted to senior vice president at the age of 32.”

Tracy makes her presence felt outside the bank as well.

She has worked with Boulder Ballet for 10 years and found funding in 2010 for a tuition-assistance program for the dance school.

She has supported Boulder Community Health Ambassadors for three years, leveraging her business network to bring in financial and in-kind donors.

In January, she began working with Junior Achievement, and was to teach 90 kindergarten students at Blue Mountain Elementary School in Longmont about financial literacy.

Nia Wassink

Executive director
Voices for Children / CASA



Nia Wassink loves to paint and rehabilitate old furniture. But some things can't be painted over, especially with a broad brush. Child abuse and neglect is such an issue.

Voices for Children CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) supports and advocates for children who have faced physical or emotional abuse. During her tenure at the organization's helm, Wassink has brought together different groups to improve children's lives. That process has included creating the Truancy Best Practices Support Team, which for the first time brought together the courts, school districts and other interested players. She also helped facilitate collaboration with a sister CASA based in Adams and Broomfield counties to better recruit volunteers. The 36 For Kids collaboration has been active for two years and recently received a large in-kind grant through BizWest and Premier Members Credit Union.

She frequently testifies before the state Legislature and speaks at conferences on child-welfare issues.

Wassink also is board president for the Acorn School for Early Childhood Development. She formerly served as director of business and development for Blue Sky Bridge, a nonprofit serving victims of child abuse, and as board president of the Boulder Youth Body Alliance.

Wassink volunteers her time with Attention Homes, InReach and a local library. She participated in Attention Homes' annual Sleep-Out in November and raised \$1,000.

"I feel strongly about supporting organizations that serve those who are most vulnerable," she said.

Benjamin Wilmhoff

Founder and president
BluFlux



Whether he's riding a bicycle with his family or developing new wireless technologies, Ben Wilmhoff is a man in motion.

"In March 2014, I became the luckiest man in Boulder by encountering an opportunity to build a technology company with an investment from a Colorado investor," Wilmhoff said. "My team and I had been part of another company funded by this investor until the end of 2013. We spun off on our own and became BluFlux."

The Louisville-based wireless product development company has the only authorized test facility for mobile cellular devices in the Rocky Mountain region. Google selected BluFlux to build a key piece of a wearable radar that recognizes human hand gestures as inputs to mobile devices.

BluFlux eases the pain of bringing connected products to market through RF, electromagnetic and antenna design for wireless products, Wilmhoff said. "We are reinvesting those revenues into a wireless product of our own, designed to keep firefighters safe when they enter a building and lose visual contact with their commander."

Wilmhoff donates to Book Trust, which inspires a passion for reading and learning in children who would not otherwise have access to a quality collection of books.

Before founding BluFlux, Wilmhoff was an RF development group lead at 10AK Technologies in Fort Collins and an RF engineer at First RF Corp. and Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp., both in Boulder.

He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Dayton in Ohio and a master's from Michigan State University.

Adam Wilson

Co-founder and chief scientist
Sphero



Adam Wilson's band saw may be fine for home projects. But as chief scientist and co-founder of Boulder-based robotic toymaker Sphero, "cutting edge" takes on a different meaning.

"I am directly involved with decisions that impact schools, families and kids that use Sphero to program and play," Wilson said. "I work on cutting-edge robotic systems that are used to advance entertainment and learning through play."

The company, originally called Orbotix and famous for the toy version of the BB-8 droid from "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," employs 100 people in the Boulder Valley and even a few internationally.

Wilson's company has raked in numerous awards, not only for its toys but also for its social media outreach, its spirit of innovation and as a good place to work.

Reaching area schools and schoolchildren is important to Wilson.

"I have volunteered for numerous programming events to teach our youth to get involved with programming and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) careers," Wilson said. "I also directly help with the University of Northern Colorado's annual research celebration with sponsorship and mentorship to students that are pursuing careers in STEM fields."

According to his resume, Wilson's focus in building something is "10 percent making it work and 90 percent making it perfect."

"If it is wireless, I have it. I also took it apart and captured the protocol, reverse engineered it and probably made it work off steam power," he wrote. "I am a Level 8 Bluetooth wizard and can automate almost anything."

Lea Yancey

Community sustainability
specialist
Boulder County



To Lea Yancey, a gardening tool and a compost pail "represent the full cycle of life. It is so satisfying and fun to dig in the dirt and grow my own food."

As a community sustainability specialist for Boulder County, Yancey said, "I am committed to sustainability for my community and for future generations. I help to educate the citizens in our community about the importance of sustainability, what they can do to make a difference and what resources are available to them to support their actions."

Yancey also makes sure the county's programs are effective, credible and transparent.

She played an integral role in the EnergySmart program that was recognized with a National Association of Counties award in 2013 and a Boulder County Pinnacle award for stewardship and sustainability in 2012.

"I am less concerned about individual professional recognition," Yancey said. "I am most interested in collaboration and teamwork to achieve goals. Therefore, I have been recognized as a member of outstanding teams."

She said the support she provides to the 10 cities and towns in Boulder County includes sharing knowledge, best practices and lessons learned, leveraging existing county programs and infrastructure, access to funding and local network connections.

Yancey came to the county post in 2010 after working with Navarro Research and Engineering and the Department of Energy in Golden.

"I have helped to advance sustainability in Boulder County in partnership with wonderful local government leaders," she said. "Together we are making a difference."

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