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THE BUSINESS JOURNAL OF THE BOULDER VALLEY AND NORTHERN COLORADO

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Including Ashley Cawthorn, marketing manager with Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti. PAGE 41



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Community Builder Awards
May 12, 2022
Grace Place, Berthoud

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Grace Place, Berthoud
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QUOTABLE

"I just think people are sensing the value of our DDA (Downtown Development Authority) and people are understanding that there are a lot of good properties to be redeveloped or developed."

Sean Hawkins, executive director of the Loveland DDA.
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BW EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Raymond Lee leads Greeley with a passion for helping others

By Shelley Widhalm

news@bizwest.com

GREELEY — Coming from a family of public administrators, Greeley City Manager Raymond C. Lee III considers his desire to be a public servant part of his DNA.

“At heart, I’m a servant,” said Lee of Greeley, who became the city manager in January. “I’ve always had a passion for helping people.”

After serving as Greeley’s deputy city manager for less than a year, Lee stepped into the management role, bringing with him more than 14 years of managerial experience.

Longtime city manager Roy Otto had just resigned in August 2021 after working in the same position since 2005 and providing 22 years of service to the city. He took a few months off, then became director of development for the NCMC Foundation/The WeldTrust in October 2021.

“I think Roy laid a good foundation for this organization,” Lee said. “I’ll be building onto that foundation to get us to where we need to go on to the next level.”

After Otto left, Lee served as interim city manager, then was named city manager.

“(Raymond) really proved his worth through his enthusiasm. He schooled up quickly on our community,” said Greeley Mayor John Gates. “He’s really hit the ground running (with) the knowledge he has of all our departments, the knowledge he has grasped really quickly of what our community stands for.”

Lee joined the city staff as the deputy city manager when he moved to Greeley in January 2021 from Texas. Originally from Dallas, Lee liked where the city of Greeley was heading, evidenced by the amount of undeveloped land it owns and its projections for growth.

“I’m a builder and this community and organization is in a building phase,” Lee said.

Greeley is a mid-sized, fast-growing city with a population of 111,000 residents projected to grow to 135,000 within the next 10 years and 265,000 in the next 40 years with full buildout estimated at 400,000.

“We know there is going to be a tremendous amount of growth that will happen within the city of Greeley, really strategically planned out growth that will meet the needs of the current citizens and those potentially moving to Greeley,” Lee said.

Otto brought Lee to the organization as the city’s deputy manager to provide leadership and strategic direction for its community-building portfolio in several departments, including community development, economic health and housing, public



COURTESY CITY OF GREELEY

Raymond Lee takes reins from Roy Otto at helm of city of Greeley.

works, water and sewer, and culture, parks and recreation. Lee leveraged his influence to focus on how to build a better community with the aim to improve resources for its residents and enhance the quality of services the city provides.

The deputy position gave Lee a view of where the city is at, particularly its strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats, he said. This cut down on his learning curve for the city manager position, since he had the opportunity to connect with businesses, residents and the city council, while also gaining an understanding of their needs and expectations of city government.

“I commend (Roy) for his dedication and his work,” Lee said. “When I think of Roy, I think of somebody who leads with his heart. He generally cares about his community and still cares about it to this day.”

Like Otto, Lee follows the city council’s direction in its key focus areas, ensuring that its visions for the city are turned into reality and projects are outlined with performance data in place for review, he said. Those

focus areas revolve around business growth, community vitality, economic development to attract and retain businesses, housing for all from affordable to executive, a sustainable infrastructure and mobility, and a safe and secure community.

“What is our brand of our city? What do we truly want to focus on? How will we sell the community to those who want to move to Colorado?” Lee said.

Lee wants to be sure that Greeley’s growth is smart so that it doesn’t outpace the city’s ability to provide quality services to its citizens. The city needs to have plans and resources in place to address growth, including increasing the housing stock and the quality-of-life amenities that include restaurants, shops and entertainment, he said.

“The things that stand out about him are his ability to create clarity around a vision ... identifying areas operationally where the city needs to grow in relation to intentional design, planning, service and infrastructure,” said Kelli Johnson, chief of staff and interim communications and engage-

ment director for the city of Greeley. “Part of his vision is focused on how to make the community the best community it can be.”

Lee puts plans in place to proactively support Greeley’s growth instead of being reactive, Johnson said. He is business savvy, setting up the city for success and elevating the health of the organization, she said.

“He’s not only trying to be responsive to the needs of the community and organization, he is designing systems and structures and processes and a culture that really establishes a healthy organization,” Johnson said. “He’s a collaborative leader. He listens first to understand, then talks about strategy and execution to talk about community needs.”

That’s because Lee wants to ensure the city of Greeley is inclusive by seeking input from not just the city council but the residents of Greeley and the stakeholders there and in the region.

“It’s a position where you’re truly helping people and working with people to resolve issues,” Lee said.

Paul Trombino III, public works director for the city of Greeley, likes that Lee is an engaging and effective communicator.

“He’s done a lot of outreach with staff across the city having departmental meetings. That’s good leadership,” Trombino said. “Raymond really seeks out our voices, trying to understand the work and how we’re doing it and how we can make it better.”

Lee also is risk advantageous, not adverse, Trombino said.

“As a city that’s growing, a city that’s changing, people expect progress and betterment. That means you have to take risks and explain and communicate what those are,” Trombino said. “Those are two things that Raymond really embodies as a whole and as a leader and a lifelong active learner.”

Before coming to Greeley, Lee held several management positions and helped municipal governments develop their growth plans. Among his various positions, he served as director of public works for the city of Amarillo from 2017 to 2021, assistant director of the city of Dallas from 2015 to 2017 and manager of street services for Dallas from 2012 to 2015.

Lee holds a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Kansas. He likes spending time with his wife, Star, and their three children, as well traveling, sightseeing and being a “big sports advocate,” he said.

“No matter where I’ve been, even at a young age, I like to see people thrive and afforded opportunities,” Lee said.

BW NONPROFITS

Martyred Angels Foundation fundraises for program expansions

By Shelley Widhalm
news@bizwest.com

BOULDER — When John Wayne Vogels of Boulder lost his nearly 4-year-old son, he couldn't find the resources he needed to deal with his loss.

Vogels wanted a way to address his grief that could help other parents, so he created the Martyred Angels Foundation in 2013 to provide equestrian therapy, grief support camps and star registries for parents who lost children and children who lost parents. The service also is provided to those with confirmed PTSD related to the loss, including veterans, Gold Star families and civilian families.

"This is such a widely needed service, I truly didn't expect it to be absent," said Vogels, founder and executive director of the Martyred Angels Foundation. "There was nothing out there (in the Boulder area) that had consistent research and care for family who lost a child."

Vogels now wants to grow his non-profit by building an Equestrian Lodge as a home base for his services and to be able to serve more families. He identified a nearly 39-acre property, the Meadowdale Ranch in the Estes Park area, that already has the buildings on site that fit with what he offers. The property, previously used as a rehab center for troubled youth, needs some work, which Vogels plans to make happen through donations, revenue and other resources.

"The idea behind it is to have a place for visitors, the public, as well as registrants of the organization to have a nice place to stay and, at the same time, to have horses at the property, so we can explain how we use horses in the horse therapy program to hopefully gain more supporters," Vogels said. "The lodge will also provide revenue for the organization to keep operating costs available and also to be able to expand and continue to acquire other properties."

Vogels launched a fundraising campaign on Fundcare, Anedot and other fundraising sites in March to purchase the property, which costs \$3.9 million with a \$1 million down payment. The property includes an 18-room lodge with a commercial kitchen and dining/meeting room, two four-bedroom houses and a duplex, plus horse boarding facilities.

"It's perfectly ideal for the ideas we have," Vogels said.



COURTESY MARTYRED ANGELS

John Wayne Vogels poses with Apollo, one of the horses he uses in the Martyred Angels program.

Vogels plans to open the Equestrian Lodge seven days a week to visitors, investors and registrants, who are the participants in the foundation's programs, so that they can have greater access to programming and spend more time with the horses. Currently, registrants access the horses through the foundation's partnership with Spirit Horse Ranch in Erie, a private horse-boarding facility that offers training, clinics and classes. The partnership operates the horse therapy/riding program with two horses and a miniature pony.

"By having horses on the property, our own team of horses, having that and a barn manager on the property as well, this will allow public access to the horses," Vogels said.

Kaia Livingstone, owner of Spirit Horse Ranch, provides equestrian therapy for the foundation, incorporating her background in psychotherapy and instruction. She leads the Martyred Angels grief support—equine facilitated psychotherapy sessions employing equine-facilitated psychotherapy, process support and trauma-informed care to help families look for ways to heal and find meaning in their sorrows.

"Complex grief can take a long time, over many years, to understand and come to terms with. Many families don't have the resources for ongoing care and support, which Martyred Angels generously provides," Livingstone said. "Martyred Angels has been able to support and encourage care for

clients who wish to receive professional help in their grieving and healing process. Some families wouldn't be able to receive ongoing support without Martyred Angels' help."

When Vogels and Livingstone initially discussed their partnership, they expected to see results in four to five months but instead saw them with their first registrant family. The family's oldest surviving son said the name of the youngest son who died in a trailer fire after not being able to speak it aloud.

"It's horse therapy, but how this therapy is provided is a little different," Vogels said. "(Kaia's) incorporating that experience and knowledge into how she trains and works with horses."

Martyred Angels offers a number of other programs, including grief support camps one to two times a summer at a private Boulder area property with cabins, a commercial kitchen and an observatory.

"It gets them feedback and information about how well the program is going for them," Vogels said.

Registrants have a place to relax, release their grief and be around others who understand, Vogels said. The idea is to help them realize they are not alone, he said.

"Everybody discusses their stories and how the horse therapy is working for them," Vogels said, adding that he also can get feedback on what the registrants would like to see done differently. "It allows everybody to open

up and in several cases not feel — the word I'm looking for — ashamed over losing a child."

The camps, as well as the equestrian therapy program, are supposed to be a place to heal but also to have fun, Vogels said.

"It's not constantly being in a state of depression and grief," Vogels said. "You actually can have fun and smile and enjoy life without all this negativity weighing you down."

By acquiring property for the equestrian therapy program, Martyred Angels will be able to host camps there in addition to the Boulder area property, plus extend the number of camp offerings. The observatory at the Berthoud property is a place for registrants to view the stars in the star registries that the foundation purchases in memory of the registrant's children. So far, the foundation has donated seven star registries.

"We had a family member purchase a star in our son's name shortly after his passing," Vogels said. "It was truly amazing, and I didn't think about it until the foundation started growing because I was more focused on other areas, then it dawned on me. . . . It's the families we purchased these star packages for when they received them, they were absolutely so happy."

Vogels and his wife, Teresa, lost their son, Bladyn, in a drowning accident April 9, 2011; they have a daughter, Raven, 16.

The Vogels got grief counseling through Boulder County but funds were reallocated and the department closed. Vogels started talking to the homeless he noticed during his breaks from work, asking them how they got in their situations. A few had lost their children, then experienced other losses as well, such as employment and marriages, and faced drug and alcohol addiction. He wanted to be able to help them, too, with his mission at Martyred Angels.

One family that the Martyred Angels helped is Troy and Barbara Walczyk, who lost their youngest son, Corbin Walczyk, 32, on Sept. 21, 2021, to Crohn's disease and COVID-19. The Walczyks met Vogels at Corbin's memorial, and Troy Walczyk, impressed with his organization, decided to place Martyred Angels Foundation patches on a vest he uses to ride on his custom chopper to show support for the foundation and the parents who have lost their children.

NONPROFIT COALITION



Community Foundation support goes deep, wide after Marshall Fire

By Lucas High
lhigh@bizwest.com

BOULDER—In the roughly four months since the Marshall Fire tore through the eastern part of Boulder County, taking with it more than 1,000 homes, businesses and other structures, the Community

BW **♥** IT FORWARD

Foundation of Boulder County, the county's philanthropic partner for more than three decades, has taken in more than \$38 million from about 76,000 donors, enough money to allow the group to provide resources for both a wide swath of the community and more intensive help for those most in need.

That's an unusual position for a group like the Community Foundation to find itself and a credit to its supporters, foundation CEO Tatiana Hernandez told BizWest.

"It's been incredibly unique in the world of philanthropic disaster response that we've raised enough to look at both ends of the spectrum to make sure we're looking

at people who need deep support while also looking at a broader picture," she said. "... Our donors have made it possible for us to both prioritize rebuilding homes and get people back as quickly as possible, while also making sure we tend to the needs of the most vulnerable," such as food, clothing, shelter and transportation.

The business community has been both a fountain of support — providing millions of dollars in donations to the foundation — and a recipient of help.

"It was mostly a residential event, but [direct business impacts] were not unknown," Hernandez said.

In addition to support for the handful of businesses directly impacted by the blaze, the Community Foundation of Boulder County has already allocated \$1.5 million in direct payments to workers who have lost wages or equipment used for work as a result of the fire.

"As part of our livelihood distribution, we did provide a stipend for people who lost tools of their trade,

like a plumber or electrician or a teacher," Hernandez said. "We are being really expansive in what we're considering tools of the trade so people can access financial support and get back to work, whatever that work might be." This support also applies to businesses based out of homes that were destroyed or damaged.

From an economic perspective, one of the most important accomplishments will be getting people back in their homes — or getting peoples' homes rebuilt — as quickly as possible, because the residents of Louisville and Superior represent both a critical talent pool and a consumer base for businesses throughout the region, she said.

"When you look at the bigger picture, the major concern for businesses is loss of client base," Hernandez said. "By prioritizing people getting back [into their homes and back into the local economy],



HERNANDEZ

it creates a gravitation center."

Bringing home working parents with children is a particularly critical goal, she said.

"In the truly long term, I worry about families not returning," which could have a major impact on school funding in the future, Hernandez said, citing estimates that 600 to 800 Boulder Valley School District students could be displaced.

"I think we'll know by next fall what, if any, impacts [the fire] will have on the district," she said.

While the support from the community for the foundation has been unprecedented, there's always more need.

"If folks want to continue to donate, we'd absolutely love to be able to expand the amount of support we're giving to our business community, expand things like childcare and summer camps," she said.

For more information about Marshall Fire disaster assistance, visit www.bouldercounty.org/disasters/wildfires/marshall/marshall-fire-financial-assistance-frequently-asked-questions/.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2022 WINNERS!

2022 TORCH AWARDS WINNERS



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THE NONPROFIT

Wish List

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COURTESY JANICE MCOUGHLIN

Runners at a previous BolderBoulder toe the line.

RUNNERS TO YOUR MARK: BolderBoulder is on again

By Dan England
news@bizwest.com

After counting on 50,000 participants who made the BolderBoulder part of their Memorial Day, Cliff Bosley and his staff now find themselves marketing the annual 10K race as if it was a local Hot Dog Hump (or whatever you'd call a small holiday race).

"We still notice a slight hesitancy, but I take the perspective of people needing to be reminded of the habit," said Bosley, the longtime race director, in a phone interview. "They need to be reminded of how awesome the race is."

It was, unfortunately, all too easy for the experience of running a 10K with tens of thousands of others to fade from our minds, as the pandemic wiped out two years of the annual event, at least in person. The BolderBoulder did what it could, offering virtual challenges that first year and a quasi event last Memorial Day staged in six venues, but there's no doubt it wasn't the same. There were no Blues Brothers, no belly dancers and no bacon givers, even when the race was able to host Fortitude, its much newer

Labor Day race in Fort Collins, last year.

"We've missed our participants and our spectators," Bosley said in a news release, "and we know they've missed us."

But Bosley sees signs that the race will return to its former glory, even if, as of mid-April, numbers are down by as much as 25% compared to 2019 (the last time the race took place in person).

"As COVID is in the rear-view mirror and people are doing more and more normal things, we are seeing more and more register, faster than what we might normally see around this time," Bosley said. "We anticipate a real groundswell."

The race didn't even open for registration until January, as Bosley wanted to let the pandemic play out, but he continues to be encouraged.

"How many T-shirts do you order?" Bosley said. "We are having that conversation every day."

The race even changed its qualification system to encourage runners to shoot for the faster waves. In the past, runners had to run a certified race and turn in proof of that time.

To go

The 42nd running of the BolderBoulder takes place in person on Memorial Day (May 30) in Boulder. More than 80 waves of competitors will toe the line, with local resident and Olympic gold medalist Frank Shorter as the official starter. Those waves start in staggered times beginning at 7 a.m. To register, go to www.bolderboulder.com.

The rules were fairly liberal, as most races qualified, but it still had to be an official race. Now the BolderBoulder will allow a Strava time, meaning you could go, say, run a 5K on a track, or during a tempo run, and qualify for a wave, as long as you bring your Garmin and record it on Strava.

"Just link to it," Bosley said. "That way, if you have a great workout, it's not been lost."

Bosley said the race hasn't been too strict on when a runner sets that time either, so it's possible your July 4 5K or Turkey Trot would work.

"This is really more about getting people back," Bosley said. "Honestly

we just think it's important to get people running more than anything else."

The BolderBoulder was able to honor registrations from 2020 — the race sent out 11,000 codes for "free" registrations this year in January — and Bosley encourages those who did enter in 2020 and deferred to run the race this year.

"We really would like people to use that deferral this year if they can," he said.

Indeed, Bosley wants to push the numbers as much as he can, as he knows part of the experience of the BolderBoulder is just the magnitude of the event itself. But as he said, he wants to see people running (or walking) and challenging themselves. And he's seeing signs that people are doing that.

"This isn't scientific," he said, "but I'm seeing a lot more people out on the trails."

Healthy people generally did better with COVID-19 than those who weren't, Bosley said, and as he looks to the future, he wants to see more than his race thrive.

"Ours is a long-term answer to COVID," he said, "but it is an answer."

BW ONE ON ONE

Interview with William Karspeck, mayor of Berthoud

Each month, BizWest asks a business leader to participate in a question and answer feature to help shed light on a business topic, an industry or add insight to a field of endeavor. This month, William Karspeck, mayor of Berthoud, discusses the town's success with economic development over the past few years.

BizWest: Berthoud has seen success in recent years with economic development. Please describe the general philosophy of community leadership with regard to how you approach business development in town.

William Karspeck: Well we have a good staff willing to try out new ideas and are very entrepreneurial in their own right, and our economic development director Walt Elish has years of experience and an extensive network to help get the word out about the great things we're doing in Berthoud. In addition we just have good municipal genetics. Our service infrastructure is well maintained and has room to grow, and our location being on U.S. Highway 287, Interstate 25 and Colorado Highway 56 as well as being 45 minutes from two major universities and an international airport gives us an unbeatable location. Our views of the mountains, access to numerous lakes and reservoirs and sense of a tight knit community are icing on the cake. With this good economy, numerous commercial developments are taking off. We try to help the commercial developer where we can. That includes easy access to staff, and reassessing fees, or partnering on infrastructure where it makes sense. From time to time, staff will come to us with an incentive plan for a prospective business. We aren't going to give away anything or lower any standards but generally there are things we can do to help.

BizWest: A couple of the recent developments — the TPC golf course and Ursa Major — are examples of successful efforts in economic development. What made those projects work for Berthoud?

Karspeck: For TPC it was the location with an unparalleled view overlooking the twin peaks and having several reservoirs to play next to and enjoy for recreation. It was also the developers vision for this location. We have a long-term water agreement with the course, and I think that made sense. That area could have just been sold for a suburb, but instead it's becoming a premier Northern Colorado location for active living and fine dining. Its future development plans are innovative. The Front Range trail will be going

near the course. We've partnered with the developers to create a great regional trail network that will benefit everyone.

For Ursa Major, we just happened to have a building that was designed to test rocket motors and that was not currently utilized. Ursa happened to be looking for an area to test their rockets in-house. It could not have worked out any better. The Berthoud location has since become its headquarters and it has developed plans for expansion already.

BizWest: The town recently turned back proposals to change the intergovernmental agreements with the Turion Metro Districts. What do you think will happen next with this development? Is it off the table or is there a path forward for it?

Karspeck: Turion will definitely be going ahead. There was apprehension over the proposed agreement given the size of the development and its location set several miles east of town and in Weld County. This means a different county, school district, library district, etc. It is essentially its own town and should have adequate amenities and strong protections. As metro districts expedite development, we really only have one chance, and since we have no metro district model service plan of our own, we were relying on the state's minimum regulations. After the mayor-pro tem did some extensive research, we learned there are numerous communities that have some sort of regulations. Turion has invested a lot into its project already, including millions of dollars worth of improvements into the Interstate 25 intersection and upcoming mobility hub. The developers understand what we are concerned about and judging by our last meeting, they seemed receptive to exploring regulations. I'm glad we have them, and I think we'll make a truly unique development that will be attractive to residents and businesses.

BizWest: What retail strategies is the town using to recruit additional sales tax paying businesses?

Karspeck: Our location, amount of commercial areas and a booming population naturally helps us out. We recognize the benefits of ongoing sales tax generation and myriad other benefits by a new business and will generally be flexible where we can. We try to partner on infrastructure improvement so the cost is not 100% born by the business(s).

BizWest: Describe the town's strategies with regard to industrial/commercial development.

Karspeck: Industrial development



COURTESY WILLIAM KARSPECK

Berthoud Mayor William Karspeck

is critical, and it provides secure, living-wage jobs. We have several industrial zoned areas in town. I think the important thing there is to look at businesses at all levels of their growth. Do we have space for someone's first business? Do we have larger units available so that business can transition to a bigger space when it is ready? Growing up here I thought I had a good idea of the industrial businesses we have, but I'm constantly amazed with how many and the unique industries they serve. We have [one of] the largest printing presses west of the Mississippi, a new company focusing on high quality roof racks and off roading accessories. We have highly skilled machinists and welders, aerospace companies that build motors and now Agile RF that builds satellite antennas, and just about everything in between. I hope as we continue to grow we have a plan to provide small to medium pads to extend Second Street north. It would be nice to see more entrepre-

neurs be able to find a space to create the next great product.

The town has been working on the redevelopment of our old Town Hall site into a walkable, mixed-use area. The plans look fun, and I can see this help existing businesses by beautifying the area and increasing foot traffic as well as enticing new businesses to set up shop downtown. A lot of us see the potential of this being a catalyst for more downtown improvements.

BizWest: What else would you like to share about the community's approach to economic development?

Karspeck: In addition to looking outward, Berthoud is beginning to look more inward for economic development. I think the recent entrepreneurial summit we hosted, and having the governor speak, helped impress our interest in providing the tools and resources for our small businesses to grow. I'm particularly excited about this, and I hope to keep that momentum going.



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2022 Notables



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LGBTQ Executives

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Mortgage Brokers and Title Officers

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August 2022

Education

Deadline: July 11, 2022

September 2022

Marketing Executives

Deadline: Aug. 8, 2022

October 2022

Female Board Executives

Deadline: Sept. 9, 2022

November 2022

Banks & Credit Unions

Deadline: Oct. 7, 2022

December 2022

Wealth Management and Financial Planning

Deadline: Nov. 7, 2022

After a total shutdown in their industries due to the pandemic, these women are pivoting to find ways to sustain and grow their businesses.

The leaders profiled in the following pages were nominated by their peers at work and in the community and showcase the diversity of talent in our market. The leadership shown by the individuals profiled here is setting an example to shape a better future for our region.

METHODOLOGY: The honorees did not pay to be included. Their profiles were drawn from nomination materials. This list features only individuals for whom nominations were submitted and accepted after a review by our editorial team. To qualify for the list, nominees must be employed at companies in the Boulder Valley and Northern Colorado.

To nominate for future Notables, please visit events.bizwest.com/notables.

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SUSAN ALBERT

FAT ALBERTS FOOD AND DRINK

OWNER

Years in industry: 40

“Sue [Albert] has been the mom to every college student who ever worked for her. She takes great pride in helping young people grow into responsible adults. And, she has successfully run one of Greeley’s favorite eateries for 40 years,” said Marria DeJohn, office manager for Bartels & Co. LLC.

“She still bakes the most delicious pies! Since the beginning of COVID-19 she has kept the business going and kept her employees employed when many places had to close. She has adapted to the new normal requirements and has kept our community fed.

“She has worked long hours when she didn’t have enough staff. She has reduced the open hours of the restaurant so as not to burn out her loyal employees. She is always there for area nonprofits by donating gift certificates for her ‘world-famous’ pies. St. Patrick’s Day is her big holiday; she even has a countdown clock. Every year droves of people show up to have corned beef and cabbage (along with a green beer.) Everyone is Irish on St. Patrick’s Day. Sue is a friend to everyone who comes in the door.



CANDY CAMPBELL

BIN 46

OWNER

Years in industry: 9

College, university: University of Colorado Boulder

“Candy Campbell is dedicated to excellence in business, lifting up women and engaging in her community. She is owner of Campbell - Scott Production and Bin 46, a catering company in Longmont,” said Ashley Kasprzak, development manager for the UCHealth Longs Peak Hospital Foundation.

“For nearly five years, she operated Bin 46 Craft Bar and Restaurant. She decided to close that establishment early in the pandemic due to multiple factors. She pivoted and expanded her business to include event coordinator for high-end affairs from coast-to-coast and even Hawaii. While navigating the pandemic and her own battle with COVID-19, she managed to create a niche for her farm fresh creations with locally-sourced ingredients.

“Candy knows all of the best protein sources, cheese makers, wine and craft beer creators and has an incredible eye for detail. She brought her knowledge, talent and passion together by lifting up health care workers during the pandemic. UCHealth provided meals to nighttime and weekend staff during the last intense wave of the pandemic. Candy was contracted to provide six meals, and she added a special fresh flair to what she provided. She delivered more than 120 small squashes to Longs Peak Hospital staff filled with soup. Some staff members had never seen or tasted anything like it, and they loved it.

“In addition, Candy serves on the Longs Peak Hospital Foundation board of directors. She most recently assisted with a corn hole tournament to raise money for health care workers to pursue higher education and special training.

“Candy finds joy in lifting up others, and she founded the Women’s Business Development Center in Boulder 12 years ago. Her bright eyes and thrill for new ideas motivate others to do their best and believe in themselves.”

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ANN MARIE COLE

STONEBRIDGE COS.

AREA DIRECTOR OF SALES

Years in industry: 24

College, university: Johnson & Wales University

"Ann Marie [Cole] is an experienced director of sales with a demonstrated history of working in the hospitality industry. She is extremely skilled in catering, sales, delphi, leisure industry, and property management systems," said her friend, Sara Duffert, senior account executive with BizWest.

She has more than 30 years experience in forecasting, building partnerships and building teams. She specializes in hotel operations and sales and regularly attends and organizes for-profit and charitable events to grow her network of contacts and add to her experiences within a changing industry.

"She is also a strong sales professional with an associates degree in occupational studies in pastry arts, a bachelors in hospitality management focused in hospitality administration/management from Johnson & Wales University. She was awarded the director of sales of the year by Providence Hospitality Partners in December 2019. The CEO of Providence Hospitality said in a news release, 'Ann Marie Cole demonstrated servant leadership, care for their associates, service to the community and unmatched professionalism.'

"A firm believer in the power of positivity and fearless collaboration, she has built several award-winning teams throughout her career. When not working on the next sale, Ann Marie can be found traveling with her two favorite people — her husband of more than 25 years and her about to head off to college son.



BETSY CRAIG

MENUTRINFO LLC

PRESIDENT AND CEO

Years in industry: 12

"Betsy [Craig] has been a passionate leader in the industry of food allergy management in food service throughout the country. She has fiercely focused her attention on serving the needs of others in this area as well as serving those who serve this community," said Betsy L'Italien from the University of New Hampshire dining services. "She is personable and uplifting and demonstrates tenacity and dedication. She has led her team to create and implement allergen awareness and safety programs, speaks around the country for education of the importance of food safety with allergen and is a lead in creating consistent programs for learning and implementing, in a variety of food service operations including college and universities."

Jeff Weissinger, general manager at Vanderbilt University, concurred. "Whether it's menu labeling, restaurant nutrition, or food allergy best practices, she has proven herself as an invaluable subject matter expert to restaurants, university dining halls, food manufacturers, and more. ... Our allergen program is a leader because of Betsy."

Gayle Rigione, CEO of Allergy Force, called her a visionary. "[She] is passionate about ensuring that people, regardless of dietary restrictions, have equal access to food and food-related experiences. She and her team have built a value add offering, building block by building block, to equip restaurants, food services providers, dining services and manufacturers with knowledge, training and processes to do just that."

Said Mulay Weisman, president of Mulay's Sausage Corp., "Betsy Craig has been a leader in the food service industry for more than a decade. Her start in this industry was in helping large restaurant groups, universities and independent restaurants develop informative labeling components on their menus. ... Once in the industry, Betsy realized the need for these restaurants and universities to safely learn how to handle foods that contain allergens in the kitchen, avoiding potentially fatal cross contamination. Starting a new branch in her company, AllerTrain, Betsy and her team developed a training system for restaurants so both management and employees were trained in best practices."



LOUANN DECOURSEY

PANHANDLER'S PIZZA

CEO AND PRESIDENT

Years in industry: 30

College, university: University of Northern Colorado

"Panhandler's Pizza was originally founded in 1975 and was almost shut down for good when developers bought the location. After much public outcry, Louann DeCoursey decided to buy Panhandler's brand and recipes to create Pan's 2.0 in 2018," said Lani Brlecic, general manager.

"She kept the recipes and the heart to continue serving the pizza that tastes like a memory to thousands of Pan's Fans everywhere. While many restaurants floundered over the past two years of the pandemic, Panhandler's pivoted to not only survive but thrive under Louann DeCoursey's leadership. During COVID, Panhandler's expanded its reach to deliver pizza to hungry Pan's Fans up and down the Front Range, added outdoor concerts, expanded nationwide shipping to all 50 states, added breakfast — all because Louann wanted to make sure Panhandler's was still standing strong at the end of the pandemic.

"The last year saw unprecedented sales growth due to Louann's vision of creating experiences for Pan's Fans focused on the amazing pizza. By creating different channels of distribution, Panhandler's has reached a bigger audience in not only Fort Collins but throughout Northern Colorado.

"Louann has a firm belief that 'we have to support the community that supports us.' She launched Slices of Kindness to pay it forward for someone in need to grab a slice. Pan's works in partnership with a number of schools and organizations to do fundraisers and sponsor events. Also, under DeCoursey's vision, Pan's started a job program with the Cooper House through Poudre School District for students with disabilities. Pan's is developing several other work programs through the Colorado Restaurant Association.

"Beyond raising four amazing kids with her partner, Mike, Louann also volunteers time at Off the Hook Arts and for more than 17 years in the Poudre School District in various volunteer capacities."



NATALIE EHLERS

PF CHANGS

OPERATING PARTNER

Years in industry: 25

"Natalie Ehlers has been a focal point in Northern Colorado for the past 20-plus years. She has been a leader with her team and represents strong female leadership in a difficult industry," said Jeannie Valliere, human resources with HRX Services.

"She provides her team resources and guidance to grow professionally while meeting the daily needs of her customers. Her demeanor is always positive, professional and filled with a lead-by-example attitude to her team. As a customer of PF Changs, it has been easy to see her level of engagement with her team and customers.

"I believe she is unique in meeting Changs corporate initiatives and maintaining a positive team culture. She always remembers repeat customers and is kind and professional in every interaction with her team and customers. During the last years during COVID, I have watched her face much adversity with staffing challenges and COVID restrictions. Yet, she remains confident, kind, and professional to everyone she engages."



CYNTHIA EICHLER

VISIT FORT COLLINS
CEO

Years in industry: 7

College, university: Colorado State University-Pueblo

"Cynthia [Eichler] successfully navigated the challenges of COVID as CEO of Visit Fort Collins. Besides assisting the destination tourism efforts of VFC, she was instrumental in the implementation of a tourism business improvement district in truly establishing Fort Collins as a tourism destination while putting the organization's funding more in line with peer cities and towns," said Gary Ozzello, director of university relations for Canvas Credit Union.

"Cynthia tirelessly worked behind the scenes with city officials and the hospitality industry to secure the BID, despite the continued challenges related to COVID. She has continually turned challenges into opportunities in moving the organization forward. She is in the midst of developing, with a consultant, a tourism master plan for Fort Collins. She is nationally recognized in the tourism realm, serving in various advisory capacities within the state and regionally, and is engaged nationally to connect with trends and developments.

"As the board's immediate past president and as a member of the organization as a board member for more than 15 years, without question she has guided the organization through incredible challenges with a positive attitude, encouragement, and a servant leadership that has served the entire community and tourism industry. Cynthia has gained the trust of city government leaders, the chamber of commerce, local hotels and tourism businesses to firmly continue the successful track in Northern Colorado."



DONNE ERWIN

EMBASSY SUITES, LOVELAND
EXECUTIVE HOUSEKEEPER

Years in industry: 35

College, university: Colorado Mountain College

"Donne Erwin, executive housekeeper, started with Embassy Suites Loveland prior to its opening in 2009 and has been with us through the best and worst of times still to this day," said Lou Ann Hoehne, director of sales.

"Donne is a huge part of the reason that our hotel has won awards each of those years both for cleanliness and guest satisfaction. Her record has 16 consecutive outstanding quality audits, and she works very hard to ensure that streak is not broken. The reason for her success is simple: genuine care about the hotel, her team, and our guests.

"It is no secret that the hospitality industry was one of the hardest hit during the pandemic. During the worst of times, Donne worked as an hourly associate to ensure that the hotel and the few rooms we were selling stayed clean. Even during this trying time, Donne never let her quality suffer.

"You can bet that Embassy Suites Loveland has the cleanest laundry room in the company. She leads our company in cleanliness scores. No small feat when you consider the current labor market — continually short staffed and at the mercy of who actually shows up to work each day. She has advocated for hiring folks who may not otherwise be considered employable and has helped mold them into respectable, hire-able associates. She participates in the Clean the World program, creating more work for her, but allowing others to have access to basics like soap and shampoo.

"[She's] a mentor to many people working their way up in our industry, who have gone on to be extremely successful. Every team member in her department receives a warm welcome and truly heartfelt thank you, along with a snack purchased from her own pocket, every single day. This is the spirit of hospitality."



TIFFANY HELTON

STUFT (FORT COLLINS)
OWNER

Years in industry: 20

"Tiffany [Helton] has been a tremendous change agent through COVID. She created places and spaces for restaurateurs to collaborate, find solutions and survive the impact of closures, guest limits and more," said Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce CEO Ann Hutchison.

"Her leadership in helping to create the Level Up Program in Larimer County set us up as an example for the entire state. As well, she created Online Restaurant Academy to continue excellence in the industry. Tiffany has been willing to share her insights, failures and successes to make the industry more resilient. As well, she has been a resource for new entrepreneurs who want to enter this space, freely sharing her time to make sure they are successful.

"Finally, she is an SBDC adviser, working with new companies wanting to grow in Northern Colorado. Thank you for providing the opportunity to celebrate this amazing female leader in Fort Collins. We celebrate all that Tiffany has done for her industry and Northern Colorado."



SARA HOCKHALTER

DICKEY'S BARBECUE PIT
OWNER, OPERATOR

Years in industry: 2

College, university: Minnesota State University Moorhead

"Sara Hockhalter and her husband opened Dickey's in Windsor in December 2019. They were so excited to bring another food option to this growing community as well as provide job opportunities," said Stacy Miller, economic development director for the town.

"Sara is an ambassador with the Windsor Chamber of Commerce. She works with the community to provide schools, sports teams and first responders fundraisers through the restaurant. Being involved with the community is key for Sara. Building relationships with the town, other business owners and people in the community in general is top priority.

"All of their guests know Sara appreciates them and welcomes them in like they are coming into her home. Sara creates an environment where employees and guests feel like they are important as well as have a fun experience. This was evident once they opened Dickey's and COVID came into the world. Guests would drive from out of town just to come in, eat, feel like the world was normal.

"Building a business during the past couple of years has been a massive challenge and adjusting to that in addition to a time where the world was shut down isn't an easy task. Having tenacity and positivity to keep things going has been the biggest learning experience of her life."



JENN KENDERS

HOT CORNER CONCEPTS/MOOT HOUSE

GENERAL MANAGER

Years in industry: 15

"Jenn Kenders is a rock in our company. For more than a decade in leadership, she has proved to be capable, dependable, and an all-around star. Her Hot Corner Concepts tenure has seen her serve in all management positions across five full-service restaurant locations in Northern Colorado, finally landing a permanent role as general manager of The Moot House," said Adam Vander Sande, director of operations.

"Jenn consistently performs at the highest level and has a gift for leading with a firm, no-nonsense, but ever kind, hand. Building her team up around her, she has a knack for recognizing and developing talent. She leads a restaurant staff of more than 50 individuals. Her placement at The Moot House was providential when our industry and the rest of the world was hit with the pandemic in 2020. As most restaurants shut down in the initial wake of lockdowns and mandates, Jenn resolutely kept her kitchen open — but not for business as usual.

"Partnering with the Bohemian Foundation, she oversaw the execution of the Feeding Our Community program, with The Moot House being the first restaurant partner in Fort Collins. The effort grew into a network that included seven restaurants, four delivery truck teams, two dozen distribution partners (nonprofits, mobile home communities, and affordable housing providers), and hundreds of staff, volunteers, and community leaders who coordinated, delivered, cooked, and so much more. This activated network kept restaurant workers employed, provided meals to community members impacted by COVID-19, and cultivated connection with one another during an isolating time. The meals were the mechanism, community-building was the result. The program ran for more than a year and produced more than 250,000 meals for anyone in need or impacted by the virus.

"Jenn went above and beyond to ensure her team was safe, taken care of, and the meals that people depended on made it into their hands."



KRISTIE MELENDEZ

VECINOS MEXICAN GRILL & CANTINA

OWNER

Years in industry: 15

College, university: Colorado State University

"A lifetime entrepreneur, Kristie Melendez always knew she was destined to do something special and help others. Her latest business venture, Vecinos Mexican Grill & Cantina in Severance, came about after the matriarch of Senor Jalapeno died, and the family approached her to take over the business," said Stacy Miller, economic development director for the town of Windsor.

"Her business philosophy is simple — you join a family when you come to work for us. Family members have respect for one another and do their best to not let each other down. A CSU graduate and fourth generation Windsorite, her community roots are why she continues to serve and provide Stepping Stones with soup for its soup suppers, free meals and gift certificates to veterans and first responders, and supports as many local community events as possible. She serves as the Windsor-Severance Historical Society president, the Lariat Loop president, and is a member of the Windsor, Severance, and Loveland Chambers of Commerce."



DENISE MOCK-GRAVES

SWEETS BY DENISE

OWNER

Years in industry: 20

"Denise [Mock-Graves] started her baking career at the famous Schmidt's Bakery in Loveland. She also worked at Panera in the catering department. Since the pandemic, she has boosted her baking business from home," said friend Donna Rupert.

"She is an amazing baker. Not only are they beautiful, they taste wonderful. Check out the photos on her Facebook page; she has made some beautiful cakes, cupcakes, and other goodies. I've used her for birthday and holiday cakes. I believe her cupcakes are sold locally on one or more food trucks in town.

Her Facebook page says, "I am a from-scratch baker who enjoys making cakes when I'm not working. I've had many years of cake and pastry experience." And her website says, "Born to bake. I have been baking and cooking all my life. It wasn't until I moved to Colorado in 2008 that I was introduced to baking on a professional level. I started working as a pastry chef for Schmidt's Bakery the same year I arrived in Colorado. I worked there off and on until it closed. Since then, I have been working as a head caterer at a local restaurant during the day. At night, I continue to work on my passion: baking and decorating. For me, the best moment is the first time my client opens the box and sees what I have created."



JENNA SAMPSON

UCHEALTH

COORDINATOR OF NUTRITION

Years in industry: 14

College, university: Colorado State University

"Jenna [Sampson] was tasked with keeping our patients at MCR, PVH, Greeley Hospital, and Long's Peak Hospital safe and appropriately nourished according to their medical dietary restrictions. Jenna is responsible for tracking ingredients, dietary supplements, and products meant to feed our patients, all of which became scarce while supply chain issues stressed our systems," said Mark Culloton, director of hospitality for UHealth.

"Jenna received notifications of out-of-stock products on a daily basis and made quick decisions on potential substitutions to ensure that patients are healthy and safe. To provide patients with the items offered on the menu, she recoded several substitute products to accurately reflect any changes made to ingredients and nutritional while not compromising the quality of the food. These changes are essential to match what doctors have ordered for their patients' medical diets.

"She revamped the menu to meet standards on the amount of calories and protein patients should eat during their hospital stays so that we could provide the best care to patients. Jenna has gathered information on types of food and what alterations need to be made and has educated each hospital's food and nutrition department on the changes that will be made.

"On top of managing all of this she trained our call center, which takes thousands of meal orders a day to accurately reflect the constant changing environment. Stress hit health care hard in these past two years, but you'd never know from Jenna. She is a key driver of culture at the four northern UHealth hospitals. She's never lost focus that the end goal is patient satisfaction and safety. She sets the bar that we all work to reach. The scope of her influence for these four hospitals was 397,000 meals served to patients last year alone."



DAWNN SHORT

SHORTD'S

OWNER

Years in industry: 21

"Dawnn Short loves roasting coffee beans. She even left her corporate job to focus on her hobby-turned-business full time during the pandemic, and she attributes much of her success to her community involvement," said Jenn Venerable, executive director of the Carbon Valley Chamber of Commerce.

"Not only did she bring her coffee truck to the Marshall Fire victims to give them a cup of warm comfort, but she gives her time and talent all year long as an active board member and treasurer for the Carbon Valley Chamber of Commerce, which serves Dacono, Firestone and Frederick. She sincerely believes that being a good partner to other businesses and organizations in the local area contributes to a company's success, and her actions follow suit.

"ShortD's has contributed to a number of local benefits and fundraisers in the Carbon Valley, including several puppy adoption events at Mac-n-Charlie's (local pet supply business in Firestone) and with Soul Dog Rescue out of Fort Lupton. It donated to a local Realtor's Shred-Hunger event (gift basket and percentage of sales from the event), ReMax Nexus' Children's Hospital/ Fall Festival donation and coffee sponsor, the Carbon Valley Half Marathon coffee sponsor, and donated a portion of sales to local schools when participating in fall festivals and teacher/staff appreciation activities. Dawn did hold down a full-time 'day-job' working for a medical device company in Gunbarrel until February this year when ShortD's went full-time.

"In addition to holding the position of vice president in a local networking group the past year and a half, she has served as treasurer for the Carbon Valley Chamber since December 2020."



LORNA SISKI

THE WATER VALLEY CO.

DIRECTOR OF SALES AND EVENTS

Years in industry: 15

College, university: Northwestern University

"I have had the pleasure of working alongside Lorna [Sisko] since I joined The Water Valley Co. in 2018," said Jason Kusel, chief operating officer of Hospitality & Experiences at The Water Valley Co. in Windsor. "In her role as the director of sales for the company, there are a couple of attributes I would like to mention and recognize. Lorna presents a genuine approach to customer service and drive for perfection to all clients who host an event with The Water Valley Co. Whether it is a wedding on our private island, an intimate private dining experience at one of our multiple dining locations or a birthday party at one of our pools — her customers are treated like VIP's the moment they walk in the door.

"Through hard work and relentlessness, Lorna is dedicated to making the best experience for all her clients. Lorna leads a sales and events set-up team that strives to create lasting memories for every one of her guests."



AMY SNIDER

CUPS COMMUNITY COFFEE

OWNER

Years in industry: 2.5

College, university: Cornell University

"Amy Snider, who founded the USL1996 W-League champion Colorado Force Women's pro-am soccer team, decided she was ready to do something other than soccer. In the summer of 2019, she purchased Cups Community Coffee on Taft Hill Road in Fort Collins, after the then-owner let Snider, a regular customer, know she was ready to sell," said Mishelle Baun, principal of Baun Business Communications.

"Snider enlisted her husband Matt and children, Summer and Jackson, to help put on her own touches. Things were going well, then when COVID-19 arrived in March 2020, overnight the cafe had to pivot as it could no longer welcome customers inside. And pivot she did. The always-positive Snider started a program called CupLift, to help 'lift up' those helping on the front lines by delivering coffee and breakfast goods.

"She received donations from friends and customers to help her deliver CupLift packages to hospitals, fire stations, and even those preparing take-out meals at the now-closed schools for needy students. It was gratifying to see the smiles on the recipients' faces, and donors were proud of the small role they played to help lift up those who were actively serving our community.

"Amy has always been a leader who finds the silver lining in any situation, and though her cafe weathered some challenging times, she forged a path through the pandemic to keep it open while providing the community much-needed positivity."



LAUREN STOREBY

SNACK ATTACK

OWNER

Years in industry: 20

"Lauren [Storeby] has been a tremendous change agent through COVID. She created places and spaces for restaurateurs to collaborate, find solutions and survive the impact of closures, guest limits and more," said Ann Hutchison, CEO of the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce.

"Her leadership in helping to create the Level Up Program in Larimer County set us up as an example for the entire state. As well, she created Online Restaurant Academy to continue excellence in the industry. Lauren has been willing to share her insights, failures and successes to make the industry more resilient. As well, she has been a resource for new entrepreneurs who want to enter this space, freely sharing her time to make sure they are successful. Finally, she is an SBDC adviser and a member of the chamber board of directors, working with new companies wanting to grow in Northern Colorado. Thank you for providing the opportunity to celebrate this amazing female leader in Fort Collins. We celebrate all that Lauren has done for her industry and Northern Colorado."



AMANDA ULLOA

SILVER GRILL CAFE
GENERAL MANAGER

Years in industry: 22

"Amanda's role in our success is a key reason Esquire Magazine named us one of '100 Restaurants America Can't Afford to Lose' during the pandemic," said John Arnolfo, Silver Grill owner for 42 years and during COVID. "Her effective leadership style centers on deep respect for all team members, from servers, cooks and assistant managers to dishwashers, cashiers and hosts. She empowers, inspires and guides them.

"By developing a 1:1 relationship with employees, Amanda tailors her coaching to fit individual learning styles. She says it's inspiring to watch them grow and become better versions of themselves."

New owner Alan Jantzen added, "Amanda's positive influence is evident in our hundreds of 5-star reviews during COVID and today. An August 2020 review praised our ample space between tables and 'fantastic service and outstanding food.' Another in April 2022 noted that staff were professional, efficient, kind and 'free to let their personalities shine.'

"When COVID hit, she was a calm influence," Arnolfo said. "Her excellent problem-solving skills helped overcome the onslaught of daily challenges. Amanda and the leadership team instituted safety protocols for staff and guests exceeding Health Department requirements. She launched our takeout, delivery and online ordering. We brainstormed unusual marketing ideas to keep Silver Grill top of mind. For one, both of us peddled a rickshaw around Old Town giving away cinnamon rolls. It led to a full-page news story."

"Silver Grill set sales records during COVID," Jantzen said. "Before the pandemic, we sold an average of 1,600 cinnamon rolls on Christmas Eve. In December 2021, Amanda launched a new ordering system and sales jumped to more than 2,000 rolls. Amanda is an exemplary general manager. Her leadership style and communication approach create smooth operations and a well-trained team delivering a 10 out of 10 guest experience."



COURTNEY WHITEHEAD

HOMEWOOD SUITES BOULDER/
SAGE HOSPITALITY

GENERAL MANAGER

Years in industry: 12

"During the uncertainty and tumultuous time of the pandemic, Courtney [Whitehead] was taking on her first GM role at a new property. However, she was also continuing in her current role as the director of housekeeping at a dual hotel property overseeing roughly 60 employees in addition to her new team," said Bonnie Becker, director of sales for Homewood Suites.

"During the transition, Courtney worked tirelessly to ensure her employees had everything they needed to succeed during unprecedented times, splitting her time between the three properties. Since her full transition to the new property, she has improved customer service scores, enriched the property with new amenities and updates for guests, and built a successful team. She was also able to effectively manage her hotel and not require any reserve funds from ownership throughout the worst of the pandemic, an incredible feat considering she not only improved the hotel, but also increased wages for every single employee who fought alongside her.

"She has invested her time in training and developing new managers, strongly believing that opportunity is the key to a bright future, and improved resources and job roles for each and every employee under her direction. Her drive, encouragement, and love for this industry is truly unmatched. Her dedication to her team and love for her guests is rare and commendable. We are honored to work for her and truly believe she deserves this recognition."



KRISTY WYGMANS

POUR BROTHERS

OWNER

Years in industry: 8

College, university: Michigan State University

"Kristy Wygmans has worked incredibly hard during COVID. The past 18 months has been a test for those in the hospitality industry. She has made all the changes required from the state, city and county to ensure protocols have been met. She was able to be a stalwart of professionalism and positivity for her staff," said Nathan Scott of Foothills Gateway.

"Accommodating every required safety measure, she managed to create a place that was a refuge from the isolation that COVID created. To further illustrate this pattern, she provided a place in Old Town for people to still make wonderful memories. That included business meetings, proposals, happy hours, outside/curbside dining.

"She is a great example of someone deserving of this award. A woman of integrity and a continued contributor to many great causes, she's an inspiration to others in the field. I'm grateful for her in my professional network, and I'm proud to call her a great example of a small business owner and my friend."



RACHEL YENDRA

GIB'S BAGELS/SPOONS

PRESIDENT

Years in industry: 16

"Rachel Yendra has been in the restaurant industry for approximately 16 years. She started at the age of 15 and worked in many capacities before becoming a teacher and moving to California," said Tom Loftus, director of operations for Gib's Bagels.

"She returned to Fort Collins and went back to work for Gib's Bagels. She seamlessly transitioned from store manager to operations manager and eventually to president. She spearheads all of the company's many community-minded endeavors. Those include working to employ developmentally challenged individuals, volunteering at events, participating in adopting a family for Christmas, donating to area churches and the food bank. Rachel does all this while being responsible for the day-to-day operations and financial responsibility of running a multi unit company.

"Her smile and positivity inspire others and make the workplace that much better. She has worked to help others grow and move up within the company, personally and within the community. All this while raising a family and caring for her many animals that she loves so much. Don't get her talking about goats.

"Recently the owner of Gib's Bagels purchased another local restaurant company, Spoons. Rachel was instrumental in this being possible. Without her it would not have happened. She was excited for a new opportunity and challenge and handled it extremely well. Rachel is helpful, kind, caring and motivates those around her to achieve their goals."

BW NATURAL & ORGANIC



DALLAS HELTZELL/BIZWEST

Jennifer Walter, right, is owner of Love's Gluten Free Bakery in Longmont. Her assistant is Kierra Kernan. The bakery produces a wide range of baked goods.

Gluten-free bakeries rise to occasion, demand

By Dallas Heltzell
news@bizwest.com

Like the dough in their ovens, interest is rising in gluten-free products produced by bakeries large and small in the Boulder Valley and Northern Colorado.

Nationally, analysts predict a 9.3% compound annual growth rate for the gluten-free market through 2026.

That growth might seem puzzling given that a University of Chicago study found that celiac disease — an autoimmune disease that occurs in people who are genetically predisposed to suffer damage to the small intestine if they consume wheat-based gluten protein — affects only 1% of healthy Americans. That translates to about 3 million people. Further, a 2017 study published in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology* found that just 6% of the population experiences sensitivity to glutes that isn't related to celiac disease.

So why has interest in locally based brands such as Udi's breads and Rudi's baked goods seen exponential growth? And why have boutique and artisanal gluten-free bakers sprung up along the Front Range and across the nation?

Local bakers say an increase in general health consciousness is fueling the trend.

"Celiac disease is a common reason people follow a gluten-free diet, but there are many other reasons people choose to eat gluten free," said Danielle Benjamin, brand manager for Canyon Bakehouse in Johnstown. "We hear from consumers who eliminate gluten to help manage headaches, inflammation or other health issues such as Hashimoto's disease or Crohn's disease. Within our consumer commu-



COURTESY CANYON BAKEHOUSE

Canyon Bakehouse employs about 200 workers.

nity, we know that 90% are gluten-free due to some kind of health reason. As consumers continue to become more aware of how the foods they eat may affect their bodies, we're seeing an increase in the number of people exploring gluten alternatives."

Jennifer Walter, owner of Love's Gluten-Free Bakery in Longmont, agreed.

"Gluten intolerance manifests so differently," she said, "and a lot of people are becoming more health-conscious, and sharing information more gives people the right to advocate for themselves. Doctors are also becoming more holistic instead of just medicating."

At Cardnl, a low-carbohydrate and gluten-free bakery in Fort Collins, co-owner Rob Benson said customers seeking gluten-free products fall into two camps.

"One is they are celiac or they've

been diagnosed," he said. "The other group might say, 'I was told a couple years ago to lay off the gluten. I tried it and now my joints don't hurt. Now I have more energy. Now the acne I had is gone. It's a whole list of things.'"

Benson said he understands the skepticism that has arisen in some quarters.

"People who don't have any knowledge about it will say, 'That's a fad. How ridiculous.' And I get it. I might think the same thing if I didn't know all the scientific research that's been done on it. We really didn't see gluten sensitivity in the '80s. It was very rare.

"We're definitely seeing, day to day, more people being sensitive to gluten than ever before," he said. "It's probably due to a vast array of circumstances, from the plastics we're ingesting, from the smoke from wildfires here in Colorado in summer, to the overconsump-

tion of carbs. All those are contributing to it — exposure to things the body can't figure out how to process."

It's not that women are more susceptible to gluten intolerance, he said, "but I think women are more in tune with their bodies because of hormonal changes than men are. She may be more apt to go to the doctor — whereas men assume their joint pain is something they have to deal with, and it's just stuff you could eliminate by changing your diet.

"That education aspect is the interesting spot. This attitude that 'well, I've always had joint pain and there's nothing I can do about it' is what holds the industry back from driving a little bit more."

Gluten-free products also meet the needs of keto and paleo dieters, Benson said.

Besides health reasons, another issue driving the increased interest in gluten-free products is that they simply taste better, thanks to research and development. Replicating the texture of a traditional slice of bread, muffin or cake without gluten was hard, but some bakers have come close by finding the right starch ratio, sometimes employing gelatinization.

Besides, said Walter at Love's in Longmont, "good products will weed out the bad ones — and our customers find our products absolutely delicious and gluten free."

Walter's middle name, and the name of her bakery, is Love, a tribute to her great-great-grandfather, Robert Love Sr., who in 1851 opened Love's Bakery in Honolulu, which would become Hawaii's largest bread supplier.

Love's turns out a varied gluten-free menu including cinnamon rolls,

chicken pot pies, sandwiches and specialty cakes. “We make a lot of sandwiches, too. Breakfast sandwiches, crepes, quiches, bagels.”

The key, she said, is finding the right flour to produce the right consistency for each item. “Cupcakes need a different composition than cinnamon rolls or pot pie crust,” she said. “It just takes a lot of trial and effort, a lot of experimentation.”

“We buy amaranth flour, almond flower, brown rice flour, white rice flour, sweet rice flour, flax seed, garbanzo, fava flour, quinoa flour, sorghum flour, millet flour, cornstarch, potato starch, tapioca, xanthan gum. Those are the raw flours we bring in, then make 15 flour mixes because everything needs a different composition of heavy-weight and light-weight flours.”

Benson found an ingredient that not only could be used to add sweetness but also met the needs of diabetics concerned about their blood sugar.

“Allulose doesn’t metabolize like sugar. It metabolizes like flour,” he said. “It’s derived from corn, grapes, anything that’s sweet that creates a fructose. They take an enzyme and they break down that fructose and create allulose. It’s not an artificial sweetener but it’s a sweetener that does not raise blood sugar but actually can lower blood sugar, and that’s pretty incredible for something that tastes a lot like sugar.”

His only problem was the supply chain.

“About a year ago, Kashi and a few other brands decided they’re going to invest heavily in allulose,” he said. “So all the suppliers got excited, forgot about the little guys like us, and started shipping all of their availability to Kashi and other big brands.”

Shopping in grocery stores for gluten-free products such as those Canyon Bakehouse turns out has gotten more consumer-friendly as well, Benjamin said.

“Packaging technology has been the game-changer,” she said. “Historically, gluten-free breads have been sold in the freezer, and it’s where many long-time gluten-free consumers have gone to find a variety of offerings. Thanks to modified-atmospheric packaging technology, gluten-free breads can now be stored at room temperature. By removing oxygen from the sealed package, we’re able to extend our product shelf life to more than 100 days.”

“As stores continue to expand and shift their specialty offerings, consumers are expecting gluten-free products to be available in their respective place, not just a space dedicated to dietary needs, and the choice to buy fresh or frozen,” she said. “Canyon was able to extend availability beyond the traditional gluten-free space in supermarkets with the goal to make sure our gluten-free products are available wherever consumers are looking.”

Developing new, tastier products with better consistency will continue

to drive the gluten-free market, they agreed, whether it’s at boutique shops such as Love’s or Cardnl or at mass producers such as Canyon Bakehouse, where about 200 employees work in a 165,625-square-foot dedicated gluten-free facility.

“There are still many mainstream products and segments where consumers don’t have a gluten-free option available, or don’t have easy access to one,” Benjamin said. “Our goal is to make products that provide solutions for gluten-free consumers in all eating occasions, and we see a big opportunity that has yet to be seized in the dinner-roll segment. This spring, Canyon will launch a gluten-free brioche-style dinner roll that is very versatile, flavor-forward and offers a new, unique offering for the category.”

“Our brand legacy is built around inclusion and giving people back the sense of normalcy when it comes to eating bread,” she said. “Something as simple as a dinner roll can have a tremendous impact when it lives up to the expectations of great taste, wholesome, high-quality ingredients. Given the success of other product extensions, including buns, bagels and English muffins, extending to a dinner roll was a natural fit. Whether there’s one person in a household who’s gluten-free or the entire family, this is a product that can do a lot of things and be enjoyed by everyone.”

“After all, that should be our mission,” added Walter. “GF should stand for good food.”

ON THE JOB

PAID ADVERTISING CONTENT

Dan Metzger BRINKMAN REAL ESTATE | NEW HIRE



DAN METZGER

Brinkman Real Estate’s continued focus on acquisitions in high-growth markets throughout the Intermountain West region has proven successful over the past year. The company closed last week on its eighth deal in as many months, topping \$220

million in volume since last fall. With the continued strength of real estate in its target markets, Brinkman Real Estate expects this trend to continue.

To support the continued influx of transaction activity, Brinkman Real Estate welcomed Dan Metzger as Chief Operating Officer to lead portfolio strategy and performance. His role will include oversight of the investor relations, operations and asset management functions of the company.

Metzger has been an active participant in the institutional real estate community since 1998. Before joining Brinkman, he was Chief Operating Officer at Brue Baukol Capital Partners (BBCP), a Denver-based investment and development firm. Among his responsibilities were leading BBCP’s investments team to successful execution on the firm’s real estate projects and ensuring the timely and accurate communication to its investors. Prior to that, he was Vice President of Asset Management at Dividend Capital Diversified Property Fund, a Denver-based REIT and he has also held positions with Lowe Enterprises (Denver), NorthMarq Capital (Denver) and Ryan Companies (Minneapolis).

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BW TECHNOLOGY

The key to unlocking Colorado's climate transition

The key to unlocking Colorado's pioneering climate goals lies firmly within our ability to secure public and private capital. With innovation driving our energy transition, Colorado must create a favorable and competitive economic landscape for the climate-friendly technologies we need. This will require bold public action that is aligned with private-sector needs.

To chart this public-private framework, Signal Tech Coalition convened Colorado's private sector leaders in finance and tech to collaborate with the state's public officials on a series of investing, regulatory and policy recommendations aimed at bolstering emerging climate-tech markets. At both the state and federal level, these recommendations are poised to attract billions of dollars of private investment and help meet Colorado's emissions-reductions targets.

As Colorado weighs its options for how best to allocate historic federal investments, this funding has the ability to catapult our economy forward toward a cleaner, more-equitable future. In addition to much-needed investments in EVs and charging infrastructure, reducing emissions in buildings and workforce development, we recommend sizable investments be made in the specific areas where private-sector investments are currently not being made, either because perceived risk is too high or return horizons are too long. These areas are industrial manufacturing decarbonization, the electrification of heavy-duty fleets, deployment of heat pumps in buildings, the devel-



TECHNOLOGY

QUINN ANTUS

JOSEPH ANTUS

opment and deployment of green hydrogen, and carbon capture and sequestration. Public capital could get these markets off the ground so they reach scale within the necessary time frame.

Additionally, state tax credits for commercial building upgrades could set asset owners ahead of incremental regulatory requirements. Tying tax credits to energy use per square foot or emissions per square foot would efficiently make larger scale energy efficiency upgrades possible sooner. Joined with strengthening state and federal energy efficiency mandates, these would significantly support the market for efficiency-oriented technology.

A green investment fund or "green bank" is another strong mechanism for attracting private-sector capital to fund harder-to-reach parts of our energy transition. Federally, the Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator is seeking a \$100 billion investment that would attract \$463 billion in private capital within four years' time. That alone would hit nearly a quarter of President Biden's \$2 trillion climate-investment target while creating four million good-

paying jobs in the U.S. in four years. The Colorado Clean Energy Fund is the state-level affiliate and would receive part of this capital. Whether through direct federal capitalization or state-level allocations, the Colorado Clean Energy Fund would be able to powerfully support disproportionately impacted communities, just transition communities, and use innovative mechanisms to expedite our energy transition.

Another central issue for supporting both climate tech and just transition communities is workforce development. As it is now, most workforce development funding is allocated to a region's established economic sectors. Yet, there's untapped potential in workforce-development programming and funding to upskill workers in the fields their economies could transition toward. Particularly in rural areas, programming focused on high-paying, climate-friendly and innovation-forward solutions could help these economies flourish. Combined with \$65 billion of federal spending on broadband infrastructure, the communities placed at risk in our energy transition would be given resilient opportunities for vibrancy and monumental growth.

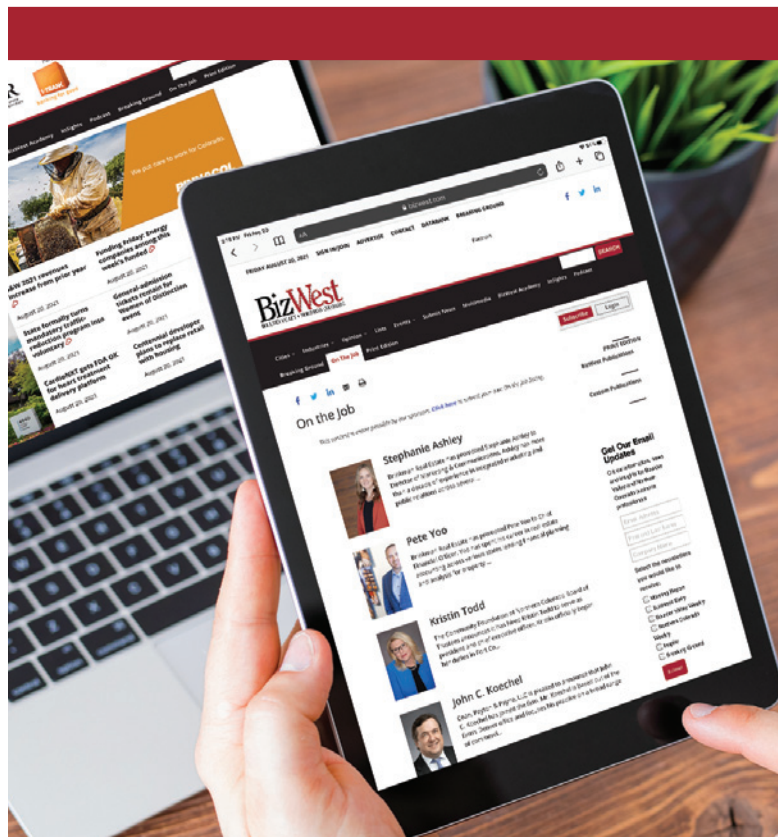
A specific testament to the power of resourcing rural communities comes from the example of flare mitigation. In 2019, 4.72 billion cubic feet of natural gas was flared in Colorado. Yet one recipient of Colorado's State Job Growth Incentive Tax Credit has created 286 flare-mitigation jobs across the state, with an average annual salary of

\$122,000. By incentivizing flare mitigation, Colorado would be primed to eliminate methane emissions by up to 98% while creating many more high-paying tech jobs in rural communities dependent on the oil and gas sector. Furthermore, adding an extraction tax credit would increase corporate and individual income tax revenue to offset foregone severance tax revenue. This same concept was successfully demonstrated in North Dakota in early 2021.

Finally, a financing structure that has enormous untapped potential for climate-positive investments is the Community Reinvestment Act. Since it was enacted in 1977, the CRA has prompted \$6 trillion of private investment in underserved communities. By adjusting the CRA criteria to include environmental components for affordable housing projects, as well as adding a new class of credit to fund climate-positive initiatives, significant private capital would be efficiently mobilized, through an established and trusted financing mechanism.

Colorado is ready to lead in the clean economy of the future. These recommendations would unlock tremendous private, climate-friendly spending and investments. By securing bold climate investments and implementing strategic policies, our markets will be primed to launch us to the forefront of climate tech ingenuity and economic development.

Quinn Antus is executive director of the Signal Tech Coalition. Joseph Antus is communications consultant.



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Multiple developments dot Loveland downtown



COURTESY THE COLLECTION

The Collection @ Sixth Street will feature for-sale condos on the upper levels with retail at street level.

By Jeff Thomas
news@bizwest.com

LOVELAND — Loveland's big investment in its downtown is starting to pay dividends with private sector investment following the city's lead.

"I just think people are sensing the value of our DDA (Downtown Development Authority) and people are understanding that there are a lot of good properties to be redeveloped or developed," said Sean Hawkins, the executive director of the DDA. "There are a lot of good business tenants. Others (patrons) are coming down and having a good time."

The city of Loveland's direct involvement kicked off the downtown revival. Early this century, the city created master plans for commercial use and streetscaping and brought strategic properties under its control, culminating in the 2½ city block, mixed-use Foundry project, which was completed in 2019.

The city is following up with the recent decision to finish funding the Pulliam project at 545 Cleveland Ave., a Works Progress Administration project completed in 1938, which was initially used as the city hall. The city council recently directed staff to come up with an additional \$3 million to complete funding for the renovation of the building, which is being aided by a \$1 million federal grant and \$2.25 million from the non-profit Pulliam Community Foundation. In total the project is expected to cost slightly more than \$10 million.

"That was a really exciting day. We've been at it for 12 years," said foundation President Norm Rehme about the 8-1 council decision. "There's a real need for meeting space, and this building can provide that for everyone — from community groups, and weddings to businesses needing convention room."

"It's a real challenge to do this level of fundraising with an all-volunteer staff. But now we're seeing the end of the campaign," Rehme said.

Likewise, expect the city to be handing off the bulk of revitalization efforts to the DDA, which was passed by voters in December of 2017. The DDA was granted authority to assume \$60 million in debt, which can be paid back using tax-increment financing. In essence the DDA gets the increase of sales taxes that accrue in the district in order to repay the debt.

The math is a little complex in Loveland, Hawkins said, as the city's own TIF financing also gets part of those funds. However he estimated the DDA is funded to the tune of about \$400,000 annually today.

Natural Grocers tapped into those funds for its new location at North Lincoln and Eighth Street, getting a sales tax rebate that could bring the company \$500,000 over 10 years. The DDA keeps the first \$150,000 each year, but the grocery keeps the excess until it reaches the \$500,000 limit.

"That corner had not produced any sales tax revenue since 2008, and it was a project we were very anxious to get back contributing," Hawkins said. "They were impressed that it was right in the heart of the city's downtown, and they were also impressed by rising traffic counts."

Likewise the Cleveland Station, at the corner of Cleveland and Fifth Street, went to the DDA for \$800,000 for widening sidewalks and improving historical building facades. Today, the site features live music and dining at the ground-floor saloon and traditional office space upstairs.

"We have one vacant space," said leasing agent Rico Devlin, noting that many of the business tenants are coming downtown from newer developments near Interstate 25. "Part of it is right sizing and being

closer to restaurants. But down here they are paying \$25 (per square foot) as compared to \$30 to \$35." The restaurant, the Tom Davis Saloon, is also taking off, he said. "They are going strong, and I hear a lot of people all over town talking about them. It's a happening place to be."

Michael Pelphrey, a principal of Aslan Construction in Berthoud, recently bought the Elks Lodge on the 100 block of East Fourth St., with the idea of expanding the downtown music scene in a significant fashion.

"Nobody is getting music right (in Northern Colorado)," said Pelphrey, who moved here from Austin, Texas, in the 1990s. "We're going to start with the acoustics first." The property was purchased for \$1.85 million and is a landmark building, which means a great deal of historical renovation. Plans include using the ballroom for a music venue, and include space for a restaurant, a downstairs bar, retail areas, and practice space.

"We're going to be chasing financing wherever we can find it," said Pelphrey about the renovation effort. "Loveland as a whole has been successful; I've seen retail space go from 12 bucks to 20, but this is definitely an opportunity to make this an entertainment destination."

The Collection @ Sixth Street, 205 E. Sixth St., is following the lead of mixed use ground level commercial with residential upper levels, but it is bucking the trend of apartment dwelling by offering condos for purchase. Named for the fact the property was formerly the city library, the property is owned by 6th St. Library LLC, with Kurt Skott and Bob Dehn the majority owners.

Leasing agent Hilary Dehn said the time is right for the 15 units of condos, with private and secured parking.

"There are a lot of apartment

options, but these are the first downtown condos within a block or two of everything," she said. "A Natural Grocers is going in a block away from us."

Another big project on tap is known as the Draper/Heartland project and includes five existing buildings on the 300 block of Fourth Street and a 56-space parking lot owned by the city. Plans are to tear down three of the buildings, which are in disrepair, and historically renovate the other two buildings, creating 14,000 square feet of commercial and 96 multi-family units for rent. The site is formerly Draper Drug and Draper Soda Fountain, and the plans are to restore the most historically significant buildings.

Jay Hardy, who was a principal with Brinkman Construction when it was selected by the city for the Foundry project, has been retained by Burgener Holdings to help oversee the project. Hardy said the parking lot negotiation with the city is key to the project, as it will be developed into a 277-lot parking building.

"Our deal is not completely done," Hardy said. "Basically we'll pay for the (\$11 million) garage," securing parking for residents and creating more downtown parking for the district. Hardy said the developers are experts in downtown renovation and will likely be approaching the DDA for facade renovation money.

Hawkins said historical renovation is a key to successful downtowns, but there is more nuance in creating a blend of redevelopment. That is difficult for city councils to balance, he said, as council members need to balance the needs of an entire city when making decisions.

"The key is our organization is partnered with the city, but not bound by those confines," he said.

"The city council is concerned with the downtown, but we wake up every morning thinking about it."

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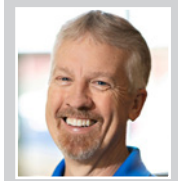
BW ThoughtLeaders

BUSINESS ANSWERS FROM THE EXPERTS

FACILITIES

Spring Cleaning Maintenance

After the winter season, spring is not only a great time for cleaning, but also for maintenance projects around your facility. If you don't have a dedicated maintenance team, our team can help on an hourly or project or contract basis, whichever works best for you.



Pete Gazlay
Total Facility Care

Spring maintenance items may include leveling off sidewalks that have heaved or moved during the winter. These trip hazards can be a safety issue and liability issue for your business.

Birds are back! We can repair damage caused by flickers (woodpeckers) that just seem to love stucco buildings. We'll fix it in such a way that they won't be able to reuse that spot again. Over time this deters them from returning. You may also find birds have decided some areas of your building are a great nesting or roosting area. Watch out below! After nesting season, we can help with mitigation strategies that will keep the birds from roosting in those areas.

It's staying lighter longer, but are your exterior entrance lights working? What about the common area lights inside the building? We can replace them and even assist in upgrading your system to more energy friendly LED lamps. We're experts in this and will calculate and manage the rebate process as well.

Most commercial buildings still need their lights on in the daytime. We can help with replacing lamps that are burnt out, ballast repair and even a comprehensive relamping program so you're never in the dark.

You may find after the winter freeze that door thresholds have moved and now you can't get that rarely used door open. Door openers wear out and we can repair or replace those.

Spring is also a great time for painting projects, and we can help freshen up the appearance inside or out.

If you need some handyman maintenance service, we can help! Give us a call today or hit us up on our website and we'll get our technician scheduled or provide a quote for your larger projects.



Pete Gazlay, President
Total Facility Care
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LAW

Non-Compete Agreements and Criminal Law: A New Intersection

On March 1, 2022, Colorado became the first state to criminalize the use of illegal non-compete agreements. Any person who knowingly uses an illegal non-compete agreement commits a Class 2 misdemeanor punishable by up to 120 days in jail, a fine of up to \$750, or both.



Lee Morehead
Otis & Bedingfield, LLC

Public policy in Colorado has long valued free competition in employment which requires employees to have the ability to move from one employer to another. As a result, Colorado law generally disfavors non-compete agreements. Some states, like California, prohibit all non-compete agreements, while others limit their use by, for example, prohibiting such agreements with low-wage employees.

Historically, Colorado law prohibits non-compete agreements except in four situations: (1) as part of the purchase and sale of a business or the assets of a business; (2) to protect trade secrets; (3) where the employee was employed 2 years or less, and the consequences are limited to recovery of education and training expenses; and (4) where the employee is an executive or manager. These exceptions have been part of Colorado law for decades. Thus, if employers are following existing law, there is little cause for increased concern.

Colorado also prohibits any person from using force, threats, or other means of intimidation to prevent any person from engaging in any lawful occupation. Unfortunately, there is little guidance interpreting what actions constitute force, threats, or other means of intimidations. With potential for broad application, employers should be cautious when looking to enforce a non-compete agreement.

Limiting non-compete agreements is a recent trend. The Obama Administration proposed the idea of limiting the use of non-compete agreements, and under the Trump Administration the Federal Trade Commission held a public workshop exploring whether it had the authority to limit non-compete agreements. In July 2021 President Joe Biden issued an Executive Order encouraging the Federal Trade Commission to ban or limit non-compete agreements.

With the additional risk of criminal liability and the ongoing trend of limiting non-compete agreements, now is the time to re-examine your non-compete agreements with your employment attorney to ensure their legality.

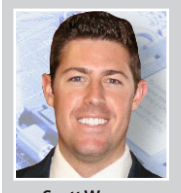


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TECHNOLOGY

The Reality of our Cybersecurity Threat Landscape

Cybercriminals are constantly changing the way they deliver attacks on networks to take advantage of employees' trust and compromise or steal data. We're also seeing more instances where global conflicts play a role in the volume and direction of cyber threats. Smaller businesses may think they aren't a target, but that couldn't be further from the truth. In fact, small businesses with 100 employees or less face the same risk of attack as 20,000-employee enterprises. No matter the size, businesses need to enhance their IT security posture to protect themselves as threats spread and become more elegant, complicated, and targeted.



Scott Warner
President
Connecting Point

Some challenges that businesses face today are:

- Not understanding their current security risks and maintaining a false sense of security by believing they are "too small" or their "data isn't that important"
- Not being able to see the suspicious activity that is already happening on their network
- Having a limited ability to react and respond to threats
- Being underprepared and not having the necessary tools or processes to address breaches or actual attacks
- Being uninsured or under-insured from a cyber liability perspective and not knowing how or why insurance is an important component of enhancing IT security posture
- Their employees don't have the skill set or understand how to practice caution and awareness
- Security breaches compromise the reputation and financial stability of an organization

Some statistics that align with those challenges are:

- 71% of attacks are aimed at small to mid-sized businesses
- 67% of businesses have experienced or are experiencing a breach
- 56% of breaches take months or longer to discover
- 63% of businesses go out of business after they experience a data breach
- 92% of all data breaches are caused by employee mistakes

To keep up with growing cybersecurity threats, businesses need to adopt more innovative and proactive methods of protection. It is increasingly important to layer security throughout your network... there isn't a silver bullet. Implementing enhanced firewalling practices, using multi-factor authentication, installing next-generation antivirus, leveraging security awareness training, and enforcing password management tools and mobile device security are a few specific examples of how businesses can build cybersecurity resiliency.

It is also critical that businesses understand their specific, current business risks and compliance requirements related to cybersecurity so that plans can be generated to strengthen security posture. Implementing better tools, technology, training, and policy is critical to help protect a business from increasing threats and provide you a chance to recover should the business experience a breach.

If you need help assessing your cybersecurity risk or want help improving your overall IT security strategy, call Connecting Point and we can help keep your business ready for anything.



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CU's first chief of sustainability advocates with UN summit

By Katherine Stahla

kstahla@bizwest.com

BOULDER — The University of Colorado's first ever chief sustainability officer has a lot on her plate. In addition to the day-to-day responsibilities of managing sustainability on a 30,000-student campus, Heidi VanGenderen has to prepare for the United Nations' upcoming Right Here, Right Now Global Climate Summit, to be held from Dec. 1-4.

"The University of Colorado Boulder has a long, rich history in its activism and its reputation, in the realm of sustainability," VanGenderen said.

CU Boulder is well-known for its history of activism. The school's first student-led environmental center has operated for more than 50 years, and current students continue that legacy by finding sustainable solutions for the future.

"The first student-led environmental center was established 52 years ago, at CU Boulder, and it's not that I came into a job that had no footprint prior to my coming into the position," VanGenderen said.

VanGenderen got her start focusing on energy and its impacts on the environment. Prior to developing her role as chief sustainability officer, she worked with the U.S. Department of Energy and in former Gov. Bill Ritter's administration.

"I was excited to be able to branch out beyond energy, but energy remains a key focus in all of the work that we do, because I think of energy as the circulatory system, really, within the broader ecosystem of human development," VanGenderen said.

A focus on energy policy has led VanGenderen to work on advocacy in favor of more responsible energy production. In addition to serving as the state's first gubernatorial adviser on climate change, she directed outreach with the American Council on Renewable Energy and public engagement with the U.S. Department of Energy.

"The transformation of the energy economy right now remains an extreme imperative, if we are to successfully address human contribution to climate change," VanGenderen said.

VanGenderen sees climate change as not just an environmental issue but as a social justice issue, and CU's partnership with the UN reflects that.

"We are very, very pleased to be



COURTESY HEIDI VANGENDEREN

Among her many roles, Heidi VanGenderen is the Director of External Affairs in the Office of Congressional & Intergovernmental Affairs at the U.S. Department of Energy.

"This summit, we expect and hope, will be the first of a series of summits where as commitments come forward in the policy realm, in the investment realm, in the programmatic and political realms, in the human rights realm, that we come back on an annual basis to measure the progress that we're making."

Heidi VanGenderen
Chief Sustainability Officer, University of Colorado Boulder

partnering with the United Nations' human rights division," VanGenderen said.

It's not just through the university's partnership with the UN's Right Here, Right Now Global Climate Alliance

that VanGenderen feels the importance of climate justice.

"At the base of all efforts within the realm of sustainability is social equity and social justice," VanGenderen said.

That extends from topics as basic as food insecurity to as daunting as droughts and floods impacting areas in poverty sooner and more severely. VanGenderen and the United Nations hold access to clean air and water as important human rights, in addition to more commonly-held beliefs in the right to life and liberty.

"Looking at that imperative through the lens of those most vulnerable and those most affected by climate change, meaning those who are least able to protect themselves, so the very young, the very old, those who are disabled, those who are impoverished, is at the aim of the framing of this global climate summit," VanGenderen said.

VanGenderen's commitment to sustainability has lasted as long as she's lived in Colorado. Born and raised in the state, she spent a lot of time outdoors.

"I'm a third generation Colorado native, and that's a blessing in and of itself, and it means that I was exposed to the beauty and the importance of the natural world shortly after I was born, and that was a great gift," VanGenderen said.

VanGenderen's connection to conservation connects back through her family tree. VanGenderen is descended from Warwick M. Downing, considered by some to be the father of Denver's mountain park system, which includes iconic spots like Red Rocks. His work in Colorado was not necessarily always environmentally friendly, though, as in addition to his conservation work he furthered the interests of the oil and gas industry.

"He appeared to me to be a slight contradiction in terms, as he was a huge believer in the exploitation of oil shale on Colorado's western slope, as one example," VanGenderen said.

The upcoming Right Here, Right Now Global Climate Summit is only the first in a long line of plans for the university, VanGenderen hopes. The December event is set to gather experts in environmental science and human rights to work on meaningful strategies to prevent ecological collapse.

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Small-Business

G U I D E

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START 2022

with a business health check

By the U.S. Small Business Administration

Making predictions is never easy, especially for small-business owners and managers living through a historic pandemic. Unlike their larger counterparts, small firms rarely have the resources to monitor and take corrective action for every trend and issue. Even entrepreneurs who've experienced numerous business cycles face new circumstances that confound their instincts and knowledge.

While there's no crystal ball that accurately predicts the future, small-business owners and managers can take steps to help their enterprises endure the worst of times and take advantage of the best of times. Perform a small-business health checkup to determine if your business is ready for the coming year.

- Talk to your banker about your company's financial status. Lenders offer experience in advising owners on issues specific to their businesses and industries. Have them review your year-end financial statements and offer an honest appraisal. Talk about establishing a line of credit, which could stabilize your cash flow position in 2022.

- Strengthen relationships with creditors. It could be time to renegotiate terms

or change payment amounts on overdue bills. Overdue bills and inconsistent payment practices won't help your long-term credit position. What's more, your creditors could be experiencing financial difficulties as well. Any flexibility will hinge on whether they perceive you as a reliable partner or a risk they want to eliminate. The pandemic has adversely affected almost all small businesses nationwide so set realistic goals that can be achieved in the coming months.

- Keep a close watch on your receivables. Review who owes your company money and make sure they're meeting terms. Be firm when dealing with problem accounts, but also remain willing to negotiate when appropriate. With a little encouragement, a struggling customer could become a long-term source of income. Remember that the longer an account receivable ages, the harder it becomes to collect on that debt.

- Make sure all expenditures are justified and contribute to the financial health of your business. You might find it necessary to redirect money to areas that will enhance business performance. If you carry an inventory of products, check the accuracy of your records and procedures to prevent

losses. It could be helpful to adjust your order amounts to match projected sales. Now is the time to review management and employee expenses to determine if they're justified and meet the mission of your business.

- Review your operations and expenses on a regular basis. If you monitor your profitability monthly, it might be a good idea to begin reviewing it on a weekly or bi-weekly basis given the impacts of the lingering pandemic. Likewise, review and update your business plan more frequently. Monthly or quarterly reviews make it easier to adjust and keep your business on track.

- Step up your marketing efforts. Many business owners mistakenly see marketing as a luxury when money is tight. This is the time when increased marketing could be needed. Along with reassuring current customers you're still there to serve them, marketing can help you reach new consumers who will grow your business now and into the future.

For more information on SBA's programs and services, please visit www.sba.gov.

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Tips for exporting your products or services abroad

By U.S. Small Business Administration Office of International Trade

What is the biggest challenge your small business faces today? For some exporters, understanding and implementing export regulations creates a discouraging mix of anxiety and doubt. Do not let fear of the unknown stop you from taking advantage of an opportunity. There are various federal and state resources you can tap into for counseling, training, and assistance.

A good first step is the U.S. International Trade Administration's website on U.S. Export Regulations where you can access informational videos, training schedules and details on U.S. Export Controls, Reporting Export Sales, Obtaining an Export License, and other legal requirements. Depending on the product you export, your governing agency might be the U.S. Department of Agriculture or the Bureau of Industry & Security.

As you determine which export regulations apply to your product, you should also confirm your buyer is not a prohibited party. Check the Consolidated Screening List to help you screen potential buyers that may be restricted due to sanctions or other illegal activities. Additionally, U.S. Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control, or OFAC, (Office of Foreign Assets Control - Sanctions Programs and Information | U.S. Department of the Treasury) also lists "persons, entities and corporations subject to trade restrictions." Examples include sanctions on various governments, such as North Korea, and certain organizations and nationals identified by the U.S. Department of State.

You have two other resources you can go to for answers. The first is the U.S. Commercial Service (Colorado Denver (trade.gov) whose international trade specialists can help you find answers and maneuver through export policies.

If you think you might need legal assistance, contact the Export Legal Assistance Network (ELAN), "a nationwide group of experienced international trade attorneys who volunteer their time to provide initial legal consultations to individuals and businesses that are new exporters or importers and/or are seeking legal advice on international trade issues."

Export regulations might seem overwhelming and cumbersome, but do not avoid asking the questions that could save you costly mistakes. Call the experts, get some answers, sign up for training, and learn the processes. For more information on SBA's programs and services, visit www.sba.gov.

Patty Brewer is an Export Finance Manager with the SBA's Office of International Trade. Her territory includes Colorado, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. She can be reached at 720-556-4664 or patricia.brewer@sba.gov.



Tips for collecting overdue accounts receivable

Collecting overdue accounts receivable can be an especially unpleasant part of doing business.

Most businesses have regular customers who pay on time and keep accounts current. But not handling late payments in a timely manner endangers cash flow and long-term viability. This process can be especially challenging during a pandemic when many businesses and vendors are already struggling to pay their bills.

Provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration



Here are six simple steps to help make the collection process less stressful and more customer friendly:

1 Make sure customers know the consequences of late payments. Establish a policy, and make sure your customers are aware of those policies before starting work. If you do not have a formal contract, make customers sign off on your terms and conditions. The terms and conditions should state if you require a full or partial payment upfront or if you offer such payment terms as net-30. State in writing any surcharges for late or missed payments.

2 Loose credit terms can create bad debt. If you provide goods or services on credit, develop qualifica-

tion standards that are specific, yet fair — a good credit history or bank references, for example. Put your credit policy in writing and make sure employees understand it. You should also have the policy posted in your store, on your web site, or available as a handout.

3 Enforce credit terms. Your collections policy will do no good unless you enforce it. You will be amazed what a personal phone call can do to encourage timely payment. If you have met your obligations, and a customer has not, you are entirely in the right to make that reminder call.

4 Keep communication channels open. Do not assume the customer is entirely wrong. Stay in touch

and make sure they are satisfied with your products or services. If they become delinquent, ask for an explanation. The invoice might have been lost or is awaiting approval. A customer with cash flow problems could request extra time. Based on your experience with that customer, you might feel confident enough to allow extra time or installment payments. Make sure you and the customer clearly understand any compromise agreement.

5 Do not be afraid to take legal action. If your collection attempts fail, it could be time to turn to a lawyer or collection firm. Your course of action will depend on the situation. You might decide the amount of the overdue account does not justify the cost and effort to collect. If so, write it off as a bad debt and move on.

6 Do not make the same mistake twice. Should customers with poor payment histories approach you about working with them on restoring credit, do not immediately refuse unless you are certain they remain a bad credit risk. Determine if the situation has changed and decide whether it makes sense to restore the relationship. As a precaution, insist on such stricter terms as advance payment or cash only.

The U.S. Small Business Administration has resources to assist business owners tackle the challenges of starting or growing a business. For more information, please visit www.sba.gov, and remember to follow us on Twitter @SBA_colorado.



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SBA Lenders

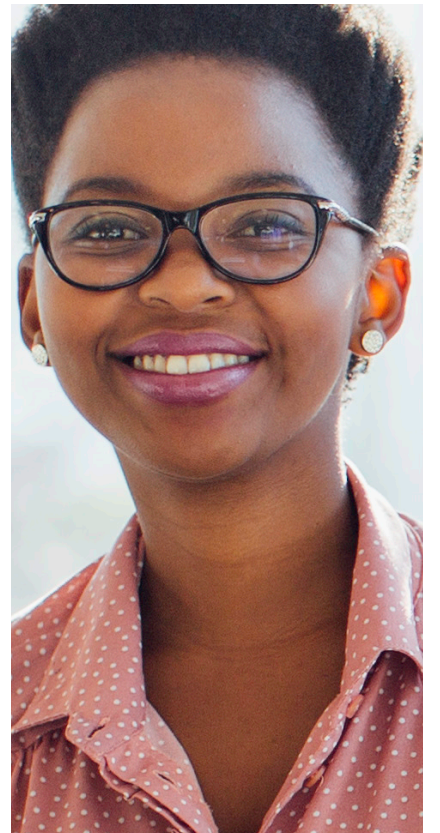
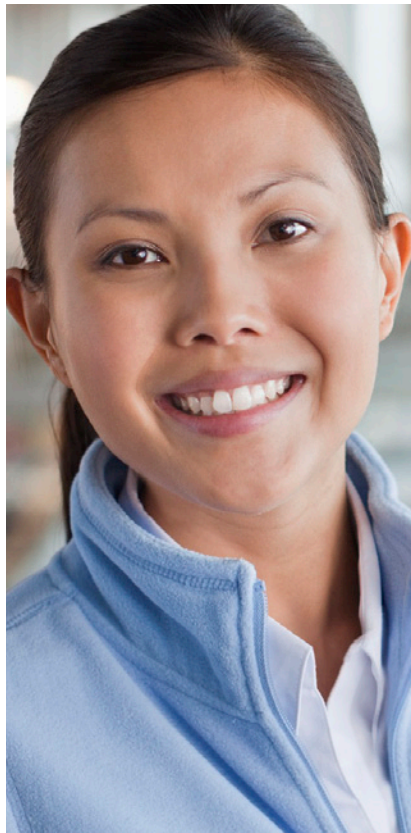
Ranked by gross amount of 7(a) SBA Loans in Boulder, Broomfield, Larimer and Weld counties.

| Rank | Company | SBA - Dollar Volume 2021 SBA - Total Loans 2021 | Headquarters Phone Website | Person in charge Title Year founded |
|------|--|--|---|---|
| 1 | Independent Financial 3090 Craig Drive McKinney, TX 75070 | \$39,711,700 23 | McKinney, TX 972-562-9004 www.independent-bank.com | David Brooks chairman, president & CEO 1913 |
| 2 | Live Oak Banking Co. 1741 Tiburon Drive Wilmington, NC 28403 | \$18,584,000 11 | Wilmington, NC 877-890-5867 www.liveoakbank.com | James Mahan III CEO 2007 |
| 3 | Wells Fargo Bank N.A. 101 N. Phillips Ave. Sioux Falls, SD 57104 | \$11,445,000 23 | Sioux Falls, SD 800-956-4442 www.wellsfargo.com | Charles Scharf CEO 1874 |
| 4 | Midwest Regional Bank 363 Festus Centre Drive Festus, MO 63028 | \$10,863,000 6 | Festus, MO 636-937-5351 www.mwrbank.com | Michael Bender CEO 2006 |
| 5 | Open Bank 1000 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90017 | \$8,958,000 4 | Los Angeles, CA 213-892-9999 www.myopenbank.com | Min Kim president & CEO 2005 |
| 6 | NBH Bank, dba Community Banks of Colorado 7800 E. Orchard Road, Suite 200 Greenwood Village, CO 80111 | \$8,398,300 7 | Greenwood Village, CO 888-237-3111 www.nbhbank.com | G. Timothy Laney CEO/president 2010 |
| 7 | Sunflower Bank N.A. 1440 16th St., Suite 250 Denver, CO 80202 | \$7,554,000 10 | Denver, CO 888-827-5564 www.sunflowerbank.com | Neal Arnold president & CEO 1892 |
| 8 | Hanmi Bank 3327 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90010 | \$6,546,000 9 | Los Angeles, CA 213-427-5722 www.hanmi.com | Bonita Lee president & CEO 1982 |
| 9 | Bank of the West 180 Montgomery St. San Francisco, CA 94101 | \$6,148,400 10 | San Francisco, CA 925-942-8300 www.bankofthewest.com | Nandita Bakhshi CEO 1874 |
| 10 | IncredibleBank 327 N. 17th Ave. Wausau, WI 54401 | \$5,574,000 4 | Wausau, WI 715-845-5522 www.incrediblebank.com | Todd Nagel CEO 1967 |
| 11 | Readycap Lending LLC 420 Mountain Ave., 3rd Floor New Providence, NJ 07974 | \$5,523,800 4 | New Providence, N.J. 800-453-3548 www.rclending.com | John Moshier president & CEO 2012 |
| 12 | U.S. Eagle Federal Credit Union 3939 Osuna Road NE Albuquerque, NM 87109 | \$5,000,000 1 | Albuquerque, NM 505-342-8888 www.useagle.com | Marsha Majors CEO 1935 |
| 13 | Byline Bank 180 N. LaSalle St. Chicago, IL 60601 | \$4,950,000 1 | Chicago, IL 773-244-7000 www.bylinebank.com | Alberto Paracchini CEO 1978 |
| 14 | The Bancorp Bank 409 Silverside Road Wilmington, DE 19809 | \$4,925,000 2 | Wilmington, DE 302-385-5000 www.thebancorp.com | Frank Mastrangelo CEO 1999 |
| 15 | First-Citizens Bank & Trust Co. 239 Fayetteville St. Raleigh, NC 27601 | \$4,769,000 2 | Raleigh, NC 919-716-7050 www.firstcitizens.com | Frank Holding Jr. chairman & CEO 1898 |
| 16 | FMS Bank 520 Sherman St Fort Morgan, CO 80701 | \$4,680,000 5 | Fort Morgan, CO 866-289-7723 www.fmsbank.com | James Smith CEO 1982 |
| 17 | Enterprise Bank & Trust 150 N. Meramec Ave. Clayton, MO 63105 | \$4,570,300 4 | N/A 314-725-5500 www.enterprisebank.com | James Lally president & CEO, Enterprise Financial Services Corp. 1988 |
| 18 | Celtic Bank Corp. 268 S. State St., Suite 300 Salt Lake City, UT 84111 | \$3,812,900 4 | Salt Lake City, UT 801-363-6500 www.celticbank.com | Reese Howell Jr. CEO 2001 |
| 19 | First National Bank 307 E. Hustan Ave. Fort Pierre, SD 57532 | \$3,700,000 3 | Fort Pierre, SD 605-945-3900 www.firstnationalbanks.com | Craig Davis president & CEO 1934 |
| 20 | Blue Ridge Bank NA 1 E. Market St. Martinsville, VA 24112 | \$3,386,000 2 | Martinsville, VA 276-638-2929 www.mybrb.com | Brian Plum president & CEO 1893 |
| 21 | JPMorgan Chase Bank 1111 Polaris Parkway Columbus, OH 43240 | \$2,918,000 4 | Columbus, OH 312-732-4000 www.jpmorganchase.com | James Dimon CEO 1824 |
| 22 | First National Bank of Omaha 1620 Dodge St. Omaha, NE 68102 | \$2,837,000 15 | Omaha, NE 402-602-3022 www.firstnational.com | Bruce Lauritzen chairman 1863 |
| 23 | Keybank N.A. 127 Public Square Cleveland, OH 44114 | \$2,742,500 10 | Cleveland, OH 800-539-2968 www.keybankusa.com | Christopher Gorman 1849 |
| 24 | Five Star Bank 2240 Douglas Blvd., Suite 100 Roseville, CA 95661 | \$2,490,000 2 | Warsaw, NY 800-416-6117 www.fivestarbanc.com | James Beckwith president & CEO 1999 |
| 25 | U.S. Bank N.A. 425 Walnut St. Cincinnati, OH 45202 | \$2,343,700 10 | Cincinnati, Ohio 800-872-2657 www.usbank.com | Andrew Cecere CEO 1863 |

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BizWest's roundup of leaders making a difference throughout our region.

At companies in the Boulder Valley and Northern Colorado, notable executives are running businesses, navigating company restructurings, arguing high-stakes legal cases, and finding efficiencies in manufacturing processes. These notable individuals also mentor, teach and volunteer in their communities. The leaders profiled in these categories are nominated by their peers at work and in the community.

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IMAGE BY LUCAS HIGH/BIZWEST,
AS SEEN IN BIZWEST APRIL 2022 EDITION

Marshall Fire victims “shop” at a Basecamp Collective store that distributes donated merchandise to people in need.

What we learned from the Marshall Fire

Provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration

The Marshall Fire in Boulder County quickly became one of Colorado’s largest fire disasters in state history. More than 1,200 homes were either burned completely, or damaged, because of the fast-moving wildland fire. Thirty businesses in Louisville and Superior were also destroyed or suffered damage. After the fire, the U.S. Small Business Administration approved nearly \$92 million in disaster loans to homeowners and more than \$6 million in aid to businesses affected by this tragedy.

Relatively few people know that a large part of the SBA’s mission is helping both homeowners and businesses recover after a disaster. Colorado remains vulnerable to a variety of natural disasters, including wildfires, floods, tornadoes, and drought. History has confirmed that nearly 25% of small businesses that close due to a disaster never reopen, and 40% of businesses hit directly by a serious natural disaster do not recover. Small firms are especially vulnerable because few have the resources necessary to assess their risks and develop recovery plans. Homeowners are at serious risk of not having sufficient, or proper, insurance coverage.

The Marshall Fire demonstrated the importance of planning for the unknown and preparing for the unexpected. The following are several steps both homeowners and business owners can take to mitigate the effects of future disasters.

- 1 Evaluate your exposure.** Know your community and the types of disasters most likely to impact your personal property and/or business. Consider your property’s proximity to flood plains, wildfire areas, rivers and streams, dams, nuclear power plants and other hazards.
- 2 Upload critical documents to the Cloud.** Many homeowners lost most or all their critical documents during the Marshall fire. Important documents such as mortgage papers, passports, birth certificates, and insurance policies should be scanned to your computer and saved to the Cloud or other online storage platform.
- 3 Homeowners and entrepreneurs should review their insurance coverage.** Consult your insurance agent to determine whether your coverage is sufficient. It is critical to understand what is covered by your policy, and determine if you need flood insurance; remember, many general policies do not cover flood damage. Check into business-interruption insurance, which helps you cover operating expenses if your business is forced to temporarily close.
- 4 Create a crisis communications plan.** Businesses should establish an email alert system, keeping primary and secondary email addresses for their employees, vendors, and customers. Provide real-time updates to your customers/clients and the community via social media so they know you are still in business, and in the process of rebuilding after the disaster. Homeowners should establish a system to update family members, friends, and emergency responders to their whereabouts. During a disaster, cell phone service may be down or limited so keep important phone numbers in a location not on your phone.
- 5 Who will run your business after a disaster strikes?** Let your employees know the emergency chain of command. Maintain a clear leave- and sick-day policy during disasters. Have a backup payroll service should your office be destroyed.
- 6 Create and implement a Business Continuity Plan.** This plan will help keep your business operating as it responds and recovers from a disaster or emergency. This plan should state when it will be activated; identify

essential business functions and staff to carry out those functions; determine which employees will be considered non-essential vs. essential; and identify records and documents that must be secured and readily accessible to perform key functions. Think about doing all of this remotely if your business is closed because it is destroyed/damaged, or for health and safety reasons.

7 Understand SBA’s disaster aid for homeowners. Only uninsured or otherwise uncompensated disaster losses are eligible. Secondary homes, recreational vehicles, and similar property are not eligible, unless used for business purposes. The maximum loan amount for physical damage is \$200,000, and for personal property is \$40,000. The key to success is to work with the agency by providing all requested and required documents to substantiate your claim.

The Marshall Fire taught us many critical lessons in establishing an effective and workable disaster recovery plan. For more information on disaster planning for both businesses and homeowners, please visit www.sba.gov/disaster.

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Seasonal retailers face many hurdles

Provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration

Many locally owned small seasonal retailers earn 50% or more of their total annual sales during the critical shopping period between May 1 and Labor Day. The business decisions made during this important period can directly impact cash flow for the remainder of the year. This period is even more critical given the impact the pandemic has had on consumer spending at brick-and-mortar retail locations.

Generally, small retailers lack the sales volume or financial resources to compete with the huge discounts offered by large national chain stores. Profit margins tend to be thinner than the big players, giving them less wiggle room on discounts. The U.S. Small Business Administration compiled the following list of challenges small retailers face during the summer shopping season, and ways to avoid them in the future.

1 **Lack of inventory control.** Inventory control is crucial for all small retailers, especially during the busy summer season. Inventory equals profits, and knowing how much product to order, when to order it, and what items to order can make the difference

between having cash in the bank, or aging inventory on the shelves. As the pandemic subsides and the economy begins to open again, understanding how much inventory to purchase is critical.

2 **Hiring the wrong employees for critical positions.** There's a cost to hiring the wrong people for key positions.

Small firms tend to have less layers of management between the owner and employees. Consequently, new hires must be able to perform with less direct supervision and be motivated to get the job done right the first time. Avoid this issue by writing a detailed job description, and training new employees on how you want them to represent your business.

3 **Not having enough cash flow is a big problem.** Cash flow is the lifeblood of all small businesses. Cash flow allows a business to make payroll, pay suppliers and keep its doors open. Business owners can immediately increase cash flow by collecting accounts receivable in a timely manner; not keeping too much cash tied up in

unnecessary inventory; and eliminating unprofitable account relationships.

4 **Not embracing online sales and social media.** U.S. Census Bureau reports show that nearly \$900 billion in e-commerce sales were made during 2021 — a 14% increase over the previous year. As more consumers make summer purchases online, it is imperative that small retailers establish a web presence. Leverage Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook to promote one-day sales or plug special product lines and high inventoried merchandise. The pandemic has forced many consumers to make purchases exclusively online and small firms need to follow that trend to increase e-commerce sales.

5 **Delay the company party until the end of the summer.** It is sales crunch time from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Company parties can cause distractions at a time when the business needs to be especially productive. Too much food and drink can not only cause a nasty hangover, but also sidetrack employee

and management's focus. Consider moving the company party until after Memorial Day and call it the end of summer thank-you event.

6 **Lack of marketing innovation and creativity.** Historically, locally owned small retailers beat their big box competitors by providing outstanding individualized customer service. The big Memorial Day sales push has driven large retailers into flooding the market with lost leader pricing on a wide array of summer and pre-holiday products. Small retailers should take the offensive by selling creative and innovative products that can't be found at the local mega mall. Create a unique customer experience that will draw shoppers to travel outside of their comfort zone and discover that out-of-the-ordinary shopping district with 10 trendy stores, not 50 traditional chain stores.

For more information on how the SBA can assist your small business start, grow, or expand, please visit www.sba.gov. Remember to follow us on Twitter @SBA_Colorado.



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Christopher Wood

THIRD PLACE

Business Feature

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THIRD PLACE

Public Service

Dan Mika, "There's COVID. And 'Long COVID.'"

THIRD PLACE

Business Enterprise Reporting

Dan Mika, "As it shuttered stores, Alfalfa's Market past-due with vendors by millions of dollars."

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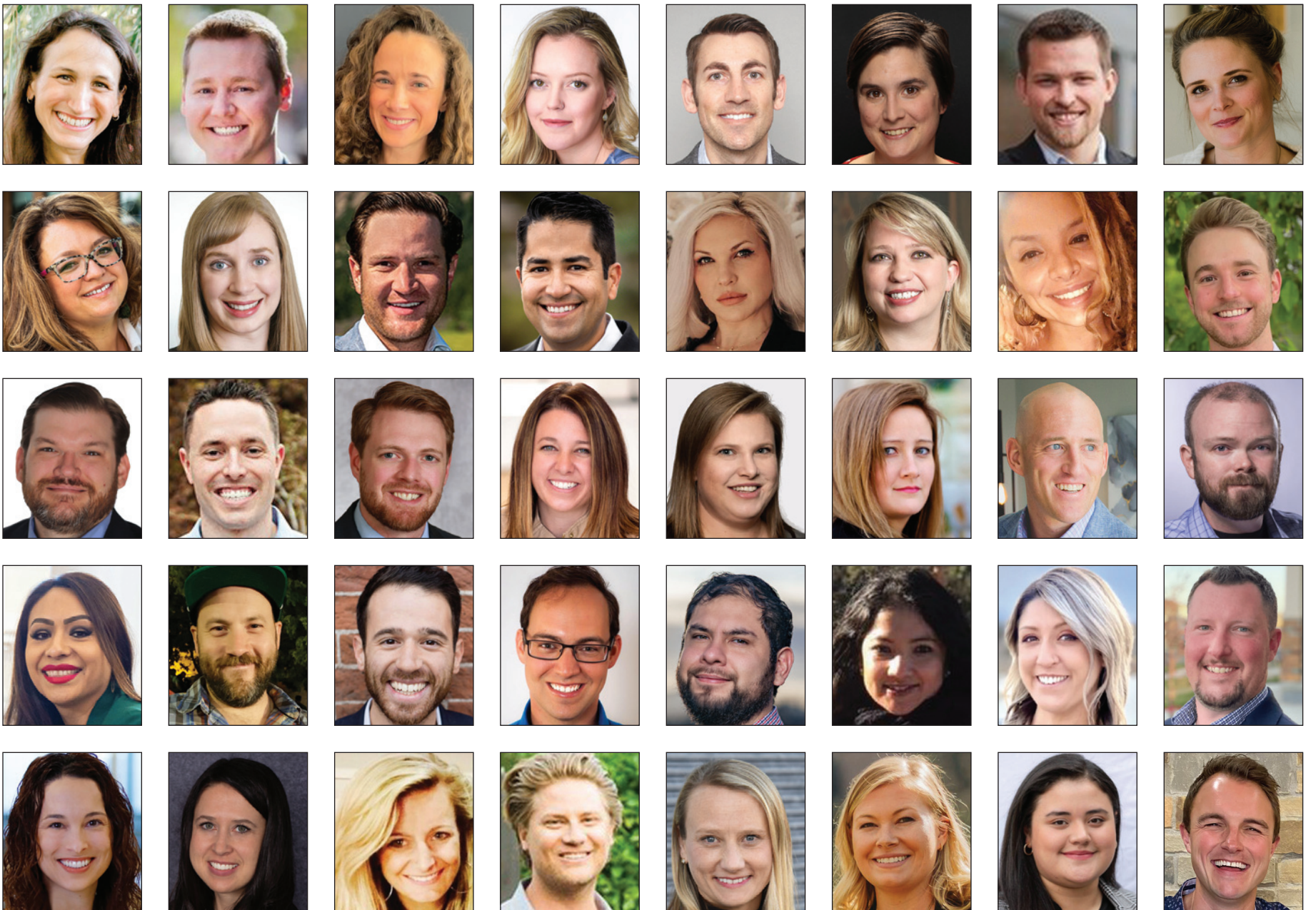
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Justin Sutherland
Vice President

Congratulations

to **Justin Sutherland**, Vice President at FirstBank Louisville, on being named one of **BizWest's "40 Under Forty"** 2022 inductees.



Carly Abrahamson

Colorado Impact Fund

Whether it's growing the entrepreneurial landscape or simply working to positively influence the community, Carly Abrahamson believes in making an impact.

As a partner and general counsel for the Colorado Impact Fund, a venture capital fund that invests in Colorado companies with a commitment to positive community impact, she puts in action her belief that that impact investing can be a force for good in the community by democratizing entrepreneurship, addressing key community challenges and building companies with exemplary business practices.

The fund manages approximately \$80 million worth of private capital.

A Connecticut native, Abrahamson has a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, a master's in education from Bank Street College and a law degree from the University of Colorado.

Before coming to the Colorado Impact Fund, she was an associate attorney in the business and finance group at the Boulder office of Ballard Spahr LLP, a national law firm with more than 650 attorneys in 15 offices. She represented both publicly traded and privately held companies in a wide range of matters including mergers and acquisitions, public offerings and general corporate governance.

She also was an editorial attorney for Themis Bar Review and served as a



legal intern for the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

Prior to moving to Colorado in 2007, she taught elementary school with Teach for America in New York City's Bronx borough.

Abrahamson, who lives in Boulder with her husband and two daughters, also volunteers with the Nature Conservancy Colorado and Women of Dartmouth.

Chris Achatz

Koenig, Oelsner, Taylor, Schoenfeld & Gaddis PC

As a partner at Koenig, Oelsner, Taylor, Schoenfeld & Gaddis PC in Boulder, Chris Achatz represents companies in structuring and negotiating complex technology and data-related transactions, including data privacy and security matters. He provides legal solutions to all types of businesses, ranging from startups to Fortune 500 companies and has worked on a wide variety of commercial agreements.

His data privacy and security practice involves advising clients on industry-specific regulations and standards that govern the responsible collection, use and processing of their customers' personal information. As former in-house counsel for a data and analytics company, Achatz understands the importance of providing fast, practical, value-added counsel that aligns with clients' business objectives.

Before joining his current firm in May 2018, Achatz practiced for three years in the data group of Boulder-based Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP. He also served as legal counsel for HIS Inc. in Englewood, interned in the state Attorney General's Office and Colorado Court of Appeals, was a law clerk in the 1st Judicial District Court in Golden, and was a contract attorney in a law office in Denver. He also worked as a supply-chain manager and software engineer.

He received his undergraduate degrees from the University of Colorado and his law degree from CU's law school.



As a Certified Information Privacy Professional, he's a frequent speaker at local and national industry, bar association and university events on all types of technology and data-related topics.

Outside of work, Achatz enjoys trail running, cooking and exploring Colorado with his family.



Susan Alban

Renegade Partners

"I'm working to make work better," said Susan Alban, "more fun, more meaningful, more successful, more equitable."

As the operating partner and "chief people officer" at Renegade Partners, an early-stage venture capital firm with offices in Boulder and San Francisco, she's an investor with a passion for building world-class teams in tech. She supports the portfolios of pre-initial public offering software startups across all areas of human-resources operational support and human-capital strategy. With experience at McKinsey & Co., eBay, Uber and Zume, Alban has deep expertise in operations and products, especially around launches, as well as a particular passion for learning about new future-of-work and marketplace businesses.

She's working on all things related to scaling companies and teams during the "B round," which she describes as the "supercritical stage of a company's growth."

Alban holds a degree in economics from Duke University and a master's in business administration from Stanford University's Graduate School of Business.

She volunteers as an adviser for the Turing School of Software and Design. In the past, she served as board director for Urban Peak, a Denver-based organization that helps young people avoid homelessness. She founded the Colorado chapter



of Achilles International, where she trained and ran road races with disabled individuals.

Outside of work, Alban hikes and skis in and around Boulder, where she lives with her husband, Josh, and two daughters. She treasures her trips to San Francisco, New York and other places where she gets to spend time with relationships, old and new.

Elizabeth Amann Whitney

Yoga Pod

"Downward dog" may be one of the most familiar yoga poses, but for Elizabeth Amann Whitney, yoga has carried her ever upward.

She began working at Yoga Pod in Boulder as a member of the cleaning staff but ascended through front-desk staffing to assistant manager, yoga teacher and trainer. She's been general manager for nearly six years.

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced Yoga Pod to close in March 2020, Amann Whitney migrated the business online, designing a unique live-stream yoga service that allowed it to keep its entire staff employed and its community of students connected. Now, live-streamed yoga has become a permanent part of Yoga Pod's business, with more than 90 such classes a week. She also developed and launched a 200-hour teacher training program.

Once in-person classes could resume, she worked to make sure the studio saw no coronavirus outbreaks. This year, she's celebrating the opening of Yoga Pod's second location, this one in Longmont.

Born and raised in Rochester, New York, she moved to Colorado in 2010. She received a degree in physiology from the University of Colorado Boulder, coached snowboarding and worked in restaurants including Mountain Sun and the West End Tavern.

Amann Whitney lives in South Boulder



with her husband, Jeff, and rescue dogs Abby and Paul. She jokes that she tries to fulfill as many Boulder stereotypes as possible in her free time: snowboarding, camping, hiking, drinking craft beer, going to Red Rocks and other live shows, hosting cookouts, composting, driving a Subaru — and, of course, yoga.



Congratulations, Ashley Garcia!

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Andrew Bonder

Turning the Corner

A self-described “psychology fanatic,” therapist Drew Bonder helped build more than a dozen programs for the state of Colorado to create supportive systems around court-involved mental health and addictions communities.

“If people don’t have a solid understanding of the steps needed to be successful and the right supportive systems around us,” he said, “it’s extremely difficult to reach our goals without sacrificing our mental health, relationships or well-being.”

Over the past decade, Bonder has applied that learning to more than 150 businesses, creating healthier, more sustainable cultures and paths to success — and often helping them scale by at least three times.

He’s now head of sales and partnerships at Turning the Corner, a Boulder-based human-resources consulting firm whose mission is to end suffering in the workplace through recruiting, training, and coaching.

Bonder earned a bachelor’s degree at the University of Denver and a master’s in industrial-organizational psychology from Kansas State University.

His community involvement has included serving as board vice president for the nonprofit Karis Community, as well as memberships in organizations including the Boulder Chamber and NoCo Manufacturing Partnership. He founded HR Thought Leaders and co-founded an Express Yourself Roundtable Series.



Bonder loves escaping to the mountains with his wife, Kirsten, children Sophie and Wade, and dog Steuben. They spend as much time in the great outdoors as possible. As a “child of winter,” he enjoys snowboarding, and said his fall weekends are spent watching the Denver Broncos and — because he’s a transplant from Austin — the Texas Longhorns.

Vicki Carey-Davis

Twiggs & Co.

Vicki Carey-Davis co-founded Twiggs & Co. nearly three years ago because she believes passionately that everyone has gifts and wants to be seen and supported in those gifts.

A seasoned relationship manager who builds authentic and transformational connections across the United States, she’s on a personal mission to create a more purpose-driven and engaged community, one relationship at a time.

On her resume, she said she practices “radical collaboration, flipping the competitive mindset on its head to solve complicated social problems with community partners across the world. I travel farther when I travel with others.”

Twiggs & Co. is a women-led, Denver-based corporate social responsibility firm that, according to Carey-Davis, helps businesses take care of their people, their communities and the planet to triple their bottom line.

This fall, she’ll attend the University of Colorado Boulder’s Master of Organizational Leadership program. She has master’s degrees in public administration and nonprofit management from the University of Central Florida.

She worked two years as development and sponsorship director for the Denver-based nonprofit Pop Culture Classroom and Denver Comic Con, where she developed and executed a five-year strategic plan to



amplify community engagement, expand corporate sponsorships, and grow special event profits. Her volunteer work includes time with The Alliance Center Regenerative Recovery Coalition, Good Business Colorado, Metro Caring, Colorado Young Leaders and Green Team Academy.

Describing herself as a “proud millennial transplant,” Carey-Davis enjoys board games, discovering restaurants, laughing, dinner parties, volunteering, experiencing theater, hanging with her family, and being in the great Colorado outdoors.



Caleb Carr

Vita Inclinata Technologies

Caleb Carr began his career as a volunteer search-and-rescue technician in Multnomah County, Oregon. When a mentor and fellow volunteer suffered cardiac arrest while on a night-training mission, it became the genesis for Vita Inclinata Technologies, a Broomfield-based aerospace and industrial company where Carr now serves as chief executive and board chairman.

Carr’s work at Vita Inclinata has won recognition including Forbes 30 under 30 for the manufacturing and industry category and Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year for the Desert Mountain Region. He raised more than \$10 million in capital and grew the company’s valuation 20-fold in 18 months.

His awards also include being named Innovator of the Year for 2019 by the Puget Sound Business Journal in Seattle. His company also received the IQ Innovation of the Year award from BizWest in 2021.

His resume includes serving as president and board chairman of the nonprofit Ideation Foundation and as a business strategist for Uber. He holds a patent for suspended load stability systems and methods.

A career highlight for Carr was getting to ring the Nasdaq opening bell.

Carr graduated from the University of Colorado Denver with bachelor’s degrees in neuroscience and public policy. He also enrolled in the Mitchell Hamline School of



Law in St. Paul, Minnesota, and graduated with a Juris Doctor focused on corporate law and civil litigation. Carr is completing final course work for his master’s in business administration from Penn State University.

He continues to serve as a volunteer firefighter, search-and-rescue tech and as an assistant professor of entrepreneurship at the University of Colorado.

Ashley Cawthorn

Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti

When the Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti law firm experienced a growth spurt, it needed a director of marketing — and Ashley Cawthorn was there. She remembers the day well.

“You can ask the many attorneys in the room the response I had to the question, ‘Why are you interested in working in legal marketing?’ They will tell you that she laughed aloud before responding, ‘I never saw myself working in legal marketing!’” Cawthorn said she “somehow pulled it together, and a few weeks later I started my new gig, and it was easy like Sunday morning.

“I aligned so well with the ethos and culture of the firm and the way it was already marketing,” she said, “and it was because of its true care for the community that I was able to lean into my desire to make an impact and be involved in the Boulder and Denver communities and my home community in Lyons.”

She came to the law firm after more than two years as director of events and marketing for BizWest. She took that job, she said, “after a few seasons in the high country playing and working for Vail Resorts and, later, the Vail Symposium.”

Cawthorn chairs the Lyons Emergency and Assistant fund, is co-chair of the Community Affairs Council in Boulder, and is



vice president of the St. Vrain Anglers Trout Unlimited team. She also has worked with Boulder Young Professionals and the Boulder Together Strategy Council.

Emily Crouse Joo

Broomfield FISH

Emily Crouse Joo can build sustainable individual and corporate financial pipelines by cultivating authentic relationships. Not only that, but she can do it in three languages: English, Spanish and Portuguese.

For four years, she has been community-engagement and business-development manager for Broomfield FISH food bank and family resource center, where she manages a team of 20 employees and volunteers, prospecting, qualifying and converting leads, overseeing public relations programs and event planning, projects and initiatives. She engages with the community through a variety of platforms, including social media, e-mail, networking events, personal interactions, public speaking opportunities and print publications.

She has created and executed more than 150 corporate sales presentations, secured 500 new individual donors and 100 new local-business sponsors, and collaborated with local nonprofits to offer fundraising events such as the Harvest of Hope annual luncheon and Broomfield Idol Karaoke Night.

She also has served as events coordinator for Infinitus Pie, an admissions counselor and brand ambassador for Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design, and assistant director of a grassroots campaign in Denver to benefit Save the Children and Amnesty International.



Crouse Joo earned bachelor's degrees in Spanish liberal arts and communication studies from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley.

She serves on the board of the Broomfield Chamber of Commerce as well as the city and county of Broomfield Board of Equalization. She also is a member of the United Church of Broomfield Selection and Hiring Committee and is a board member of Partners of the Americas.

Phil Dumontet

Whole Sol Blend Bar

For smoothie bowls, hot breakfast and lunch bowls, organic cold-pressed juice and grab-and-go snacks, Phil Dumontet believes stopping by one of Whole Sol Blend Bar's five would be a really healthy choice.

With his wife and business partner, Alexa Squillaro, Dumontet built Whole Sol Blend Bar into the fastest-growing small company in the Denver metropolitan area, according to the Denver Business Journal's Fast 50. The Colorado-born chain opened five locations in less than three years, with two more in development along the Front Range. Voted Best New Restaurant, Best Brunch and Best Vegan/Vegetarian in 5280 Magazine's Readers' Choice polling, Whole Sol's offerings are 100% organic, gluten-free and dairy-free, and Dumontet said it's the only USDA organic juice and smoothie bar in both Boulder and Denver.

Dumontet moved from New York to Boulder in 2017. The graduate of Boston College is former chief executive of Dashed, one of the largest privately owned restaurant delivery platforms before it was acquired by GrubHub in 2017.

A 12-time marathon runner who routinely finishes in the top 20 in his age group, Dumontet also is the creator of the nonprofit organization behind Boulderthon, Boulder's first and only signature marathon with a downtown finish, drawing nearly



3,000 runners from 48 states in its inaugural year. He serves on the Downtown Boulder Partnership Board.

He lives in Longmont with his wife, Alexa, and is a proud new father to Dante Philip Dumontet. In his free time, he loves to run, hike, and ski.



Katie Erdley

LightDeck Diagnostics

Katie Erdley in October was named senior director of manufacturing at LightDeck Diagnostics, a rapidly growing company that develops and manufactures point-of-care rapid diagnostics for the human in vitro, veterinary and environmental industries and was named Colorado Bioscience Association's 2021 Company of the Year. She is an experienced operations leader with a proven track record of implementing and improving processes in fast-paced entrepreneurial business environments. She has served multiple roles as the company transitions from a small research-and-developed group into a commercial organization with more than 100 employees.

Erdley built a Quality Assurance and Regulatory Affairs department that augments the entire operation and has been the primary interface with the Food and Drug Administration. She now is transitioning into a role in which she'll lead efforts around LightDeck's \$35 million manufacturing scale-up contract from the U.S. government.

Before joining LightDeck, Erdley held leadership roles at Actuated Medical and business operations consulting roles at ZS Associates and Accenture. She also has experience in investment, continuing as limited partner at Col du Tourmalet LLC and 1855 Capital.

She is part of a team that holds a patent



for an active system for in-situ clearing of secretion and occlusion in tubes, and in 2009 won a Wilbur L. and Judy L. Meier Award in Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering.

Erdley earned a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering from Penn State University.

Outside of work, she and her husband, Alan, are parents to Enzo, 6, and Leo, 4. She enjoys hiking, skiing, and trying new restaurants.

Guillermo Estrada-Rivera

Boulder County

As supervisor of Boulder County's Cultural Brokers Resiliency Program, Guillermo Estrada-Rivera said, "I have been able to help diverse communities of college students, the homeless population, mental health patients and, more recently, the immigrant community and the bilingual-bicultural brokers who serve them."

Born and raised in Puerto Rico, he graduated from the University of Puerto Rico with a double major in history and geography. He moved to Colorado in 2012 and earned a master's degree in divinity from Naropa University in Boulder.

"I studied the relationship of emotional and spiritual care with urban development through the lens of Buddhist principles," Estrada-Rivera said. "I have mainly worked in community engagement, language access and caregiving."

He began serving as a bridge and community connector in the role of a cultural broker in 2017. "Through this role, I have supported different community networks in Boulder County through multiple projects and collaborations with a multicultural approach," he said. "More recently, in 2020, with the support of the Boulder County Community Foundation, the Philanthropiece Foundation and many other grassroots organizations, I built a coalition known as the Suma Latina Emergency Response Group, a community-



led emergency response effort that included culturally responsive translations. I created a community resource catalog for COVID-19 resources directed to undocumented Latinx community members disproportionately affected by the early stages of the pandemic crisis."

Through this community engagement process, he has assisted in implementing culturally informed recommendations for recruitment, retention and equitable compensation in local government, nonprofits and the private sector.

Jonathan Galindo

EforAll

Jonathan Galindo has dedicated his adult life to promoting entrepreneurship in the Latino community as a way to reach the American dream.

"It is my strong belief that entrepreneurship and the American dream go hand in hand," he said, "and that starting a business is one of the most American things one can do."

Appointed vice chair of the Latino Chamber of Commerce of Boulder County early this year after two years on its executive board, Galindo has been focused on creating programs in Spanish to help people start their businesses. The chamber's website features community resources as well as Spanish-language advisories about COVID-19 and wildfires in the area.

"I recently started working as a program manager for an organization called EforAll," he said, "which stands for Entrepreneurship for All. I'm currently in charge of the Spanish Accelerator program, which has the goal of educating Latino entrepreneurs who are about to start a business."

Born in Mexico City, Galindo immigrated to the United States when he was five and grew up in the Chicago suburb of Buffalo Grove. He's been living in Colorado for the past three years, currently in Longmont.

According to Berenice Garcia-Tellez, another BizWest 40 Under Forty honoree, "since Jon moved from Chicago, he has been a great asset for the Latino Chamber



of Commerce. He has done door-to-door outreach to Latino businesses and helped them apply for grants during the pandemic. Jon now works with EforAll, creating training opportunities for entrepreneurs of color."

Beau Gamble

Dean Callan & Co.

Real estate is a family affair for Beau Gamble. He joined Dean Callan & Co. in 2014 as a third-generation broker, following in the footsteps of his grandfather and mother.

As a broker associate, he specializes in landlord and tenant representation as well as investment sales. A lifelong Boulderite and member of the Commercial Brokers of Colorado, he's excited to leverage his local market knowledge and contacts. Callan's brokers have extensive experience in tenant and landlord services, as well as leasing and sales of office, industrial and retail space, land brokerage, land development, new construction and development of industrial parks and office buildings.

A graduate of the University of Colorado Boulder, where he played basketball for head coach Tad Boyle and sat on the Student Athletic Advisory Committee, Gamble sits on the Buffs4Life legacy board and loves giving back to his forever Buffs community. He earned a bachelor's degree in communications from CU, and previously attended the Leavey School of Business at Santa Clara University in California and New Hampton School in New Hampshire.

Gamble also volunteers with There With Care, a 17-year-old Boulder-based organization that provides services for families and children facing critical illness.

In his free time, he enjoys playing golf, skiing, working out and hanging out



with his best buddy Charlie, a 6-year-old chocolate lab.

Gamble can point to a formidable number of recent sales and leasing assignments. His attention to detail and professionalism ensures that his company will be in good hands.



Ashley Garcia

Blue Federal Credit Union

As a business-development specialist at Blue Federal Credit Union in Broomfield, Ashley Garcia helps create pathways to realize customers' possibilities.

"I truly live that by building genuine human connections, and serve as a conduit within our communities," she said. "I am also very passionate about giving back to those who need it most and am honored to serve and volunteer with many nonprofit organizations."

By effectively expanding Blue's influence in the Denver-Boulder-Fort Collins-Granby markets, Garcia has contributed to \$22 million in regional growth for the credit union by creating more than 1,600 new accounts.

She joined Blue in 2019 after two years as a member advocate at Credit Union of Colorado. Her jobs before that were more about fashion than finance; she was a manager at Victoria's Secret and Pacific Sunwear locations.

Garcia is very active in the Broomfield business community. She's an ambassador for the Broomfield Chamber of Commerce, which recognized her as its 2021 Young Professional of the Year. She's a member of the Broomfield North Metro Kiwanis Club, True North Young Adult Services and co1000.org, and a participant in the Emerging Leaders program. She's also active in the Erie Chamber of Commerce and was recognized as a Standing Strong Partner during the 2021 Boulder Chamber



Celebration of Leadership.

As a Colorado native who attended Metropolitan State University in Denver, Garcia loves spending time outdoors snowboarding, hiking, and kayaking with her children Brayden and Kyler and her "partner and best friend" Daniel.

Berenice Garcia Tellez

Latino Chamber of Commerce of Boulder County

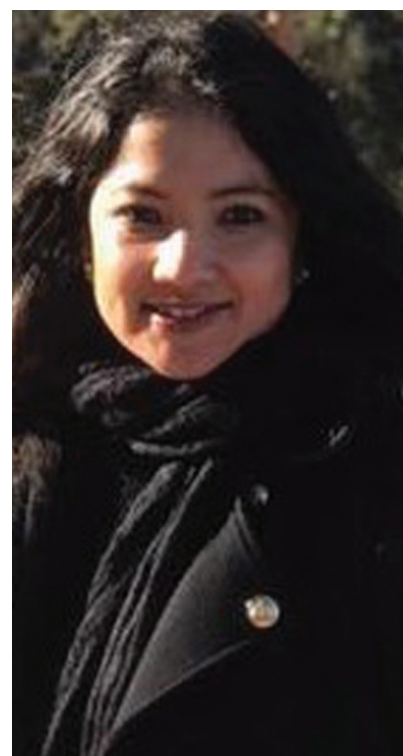
Well-traveled Berenice Garcia Tellez brings a world of experience and perspective to the various posts she's held around the Front Range.

A native of Mexico, she received a master's degree in environmental engineering in Saudi Arabia and has lived in several countries including Turkey, Italy and Norway, where she worked researching climate change.

Garcia Tellez chairs the Latino Chamber of Commerce of Boulder County, where she has supported Latino businesses throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and works constantly to advocate for Latino businesses and residents.

She's also equity administrator for the city and county of Denver's Energize Denver program. She previously managed the Sustainable Business Program for the city of Longmont and worked with various community stakeholders to achieve goals in environmental stewardship, social equity and economic development that led to the creation of the first equitable, sustainable business program in the country.

She also remotely advises Ecologico Albustan, an eco-startup in Mexico, which ultimately seeks to provide an alternative farm-to-table café and recreational area dedicated to sustainable and self-sufficient practices. She previously was a programs specialist who managed a medical mobility program for Boulder-based Cultivate and an outreach specialist for Americas for



Conservation + the Arts.

Some of Garcia Tellez's favorite figures are Elon Musk and Batman. Although the two have very different origin stories, they both rose to make a great impact in their respective communities. While Batman may be fictional, Garcia Tellez said both he and Musk inspire her to one day do something that influences the world.

Grayson Hofferber

Millennial Wealth Management

It takes a millennial to understand a millennial, and that's where Grayson Hofferber comes in.

As founder and president of Millennial Wealth Management, a fee-only registered investment adviser serving clients of the millennial generation in the Boulder and Denver areas, he's been in the financial services industry for 11 years.

As a millennial himself, Grayson understands that achieving financial independence is the new "retirement." Clients choose to work with his company because they want a financial adviser who understands them personally and financially and will be able to serve their needs for a long time. The average age of a financial adviser is 51, and according to Ciruli Associates, 38% of all advisers plan to retire in 10 years.

MWM is unique in that financial planning is delivered through a monthly subscription fee instead of large upfront planning fees. It has no minimum requirements for income or net worth, although most of its clients are high-income young professionals or entrepreneurs.

Hofferber's other business is, naturally, Millennial Bookkeeping.

He lives in Broomfield with his wife and three children and is very active in the community. He chairs the Broomfield Chamber of Commerce and ran for city council in 2021. He's the founding member



of HYPE: Helping Young Professionals Evolve, a networking and personal development group for young professionals in the Broomfield area.

Hofferber, who attended West Texas A&M University, enjoys local craft beer, hiking in the mountains and just hanging out with the family at one of the local parks.

Finity Jernigan

Holland & Hart

Finity Jernigan had a dream of balancing a robust legal career with her passion for the great outdoors. She made the dream a reality by moving to Colorado after graduating with honors from the University of Texas School of Law and clerking for Judge David Godbey in U.S. District Court for the northern district of Texas.

Once in Colorado, Jernigan began practicing law at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP's Denver office and served as an assistant attorney general for the state before initially joining Holland & Hart LLP's Boulder office in 2016.

As a partner in the firm's corporate group, Jernigan co-chairs the Food, Beverage, and Consumer Products industry group. She has represented funds and brands in more than 100 financing and merger or acquisition transactions, and always strives to be a practical, business-minded adviser.

On her LinkedIn page, she wrote, "I help emerging growth clients to reach their goals and have particular experience working with entrepreneurs, private-equity and venture-capital funds in the food, beverage and consumer-products space. I advise clients at all stages of growth on a variety of venture capital and corporate matters, helping them raise capital, execute acquisitions and divestitures and comply with regulatory requirements."

Jernigan is a member of Naturally



Boulder, recently served as a board member of Colorado Food Words, and regularly advises for the Women on Boards Project, a game-changing movement that strives to increase the number of women and other diverse candidates at the boardroom table.

To date, Jernigan has summited 32 of Colorado's Fourteeners.



Jennifer La Borde

Family Hearing

You should hear what Jennifer La Borde's been doing — and if you can't, she can help.

A board-certified hearing instrument specialist, La Borde graduated with honors from the University of Colorado Boulder, where she studied speech, language and hearing sciences. She has been working in the hearing-care industry since 2002 and has been with Family Hearing for the past 17 years.

As a student at CU, she was a member of an American Sign Language club, an audiology society and the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association.

Her fascination with hearing loss began when she took her first ASL class at age 16. Through her experience in class and getting to know the local hearing-impaired community, she became passionate about human connections and communication. She decided to study speech, language, and hearing science in college, which required her to practice hearing evaluations. She tested her parents, who both showed signs of hearing loss that could be improved with the use of hearing aids.

La Borde is proud to be co-owner of the longest-serving, most awarded hearing-care practice in Boulder County, with a team that takes pride in exceptional customer service. Founded in 1963, Family Hearing has locations in Boulder, Broomfield and Lafayette.



Besides helping people hear, she loves to dance. She has practiced ballet for more than 30 years and regularly dances Argentine tango with her husband. ASL is still a big part of her life as well, and she regularly uses it with her patients. She lives in Boulder with her husband and son.

Lauren Lambert

Google

To find out what Lauren Lambert's been up to, just Google it.

A public policy professional with a passion for all things state and local government, Lambert is head of government relations and public policy for Google in the southwestern United States.

Before joining Google, Lambert served on the senior staff for former Gov. John Hickenlooper, advising on legislative, policy and fiscal affairs.

She started her career living and working in Washington, D.C. She first interned and was eventually promoted to senior research associate at Pew Charitable Trusts, a nonpartisan research organization.

"Lauren Lambert is a good neighbor," said Daniel Aizenman, director of design and development for Boulder-based Conscience Bay Co. She listens to the community, learns who needs support, and leverages Google's resources to empower individuals and organizations to connect, create and thrive. She's been a Boulderite for only a few years, but her passion for and impact on the community is enormous — and she's just getting started. Her ability to build meaningful relationships that transcend industry in order to enact change that makes our community better is unique



— regardless of her age or gender. She is a trailblazer, innovator and role model."

Lambert completed her undergraduate degrees at Boston University and obtained her master's degree in public policy with a focus on health policy from Johns Hopkins University.

She lives in Boulder and serves on the Downtown Boulder Board and as a co-chair of Boulder Together. Lambert and her husband are expecting boy/girl twins this spring.

Jason Markel

Markel Homes Construction Co.

Jason Markel has been immersed in the homebuilding industry and culture since he was a child.

He's now vice president and project manager at Markel Homes Construction Co., but he started at age 8 by sweeping floors at building sites, and by 12 he was assisting with framing. In high school, he worked summers and weekends as an assistant superintendent and estimator for the family company and later graduated from one of the top schools in the country for construction management, California State University at Chico.

In 2005, he joined the Markel team as a building superintendent. Seven years later, he was promoted to his current position.

Markel has worked on the development of several Markel communities, including Dakota Ridge Village, Kalmia38, and the Northfield neighborhoods in Boulder, Lyons Valley Park in Lyons, and Silver Creek in Lafayette. He's managing the build-out of Silver Creek and shepherding the lengthy approval process for 40North in Lafayette.

As project manager, Markel takes his projects from acquisitions through build-out. He works on securing the entitlements for new communities, interacts with the planning commission and city council, engages with product development, manages the warranty department and supervises sales. Jason also handles information technology and estimating for



Markel Homes and oversees the operations side of the company.

Markel's adventurous spirit is happiest riding a mountain bike, piloting a plane or skiing bumps. He and his wife have two young children and make their home in a Markel Homes community in Boulder.

Kelsi Tesone Mathews

In Memoriam

Since every person is unique, Kelsi Tesone Mathews works to provide an exit that's just as unique.

"My official title is mortuary science practitioner, which means I am a funeral director and embalmer," said Mathews. Her company, In Memoriam, is a full-service funeral provider that hosts a broad spectrum of end-of-life services from honoring and preparing the physical bodies of the departed to assisting with home funerals, pre-death planning, traditional burials, cremations, memorials, shroudings and other unique offerings.

Mathews graduated from Broomfield High School in 2006 and immediately went into the accredited Mortuary Science Program at Arapahoe Community College. She graduated in 2008 on a presidential scholarship with an associate's degree in mortuary science. She passed The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards and started as a funeral director and embalmer for a small family funeral firm. She next went to work for an organ-procurement agency, and eventually settled back into her passion as a funeral director.

In October 2017, Mathews started In Memoriam. She continues to self-police and advocate for funeral professionals across the state by running The Denver Metro Funeral Directors Association and sitting on the advisory committee for the Mortuary



College.

"While death is not everyone's favorite topic, I am here to tell you it's an important one," she said. "I love what I do, the families I help, and the community I support."

Mathews is mom to a girl, 7, and boy, 3. She says she loves the beach, good music and good food.



Lindsey Nehls

Elevate Leadership

Lindsey Nehls' job is uplifting. Literally.

She's co-founder of Elevate Leadership, an executive coaching and leadership development company. After 11 years as an executive in clean-tech in the San Francisco Bay area, where she was senior vice president for sales, she realized her true passion was in developing great managers. She believes that who you work for is everything and built Elevate Leadership to help managers be the kind of manager they would want to work for.

Nehls brings the perspective and understanding of what it is like to sit in the seat. Over her prior career, she successfully managed turnarounds, increasing sales by 1,000%, led \$200 million business units, and delivered \$1 billion in enterprise sales.

Nehls, who studied at Harvard Business School and Middlebury College, she worked for more than a decade at Chevron Energy Solutions and was there when it became OpTerra. She started as business development manager and rose to senior vice president for business development. Before coming to Elevate in Boulder, she founded Evolve Leadership Group in San Francisco. The coaching, consulting and training company helps individuals and companies navigate and successfully transition through big changes.

Nehls' husband, Chris Nehls, grew up in Boulder and together they have three children: Bailey, 3; Corbin, 3; and Lilly, 5.



When she isn't with her kids, she is skiing or mountain biking with her husband. They met while skiing and had a ski wedding, so they have every hope and dream that their kids will love to ski too.

Chelsea Nelson

Elevations Credit Union

Chelsea Nelson's path to becoming a mortgage fulfillment manager for Elevations Credit Union in Broomfield began by studying business administration at Johnson and Wales University in Denver and then working as a receptionist at a title company that also employed her mother and brother.

"In a short time, I moved into training in title processing and then eventually settled in a title closer position," she said. "I enjoyed this role and eventually ended up working for a couple of different smaller title companies where I was able to enhance my closing skills. From here I transitioned to a large title company but still felt as though it was not suited to my talents, and so I started looking elsewhere."

Through an agency that places temporary workers, she landed a job assisting in mortgage setups, but she wanted to move up to a permanent position doing closings. She finally got her chance in November 2014.

"I adapted to the position quickly and became a lead and a resource for my closing colleagues," she said. In July 2017, Nelson was promoted and spent the next four years building and enhancing those teams. She reached her current position in November 2020.

"I feel so very fortunate to work for an organization that pushes me to succeed, cultivates my talents, and I can honestly say that Elevations Credit Union is truly the best



place I have ever worked," she said.

Outside of work, Nelson frequently volunteers for Habitat for Humanity and Community Food Share.



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Movement Schools is a free, public charter school network committed to teaching world-class academics and virtues in areas where families have historically lacked access to education options.



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Congratulations

Joshua Snyder

Vice President of Software Engineering

We are extremely proud to see your professional accomplishments and significant community service recognized as a BizWest 40 under Forty honoree.



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Angela Maria Ortiz Roa

University of Colorado

Angela Maria Ortiz Roa, climate justice program manager at the University of Colorado Boulder, is a native of Colombia who arrived in Colorado in 2001. Rooted in an eco-cultural upbringing and a commitment to serve the communities she belongs to, Angela's migration experience led her to seek education on concepts of eco-social justice, cross-cultural communication and intersectionality to actively become a change agent in her community.

Living as a cultural and linguistic minority guided her to obtain an associates degree in Interpreter Preparation at Front Range Community College in 2014. That same year she received her Permaculture Certificate and began working as a bilingual urban agriculture educator, which renewed her connection to the land and nature.

In 2016, Ortiz became program coordinator for the Foundation for Leaders Organizing for Water and Sustainability (FLOWS).

She is intentional about making use of her multicultural and multilingual skills as a grassroots community organizer, climate justice advocate, cultural broker and language service provider.

She worked as a community empowerment liaison for Boulder County's Department of Housing and Human Services from 2019 to 2021, and earned a bachelor's degree in 2020 from Metropolitan State



University in Denver.

She serves on the boards of Boulder Food Rescue and Harvest of All Nations.

Ortiz said she is determined to continue to educate herself so she "can better support the creation of bridges between people, cultures, natural resources and the Earth and to be a dynamic part of the liberation and transformation of humanity."

Charlie Pastor

Damn Good Planning

It's not often you hear a pastor say something's "damn good." But Charlie Pastor does.

At age 22 and fresh out of the University of Colorado Boulder, Pastor founded Damn Good Planning, a fee-only financial planning firm with the motto, "Give a Damn About Your Financial Plan." Besides, he said, "the name stands out a little better than something like Green Mountain Financial Planners."

His intention was to help young professionals build strong money habits and reach financial success. He frequently heard some of them say, "I wish I would've started when I was 20!" Although he sees too many young professionals as an undereducated and underserved group within the financial-services industry, he believes they have incredible potential to achieve financial security.

Pastor posts articles on financial planning on his website, is a contributing writer for Motley Fool, and has been featured on financial literacy panels for universities across Colorado. He gives free seminars to local alumni associations and student groups, has worked with the Colorado State University Society of Women Engineers, and holds a seat on CU's Leeds School of Business's Graduates Of the Last Decade (GOLD) Board.

In January, he went to work as a financial planner for Golden-based Intellicents Investment Solutions, where he collaborated



on LifeSteps, an app available to member retirement plans. However, he has kept Damn Good Planning alive as an educational resource.

A Thornton native and Horizon High School graduate, Pastor enjoys hiking, biking, snowboarding and motorcycling, adding, "When I'm outside, I'm happiest."

Damn right!



Anthony Pratt

Kimley Horn & Associates

If you've walked or biked along the reconstructed section of the Boulder Creek Path from Eben G. Fine Park to the Sixth Street Underpass, you've been the beneficiary of the planning and design work of Anthony Pratt.

Growing up in a small town, he became accustomed to relying on his feet and bicycle as main modes of transportation. Now based in Broomfield, he's passionate about improving multimodal infrastructure across Colorado because he understands the direct correlation between accessible cities and improved safety and quality of life.

A project planner and landscape architect for Kimley Horn & Associates, Pratt has more than 14 years of experience planning and designing innovative multimodal solutions for communities across the United States. He has played a critical role working for sustainable community initiatives in the Boulder Valley and Northern Colorado.

In Louisville, Pratt serves as Kimley Horn's project manager for that city's "Future 42 Corridor." He and his company's team also helped provide planning and engineering for concept-level designs and cost estimates for up to five underpass locations throughout Louisville.

For trails in the town of Superior, Pratt's role included working through all of the designs to find cost efficiencies, lower maintenance routing, and provide details to the town's staff to present to adjacent



landowners. That communication aspect led to a successful project.

Pratt earned a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from the University of Kentucky, serves on the WTS Boulder Committee and is a member of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.

Joshua Snyder

OptTek Systems

Joshua Snyder worked his way through college at McDonald's as a floor supervisor and shift manager. Today, he's vice president for software engineering at OptTek Systems.

Snyder is responsible for managing that process for all of OptTek's multiple business lines. He has wide-ranging experience directing software-development teams through program and product management, as well as designing and implementing software and algorithms for both desktop and web-based applications. He also supports recruitment and on-boarding efforts as well as managing personnel.

He joined OptTek in 2006 as a software engineer, and rose to his current position in 2018.

Snyder holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics and information systems from Nebraska Wesleyan University and a master's in computer science from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with focuses in foundations of constraint processing and artificial intelligence. He also has co-authored multiple articles on constraint-based approaches to gaming.

Snyder's family includes his wife, Kristen, and daughters Chloe, 8, and Sophie, 6, as well as a Shiba Inu named Maddox who sometimes accompanies him to work. He loves spending time with his family in the Colorado outdoors and has been an avid runner since childhood. He chairs the board of trustees at Broomfield United Methodist Church. He and Kristen have



financially supported Hope House Colorado, Broomfield FISH, TRU Community Care, Global Hope and A Precious Child. He has volunteered for Habitat for Humanity, Boulder Open Space and Boulder Shelter for the Homeless.

Snyder enjoys bicycling, watching football and reading the works of William Shakespeare, Stephen King and C.S. Lewis.

Katherine Stinson

First National Bank of Omaha

Katherine Stinson is a senior adviser for FNBO Wealth Management in Boulder, entrusted with helping clients navigate through a sensitive time — whether it's dealing with a loss, honoring a legacy or growing and preserving family wealth. She joined the Boulder branch of First National Bank of Omaha in 2019, just after moving to Colorado from Rhode Island.

Stinson earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont, and a law degree from Vermont Law School.

She's recently joined a Rotary club and is involved with the University of Colorado Boulder's mentor program, working with and learning from two mentees. "For me, this feels like the best way to give back," she said. "I am so fortunate to have wonderful mentors myself who supported me and provided great insight and advice; I hope to do the same for my mentees."

"In law school I focused on juvenile law and although my career path has been different (trusts and estates and private wealth management) I enjoy finding time to give back to the youth in our community in any way I can. I also recently joined Boulder Rotary and look forward to giving back and learning through that organization as well," she said.

Stinson moved to Colorado about three years ago and is newly married to Aurora firefighter Chris Fergus. They go hiking and



camping with their 100-pound chocolate lab, Chip, and Stinson also enjoys skiing as well as entertaining and cooking for friends and family.

Justin Sutherland

FirstBank

A leader in area banking and an advocate for affordable housing, Tennessee native Justin Sutherland, who moved to Colorado Springs in 2000 and then Boulder in 2006, feels at home in Boulder County, and wants others to as well.

As vice president at First Bank, Sutherland is responsible for originating and underwriting consumer, mortgage and commercial loan requests while managing lobby operations and personnel at the bank's Louisville location. He joined FirstBank in 2016 as assistant vice president and was promoted to his current position last December.

Sutherland also is active in addressing Boulder's affordable-housing needs through his work with the city, Habitat for Humanity, Landed and Elevations Community Land Trust.

FirstBank staffers report that he "will be the first to offer assistance for those in need. His positive attitude is contagious, and FirstBank is fortunate to have him on our team."

Before coming to FirstBank, Sutherland was general manager for housing and dining services at the University of Colorado Boulder from December 2013 to August 2016. In that role, he oversaw dining centers with a combined staff of 365 employees serving more than 6,500 meals daily. His focus there was on employee training, leadership development, employee



retention and improved customer service.

Sutherland earned a bachelor's degree in operations management and supervision from CU Boulder in 2011 and a master's in business administration from CU Denver in 2014, focused on organizational leadership.

Outside of work at the bank, he enjoys snowboarding, hiking and hanging out with family and friends.



Kristen Turnbull

Kaiser Permanente

The role of community engagement lead for Kaiser Permanente Colorado allows Kristen Turnbull to draw on her passion for total health to educate others on how Kaiser uses integrated-care delivery and philanthropy to impact social drivers of health. The results she seeks are better care outcomes and greater care equity.

Putting her belief that change can be influenced through everyday acts of service, Turnbull serves as executive director and volunteer athlete for CHEER Colorado, a co-chair for the Boulder Women's Leadership Group, and a Gold Award mentor for Girl Scouts of Colorado.

Turnbull earned a bachelor's degree in social relations from James Madison College, a residential college within Michigan State University. She served on the college's Student Senate and was a founding member of Michigan State's All Girl Competitive Cheer Team.

After graduation, she worked as a constituent-affairs liaison at the Michigan House of Representatives, advancing to legislative aide and then chief of staff.

In 2009, Turnbull moved to the San Diego area and began working part-time with Amazing Athletes, a small franchise company that teaches sport-based health and physical fitness classes to preschoolers. Over her more than eight years there, she served as director of operations and program trainer.

An enthusiast of arts, culture and



adventure, Turnbull loves any opportunity to indulge in live theater, live music or mountain exploration. She has climbed three Colorado Fourteeners with her brother and backpacked Havasupai as well as 4 Loop Pass in the Maroon Bells. She enjoys short walks with her French bulldog, Luna.

Astrid Villalobos

City of Longmont

Roles at work and school keep Astrid Villalobos Chavez busy.

At the city of Longmont, she's a sustainability program assistant, assisting owners of small businesses in making social, economic and environmental improvements in order to promote sustainability. She helps clients complete applications for Longmont Boost Grants and Energize Colorado, and develops a program for Sustainable, Opportunities, Lifestyle and Leadership (SOLL).

At Front Range Community College, meanwhile, she's a member of the Student Government Association while taking a full slate of classes including accounting, public speaking and introduction to business.

She also co-chairs the Chamber Student Network, volunteers for the Latino Chamber of Commerce of Boulder County, is a volunteer teacher at a Church of Christ in Denver, and recently joined the Colorado Election Youth Advisory Council. She also worked for three years with El Comite in Longmont.

She was awarded Community Service Awards from the Longmont Chamber of Commerce and FRCC, and a Rising Star Award from the Colorado Community College System.

Villalobos said her desire to give back to her community stems from her upbringing in a first-generation household. The Longmont High School graduate intends to transfer to the University of Colorado



Denver to pursue a bachelor's degree in political science, but her ultimate goal is to become an attorney so she can assist her community and support Latinx and Hispanic businesses in growing and prospering.

In her spare time, what there is of it, Villalobos enjoys spending time with her friends and family, reading classic literature and listening to music.

Corine Waldau

Boulder Chamber

Corine Waldau brings a broad range of experience to her duties as senior director of economic vitality at the Boulder Economic Council, part of the Boulder Chamber, the region's flagship business advocacy and support organization.

She joined the council with a background in association management and stakeholder-driven organizations, with more than 13 years of work with nonprofit organizations' member services, event planning, marketing, research, communications and economic development. Her strengths also include budgeting, program evaluation, public speaking and fundraising.

Chamber officials have hailed Waldau's dedication to the work of helping businesses and residents weather the COVID-19 pandemic and the Marshall fire, and they recently were able to give back to her and her family in a special way. In the early morning hours of March 29, a fire severely damaged the Waldau home. In response, the chamber launched the Corine Waldau and Family Relief Fund, with a goal of raising \$10,000. That goal was reached in just three days.

For four years before joining the chamber, Waldau was alliance manager for the Public Health Alliance of Colorado. She also has been an internet marketing specialist for Aimco Apartment Homes, a member associate for the American Water Works



Association and a membership services director for the Metropolitan Denver Dental Society, and worked with the Aurora Economic Development Council.

She earned a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's in public administration from the University of Colorado Denver.

Rabin Walters

FRIENDS of Broomfield

Rabin Walters is passionate about improving the health, well-being and quality of life for underserved, special-needs and at-risk populations.

As development officer at Friends of Broomfield, which creates opportunities for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Walters provides administrative support to the organization's fund-development and communications efforts so, he said, "we can continue to best serve our 180-plus friends through our day, residential, social and travel, and supported employment programs. Friends is the happiest place on earth, and I couldn't be more grateful to be a part of it."

A native of the Superior-Louisville area and a Monarch High School graduate, Walters went on to the University of Kansas, where he studied social work and volunteered for four years with a group called Natural Ties. He'd attend the group's monthly social events along with his "tie," an adult with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Entranced with that population, he graduated and worked two years with Friends as a direct-support professional.

After holding a similar position in San Diego at TERI Inc. (the acronym stands for Training, Education, Research and Innovation), Walters and now wife Laura moved back to Colorado, where he returned to Friends in a fundraising role.



Walters also has been a grant writer for Boulder-based H&W Consulting, a special-events logistics coordinator for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and a social-work intern. He's a fundraising team member for Camp Wapiyapi, a summer camp for kids facing pediatric cancer, where he first volunteered 10 years ago as a camp counselor and companion.



Andrea Warren

Broomfield Chamber of Commerce

Andrea Warren, event and program manager for the Broomfield Chamber of Commerce, is passionate about supporting her community and its businesses and creating a positive environment where both can flourish.

"I believe in working with business and community leaders to build strong, long-lasting partnerships," she said. "These partnerships strengthen our community and contribute to making Boulder Valley one of the best family communities in the country."

An executive with PMI Worldwide in Broomfield said, "Andrea always goes above and beyond to support her partners and to ensure they get the best results possible."

On her LinkedIn profile, Warren wrote that "I pride myself on my ability to create lifelong customers by giving them the best value and experience possible." Her background includes experience in inventory management, personnel management and employee training, skills which, she wrote, "allow me to thrive in a fast-paced environment where experience, quick reactions and a thoughtful approach are necessary."

Before joining the Chamber April 2021, Warren was event and marketing manager for more than three years at Broomfield Open Space.

After receiving her bachelor's degree



from Western Michigan University, she held events-management positions at Serious Staffing and Portage Bay Café and Catering in Seattle, The Loft at Simon Pearce in Quechee, Vermont, and Venue 252 in Eugene, Oregon, before coming to Colorado.

In addition to working with the Chamber, Warren is active in the greater Boulder Valley, where she and her family chose to raise their two young boys.

JD White

White Hawk Wealth Management

An accomplished swimmer in high school and college, JD White makes sure investors aren't in over their heads.

As founder and president of White Hawk Wealth Management, White said, "I put a lot of time into my personal growth and education, as I believe it benefits our clients."

His executive coach, Karen Davis, said White "leads with a service-first mindset and has grown his assets under management by 35% this past year. He has brought in and mentored a second wealth manager and is also in the process of hiring a manager of client relations. Of all my clients this past year, JD is the one who has had a huge bias for action."

Born in Boulder, White was raised by a single mother in Longmont from age 1 to adulthood. With little money saved for college, he set his sights on earning a swimming scholarship. He won five state swimming titles at Longmont High School, was a nine-time All-American and was named 5A Swimmer of the Year his senior year. Pursued by more than 30 Division I colleges, he chose a full-ride scholarship to swim at Southern Methodist University, where he was named a team co-captain his senior year.

White earned his bachelor's degree in real estate finance from SMU's Cox School of Business.



He now lives in Broomfield with his wife, Mary, son Reagan, 8, and dog, Rory. They keep busy with Reagan's sports and spending as much time outside as they can.

Jeff Whitney

Whole Foods

Another of this year's 40 Under Forty honorees, Ashley Cawthorn, marketing director at the Berg Hill Greenleaf and Ruscitti law firm, would like to make one thing perfectly clear about Jeff Whitney:

"First of all, Jeff makes some of the best barbecue I've ever had in my life," she said. "That alone should afford this man a gold medal."

Whitney recently stepped down as executive chef at Boulder's West End Tavern, landed a job in the prepared-foods team at Whole Foods and hopes to navigate the corporate ladder there. But, as Cawthorn pointed out, "through his leadership over the last several years, the restaurant has grown exponentially — and I would have never thought that would attribute to a chef until I really understood his role more."

Born and raised in south Florida, Whitney relocated to Boulder in midwinter 2014, eventually finding his home in food service and hospitality. After attending a private culinary school, he worked at more than a dozen food-service establishments over 15 years including two in Boulder: The Kitchen and the West End Tavern.

During the pandemic, West End went from one of the busiest spots in all of Boulder to a takeout-only establishment, allowing Whitney to focus on stability, simplicity, and helping keep the restaurant rolling.

Whitney loves spending time with his



wife, their two dogs and a group of East Coast-transplanted friends. He enjoys snowboarding, running, biking, camping, drinking craft beer in the sunshine, gardening, hosting dinner parties, attending baseball games and going to see live music.

Daniel Yerger

My Wealth Planners

Daniel Yerger is founder and president of My Wealth Planners, a fee-only financial planning firm in Longmont.

He founded the company in 2015 after working at IBM as an information-technology subject-matter expert and serving in the U.S. Army as a psychological operations specialist. His firm serves more than 100 families and small businesses in Longmont and Boulder County.

Yerger's academic studies in financial planning have been published in the Journal of Financial Planning, and he authored "Getting In the Door: Starting a Financial Planning Career."

He actively serves on boards and committees for the Financial Planning Association and National Association of Personal Financial Advisors. Yerger is a chartered financial consultant, accredited investment fiduciary and certified divorce financial analyst.

Chris McGilvray, who has owned multiple businesses, taught business at Front Range Community College and chaired the Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce's board of directors, said Yerger "has built a successful and profitable financial advising business in Longmont while giving a tremendous amount of his time and talents to the Longmont community through serving in many leadership roles such as chair of the Longmont Chamber of Commerce Public Policy Committee, board member of Front Range Community College Business Advisory



Board and volunteering as an ambassador."

Yerger is a Ph.D. student at Kansas State University, studying personal financial planning. He earned a bachelor's degree in history and political science from the University of Colorado Denver and a master's in business administration from Colorado State University.

He lives in Longmont with his fiancé, Kaitlyn.



Laura Zavala

Movement Mortgage

A branch manager at Movement Mortgage since 2017, Laura Zavala has 20 years of banking experience and is dedicated to changing lives through the power of homeownership.

A bilingual and bicultural professional with experience in leadership, sales and business development, she is a member of the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals and advocates for financial education for the Hispanic community.

Before coming to Movement Mortgage, she spent six years at Elevations Credit Union as a senior business development officer and mortgage loan officer.

Her voluminous list of community-service includes roles as a Via Mobility board member, a volunteer director for the nonprofit Latino Task Force for Boulder County and a docent at the Longmont Museum and Cultural Center.

Zavala is described as a "natural teacher" and role model by teachers in the St. Vrain Valley School District, where she volunteers in classrooms to educate children in financial literacy. Additionally, the Mountain West Credit Union Association picked her as a 40 Under Forty honoree and selected her to volunteer at the Democratic National Convention.

She's involved with a committee for World Young Credit Union Professionals to increase education and knowledge of credit unions, and received a Global



Women's Leadership Network award in 2016, a scholarship for the CUNA Mutual Governmental Affairs Conference, and numerous awards from Elevations Credit Union. In 2019 she won a multicultural business award from Boulder County Community Action Programs.

Zavala, who attended Front Range Community College in Longmont, has a son, Gabriel, who is in seventh grade.

Matthew Zavala

City of Boulder

Firefighters are known for climbing ladders, and that's what Matthew Zavala has done during 14 years with the Boulder Fire Department — starting as a firefighter and climbing to fire engineer, fire-code inspector, lieutenant and now captain.

A lifelong resident of Longmont, Zavala also has a burning desire to serve his community. He's vice president of the OUR Center board of directors, a coordinator for the Muscular Dystrophy Association and a member of the United Church of Christ church council in Longmont.

His past leadership positions include service on the boards of the Hispanic Education Foundation and Community Food Share.

Longmont Community Foundation chief executive Eric Michael Hozempa hailed Zavala's work as chair of that organization's board of trustees. "Matt has gone above and beyond helping the Foundation and HEF with his tireless leadership and enthusiasm for helping those in our community," Hozempa said. "He's an unselfish and ethical leader who looks for solutions rather than just complaining about the problems. I have learned a lot from Matt and am proud to call him a friend."

Zavala received bachelor's and master's degrees from Regis University in Denver, and attended the National Fire Academy's managing officer program, specializing in public administration. He continues at the academy, part of the Maryland-based



National Emergency Training Center, as a contract instructor, teaching such courses as Applications of Leadership in the Culture of Safety, Fire Service Safety Culture, Safety Program Operations, and Command and Control of Incident Operations.

Zavala and his wife, Shelby, have two children, Chloe and Dawson.



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BW REAL DEALS

At \$625M, Flatiron Park sale is richest deal in Colorado history

By Lucas High
lhigh@bizwest.com

BOULDER — The Flatiron Park business campus portfolio sale in early April represents the single largest single-asset transaction in Colorado's history.

BioMed Realty LLC, through a series of holding companies, bought the roughly 1,000,000-square-foot, 22-building campus from Crescent Real Estate LLC for \$625 million.

The deal comes a year to the month after Etkin Johnson Real Estate Partners unloaded its Colorado Technology Center assets in Louisville for \$393 million, at the time the largest sale by dollar volume in state history.

"Boulder has always been a market to watch, driven by highly educated talent, robust capital flow, an existing base of life science and tech pioneers and great quality of life," BioMed vice president of leasing Mike Ruhl said in a prepared statement when the deal closed. "As demand for office and lab space in the region continues to grow, we believe BioMed's integrated platform and expertise is uniquely suited to support companies as they continue to scale in this key market."

BioMed, a Blackstone portfolio company that owns about 13.7 million square feet of commercial space throughout the country, said it will pump \$200 million in renovations and upgrades into Flatiron Park with the goal of increasing the presence of biotechnology companies within the campus.

About 15% of Flatiron Park is home to life sciences tenants, according to BioMed president of West Coast markets Jon Bergschneider, and part of BioMed's investment will be upgrading buildings to bring that percentage closer to 50%.

"With this significant investment in Boulder, we're delighted to become a part of this innovation-based community," Bergschneider said in a statement provided to BizWest upon closing of the acquisition. "... Beyond being a preeminent regional tech and life sciences hub, Boulder is a thriving community that couples innovation with a profound respect for natural resources and sustainable practices. We look forward to joining and supporting the Boulder community by not only providing best-in-class workspaces for companies to continue their life-saving and inventive work, but also by creating strong, long-term relationships with local organizations working to maintain Boulder's unique identity as a gem in the Rockies."

At \$625 per square foot, the Flatiron



CHRISTOPHER WOOD/BIZWEST

The entrance sign to the Flatiron Park development in Boulder.

Park deal could usher in a new era of pricing for office and flex spaces that cater to technology companies.

The 485,000-square-foot Pearl East Business Park, for example, sold in July 2021 for \$190 million, or \$391 per square foot. That was \$40 million more than the selling owners paid for the property just two years prior and 123% higher than the \$85 million that longtime owner W.W. Reynolds Cos. sold the complex for in 2015.

And Boston-based Tritower Financial Group LLC in June 2021 acquired the 60,030-square-foot former Trimble building at 2300 55th St. in Flatiron Park for \$21 million, or \$349.82 per square foot.

But other recent deals involving global tech users have seen much higher sale prices per square foot.

Google in September 2021 paid \$97.8 million — or \$782.40 per square foot — for a 125,000-square-foot office building in The Réve development across from its main campus at Pearl and 30th streets. But that was for a brand-new building directly across the street from its main campus.

Atlanta-based Invesco Ltd. last January purchased the Pfizer campus in Boulder for \$99 million, or \$653.96 per square foot.

Jones Lang LaSalle Inc. (NYSE: JLL) brokered the Flatiron Park deal. Lionstone Investments LLC and Goldman Sachs Group Inc. also owned portions of the portfolio sold to BioMed. The sale was a joint venture between Crescent and those two groups.

Crescent will remain involved in the portfolio as property manager and will likely dip another investment toe in the Boulder waters soon.

"We are absolutely buyers of real estate still, and we are big believers in Boulder," Molk said. "We're actively looking for a deal in the market."

Flatirons Park is San Diego-based BioMed's only property in Colorado. The company's portfolio is centered on six regions, including California's Bay Area, Seattle and the New York metro area.

"What we focus on is innovation and technology clusters," Bergschneider told BizWest. "Historically those have been in the East and West Coast markets. It's been with great interest and enthusiasm that we've continued to watch the Boulder area grow."

The Flatiron Park deal is likely not BioMed's last in the Boulder Valley.

"We think of this as an opportunity to enter the market with size and scale and by no means is [the Flatirons Park acquisition] the end of our investment tolerance," Bergschneider said.

As the local portfolio grows, BioMed, which also has a development arm, may consider adding administrative and support offices in Colorado.

"Boulder has always been a market to watch, driven by highly educated talent, robust capital flow, an existing base of life science and tech pioneers and great quality of life," BioMed vice president of leasing Mike Ruhl said in a statement. "As demand for office and lab space in the region continues to grow, we believe BioMed's integrated platform and expertise is uniquely suited to support companies as they continue to scale in this key market. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to a thriving community whose values directly align with our own."

PROPERTYLINE

New real estate investor buys Meati office in Gunbarrel

Evermore Partners, a newly formed, Denver-based real estate investment firm, last month closed on a deal to buy the office space at 6840 Winchester Circle in Boulder, home to the headquarters of plant-based meat producer Meati Foods (Emergy Inc.)

The deal marks Evermore's first. The company said it plans to make \$250 million in acquisitions over the next three to five years.

The 22,240-square-foot office building in Boulder's Gunbarrel neighborhood fetched nearly \$4.46 million, Boulder County property records show.

Proposed Ranch hotel draws no interest

A request for proposals to build a hotel and conference center as part of the expansion of the Larimer County Ranch Events Complex in east Loveland was met with no interest.

The RFP, published Feb. 24 and closed to submissions April 7, generated no proposals. The county is now trying to figure out why.

"We're investigating," said senior operations manager Mark Tinklenberg. "We still want to do the project," he said, but the county is not sure why potential developers of the hotel and conference venue took no interest. The Ranch is adjacent to the Embassy Suites hotel and conference center.

Greeley council approves Poudre Heights PUD

The Greeley City Council in April approved a rezone and preliminary planned unit development for Poudre Heights, a 277-acre mixed-use development in northwest Greeley.

The development could contain up to 1,185 residential units on 100 acres, with 108 acres dedicated to mixed-use development and 30 acres of industrial land. It will also feature more than 50 acres of open space.

The council had previously approved the creation of metropolitan districts for Poudre Heights with a levy of 60 mills.

Uncle Benny's closes, plans new store

LOVELAND and JOHNSTOWN — Uncle Benny's Building Supplies LLC closed its doors late last month. It hopes to reopen at a new location near the Candlelight Dinner Playhouse in Johnstown in a few months.

The recycled and reclaimed building supply store has operated at 1815 S. County Road 13C, just south of Colorado Highway 402, since 1998. As noted in a Reporter-Herald news story, the business was forced to close or make changes after the county determined that it had been operating out of compliance with county building codes for 20 or more years.

Johnstown officials said that the property does not yet have an address. It has been annexed and zoned; it is known as the Johnson's Corner Annexation, said Jamie Barker, spokesperson for the town.

The site was purchased from Johnson-Taylor Family Properties LLLP by the Sandra L. Aste Revocable Trust on March 31 for \$650,000, according to Larimer County Assessor records. The Ben Aste family has been the owner of Uncle Benny's since its start.

Analyzing the trends shaping residential real estate

While American consumers are embracing freedom from post-COVID restriction, there are mounting concerns that inflation might take the wind out of the sails of consumer spending in 2022. What's the impact on residential real estate?

Here is a closer look at what we see happening in the housing market:

Inflation

Rents have become a primary source of inflationary pressure, as evidenced by the Consumer Price Index (CPI).



RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE
BRANDON WELLS

According to a recent CNBC article, rents are up 10.2%, accounting for about one-third of the latest CPI report. And these pressures will likely persist into 2023, as rent hikes have still not taken effect for many Americans, and the delayed impact of eviction moratoriums on rents will generate continued inflationary pressure next year. The Federal Reserve is attempting to stem inflation with interest rate hikes. But Fed hikes — and their impact on long-term interest rates — are also pricing some out of the real estate market.

Interest Rates

As mortgage rates have eclipsed a 10-year high — and done so in surprisingly quick fashion to start 2022 — they have started to impact segments of the real estate market. The 30-year Freddie Mac fixed-rate loan as of April 21 was nearly 5.11%. In a housing market where a majority of the offers being accepted are cash with no financing, we're witnessing the strength of "tappable equity" in the U.S., which topped \$9.9 trillion in 2021 (Tappable equity is the amount people can borrow while still maintaining at least 20% equity in their homes. Homeowners can access these funds through tools such as home equity loans, home equity lines of credit, or cash-out refinances.)

While it will take time to work through this supply of cash for equity-positioned buyers, traditional financing buyers are still out there; as rates rise, the ability of traditional buyers to afford certain price points diminishes as payment totals increase. The U.S. housing market needs to stabilize. The continued imbalance of supply and demand, and its impact on rapid rise of median home prices, is not a healthy long-term trend. Based on the decline in mortgage applications across the country, it's evident that rising rates are making an impact. The tight supply is keeping competition fierce, and keeping prices rising into the middle of 2022.

Detached Homes For Sale Quarterly Analysis

Source: IRES

| City | # of Detached Homes For Sale (Q1) | | | | # of Detached Homes Sold (Q1) | | | | Detached Median Sales Price (Q1) | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| | Q1 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q1 2022 | YOY % | Q1 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q1 2022 | YOY % | Q1 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q1 2022 | YOY % |
| Berthoud | 126 | 46 | 21 | -54.35% | 72 | 124 | 117 | -5.65% | \$432,500 | \$489,748 | \$553,203 | 12.96% |
| Estes Park | 43 | 15 | 9 | -40.00% | 41 | 38 | 42 | 10.53% | \$495,000 | \$574,950 | \$813,500 | 41.49% |
| Fort Collins | 252 | 96 | 67 | -30.21% | 413 | 442 | 361 | -18.33% | \$435,000 | \$502,000 | \$590,000 | 17.53% |
| Greeley | 104 | 53 | 84 | 58.49% | 391 | 377 | 431 | 14.32% | \$324,750 | \$358,000 | \$445,000 | 24.30% |
| Johnstown | 56 | 24 | 32 | 33.33% | 84 | 83 | 133 | 60.24% | \$375,000 | \$420,000 | \$495,000 | 17.86% |
| Longmont | 171 | 52 | 49 | -5.77% | 340 | 280 | 237 | -15.36% | \$475,000 | \$510,000 | \$600,500 | 17.75% |
| Loveland | 202 | 68 | 60 | -11.76% | 309 | 339 | 266 | -21.53% | \$382,689 | \$409,233 | \$541,585 | 32.34% |
| Mead | 12 | 44 | 18 | -59.09% | 11 | 66 | 75 | 13.64% | \$465,000 | \$482,797 | \$566,180 | 17.27% |
| Milliken | 25 | 9 | 9 | 0.00% | 56 | 64 | 55 | -14.06% | \$349,950 | \$380,000 | \$458,759 | 20.73% |
| Severance | 104 | 69 | 21 | -69.57% | 146 | 129 | 75 | -41.86% | \$365,212 | \$422,000 | \$500,000 | 18.48% |
| Timnath | 101 | 28 | 10 | -64.29% | 60 | 77 | 47 | -38.96% | \$507,500 | \$532,175 | \$740,000 | 39.05% |
| Wellington | 50 | 25 | 17 | -32.00% | 78 | 98 | 74 | -24.49% | \$367,500 | \$410,055 | \$485,000 | 18.28% |
| Windsor | 190 | 106 | 50 | -52.83% | 191 | 310 | 207 | -33.23% | \$457,000 | \$458,000 | \$590,935 | 29.03% |
| Totals | 1,436 | 635 | 447 | -29.61% | 2,192 | 2,427 | 2,120 | -12.65% | | | | |

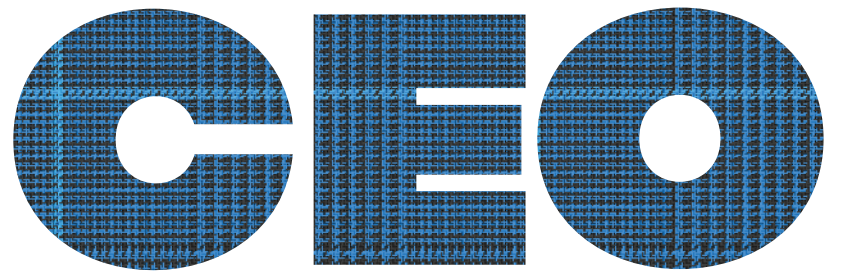
Inventory

New challenges have emerged in 2022. Last year, new construction offset much of the pressure brought on by a short supply of standing inventory. But this year, continued and worsening supply chain issues, labor shortages, and the rising cost of construction materials, have limited that relief and caused a wider supply-and-demand imbalance. Developers and builders moved through lots and newly completed homes in 2021 at a pace that had not been seen in more than a decade. Today, the process of getting a new project from planning to actual vertical construction is much longer and leads to further bottlenecks. This bodes well for existing homeowners, as the upward pressure on prices is likely to stay strong into the second and third quarters.

Investment

With all the challenges stated above, investors are staying focused on residential real estate. This is primarily due to inflation and the fact many feel safer investing in real estate than other asset classes. While the stock market has been hot, many economists anticipate a correction. With inflation being persistent — and expected to worsen before easing later in the year — real estate appears to be the desired hedge against the other forces. With rents rising across the country, investors see strong opportunities in residential real estate. One example is the trend toward BFR (Build for Rent) communities. At the same time, the supply side challenges do not seem to have an end in sight, with challenges continuing to mount that would further limit the acceleration of new inventory.

Brandon Wells is president of The Group Inc. Real Estate, founded in Fort Collins in 1976 with six locations in Northern Colorado. He can be reached at bwells@thegroupinc.com or 970-430-6463.



ROUNDTABLE **BW**

Real estate leaders don't see market slowing down

Participants in the BizWest Real Estate & Construction

Roundtable were: **Erik Broman**, Realtec; **Sara Coutts**, Neenan; **Julia Crawmer**, Mountain-N-Plains Inc.; **Mike Eyer**, CBRE; **Josh Guernsey**, Waypoint Real Estate; **Jake Hallauer**, NAI Affinity; **Steve Kawulok**, SVN/Denver Commercial LLC; **Jerico Devlin**, LC Real Estate Group; **Tom Livingston**, Livingston Real Estate & Development; **Brandon Myers**, WestMark Homes; **Brandon Wells**, The Group Real Estate; **Josh Billiard** and **Sean Nohavec**, Plante Moran; **Paul Watkins**, Elevations Credit Union.

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For more information about the CEO Roundtable contact Jeff Nuttall at 970-232-3131 or jnuttall@bizwest.com

BW ECONOWATCH



COURTESY CITY OF LOVELAND PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The Draper Heartland project in downtown Loveland would upgrade properties at Fourth Street and Lincoln Avenue.

Draper project would transform downtown Loveland corner

By Katherine Stahla
kstahla@bizwest.com

LOVELAND — Downtown Loveland's planned Draper Heartland project continues to be cloaked in mystery. While some details of the project were disclosed to the Loveland City Council last month, the council retreated into executive session to hear details related to the project's financing.

No decisions were rendered following the executive session.

After receiving a presentation on the planned development, which included information on the site, the council voted 7-2 to move into executive session. Council members Andrea Samson and Patrick McFall were the dissenting votes. The posted agenda for the special meeting did not cite a specific reason for the executive session other than negotiation.

The project, which would redevelop a portion of the block northeast of Fourth Street and Lincoln Avenue, has overcome some hurdles as it moves forward. In November, Loveland's Planning Commission voted to exempt the development from a 40-foot height limit that applies to much of Fourth Street. The waiver of the height restriction would permit the development to rise to five stories or 62.5 feet.

While developers have pointed to the height variance as necessary in order for the development to be commercially viable, some council members and community members expressed concern about the variance

setting a precedent. Council member Patrick McFall asked for more details on the specifics surrounding the call for a variance.

"You're never gonna please everybody out there, but the more information we get out there on this one the better," McFall said.

Plans presented for the site included a five-floor mixed-use building with commercial and residential spaces on the ground floor and more residential spaces above. There are 96 total planned residential units, with more than 14,000 square feet of commercial space planned for the ground floor.

Plans for the site also include an adjacent 277-space parking garage on a city-owned parking lot with 57 spaces. In addition to one parking space for each residential unit, the site would add 117 spaces to Loveland's downtown.

The 4½-story parking garage could potentially impact other local businesses on the same block, including Loveland staple The Black Steer, which operates a rear patio adjacent to the proposed garage location.

The garage would be operated in conjunction with the city of Loveland, and one proposal to finance its construction is a certificate of participation using Loveland's city hall as collateral. Property and sales taxes from the site would be used over 25 years to retire the debt. The total cost of the Draper Heartland development is expected to be \$36 million, plus \$11 million for the garage.

Renderings for the site include

plans to maintain the facades of 333 Fourth St. and 315 Fourth St., home to Loveland's Odd Fellows Lodge, built in 1903. The roof of the Odd Fellows lodge is set to become a rooftop patio for residents of the building.

The majority of units in the building will be studios and one-bedroom apartments, with some two- and three-bedroom apartments as well. All units will be available for rental, rather than for sale as in condominiums. Tribe Development CEO Ashley Stiles reassured the council that the developers have looked into affordable housing.

"It is something we've definitely explored through our partnership with Loveland Housing Authority," Stiles said.

Improvements to the Sweetheart Alley that runs west to east between Fourth and Fifth streets are also planned, with developers proposing the alley run one-way for its entire length, rather than splitting at the edge of the current parking lot. A passage between two of the retail units would connect the alley and Fourth Street.

The project is a collaboration between BH Developers, Hardy Investments, Tribe Development and Tryba Architects. The development is named after the Draper drug store that occupied the corner location from 1936 to 1986 and the Heartland Cafe, which also called the site home from 1984 to 2015. Next steps for the project include planning commission review again and a public neighborhood meeting.

THE TICKER

State's jobless rate falls below pre-pandemic level

DENVER — Colorado's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, which dropped 0.3 of a percentage point in March, was 3.7% in March, the lowest rate since the pre-pandemic nadir of 2.8% in February 2020.

The state trails the nation, which posted a March jobless rate of 3.6%, according to new data released Friday by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment.

But that's a function of Colorado climbing out of a deeper hole than many other states. Colorado's recovery rate is 109.3%, outpacing the national rate of 95.9%.

Locally, Boulder County led the way with a non-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 2.7%, down from 3.2% in February.

Broomfield County was just behind with 2.8%, an improvement of 0.5% from the previous month.

Larimer County's rate fell from 3.5% in February to 3% in March.

Weld County had a March jobless rate of 2.8%, compared to 4.3% in March.

Colorado has been trending in the right direction for months and could potentially see the unemployment rate approach or even dip below pre-pandemic lows, CDLE senior economist Ryan Gedney said.

Business leaders still optimistic about economy

BOULDER — Colorado business leaders are looking increasingly pessimistic about the national economy heading into the second quarter of 2022, but remain mildly optimistic about the state economy.

While the threat of COVID-19 wanes, new challenges such as inflation and the war in Ukraine have the business community on edge, according to the University of Colorado Boulder Leeds Business Research division's quarterly Business Confidence Index.

Overall, the index pinned business confidence at 53.9 ahead of the first quarter 2022, down 4.1 points from the previous quarter. A score of 50 is considered neutral and the index stood at a record low 29.7 in the first quarter of 2020 before hitting a record high of 67.3 in the third quarter of 2021.

The index rated confidence in the state economy at 51.9, national economy at 40.4, industry sales at 59.1, industry profits at 55, industry hiring at 60.4 and capital expenditures at 56.7.

Looking forward to the second quarter of 2022, the overall confidence index is 53.3.

The index was developed by analyzing 195 responses to a survey conducted between March 1 and March 21.

The difference between business leaders' outlook on the state economy and national economy is 11.5 points, the greatest gap in nine years.

Region hosts highest paid jobs in state

DENVER — The Boulder Valley and Northern Colorado regions are home to some of the highest-paid labor pools in the state, thanks to high concentrations of technology and science-centric occupations.

The Boulder metropolitan area, which includes all of Boulder County, had the highest wages in the state in 2021, with an annual average salary of \$73,360, according to new data from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment.

Focus on the essential, avoid getting lost in details

Most businesses are quite complicated. With customers, employees, partners, regulations, financials, industry dynamics ... it's a whole lot to wrap your mind around.

Don't get me wrong — that's all necessary.

The problem is that your team can get lost in all that detail. The larger the organization, the smaller each person's contribution feels. So motivation slowly ebbs and nobody even notices.

To keep your folks motivated, you need to sustain what feels vibrant and necessary. What's essential.

In the big picture, a business should be pretty simple:

- We create stuff that people want and need.
- We deliver it to them in a way that is reliable, high quality, and cost effective.
- We engage the right customers who are willing to pay us for what we do.
- We employ people who are quite good at what they do.
- We do all of this in a way that is sustainable over the long term.

The next level of detail will differ greatly from one organization to another, but the basic picture is pretty simple.

Why is that important? Because most of your people aren't NEARLY as deep into the specifics as you are. Sure, they have one narrow piece that is their job, but the rest of it fades into the background.

But it's critical to shift people from just doing their job into actually caring about the results that matter.

Let's imagine that we're talking with the marketing department. Their role is simply to find and engage those who we consider to be the best customers. They'll have money to spend and be willing to give us some. But more importantly, we need to create a compelling exchange of value in the customer's mind.

Since the products and services aren't typically created by the marketing department, we'll need to rely on other groups to do that. It doesn't help when we complain about others not "doing their job" — that doesn't yield great business results.

No, marketing needs to partner with those developers and service providers to create something that is

truly special and compelling. Together, as a team.

In just a few sentences, we have painted the picture of marketing's reason for being a critical part of this company and some key relationships it needs to nurture in order to succeed. If I were an employee, I might start being a bit more motivated to do good work. Because it's an essential part of this company. My work matters.

To you as the business owner, this is all quite elementary, because you hold the big picture in your mind every day. You may have even designed it in the first place. But to many employees, a lot of this swims around in a vague sea. They may not worry about it too much because it's "not my job."

But the health and the success of the business is everybody's job. Not just managers at the top of the org chart.

This is an especially important concept when it comes to financial matters. That's something we don't like to talk about much in our culture, and we hide financial information for various reasons.

But the basic financial picture actually isn't that complicated. We have revenue flowing in, expenses flowing out, and what remains is what allows us to continue staying in business. Expenses go to our paychecks, employee benefits, outside suppliers, taxes, and stuff we need to do what we do. If you think about it, there are direct analogies to how someone manages their household.

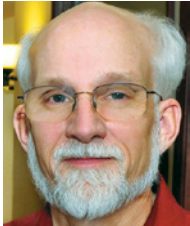
So why is it that most employees don't understand these foundational concepts? Because we quickly get lost in the details. And it's "not my job."

But this explains why it's great to have more of the right customers. Why we worry about more than just employees' wages. Why it's important to understand whether buying that nifty new computer will be a good choice. And what we actually do with the much-maligned "overhead."

As you can tell, I resist using "not my job" as an excuse for not understanding why we do what we do. Everybody in the organization needs to have some of the fundamental pictures in their mind, if only that they can appreciate the value they provide and the hard work of others.

Could your employees draw some of these basic pictures with a few boxes and arrows?

Carl Dierschow is a Small Fish Business Coach based in Fort Collins, specializing in companies committed to improving society and the world. His website is www.smallfish.us.



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BizWest photo/Lucas High

Local biotechnology and BizWest CEO Roundtable sponsors present for Tuesday's event at the University of Colorado were (from left) Aaron Spear, Bank of Colorado; Joey Azofeifa, Arpeggio Biosciences; Pawel Fludzinski, Amide Bio; David Brunel, industry adviser; Kevin Koch, Edgewise Therapeutics; Becky Potts, Plante Moran; Roy Smythe, Somalogic; Elyse Blazeivich, Colorado Bioscience Association; Greg Sebring, KBI Biopharma; Jason Myers, Genapsys Inc.; Kyle Lefkoff, Boulder Ventures; Brynmor Rees, University of Colorado Technology Transfer Office; Marvin Caruthers, distinguished professor at the University of Colorado Boulder; Sean Nohavec, Plante Moran; Kristen Bjorkman, BioFrontiers Institute; Ashley Cawthorn, Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti; and Kristi Anseth, BioFrontiers Institute.

CEO
ROUNDTABLE BW

Biotech leaders seek to make Boulder into a top city for industry

Participants in the BizWest Life Sciences Roundtable were, **Kristi Anseth**, BioFrontiers Institute; **Joey Azofeifa**, Arpeggio Biosciences; **Amy Beckley**, MFB Fertility Inc.; **Kristen Bjorkman**, BioFrontiers Institute; **Elyse Blazeivich**, Colorado Bioscience Association; **David Brunel**, Front Range biotech companies; **Marvin Caruthers**, University of Colorado Boulder; **Pawel Fludzinski**, Amide Bio; **Kevin Koch**, Edgewise Therapeutics Inc.; **Kyle Lefkoff**, Boulder Ventures Ltd.; **Jason Myers**, Genapsys Inc.; **Brynmor Rees**, Venture Partners at CU Boulder; **Greg Sebring**, KBI Biopharma Inc.; **Roy Smythe**, Somalogic Inc.; **David Traylor**, Golden Eagle Partners; **Ashley Cawthorn**, Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti LLP; **Sean Nohavec** and **Becky Potts**, Plante Moran; **Aaron Spear**, Bank of Colorado.

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For more information about the CEO Roundtable contact Jeff Nuttall at 970-232-3131 or jnuttall@bizwest.com

BW STARTUPS

Company converts shipping containers to liveable space

By Ken Amundson

kamundson@bizwest.com

SEVERANCE — A startup Severance company hopes to tap into the home office, accessory dwelling unit market with a lineup of small structures built on the bones of industrial shipping containers.

Pivot Structures LLC is the brainchild of Jeff Hanesworth, who also operates Mountain Standard Homes LLC based in Timnath.

“In 2020 [as the pandemic began], he began to ask ‘what’s the most efficient way of building home offices or ADA units,’” said Koby Bishop, sales and marketing manager for the company.

The result was Pivot Structures, which works out of a 4,500-square-foot manufacturing facility in Severance where container units are turned into functional living or working spaces. The company has multiple models suitable for use as mountain cabins, backyard offices, or dwelling units for parents, in-laws or college students returning home.

The company’s first flex home with one bedroom, one bathroom and a full kitchen was installed as a fishing cabin in Pinedale, Wyoming. Flex homes are typically placed on a foundation and intended to be permanent. Studio offices, on the other hand, do not require a building permit and are designed to be moved, Bishop said.

“During the pandemic, one of our audiences was the professional who wanted to work from home and didn’t



COURTESY PIVOT STRUCTURES

Pivot structures can be outfitted to work as home offices or living spaces.

have space. Another big interest area was as ADU units for mother-in-law suites,” he said. The units provide privacy while maintaining close proximity for families.

Designs can be basic or upscale, Bishop said, using shiplap interiors, Anderson windows, vinyl floor planking and can include decks or pergolas.

Units are insulated using spray foam and are rated R-49 in the ceilings and R-21 in the walls. Heating and air conditioning are handled by heat pump systems, Bishop said.

Pricing for auxiliary offices range from \$14,500 for a 10-foot by 8-foot unit to \$22,500 for a 15-foot office and \$27,500 for a 20-foot unit.

Flex homes are priced beginning at \$89,500, plus the foundation.

“We can ship these anywhere in the world, but we’re focused locally and in surrounding states,” Bishop said. He said the company has received some interest from developers in Florida who have clients who would like home offices in their back or side yards.

Bishop said the small crew of three builders was working on two offices as he was speaking with BizWest. He said offices can be turned around in 10-14 days; flex homes require 30 to 45 days.

“I think our flex homes are awesome. It’s not comparable to a modular home because of how sturdy it is,” he said.

Boutique stationery store opens in Longmont

By Ken Amundson

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LONGMONT — Wholesale stationery company Wolf & Wren Press LLC has opened its first physical location at 332 Main St. in Longmont.

The store will celebrate a grand opening May 7 from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m.

The new 430-square-foot store specializes in letterpress-printed greeting cards and stationery but also features handmade art from other women-owned businesses across the U.S.

“We have had such a positive response from our friends, family, and customers near and far. Generally, I think people are refreshed by good news, and on our end it really feels like people are really rooting for us,” Liz Wolf, co-owner of Wolf & Wren, said in a written statement.



COURTESY WOLF & WREN

Co-owner Lauren Stapleton stands in front of the store on Longmont’s Main Street.

Wolf, of Rockford, Illinois, and best friend Lauren Stapleton of Longmont created the company in 2014, according to Colorado Secretary of State records. They’ve had only an online presence until now.

“People are so excited to have a

stationery and greeting card store in Longmont,” Stapleton said. “The fact that all our cards are letterpress printed is such a tactile experience, and when people interact with our products they can see that deep impression, thick, soft paper, and rich color. It has been so fun to watch people look at and read our cards and smile or laugh.”

All the cards feature hand-drawn art and are printed on 100% cotton paper.

In addition to the ready-to-purchase letterpress stationery, customers can also get a first-hand look at the process thanks to a 114-year-old press (named Pearl) kept onsite, according to information from the company.

The store is open Tuesdays through Thursdays from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m., and on Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.

STARTINGLINE

Tech accelerator for women opens applications

BOULDER — For 2nd year the Colorado Small Business Development Center’s Techsource has opened applications for the second year of its Tech Venture Accelerator for Women program. The virtual accelerator has room for eight women who are founders, C-level executives and executive managers in the technology industry.

The program launched in 2021, and offered eight women the opportunity to network with other high-level women and grow their skills in entrepreneurship. Businesses that went through the program include Denver’s LuLu Tech Labs and Berthoud’s Agile RF Systems.

Eligible businesses must be science and technology companies owned by women that are based in Colorado and can submit SBIR or STTR proposals. While entry to the program costs \$2,450 per participant, a grant program allows the accelerator to reimburse participants.

The cohort program runs from June 2 to Aug. 11 and includes weekly virtual lessons with peer groups in addition to 30 hours of growth consulting from experts in the field. More information about the program can be found at the SBDC’s website.

Post sells Howdy brand to cider company

LAFAYETTE and BOULDER — The Post Brewing Co. is selling its iconic Howdy Beer brand to Stem Ciders LLC.

The Post, a chain of fried chicken and beer restaurants that has locations around the Front Range, launched Howdy Beer as an American-style Pilsener in 2014. It received national acclaim, including earning a Bronze medal in 2018 in the American-Style Pilsener category and a Silver medal in 2014 in the American-Style or International-Style Pilsener category.

Stem Ciders, which has a national distribution platform, will now focus on growing the beer’s brand around the country. The cidery began entering the beer space in 2020 through a partnership with Sleeping Giant Brewing to manage sales and marketing efforts for Boulder Beer Co.

“We have always believed that Howdy Beer is an incredible beer with awesome potential,” Dave Query, founder of Big Red F Restaurant Group, which owns The Post, said in a prepared statement. “The partnership with Stem will allow Howdy to reach its brand and distribution potential. They have a skilled sales team and a strong knowledge of the industry needed to launch a brand across several regions.”

Distillery completes \$1.3M funding round

LONGMONT — Dry Land Distillers, trade name for a craft distillery owned by Breaking Dads Distillers LLC located in downtown Longmont, has successfully closed its first Class A private financing round. At just under \$1.3 million, the funds have allowed Dry Land to increase its production capacity by 400%.

According to a press statement, the distillery, specializing in craft spirits that showcase the American West, has shown growth every year since operations began in late 2018. Its core products include rare, single grain wheat whiskeys, an original mescal-style spirit made from native prickly pear cactus and 100% native Colorado gin.

Exiting Estes chamber chief springs into a new challenge

By Dallas Heltzell

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ESTES PARK — The 135-mile commute between Estes Park and her family's home in Colorado Springs was taking a toll on Donna Carlson. Her husband and children didn't want to move north. But Carlson, as executive director of the Estes Chamber of Commerce, couldn't leave until she'd accomplished what she wanted.

And now she has.

"I loved being in Estes Park," said Carlson, who was hired in April 2020 as the newly formed chamber's first full-time leader — just in time to deal with a pandemic-fueled lockdown. "After about a year and a half of being away from my family, and living in different bedrooms here and there, and vacation homes, and wherever I could find a place to stay, my husband said, 'I think it's time for you to come home' — and I said 'I'm not ready to leave yet.'"

"But round about last February, I was approaching my second full year here, and we had finally tripled our membership" from 134 when she arrived to more than 350 now, "and that was the point — there was almost a shift in me that said this is a good thing. We've built a strong, healthy organization, and I'm not going to cripple the organization if I leave. In fact, I think it's in a very healthy position to turn over to somebody who brings a new skill set. So I felt at liberty to go ahead and offer my resignation. The board was really appreciative that I said 'I'm not going anywhere. I'll stay 'til May if you want me to.'"

Carlson's last day in the Estes Park post will be May 7, and she'll start May 16 as vice president for membership at the merged Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce and its Economic Development Commission.

"It wasn't even until after I'd given notice here that I learned about the new position I pursued in the Springs," she said.

On April 25, the Estes chamber's board announced that Colleen DePasquale, who has been president and chief executive of the Greater Fort Myers (Florida) Chamber of Commerce and its nonprofit foundation for 11 years and once worked at a hotel in Russia, will take the reins in Estes Park effective May 23. That means two of Estes Park's primary business-promotion entities will have Sunshine State transplants at their helms, since Visit Estes Park in March 2021 hired Kara Franker as chief executive. She had been senior vice president for marketing and communications for Visit Lauderdale in Broward County, Florida.

Carlson said she hopes her chamber successor will be "really strong in political advocacy at a local, county, state and federal level" with "an intuition for the boundaries of chamber influence. As a 501(c)(6), you can be a nonprofit that does advocate. We need somebody who understands that —



DALLAS HELTZELL/BIZWEST

Donna Carlson stands next to the Big Thompson River on Estes Park's Riverwalk, which was developed after the 1982 Lawn Lake flood.

and also knows when to say no."

Carlson got some lessons on that topic in her last few months on the job, involving both the chamber's reaction to state House Bill 22-1117, which dealt with how lodging-tax revenue is spent, and a measure on the town's April 5 municipal election ballot that concerned funding under Colorado's Taxpayer Bill of Rights. On March 23, the chamber sent out an email endorsing the TABOR measure — "really, basically to give the town a little more control over spending," Carlson said — then retracted the email the next day when a chamber member suggested it wasn't legal for a nonprofit to make such an endorsement. Two days

later, after studying the law, the chamber retracted the retraction.

"Every time you make a mistake, it's an opportunity to learn something that you're never going to forget, and it's going to improve your processes," Carlson said. "So I'm happy for it, and I'm happy to take the fall for it."

Carlson said that throughout her term in Estes Park, she also fielded complaints from business owners who said "What's the value of my chamber membership?" When she'd hear that, she said, she'd go to her membership database "and look at how involved they are. And then I could say, 'Have you attended any meetings? Your membership means

nothing if you don't use it.'

"I'm not going to listen to complaints from people who complain about things they don't like if they're not going to be part of the solution," she said. "I have very little tolerance for that."

Besides increasing chamber membership, implementing a supplier-attraction program and launching a lead-generation and referral system, Carlson said her biggest source of pride in what she accomplished in Estes Park is that "I can walk into just about any business, and I know the name of the owner. That's not something that you learn too quickly. They found a leader who went out there with sneakers on, and I went door to door with my executive-director badge on, and people aren't used to seeing that, and it built a lot of trust."

"I love the fact that when we have a Business After Hours, every person who arrives I know their name and the business they run."

"I had been working for a month to get Duck Race prize donations, sending emails and reminders and having people make phone calls, and I couldn't get anything to happen until I put my sneakers on and went door to door and sat there and watched them fill out the forms. It seems like that's the only way to get things done. But the conversations I have when I go door to door are so rich; it's worth it."

That personal touch won't be quite as easy in a large city such as Colorado Springs, but Carlson said her role in the new job will be narrower in scope.

"I love the fact that I'm focusing just on membership development, which also means I'm focused on connecting members with each other, catalyzing business relationships," she said. "That's what I love to do. There's a lot of the administrative parts of the chamber that I'm happy to hand off."

The highest membership fee for the Estes chamber is \$3,000, while at the Colorado Springs chamber it's \$25,000. "It's a different conversation," she said. "The good news is I'm familiar with that." In her previous position at the Springs' heralded Center for Creative Leadership, she said, she was "used to doing \$300,000 deals. The critical difference now is that I know how to build value in chamber membership."

In the media release announcing DePasquale's appointment, Carissa Streib, who chairs the Estes chamber's board of directors, wrote that "we have established a strong reputation of advocacy and support under Carlson's leadership, and we wish her the best in her new endeavors."

Even though Carlson will be back home with her family in the Springs, she'll still nurture her connections in Estes Park.

"At the first opportunity," she said, "I'll bring my new membership team up here for a strategic-planning retreat."

BW COMMENTARY

Omission of I-25 North from Mega Grant Program represents missed opportunity

Northern Colorado stakeholders are rightfully miffed at the exclusion of further improvements to Interstate 25 from a federal grant program.

The Colorado Department of Transportation decided to forego applying for a Mega Program Grant for north I-25, instead focusing efforts on the Floyd Hill area of Interstate 70. Mega Program Grants are available as part of the \$1.2 trillion federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

While Floyd Hill deserves attention — as do other parts of Colorado's transportation infrastructure — additional funding for I-25 is critical to relieving congestion in the area from Thornton to Fort Collins. Especially important is the stretch from Colorado Highway 66 near Longmont to Colorado Highway 56 at Berthoud, which suffers from bottlenecks as the interstate goes from three lanes to two.

That area — known as Segment 5 — has languished without funding for more than a decade. (The Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for widening were completed in 2011.)

Northern Colorado represents one of the fastest-growing regions of the state, with Weld County behind only Broomfield County in terms of population growth since the 2020 census. Far greater growth is projected in the coming decades.

And population growth inevitably leads to rapid commercial growth, including retail, office, warehouse/distribution, recreational and more.

Travelers who venture north from Denver into Larimer and Weld counties will see significant highway improvements that are ongoing, but the span from Longmont to Berthoud remains void of transportation improvements.

Completing the I-25 improvements along the corridor is estimated to cost another \$600 million to \$900 million.

CDOT's decision not to request funding for I-25 has upset Republicans and Democrats alike, with governmental representatives and business leaders voicing their displeasure in letters to CDOT executive director Shoshana Lew.

Several groups, including the North I-25 Coalition and the Fix North I-25 Business Alliance, have for years worked to secure funding for I-25, which functions as the "Main Street" of Northern Colorado. Many business leaders worry that CDOT suffers from "I-25 fatigue," given funding that has already gone into the area.

But any "I-25 fatigue" is misguided: Local governments pooled funding sources to supplement state and federal dollars that have gone into the current projects. And Northern Colorado's transportation needs previously were neglected for decades.

So now is not the time for CDOT to tap the brakes when it comes to I-25 improvements. It's time to step on the gas to get the projects done.

Humanitarian hiring improves business one job at a time

Any working person can remember his or her first job. Whether it was a babysitting gig, distributing newspapers, scooping ice cream or delivering pizza, that feeling of nervousness and desire to make a good first impression during the interview and initial weeks on the job may feel like it was yesterday.



HOMELESS CONNECTION
CHRIS NELSON

Take a moment to put yourself in the shoes of a young person who is eager to find work but happens to be exiting homelessness. Oftentimes, young people in this situation may not have work experience, access to a shower to clean up for an interview or a computer to write a résumé and apply for jobs online. Many young people feel so intimidated before and after interviews that they don't follow up. An already nerve-wracking process just became that much more challenging, didn't it?

Although young people experiencing homelessness may look like the next candidate and have all of the qualities and skills needed to thrive in the work environment, many businesses' hiring practices and requirements tend to overlook the opportunity to add this young adult to the team. A significant part of finding a job is through networks, something that young people who are unhoused often don't have.

Today's hiring practices call for several qualifications that lead unhoused youths to feel unrecognized and discouraged. A few common and outdated hiring practices include irrelevant requirements, job descriptions that are not gender-neutral and ask trick questions during the interview. I have heard stories from unhoused young people being asked questions early in the interview about criminal charges,

substance use and other assumptive questions based on a perception of homelessness. Additionally, a fair amount of employers don't get back to applicants when they don't have an address.

So, how exactly can we begin to address the gap in today's hiring practices?

Consider the advantages of partnering with local organizations dedicated to ending youth homelessness. In Boulder, TGTHR partners with businesses to build pathways for youths to get experience and gain the skills necessary for career success. We don't want to see restaurants closing because they can't hire staff or the small businesses that move away from Boulder because they can't afford rent. If we, as a community, can't come together to see where the opportunities are for businesses and youth, then we are perpetually going to have this labor shortage.

Let me be clear — this is not at all about exploiting young people for a business benefit or because it is more affordable. This is about building sustainable businesses, which requires fair hiring practices. Homelessness does not make someone unworthy — it makes them that much more deserving of a work opportunity.

Addressing our inadequate hiring practices will empower Boulder businesses to better understand how to support young people contending with homelessness. Simply acknowledging and addressing youth homelessness is not only a business responsibility but helping provide employment opportunities to support young people in our community should be seen as a privilege.

Chris Nelson leverages more than 25 years of experience working with youth, including 14 years at TGTHR, a nonprofit business dedicated to ending youth homelessness.

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East Boulder neighborhood could add 5,000 homes

By Lucas High
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BOULDER — East Boulder, the neighborhood generally north of Arapahoe Avenue and east of Foot-hills Parkway, could add as many as 5,000 new homes in the next 20 years, a figure that represents more than 10% of the city's overall housing stock.

Boulder officials are in the process of planning for growth in the area, and city staff met with Boulder City Council members in April to provide an update on the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan, a project that's about 90% complete after three years of work.

The 20-year plan is meant to guide land-use and transportation connectivity decisions.

Of the 5,000 new homes the plan contemplates, staffers expect 1,200 of them to be affordable, representing a 32% increase in Boulder's affordable housing stock.

In all, the neighborhood could see 11,000 new residents over the next 20

years.

With those residents, city officials are also expecting about 2,700 new jobs in East Boulder by 2042.

Zooming in on the region, here's the by-neighborhood breakdown of where those homes and jobs are expected to be added:

- Park West: 375 jobs, 1,300 homes
- Park East: 125 jobs, 580 homes
- 55th Avenue Corridor: 200 jobs, 1,170 homes

55th Avenue and Arapahoe Corridor: 2,000 jobs, 2,050 homes

"The vision for East Boulder is to evolve into a thriving industrial area with interesting places to work, live, play and do business," Boulder principal planner Kathleen King told City Council members.

As staff near completion of the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan, members of the working group assembled to advise on the project have urged its writers not to overlook "incentivizing affordable commercial space and to address business displacement," according to a city memo.



COURTESY BOULDER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The addition of 5,000 homes in East Boulder would represent more than 10% increase in Boulder's overall housing stock.

Severance lifts building-permit moratorium

By Christopher Wood
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SEVERANCE — One day after the North Weld County Water District approved an amendment to its water service agreement with the town of Severance, the Severance Town Board reciprocated, approving the amendment in April and subsequently lifting a building-permit moratorium stemming from its dispute with North Weld.

The actions pave the way for resumption of new building activity within the town. Both approval of the amendment and lifting of the moratorium came on 4-0 votes, with board member Tad Stout recusing himself from the discussion. Stout also serves on the board of the North Weld County Water District.

"I am glad we've made it to this point where we can lift this ordinance," Severance mayor Matt Fries said during an April town board meeting. "I wish I could say that this is what I would consider the end of this issue, but I think I can say that it's the beginning of the end."

The amendment to the water service agreement provides for the district to sell 100 plant-investment taps to the town of Severance, enabling North Weld to increase the flow of water to the master meter that serves the town.

North Weld had imposed a moratorium on new taps in September 2021 over concerns about treatment and delivery capacity. That tap moratorium was eased in February, with the district board authorizing 120 taps to be issued in 2022.

Severance also in February lifted its building-permit moratorium in parts of the town served directly by North

Weld but retained it in areas served by the town.

The most recent action lifts the building-permit moratorium entirely.

"The primary justifications for imposing the moratorium were essentially to prevent the town from getting in a situation where it was approving the construction of new residential dwellings that would basically be uninhabitable because they would be unable to receive water service from the town's water system," town attorney Keith Martin said in a staff presentation. "We believe now that with the approval of the second amendment that does allow the purchase of those 100 additional plant-investment taps, that the town is no longer in a position where it needs to maintain the existing moratorium to prevent creating uninhabitable residential dwelling units."

Fries noted the toll the moratorium has taken on home owners and developers, and praised town staff for helping navigate through the issue.

"We've learned an awful lot, and I think this is a great step to allow homeowners to continue to build their houses," he said. "As the mayor, I appreciate everyone's patience throughout this process. It has been very painful. I can't imagine what some of the folks have gone through."

The North Weld County Water District Monday also lifted its 120-tap limit for 2022, after concluding that capital improvements, including installation of a new one-mile stretch of pipeline, would enable it to increase flows for new developments.

But any new taps issued would fall within its more-restrictive Tap Criteria Policy, adopted in February. The tap moratorium continues for developments that do not meet the criteria.

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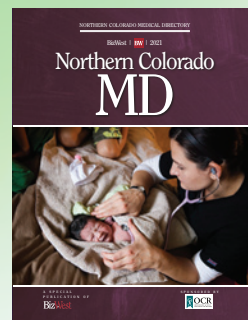
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Supporting local and independent businesses

BizWest is launching a campaign to highlight the importance of supporting locally owned businesses. This campaign will include articles on the importance of supporting local businesses, profiles of independent businesses and a database of locally owned businesses.

Why we're doing it:

1. Studies show that dollars spent with a local business remain in the local economy longer than dollars spent at national retailers. The American Independent Business Alliance estimates that 86% of money spent with national chains leaves the local community, while the U.S. Small Business Administration estimates that 68% of all dollars spent with small business remains in the local community.
2. Shopping local supports a vibrant local business scene, with mom-and-pop shops, eclectic galleries and retailers, and a diversity of restaurants.
3. Small businesses represent 99.5% of all Colorado businesses, according to the 2020 Colorado Small Business Profile published by the U.S. Small Business Administration, with small businesses employing 48.1% of all Colorado employees.
4. Small businesses also donate heavily to local philanthropic causes.
5. In addition to retail, many other local sectors provide opportunities to engage with locally owned businesses, from manufacturers to suppliers, consultants to the service industry.

What can you do?

1. Help us build our database of locally owned businesses via our submission link.

To be included, companies must demonstrate ownership in Boulder, Broomfield, Larimer or Weld counties, Brighton or Westminster.

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