

# 40

U N D E R

N O C O F O R T Y 2 0 1 6



THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS IN BANKING LAW HOSPITALITY



REAL ESTATE GOVERNMENT SMALL BUSINESS BIG BUSINESS MARKETING



EDUCATION PUBLIC SERVICE INSURANCE OUTDOOR INDUSTRY



**BizWest**

# 4 0 u n d e r f o r t y



# Meet Northern Colorado's emerging young leaders

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

Those being honored had to be younger than age 40 by Dec. 31 of this year. This is the 12th year for the Northern Colorado program, with another program in the Boulder Valley.

As always, we are grateful to our 2016 Supporting Sponsors, EKS&H and the Community Foundation of

Northern Colorado, as well as our Associate Sponsors, the Better Business Bureau of Northern Colorado and Wyoming, DaVinci Sign Systems, Flood and Peterson, Miramont Lifestyle and Fitness, Palmer Flowers, and our host, Candlelight Dinner Playhouse.

Thanks also go to the members of our selection committee, who spent many hours poring through the nominations. Our own Jeff Nuttall and Lexi Valenti served on this year's panel, along with 40 Under Forty alums Jordan Austin and Ryan Smith of Thrivent Financial, Heather Buoniconti

of the Food Bank for Larimer County, Allison Hines of United Way of Larimer County, Justin Davis of Wells Fargo Advisors, Ann Hutchison of the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce, Leah Johnson of JD Consulting, Amanda Miller of The Place Setting Co., Rochelle Reynolds of Kia I-25, Clint Skutchan of the Fort Collins Board of Realtors, Ashley Valenzuela-Ruesgen of Aims Community College, and Randy Watkins of Anton Collins Mitchell LLP. Thanks also to Miller and The Place Setting Co. for helping us manage this event! Thanks to BizWest's

Chad Collins for all the photos of this year's honorees, and to Dallas Heltzell for writing the 40 stories.

Year-round access to the digital edition of this supplement can be found at [fortyunderforty.com](http://fortyunderforty.com). We at BizWest and our sponsors salute the winners for their enthusiasm and dedication in helping enhance Northern Colorado's reputation as a great place to live.

— Dallas Heltzell  
40 Under Forty special-section writer

## BizWest Reprints

Available as digital file, plaque and framing options



Showcase your company.

Available now in print, online and digitally.

[www.bizwest.com](http://www.bizwest.com)



BOULDER VALLEY • NORTHERN COLORADO

# BizWest

The Business Journal of the Boulder Valley and Northern Colorado

Brought to you by these sponsors.  
Thank you for helping the 40 Under Forty Class of 2016 celebrate their success!

### Supporting Sponsors

**EKS&H**  
AUDIT | TAX | CONSULTING

**Community Foundation of NORTHERN COLORADO**  
and Community Foundation Trust

### Associate Sponsors

**Flood and Peterson**

**CANDLELIGHT**  
DINNER PLAYHOUSE

**DA VINCI**  
SIGN SYSTEMS, INC.  
the art and science of identification

**MIRAMONT**  
LIFESTYLE FITNESS

**PALMER FLOWERS**

**BBB**  
Start With Trust

**surveygizmo**

**GRAF X GROUP**  
Printing | Production | Installation

**CYCLEBAR**

**WildRock**

NORTHERN COLORADO'S LEADING SIGN MANUFACTURER







# DA VINCI

## SIGN SYSTEMS, INC.

the art and science of identification

970.203.9292

4496 BENTS DRIVE, WINDSOR, CO 80550




WWW.DAVINCISIGN.COM

## Nick Armstrong

Geek-in-chief  
WTF Marketing



Nick Armstrong believes that “heroes come in all forms to serve their community, and Fort Collins Comic Con is a team effort and labor of love to bring those heroes together.”

Those heroes sometimes go to war in the pages of comic books, and Armstrong said he has gone to war as well — against business as usual “by being unapologetically awesome at making marketing fun for small-business owners.”

As “geek-in-chief” at Fort Collins-based WTF Marketing, Armstrong said, “I can explain difficult-to-grasp marketing and web-technology concepts, making them much less scary.”

WTF has made marketing fun again for Fort Collins area clients ranging from mom-and-pop shops to multi-million-dollar businesses. Armstrong’s work for the Poudre River Library District helped increase library-card-using households in Fort Collins to 58 percent in 2014, up from 46 percent in 2013 — a 12 percent increase. Digital circulation increased by 30 percent, and database usage was up 37 percent.

Armstrong helped build Fort Collins Comic Con to benefit the library district, raising more than \$15,000.

“I also love to give people a soapbox and a forum to share new ideas,” Armstrong said. “That’s why I’m the co-organizer and curator of Ignite Fort Collins, a speedy-presentation event of awesome topics featuring folks from the Fort Collins community. We’ve had 232 talks from the best minds in our community over the last six years.”

He also brought LaidOff Camp (later CareerCamp) to Fort Collins nine times, helping hundreds of job seekers find hope in the recession economy from 2009 to 2011.

## Jake Atchison

Vice president for business development  
Workspace Innovations



Jake Atchison’s children come first. “Everything I do in my life is to better their position and give them more opportunities to do what they want in their lives,” said Atchison, vice president for business development at Fort Collins-based Workspace Innovations. “WSI has a family-oriented culture, and I am able to get all of my work done and still have time for my family at day’s end.”

His job at WSI is to bring in new business and manage current accounts.

“Upon my arrival at WSI, I implemented new operating systems that have streamlined our internal communications processes,” Atchison said. “This has helped WSI to better serve our customers from the initial call all the way to the final invoice.”

Atchison previously was vice president for sales and operations for Exodus Moving. When he joined that company, it had grossed \$2.5 million the previous year. By the time he left, Exodus was grossing \$6 million a year.

Atchison has persuaded his large clients to donate used office furniture to nonprofits such as the Boys and Girls Club, Realities for Children, Crossroads Safehouse, Matthews House and Habitat for Humanity. He also has donated moving services to nonprofits including Junior Achievement, Catholic Charities and Reflections for Youth, where he has been a board member for eight years.

“I make it my business to look out for my clients’ best interests and not my own,” Atchison said. “I think when consumers see this trait in a vendor, they will continue to call you back.”

## Mary Baird

Campaign director  
United Way  
of Larimer County



Mary Baird says daughter Aiya is “my joy — and a reminder to sow seeds of generosity and service in her life every day that will build future opportunities for all and communities that stand united.”

That spirit of community service drives Baird as campaign director for United Way of Larimer County, and she wants to pass it on to Aiya just as her parents passed it on to her.

“My parents led by example, cooking for widows, housing those in need of shelter and caring for the lonely,” Baird said. “I believe this was the beginning of my passion to serve the vulnerable and those in need of a helping hand. My parents are my true role models and inspiration. I would be so humbled and lucky for my daughter to say the same about me 30 years from now.”

At United Way, Baird develops and implements its \$4 million fundraising campaign for corporate partnerships and employee charitable contributions. She also is active with WomenGive and Generation United, a Young Leaders Philanthropy Society. She’s a volunteer driver for seniors or individuals with disabilities and provides mentoring and a host home for international students and families.

Before coming to United Way in 2014 as one of three resource development managers, Baird held a similar post at Matthews House in Fort Collins, where she launched a volunteer-engagement program and developed new partnerships with 39 local businesses. Her donations and activities at Everyday Joe’s coffee house helped that nonprofit hire a part-time children’s director.

## Josh Billiard

Senior manager  
EKS&H



Family is important to Josh Billiard — and that includes Murphy the dog.

It’s also important to him to work with dogged determination in the audit service area of EKS&H. He manages about 50 projects a year, spread among 30 different client groups and supervising more than 50 staff, seniors and managers.

Billiard conducts trainings, interviews Colorado State University students and participates in recruiting efforts. He helps lead EKS&H’s construction, benefit plans and technical accounting niches.

The Construction Financial Management Association recently asked Billiard to present nationwide webinars to help financial professionals prepare for Certified Construction Industry Financial Professional examinations; he now is a board member with Colorado CFMA and chairs its Northern Colorado committee.

In addition, Billiard is a coach and mentor to seven employees, taking an active role in their personal and professional development.

In his non-work hours, Billiard works with NoCo United for Youth, which raises funds for underprivileged and underserved children in Northern Colorado. “I am very proud that we were able to raise more than \$300,000 during 2015 for local charities including Turning Point, SAVA Center and Book Trust, among others,” he said.

He served eight years as treasurer for his homeowners’ association, where his first assignment was to find out why the HOA was significantly underfunded. After weeks of investigating, he discovered the source of the shortfall, got full restitution for missing funds, returned the organization to solvency and lowered dues for all the homeowners.

Billiard also is a musician who performs with several Northern Colorado groups.

## Jennifer Bray

Loan officer  
Cornerstone  
Home Lending Inc.



A horseshoe has a double meaning for Jennifer Bray. It means both luck and leisure.

"I have always been fortunate in my career, life and passions," she said. "That fortune and luck I like to share with those around me."

Then comes the end of the day, when "riding my horses on the trail takes me to my happy place."

As a loan officer at Cornerstone Home Lending, Bray is part of a team that produces more than \$3 million a month in loan-production volume. She said she finds joy in "having the opportunity to work with the friends, family or neighbors of my past clients and share an incredible amount of knowledge with those around me."

She has brought that knowledge to Fort Collins' Affordable Housing Board. "To be able to help tangibly build better and more-affordable home ownership and home-rental options in the area has been my passion," she said, "and it has become incredibly rewarding to aid and assist those outside my immediate sphere."

Bray said helping clients qualify for a loan to purchase their first home "is more important to me than any trophy."

Her activities outside the office have ranged from training homeowners' association managers and being a manager and wrangler at SK Horses Ltd. in Estes Park to acting, directing and working on the stage crew at the Windsor Community Playhouse, Loveland Community Theater and Fort Collins-based Encore! Encore! From 2012 to 2015, she captained the Punchy Brewsters roller derby team.

## Audra Brickner

Vice president  
for advancement  
Semester at Sea



Developing a "global view" is considered key to advancement in a career. Semester at Sea takes that concept literally.

Semester at Sea provides students an opportunity to travel the world, visiting 10 to 12 countries in a single semester. And for the organization's vice president for advancement, Audra Brickner, "experiencing other cultures is the key to world peace, ending poverty and better understanding."

Making it happen takes money, of course, and part of Brickner's job is "identifying partners to help us fund scholarships, build buildings and provide programs to educate motivated students."

Brickner is no stranger to fundraising, having done it successfully for Colorado State University's colleges of engineering and business. She was able to secure a \$12 million naming gift for the Suzanne and Walter Scott Jr. Bioengineering Building, the largest single gift to CSU.

"Having worked solely in the nonprofit world for my career, giving back has always been a priority," Brickner said. She is an active volunteer in her children's school, Riffenburgh Elementary, and co-chairs the stewardship committee at First United Methodist Church.

She and her family frequently volunteer their time with Faith Family Hospitality to help the area's homeless population and donate to support the Boys and Girls Clubs of Larimer County, WomenGive and CSU.

"I believe through education and opportunity, we will ensure that Fort Collins and Northern Colorado remain a vibrant and connected community," she said.

And through the efforts of Semester at Sea, Brickner hopes that connection extends around the world.

## Katherine Brooks

Associate general counsel  
University  
of Colorado Health



The quest for health drives Katherine Brooks.

"I love being physically active," Brooks said. "I have played tennis since grade school. I run and lift weights four times per week. Being physically active and enjoying the beautiful state we live in is a privilege we should all take advantage of."

As associate general counsel for University of Colorado Health, Brooks makes sure health care is delivered by the book.

"In this position, I serve as legal counsel for the system's hospitals, physicians group and affiliated entities on health-care law and business-law matters," she said.

Not that her experience in health care hasn't been hands-on. "Prior to serving as counsel to a hospital," she said, "I worked as a volunteer in an emergency department and cardiac rehab, as an employee in an adult day-care program, in an administrative role in a medical-surgical and pediatric unit, as a contract coordinator and compliance officer." Those roles, she said, have helped her "see the issues and solutions from a perspective outside of the legal point of view."

Outside her office, Brooks is a board member for BASE Camp, which provides affordable, accessible and safe year-round child care and enrichment services in Larimer County. She volunteers at her child's elementary school in the Poudre district.

She also is a member of WomenGive and donates annually to the Women's Foundation of Colorado and Book Trust.

## Tobias Clary

Partner  
Soukup, Bush  
and Associates PC



Toby Clary admits he's obsessed with road cycling, and even designed his bicycle in green and gold as a tribute to his alma mater, Colorado State University.

Just as he and his bike steadily climb hills on a road course, Clary steadily climbed the ladder at Soukup, Bush and Associates in Fort Collins, starting in 2007 as an associate and working his way up to shareholder in 2014.

Clary has earned designations as a certified public accountant and certified valuation analyst.

"My role in the organization is to provide tax and business advisory services to small and mid-sized businesses in the Northern Colorado region," he said. "In order to become a shareholder in the firm, I had to demonstrate a high level of acumen in public accounting as well as be able to generate and manage a significant book of business."

"In addition to serving my clients, I am in charge of our firm's professional education, as well as being a mentor for the more-junior staff in the office."

An alumni of Leadership Fort Collins, Clary currently is president of the northern chapter of the Colorado Society of CPAs and is a trustee for its education foundation, which to date has distributed more than \$2 million to local nonprofits.

His community service in Northern Colorado began at CSU, where he was a tutor through Partners Mentoring Youth. After graduation, he became a senior partner for the organization.

Clary also has been a member of Northern Colorado United for Youth since 2010.



**Nathan Sloan, FIC**  
Financial Associate

Congratulations Nate  
on your “40 under Forty” honor!

*Connecting faith & finances for good.®*

Insurance products issued or offered by Thrivent Financial, the marketing name for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Appleton, WI. Not all products are available in all states. Securities and investment advisory services are offered through Thrivent Investment Management Inc., 625 Fourth Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55415, a FINRA and SIPC member and a wholly owned subsidiary of Thrivent. Thrivent Financial representatives are registered representatives of Thrivent Investment Management Inc. They are also licensed insurance agents/producers of Thrivent. For additional important information, visit [Thrivent.com/disclosures](http://Thrivent.com/disclosures).

1623925-102016

# LOOK FOR THE SEAL.



[bbb.org](http://bbb.org)



Congratulations to the  
40 Under Forty Leaders  
Honor Roll who are  
shaping the future of  
Northern Colorado.

We applaud your success  
and commitment to  
our community.

[www.eksh.com](http://www.eksh.com)

**EKS&H**  
AUDIT | TAX | CONSULTING

## Greta Cornett

Talent buyer/marketing  
Bohemian Foundation



For jazz trumpeter Greta Cornett, a self-described “verifiable band geek,” music is a driving force.

“I listen to and love most everything, as long as it’s genuine,” she said. “I get most of my inspiration from musicians who have no fear — or maybe they do have fear, but they put it all out there because they have to in order to survive. I love that kind of passion.”

It shows in her performances with local bands, as well as work behind the scenes and promotion of local artists as a talent buyer and marketer for the Fort Collins-based Bohemian Foundation.

She combines performance, advocacy, organization and education into one melodious job.

Cornett is co-founder and president of the nonprofit Fort Collins Music Association, which provides education, support and networking opportunities for the Northern Colorado music scene. She also organizes FoCoMX, the annual Fort Collins Music Experience, a festival she created in 2009, is a contract worker for Bohemian Nights at NewWestFest, and manages to squeeze in some freelance music writing as well as volunteering at KRFC-FM 88.9, where she has booked, scheduled and hosted bands for the station’s “Live at Lunch” program. She also has worked with KCSU-FM 90.5.

“We have been able to showcase the wide range of talent that lives in Fort Collins on a national platform,” she said, “and have worked tirelessly to keep a solid foundation under our local musicians and do our best to keep cultivating new talent and making Fort Collins a musical destination.”

## Stephanie Davis

Founder  
Albarelo LLC



Stephanie Davis offers a taste of the good life.

She founded Albarello LLC in 2014, a Fort Collins-based luxury product manufacturer focused on the gourmet food and wine lifestyle. The brand develops unscented, stylish skin-care products and home accessories.

She also co-founded the weekly Wine Two Five podcast and serves as its co-host and executive director.

Both ventures benefit from Davis’ networking skills, salesmanship, persistence and creativity.

Before launching the businesses, she worked as a clinical pharmacist for University of Colorado Health. She learned and developed business acumen on that job by becoming proficient in accounting, marketing, supply-chain management, merchandising, manufacturing and leadership skills. She also was one of the lead oncology pharmacists who helped develop the pharmacy oncology services that support Loveland, Greeley and Fort Collins.

As a wine professional, Davis has earned titles including certified sommelier, French wine scholar and certified wine educator.

Over the past seven years, she has facilitated events for nonprofits including the Food Bank for Larimer County, Disabled Resource Services for Larimer and Jackson Counties, and My Team Triumph, and serves on the membership committee for WomenGive.

Davis uses her time, dollars and insight to elevate nonprofit event experiences, including the Taste of Fort Collins, Corporate Food Fight and Wine Fest. She also supports NoCo Unify, United Way of Larimer County, Junior League of Fort Collins, Community Foundation of Northern Colorado and Success Summit. She is a founding supporter of the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery. Her charitable contributions were recognized by the Bohemian Foundation’s Give 10 program.

## Blas Estrada

Broker associate/partner  
The Group Inc. Real Estate



“Working for The Group Inc. as a Realtor has changed my life,” said Blas Estrada. “I’m in an industry I love, helping people and giving back to my community. What more is there?”

Since joining The Group in 2014, Estrada has doubled his sales volume and gross commission income every year. “As an independent contractor, I have utilized the resources at The Group to grow my business from nothing to a multi-million-dollar sales volume company.

“I serve a purpose within the community that utilizes my unique skill sets of networking, professionalism, relationship-based mindset and real-estate knowledge, assisting clients with what may be their largest cash transaction.

“I have personally helped over 75 clients successfully achieve their real-estate goals,” he said, “ensuring client understanding through the teaching of real-estate principles and practices and providing quality standards to meet client needs for services.”

Estrada is a board member of Group Gives, which grants thousands of dollars to a multitude of nonprofits that provide for housing needs in the area. He co-chairs United for Thompson, a committee that promotes initiatives for the Thompson R2-J School District.

He serves on the steering committee of STIR, a young professionals’ networking group, and the Loveland Chamber of Commerce’s legislative affairs committee, and is a member of Loveland Sertoma and Foundations Church. He has been a TedX Front Range presenter on the subject of creative potential.

Estrada also was a family and youth-transition facilitator at Matthews House in Fort Collins and was executive director and founder of Generation Prosper.

## Lindsay Ex

Climate program manager  
City of Fort Collins



Piecing together the right strategies to help Fort Collins achieve its Road to 2020 climate goals is just part of the puzzle that is the life of Lindsay Ex. There’s also raising twin 16-month-old daughters alongside her husband, and other service projects.

As the city’s climate program manager, she leads a team working on the city’s efforts around community resiliency, green building and municipal sustainability. She also leads 70 staff members and almost 50 citizens who identify pragmatic and cost-effective solutions.

Within six years, Ex rose from a part-time environmental planner to leading one of Fort Collins’ largest interdisciplinary teams. Ex also is project manager for Nature in the City, ensuring that all Fort Collins residents have access to nature within a 10-minute walk and developing urban agriculture.

“I am a genuine connector. I believe relationships and outcomes are better when we create solutions together,” she said. As a “pragmatic visionary,” she added, “I am constantly seeking ways to achieve our goals while leveraging existing efforts.” Another key, she said, is listening to the community.

Ex also is treasurer of the Sustainable Living Association and on the steering committee of Urban Lab. Raised by a single mother, Ex now donates to Women Gives, which provides single moms with resources to achieve their academic goals.

“My husband and I are members of several local organizations,” she said, “and, outside of the region, we sponsor a woman each year in Kenya to ensure she is able to get a high school education.”

## Neil Fisher

Co-founder/head brewer  
WeldWerks Brewing Co.



Neil Fisher is realizing a vision that finally has come to a head.

"Brewing beer professionally was a long-time dream of mine," he said, "and WeldWerks is the culmination of that dream."

Earning USA Today's recognition as best new brewery in the country was worth toasting as well.

As owner and head brewer of WeldWerks Brewing Co. in Greeley, Fisher is no stranger to awards. His brews have won six medals at competitions in the past two years, including at the Denver International Beer Competition, U.S. Open Beer Competition and Great American Beer Festival in 2015 and the 2016 World Beer Cup.

"Before opening WeldWerks (in February 2015), I was a homebrew hobbyist, brewing beer in my garage," Fisher said. "With the help of my business partner Colin Jones, that dream became a reality after we managed to complete the business plan, secure investors and financing, identify, lease and renovate a building in downtown Greeley and order, install and commission the brewing equipment in less than a year."

The brewery has produced more than 1,500 barrels of beer so far in 2016 and logged more than 300 percent growth year over year in the face of mounting competition.

"To date, we have not turned down a single donation request from any nonprofit organization from within Weld County," Fisher said, "and we hope to maintain that policy for years to come."

Coming soon: the WeldWerks Piloting Change program, in which the sale of special, limited-release beers will benefit partner organizations.

## Levi Gain

Co-owner  
Doug's Carpet  
and Upholstery Care



When Levi Gain joined Doug's Carpet and Upholstery Care in Greeley eight years ago, he knew things needed to be cleaned up. He eventually got his chance and made the most of it.

"Having grown up in the business, I've always had a vision of what I wanted it to look like," Gain said. "I was a long-time employee of the company before becoming a co-owner."

Once that milestone was achieved, it was time for a clean sweep.

"When I started taking over a business that is 30-plus years old, it was really important to me to keep our foundation and core values while pushing the company to grow and stay on the leading edge of the industry," Gain said.

"I did a full rebranding of the business in 2013, which included everything from logo, uniforms and print materials to website and search-engine optimization," he said. "My goal has always been to have the professional image of a well-branded franchise with the quality, customer service and community-oriented mindset of the hometown boys."

The business ranked first in the Greeley Tribune's annual "best of" rankings in 2015 and 2016, and Gain was nominated for Greeley's young entrepreneur of the year in 2014.

The business contributes to organizations including A Woman's Place, Greeley Rotary, Greeley Young Professionals and Habitat for Humanity.

"I have a passion for personal and professional growth," Gain said, "and truly believe that the more opportunities we can give people to follow their passions, the better off our communities will be."

## Stephanie Gausch

Director of development  
Weld Food Bank



"One in five children in Weld County do not know where their next meal is coming from," said Stephanie Gausch. "We help feed these kids through our Backpack Program."

Gausch, development director for Weld Food Bank, is responsible for educating the community about the scale and scope of hunger. She works in partnership with businesses, grant funders, community organizations, board members and individuals to raise \$2.1 million annually in support of the fight against hunger in Weld County.

A summa cum laude graduate of Regis University with a master's degree in nonprofit management, Gausch has overseen the three most successful fundraising years in the food bank's history, with a growing and more diverse number of individual donors and corporate partners.

She combined positions in the Development Department to eliminate excess personnel costs while growing the volunteer hours donated to 47,000 annually, helping to keep administrative and fundraising costs to only 1.5 percent of the food bank's \$2.8 million budget. That efficiency earned the organization a 100 percent rating from Charity Navigator, placing it among the top 10 percent of charities in the nation.

She serves as president of the Greeley Kiwanis Club and has for the past five years tutored students at Madison Elementary School to increase their reading skills. She advises the Builder's Club at Heath Middle School, where for four years she worked every other week with students to create and implement service projects, and volunteered for a year with the Greeley Central High School student recovery program.

## Logan Hale

Founder/creative director  
V3 Media Marketing



Stepping up from the UCLA film school to found his own video-production and digital-marketing company seems only natural for Logan Hale.

"I've been producing images and stories all my life," he said, "and it's what I love to do."

His business, Fort Collins-based V3 Media Marketing, employs three full-time staffers and numerous freelancers.

"As an owner, I strive to invest quality time and money into hiring professionals," he said, "helping to support talented people who have dedicated themselves to video production and filmmaking, which are hard jobs to come by in Northern Colorado."

V3 was named best video production company in Colorado for 2016 by ColoradoBiz, and Hale is president-elect of the American Marketing Association of Colorado.

Hale participates in technology and startup events including 1 Million Cups, Fort Collins Startup Week and programs through the Innosphere tech incubator.

Community service is important to Hale as well.

"I was born a giver and have always found ways to give — through my church, through my career as a video producer and event organizer, and as a volunteer for various charities and industry organizations," he said.

He has volunteered with Project Smile, using his video and storytelling skills to communicate its message and raise funds to help provide dental services for children in need.

Hale also has volunteered with Northern Colorado Manufacturing, the NoCo Maker Faire and the Colorado State University Office of Engagement to produce videos that encourage young students to learn more about manufacturing and ways they can make it a future career.

## Robert J. Herrera

Senior business litigation attorney

Coan, Payton and Payne LLC



As a senior business litigation attorney for Greeley-based Coan, Payton and Payne LLC, Robert Herrera's work includes cultivating new client relationships with individuals and organizations that find themselves in need of an experienced litigator.

"I have had the distinct pleasure of representing some of our finest community members and businesses in all aspects of real estate, employment and business litigation," Herrera said. "I have impacted my organization by bringing experience in areas previously unserved at 'CP2,' including employment litigation."

His bar memberships include federal district court, tax court and bankruptcy court.

And as a business law professor at the University of Northern Colorado for the past 10 years, he routinely has received exceptional reviews from peers and students alike. In 2008, he received the Kimberly Hayes Outstanding Professor award.

Outside of the courtroom and classroom, Herrera volunteers his time with Junior Achievement, the Better Business Bureau, Weld County Legal Services' "Ask an Attorney" clinics and small-claims mediation.

"In my role with Junior Achievement," Herrera said, "I am placed with a primary-school teacher in the District 6 program and teach a five-week course to second graders about needs versus wants, community involvement and entrepreneurship."

"For many of the young students, it is their first experience with a lawyer," he said, "so I am able to bring them a new perspective on how they analyze situations and issues in their lives."

"I find all of my volunteer opportunities to be very rewarding and, I believe, beneficial to the community at large."

## Landon Hoover

President

Hartford Homes



"Archery elk hunting is something I get to do with my dad," said Landon Hoover. "Much like our business, it is something I get to learn from him and share as a passion."

As president of Timnath-based Hartford Homes, he considers his most important accomplishment "continuing and growing the legacy ... as a second-generation company and preparing it for generations of future success."

Hoover said "performance" at Hartford Homes "is likely defined differently than most other companies. Our objective is not merely hitting quarterly targets or industry benchmarks, but rather building an enduring, great company." That goal, he said, "requires performance today, and equally important, the development of and investment in strategy, culture, infrastructure and human capital that provide for a sustainable future."

He joined the company in 2012 as vice president for land development, he said, "when this enduring success was in jeopardy. The economic downturn crippled my father's business. While we survived, our vitality was significantly damaged. Since joining, I have rebuilt the company, made the company more resilient and established Hartford Homes as the leading homebuilder and developer in Northern Colorado."

Revitalizing a struggling business was nothing new for Hoover. At the University of Texas, he co-founded an organization that educates and consults struggling small businesses in Austin. While in Dallas, he and his wife became partners in a social-venture fund that acted similar to a venture-capital firm, investing in and consulting for nonprofit organizations.

Hoover is an active member of NoCo Unify, which raises funds for child-focused nonprofits.

## Brady Hull

Sales/operations manager

KFKA-AM 1310



Brady Hull loves sports and always wanted to talk about it on radio. Now he does — as host of "Agfinity Sports Day" from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. weekdays on KFKA-AM 1310 in Greeley.

Starting as an intern at the venerable news-talk station eight years ago, Hull has risen to run it — as sales and operations manager — and gets to live out his passion for sports by creating live game broadcasts and ticket giveaways.

Hull also hosts a Northern Colorado Preps Preview show before every high school football or basketball broadcast, and launched a program based on the annual Greeley Stampede.

"My ability to broadcast while having the foresight to create sellable items makes me a rarity in the radio industry," he said. "Most stations have a sales manager and a programming director. I do both, meaning I must walk the line of how to gain advertising dollars while ensuring we have the best content for the listeners."

As operations manager, he manages on-air talent, handles marketing, develops programming and creates promotions and giveaways. As sales manager, he built a sales force from the ground up and develops campaigns to lure advertisers.

"Under my leadership, KFKA's morning program made huge strides in the community and received runner-up from the Colorado Broadcasters Association for best news-talk program," Hull said. "My own program received honorable mention in the Tribune's Best of Greeley this year."

Hull partnered on live remotes and show segments with United Way, Weld Food Bank and School District 6.

## Miles Kailburn

Founder/director of technology

Old Town Media



Riding his motorcycle "gives me a sense of freedom," said Miles Kailburn. "It takes a short drive or a commute and makes something of an experience of it."

At the end of that commute is Old Town Media in Fort Collins, which he founded, serves as director of technology, and has built a team of eight "passionate and driven people whom I have the pleasure of working with each day."

"Through my role at Old Town Media," he said, "I feel privileged to have the unique opportunity to cultivate an environment that attracts top talent and great people."

His company builds approximately 100 websites a year, manages 65 active marketing clients and boasts year-over-year growth of at least 45 percent every year for the past nine years.

"Community service has been a large part of my life," Kailburn said. He and his wife are members of a local Rotary group, through which he volunteers time and talent to an annual peach festival and sale, a Greens Fore Giving golf event. He sits on his club's public-relations and district-conference committees, and received the club's 2015 Charlie Peterson Service Above Self award for his contributions to both the club and local causes.

Once a month, Kailburn participates in the Meals on Wheels program and volunteers at the Larimer County Food Bank. Through Old Town Media, he has contributed work to more than 15 local nonprofit organizations, including WomenGive, Project Smile, Realities for Children, Foothills Gateway and the American Cancer Society.





**REVE**  
by Miramont

1981 Jessup Dr.  
revefitness.com  
970-480-0880

**fu-sion** *n.*  
the combination of separate fitness disciplines to create a hybrid workout unlike anything else.

Find your healthy obsession

**Congratulations Nick Roe!**  
**2016 BizWest's 40 Under Forty Honoree**

**Flood and Peterson**

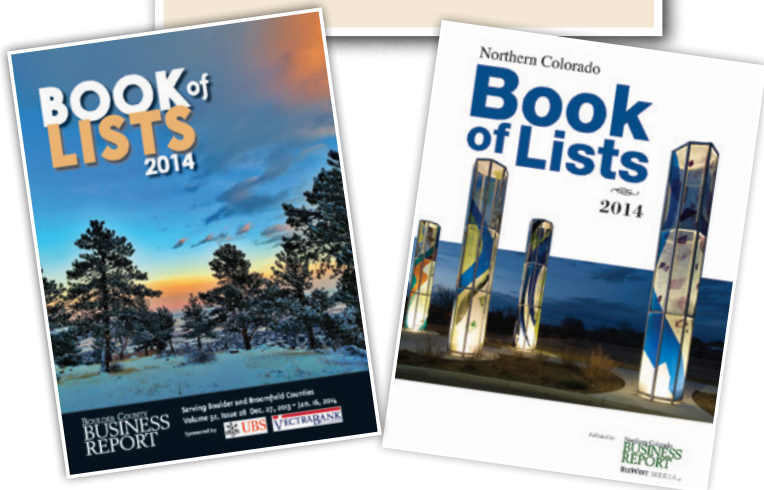
Denver | Greeley | Fort Collins  
[www.floodpeterson.com](http://www.floodpeterson.com)

Commercial Insurance | Surety | Employee Benefits | Home - Life - Auto

## Two great markets – combined into one great Book of Lists.

### The Ultimate Business Tool

- Multitude of lists.
- Every important industry.
- Thousands of companies.
- All ranked by size.
- Addresses.
- Phone numbers.
- Faxes.
- Web sites.
- Revenues.
- Employment numbers.
- Key contacts.
- Products and services ...



Available now in print, online and digitally.

# BizWest

BOULDER VALLEY • NORTHERN COLORADO  
[www.BIZWEST.com](http://www.BIZWEST.com)

**Boulder Valley** ■ 1790 30th St., Suite 300, Boulder, CO 80301  
**Northern Colorado** ■ P.O. Box 270810, Fort Collins, CO 80525  
Subscribe: 303-630-1953 ■ 970-232-3143 ■ [www.bizwest.com](http://www.bizwest.com) Click subscribe link.

@bizwestmedia /bizwestmedia /groups/bizwestmedia-1743627/about



Congratulations to  
Class of 2016  
40 Under Forty  
Honorees!

## 4 Locations To Serve You

 <b>Fort Collins</b> (970) 226-0200 3710 Mitchel Dr Fort Collins, Co 80525	 <b>Loveland</b> (970) 825-1111 1300 E Eisenhower Loveland, Co 80537	 <b>Downtown FoCo</b> (970) 482-9121 111 W Olive St Fort Collins, Co 80524	 <b>Boulder</b> (303) 494-5678 2935 Baseline Rd Boulder, Co 80303
--	--	--	---

## Inspiring a Legacy of Generosity through Charitable Giving

**Community Foundation**  
of NORTHERN COLORADO  
and Community Foundation Trust

The Community Foundation of Northern Colorado is a nonprofit, public foundation working to build permanent endowments for the benefit of charitable causes and organizations in Northern Colorado.

No other organization in Northern Colorado has such a dynamic network of relationships with **donors, nonprofits, and community leaders**, bringing people and resources together around important local issues.

**428 individual charitable funds**  
**\$98 million in assets**  
**50 nonprofit endowment partners**

4745 Wheaton Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80525  
(970) 224-3462 | [www.NoCoFoundation.org](http://www.NoCoFoundation.org)

## Todd Karl

Vice president and commercial relationship manager

US Bank



Todd Karl proudly displays a medal he won for finishing “the first full marathon I’d ever completed,” he said, because “I think that it demonstrates that if one is willing to work hard enough, anything is possible — even a fat guy like me running a marathon.”

Karl’s more lucrative method of exercise, however, has been climbing corporate ladders. Starting in the banking industry as a teller in Colorado Springs, he now manages a \$25 million portfolio in two states as vice president and commercial relationship manager for US Bank in Fort Collins.

“As I’ve grown with various jobs and responsibilities, I’ve frequently looked back to that younger me, taking deposits on Saturday mornings,” Karl said. “I have more gray hair now, but I still work like a dog, just like I did then.”

He said he takes pride in working on customer relationships instead of being the “product-pushing type of banker.”

Karl serves as board treasurer for A Kid’s Place in Greeley and helps steer the Leadership Northern Colorado committee. Through his Rotary Club membership, he has volunteered in ways that have directly benefited nonprofit organizations such as Child Safe and the Alliance for Suicide Prevention of Larimer County. He has taught Junior Achievement classes for youths from second grade through high school, taught a personal-finance class for at-risk high school seniors, worked with a food bank and a coat drive, and assisted in mitigation work in the flood- and fire-ravaged Waldo Canyon area west of Manitou Springs.

## Amanda King

Communications and public involvement director

City of Fort Collins



For Amanda King, snowshoes represent her profession as well as her pleasure.

“I love exploring the mountains of Colorado,” she said. “Similar to some of my favorite communication tools, these snowshoes allow me to tread lightly, find new paths and enjoy the adventure.”

As communications and public involvement director for the city of Fort Collins, King sometimes has to tread lightly, but she’s certainly enjoying the adventure.

She leads a team of professionals who assist various city departments with their communication and public-engagement needs. They produce news releases, Web pages, special events, videos, cable-TV programs, graphic design, advertising campaigns and social media. King’s office also serves as the main hub for all internal communications within the city and assists with dispensing emergency information.

Before starting her job with the city, King was marketing and branding manager for Odell Brewing Co.

A Colorado State University alum and graduate of Leadership Fort Collins, King serves on the Visit Fort Collins board and CSU’s stadium advisory committee.

A special mission for King has been serving on the board of WomenGive. “As a former single mother, I have been incredibly moved by the mission of this group,” she said.

“This is an amazing place to live, work and play. Giving back will help it stay that way for our future generations,” King said. “I would like to see this region continue to thrive as it grows. I want to see people caring for one another, sharing ideas and giving back. That’s what community is all about.”

## Stacey McBride

Director of marketing and sales

New Century Software



Stacey McBride runs to think, plan, generate creative ideas and find balance.

All that comes in handy at her job as marketing and sales director for New Century Software, a privately held small business that provides GIS-enabled software and consulting services to oil and gas pipeline operators. Her role there is to coordinate business-development efforts and ensure continuity in brand messaging and industry position.

“Prior to coming on, I had no experience in either energy or GIS (geographic information systems),” McBride said, “so when I started as a marketing manager, I had a lot to learn.”

And learn a lot she did; she now manages a team of five sales and marketing staffers and is a member of the executive management team.

McBride and her staff redesigned the company’s website, polished its branding, increased event attendance and launched a second division of the company as a public-facing entity.

Because she had grown up serving as a “candy striper” and volunteer swim instructor, and had worked as a Big Brothers/Big Sisters group mentor while in college, community service came naturally to McBride. She has volunteered for the Junior League of Fort Collins, WomenGive, Athletes in Tandem and her church.

Through the Junior League, she served primarily on marketing and fundraising committees that funded programs including the Career Closet, which serves women in need; Imagination Series, which exposes children to the arts; and the Hunger Initiative to provide healthy snacks to children in the Poudre School District.

## Dan Murphy

Northern Colorado director

Concerned Veterans for America



With military service in Iraq and Afghanistan — including five years in an infantry battalion reconnaissance platoon — and work on several political campaigns under his belt, Dan Murphy finds it only natural to help other veterans be part of the process of addressing issues important to them.

In his role as Northern Colorado director of Concerned Veterans for America, Murphy sees volunteer recruitment as his most-useful skill.

“Prior to my coming on board, CVA didn’t have much of a presence in Northern Colorado,” he said. “Since January, we have grown to a core group of about 30 volunteers, and we hold several events a month in Larimer and Weld counties. My challenge in this role has been in learning new ways to reach individuals who normally might not be interested in being involved in the legislative process.”

He said he helps “veterans, their family members and caring citizens better understand the issues that affect them and see that there are ways we can work together to improve them.”

Murphy also serves on the board of directors of Operation MCP (Making Careers Possible), which teaches veterans and service members skills such as resume writing and interviewing. Last year, as part of U.S. Rep. Ken Buck’s selection board, he interviewed high school seniors for service-academy nominations.

“Over the course of employment with several issues-based nonprofit organizations, I have recruited approximately 800 unique volunteers.”

An honorary Kentucky Colonel, Murphy also was just elected to the board of Northern Colorado Crime Stoppers.

## Joshua Olhava

Senior planner  
Town of Windsor



Josh Olhava has a lot of passions.

He has a passion for his alma mater, Iowa State University, and surely plans to outfit the twins he and his wife are expecting this fall in ISU Cyclones garb.

He has a passion for being active, with a life full of hiking and other exercise.

And as senior planner for the town of Windsor, he has a passion for enhancing its business-friendly atmosphere with a balance of residential, commercial and industrial projects.

"I problem solve with local developers and consultants by thinking outside of the box to ensure their projects and proposals meet local guidelines," Olhava said. "I also work with local residents and businesses by guiding them through various town processes and requirements."

In Windsor, he has received many PRIDE (Producing results, Responsibility, Integrity, Dedication and Exceptional service) nominations and recognitions. He has been planning project manager for high-profile projects such as Cargill Metals, Aims Community College Public Safety Institute, Columbine Commons, the Summit Entertainment Center and two expansions for Windsor Charter Academy.

Holding an American Institute of Certified Planners designation, Olhava has served on many professional committees, including some for the American Planning Association's Colorado chapter, History Colorado, Greeley Area Habitat for Humanity and Weld County School District RE-4.

He is a member of Christ Community Church, which he said offers many opportunities for his family and him to be involved in community service and through charitable giving.

"I continually look for ways to challenge myself," Olhava said, "personally and professionally."

## Jonathan O'Neil

Owner/partner  
Encompass Technologies



Fort Collins-based Encompass Technologies developed and launched the first Web-based route-accounting software for beverage wholesalers as well as deploying the industry's first mobile-platform iOS and Android application for beverage sales and delivery.

It all can be accessed from a standard smartphone.

Jonathan O'Neil, Encompass' owner and partner, spends most of his time overseeing the company's U.S. and Chinese development teams as they innovate and improve the software.

"Each customer has different needs and uses different features," O'Neil said, "so we are always revising the software to create a feature-rich, seamlessly integrated, intuitive and user-friendly software that can be highly customizable."

When Encompass began, he said, "I was primarily working on the actual development of the software. Now that we have grown, I can focus more on overseeing and mentoring our development teams. This allows me to groom our current crop of software engineers, not only for best-practices identification but also for information sharing."

One way O'Neil and the company give back to the community is through internship programs that give the next generation of software developers practical applications of the concepts they're learning.

O'Neil's mentorship extends outside the company as well. Through Northern Colorado Renaissance Executive Forums, he provides advice to other entrepreneurs while he learns from local executives. The company sponsors a month during the summer for its Chinese employees to visit Fort Collins and hosts English classes for anyone who wants to participate. Encompass also sponsored a trip to China for a group of Colorado teachers for cultural exchange.

## Jeremy Podany

Executive director, career and corporate services  
Colorado State University



Jeremy Podany loves — and lives — technology innovation.

Podany leads two offices at Colorado State University: The Career Center and Ascend, which coordinate to serve the holistic needs of students, alumni and outside organizations seeking services related to career education, hiring, and organizational and employee development.

Three years ago, Podany led the launch of CSU's Ascend initiative, the first of its kind in the nation to provide concierge service that leverages the expertise and intellectual capital of an entire university system to bring customized services to businesses in Colorado and around the nation.

Combined, these offices served more than 800 organizations in person last year and helped 1,500 hire CSU students or alumni.

"I believe in having an innovation mindset every day," Podany said. "In recent years, this mindset has yielded winning two West Coast innovation awards ... which spawned two new technology products built at CSU and then transferred into the marketplace."

The products are The Fairs App, a job fair and events app of which Podany is co-founder and chief executive, and Career Tools, a personalized career-resource database run out of CSU Ventures, of which Podany is the inventor and a managing partner.

Podany and his family participate in charitable activities such as running in the Liberty 5K to combat human trafficking, stuffing backpacks for Lincoln Middle School children, or providing resources and encouragement to the Fort Collins Rescue Mission. He also facilitates six- and 12-week leadership growth groups for community leaders who attend his church.

## Sarah Rice

Community relations coordinator  
Kaiser Permanente



A bachelor's degree from the University of Phoenix represents a milestone in a life-defining journey for Sarah Rice.

"It took me quite a while to figure out what I wanted to be when I grew up," she said, "and when I moved to Fort Collins in 2009, I found my passion for nonprofit work serving the community."

Within a year, she was going to school full-time and working full time. "It took me 3 1/2 years," she said, "but I finally did it. I graduated!"

Today, as community relations coordinator for Kaiser Permanente, she helps steer employees toward volunteerism, including a partnership with a wildlands-restoration group and in-house projects at each medical office on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

A graduate of Leadership Fort Collins and Leadership Loveland, Rice joined the board of the Fort Collins-based Kitchen Community and sits on the steering and leadership committees of United Way of Larimer County. She raised more than \$4.5 million for that United Way chapter and its community partners and provided emergency support during the 2012 High Park Fire and 2013 flood.

Rice also helped develop a successful ballot initiative in Wellington to approve space for a four-acre community park, and co-chairs the town's parks advisory board. Since the board formed, she said, "we've built two parks, opened up fishing ponds, were awarded Playful City USA, hosted community build day and play days, are currently working to improve the trail system, renovating the downtown park, and more. How fun is that?"

## Nick Roe

Sales executive  
Flood and Peterson



For Nick Roe, it's all about teamwork.

When he's not coaching sons Jack and Joe in their athletic endeavors, Roe applies his more than 15 years of business-to-business experience to sales for the Fort Collins-based Flood and Peterson insurance firm.

As a property and casualty sales executive there, he said, "my focus is development and management of strategic plans designed to help organizations reduce their total cost of risk. I engage businesses in thoughtful dialogue focused on a variety of aspects necessary to help implement a successful safety culture."

He led his team in organizing and developing an annual symposium for more than 500 of Flood and Peterson's current and prospective clients.

He also has been an account development manager for Enterprise Fleet Management, a division of Enterprise Rent-a-Car, where he repeatedly was recognized for sales and account management.

Roe graduated this year from Leadership Northern Colorado and is a board member of the Loveland Chamber of Commerce and the Community Foundation's Loveland chapter.

Roe coaches in youth soccer, basketball and flag football leagues in Loveland — using some of the same team-building skills he brings to the workplace. "I am instilling hard work, teamwork, perseverance and to have fun," he said, "which are all qualities that will suit them well in years to come."

He also volunteers for local charities and donates to nonprofits including United Way and Partners Mentoring Youth.

"I have no problem getting my hands dirty," he said, "and volunteering my time and energy to help these organizations accomplish their goals."

## Ryan Rohman

Chief nursing officer  
Medical Center  
of the Rockies



Fresh from "one of my best life experiences" on a medical mission to Brazil, registered nurse Ryan Rhoman says he "can't wait to do more."

The trip was as part of an International Medical Mission volunteer team that provided medical relief and primary-care clinics for villages along the Amazon River.

Until his next trip, however, he has his hands full as vice president and chief nursing officer at the 166-bed, full-service Medical Center of the Rockies in Loveland. He ascended to that post in April 2015 after directing perioperative services at MCR and at Poudre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins.

Rhoman began his health-care career in 2003 as a nurse in PVH's surgical unit. "Early on in my career, I became very involved in numerous initiatives such as our practice council, evidence-based practice and bariatric surgery," he said. "Gradually, with these experiences along with my master's of science in nursing in health-care administration, I continued to move into leadership roles and quickly realized that those roles were where I felt challenged and where I excelled."

He is a Nurse Manager Fellow for the American Organization of Nursing Executives, an active board member of the Colorado Organization of Nurse Leaders and a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

Rhoman is a graduate of the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Leadership Fort Collins class. Through that program, he led a team project that helped raise funds and awareness for Mountain Crest Behavioral Health System in Fort Collins.

## Lindsey Rohrbaugh

Group and international sales  
Visit Fort Collins



A Colorado native with a great love for music, Lindsey Rohrbaugh sings the praises of Fort Collins.

As group and international sales manager for Visit Fort Collins, she works to increase the area's economic impact by seeking and developing working relationships with potential clients that host meetings and conferences, as well as international tour operators who might add the city to their itineraries.

"My career with Visit Fort Collins began in 2011 as director of partnership," she said. "Within my first year, I increased participation by 137 percent. To accomplish this, I implemented a relationship-centered approach of business that has been beneficial for my organization and continues to support local businesses through connecting the community, one business at a time."

A graduate of Leadership Fort Collins, Rohrbaugh also supports local arts and culture through Downtown Business Association and Bohemian Foundation events, has volunteered with Partners Mentoring Youth, and helped develop a vertical-garden project for elementary schools.

She has been involved with flood-relief projects through Serve 6.8 and helped organize and execute the Estes Park Winter Festival. She's looking forward to working with Muck Fest to benefit people with multiple sclerosis, helping promote positive body image through Girls on the Run, and the Miracle Ball, which benefits more than 200 children who are fighting cancer.

Volunteering "is definitely a part of my heart," Rohrbaugh said. "We are very blessed to live in a community with such philanthropic passion that it makes it easy to be a part of the change."

## Andrew Schneider

Founder and president  
Create Places



In an increasingly virtual workplace, why does Andrew Schneider still occasionally pass out Sharpies?

"Even in a digital world, sometimes the best way to bring people together and get things done is an old-fashioned table scrum," Schneider said. "Be creative. Get your vision down on paper. Move the world forward."

After 14 years away, Schneider moved back to Fort Collins in 2009 to "escape the saturated creative market of Los Angeles," he said. Filling his time with a lot of live music, art, culture and bicycling, he works on new and traditional media products with a focus on fostering community and fueling passion.

Schneider founded and leads Creative Places, an artist-organized economic and workforce-development nonprofit that provides support to increase arts-related employment in Northern Colorado.

"In the short span of two years, I have gone from creative entrepreneur with an interest in community building to a full-time evangelist for the power of arts, culture and creativity to serve the community's interests," Schneider said. His work has caught the attention of the state Office of Economic Development and International Trade and given him a seat at the Colorado Change Leader Institute.

Schneider also is a familiar presence around the studios of Fort Collins' KRFC-FM 88.9, where he has been a host and co-producer for "Live at Lunch" and enhanced the community radio station's social-media presence. He also has been an interactive media specialist for A-Train Marketing, an associate producer at Current TV and the co-founder and director of the Fort Collins Horror Film Festival.

# We're all business.

BizWest has more business news content and data than all of the Boulder Valley and Northern Colorado newspapers — combined.

**In print and online.**

## PrintPlus Membership

- Print and digital editions of each issue and special publication.
- Premium online access to BizWest.com, including archives.
- Free subscriptions to all BizWest newsletters.

**Just \$4.16/month**

## Unlimited Membership

- Everything included with our PrintPlus and these additional benefits:
- Full subscription to the BizWest DataStore.
- Two free tickets to the BizWest event of your choice.

**Just \$25/month**

**Subscribe today.**

Call or click | 303-630-1953 | 970-232-3143 | bizwest.com

# BizWest

The Business Journal of the Boulder Valley and Northern Colorado



WINNER OF 18 SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS AWARDS | 2016

## Michael Shirazi

Advisor  
Shirazi Benefits



Masoud Shirazi of Greeley-based Shirazi Benefits in Greeley won one of BizWest's 2015 Bravo! Entrepreneur awards, and Michael Shirazi is following his father's example.

They're "both working to carry on the legacy of a family business," Michael Shirazi said, "and I'm also trying to follow in my dad's footsteps in community involvement and recognition."

The younger Shirazi came to the business after also working in his family's real-estate investment company as well as Principal Financial Co. in Denver and two banks in Greeley, Cache Bank and Trust and First National Bank.

Since joining Shirazi Benefits in 2014, he has opened and manages a Fort Collins location while also expanding the Greeley client base and concentrating on client retention. He said he takes pride in growing the business in a new market at a much younger age than most of his peers "in an aging industry filled with confusion and uncertainty."

He serves with Northern Colorado United For Youth (NoCo Unify) and on the board of the Child Advocacy Center as well as supporting other organizations such as Child Safe and Neighbor to Neighbor.

"Being involved in and giving back to our community in Northern Colorado has been a pillar of our organization for the past 40 years, and has been a huge part of the success I have had while with Shirazi Benefits," he said. "I am a true believer that, if you work hard with honesty and integrity and help as many people as you can, success will follow."

## Nathan A. Sloan

Financial associate  
Thrivent Financial



"My family means everything to me," said Nate Sloan. "My wife, Laura, and I have four amazing children ages 6, 4, 2 and new.

"In my work as a financial adviser with Thrivent Financial, I am able to help many families like mine make wise financial decisions. Helping families be properly insured against the unexpected events in life and be prudently invested for the future is my professional passion. Spending time with my family in the mountains, at the beach or just at home around the dinner table is my personal passion."

Since joining Thrivent in Johnstown in 2012, Sloan has qualified as a Thrivent Peak Performer each year, ranking in the top fourth of the approximately 2,800 Thrivent financial advisers nationwide. In 2014, he was recognized as sixth in sales production for all Thrivent representatives nationwide in their first two years with the company.

For community service, Sloan serves as treasurer of a small nonprofit, Vision for the Children International, which focuses on orphan outreach and orphan prevention in eastern Europe.

"I am responsible for the organization's finances and for helping to ensure financial transparency and accountability to donors," Sloan said. "I am also a supporter of Habitat for Humanity. This summer, my Thrivent practice partnered with Habitat for Humanity of the St. Vrain Valley to repair an extremely dilapidated roof in Dacono. My team and I enjoyed removing an old tar roof and installing new shingles in 90-plus-degree heat."

He and his wife also volunteer at Grace Place in Berthoud.

## Tyler Smith

Chief sales  
and marketing officer  
Otter Products



Always connected and always "on." That's just part of the gig for Tyler Smith, chief sales and marketing officer for Fort Collins-based Otter Products. He figures that having a cell phone permanently attached to his ear is written in the job description.

"Yes, I do work for a technology accessory company, so phones are extremely important," he said, "but staying connected to my team, our customers, consumers and market trends are critical in this fast-paced consumer electronics industry."

"Working for a company that protects our technology is more than just a job to me because of the passion I have for our products," he said. "They allow people around the world and in every walk of life to opt into the lifestyle they choose to live without worrying about damaging their technology."

When Smith joined Otter Products as a national account manager in 2009, it had just closed a year that saw \$16 million in revenue; today, that annual revenue is closing in on \$1 billion. Smith was named one of Colorado's 10 Most Powerful Sales People in 2012 and Otter Products' Sales Person of the Year in 2010 and 2013.

Smith served as a judge when the OtterCares Foundation worked with Junior Achievement Colorado on a weeklong challenge for high school students to create a new OtterBox product. He also coaches youth sports in Windsor and volunteers on a fundraising committee to bring technology to Windsor School District RE-4 students through an annual event called the "Flip Flop Gala."

## Kate Spruiell

Director of  
community relations  
Ability Home Health Care



Kate Spruiell's business mission looks a whole lot like a pineapple.

"A pineapple is the universal symbol for prosperity," she said, "and my personal goal is to bring hospitality back into health care."

Spruiell, director of community relations for Ability Home Health Care in Fort Collins, acts as a resource for individuals and families as they navigate the decisions that surround arranging and paying for short- or long-term in-home nursing care, rehabilitation services and, in some cases, hospice care.

Spruiell described her industry as one full of "tough competitors, tight regulations and too often limited reimbursements," but added that rather than focusing on those challenges, "instead I focus on bringing the at-your-service hospitality I committed to my clients when I was working at the Hilton in Fort Collins."

Before coming to Ability in August 2015, she was director of sales and marketing at Interim HealthCare of Fort Collins and area marketing liaison at Sava Senior Care.

She said she works for "every patient and every family referred to me, whether my organization can meet their needs or not. Bringing hospitality to health care means being able to make people feel cared about and loved — and even smiled during their worst day — because they know I will be there to guide them through every decision along the way."

Spruiell is executive vice chair for the Elder Care Network, helps lead the Sharing the Care Campaign and serves on the boards of the Foundation on Aging and Northern Colorado Long-Term Acute Hospital.

## Ashley Stiles

Vice president  
for development  
McWhinney



"I have been an artist since a young age," said Ashley Stiles. "Having this creative outlet helps me find balance and brings an incredible amount of joy to my life."

She tries to be just as artful in her role as vice president for development at McWhinney, where her canvas is graced not just by buildings in a commercial project but also by "a sense of place."

"I find the opportunity, develop it into something tangible and then ensure that the project performs as intended — for McWhinney, tenants and the community," she said. "I have embraced the intangibles of creating community."

That sense of place "can't be measured in an initial proforma," she said, "but can be seen by the longevity of the project and the tenants that call it home."

Stiles received this year's McWhinney Taking Care of Business award, recognizing the development of 280,000 square feet of space in just 12 months. The 40 Under 40 recognition isn't her first award from BizWest; she was nominated in 2014 as a Northern Colorado Woman of Distinction.

At BizWest's Bravo! Entrepreneur awards this year, Wes Sargent of Guaranty Bank and Trust Co. asked, "Is this good business or will it get us into heaven?" Stiles' response: "Both, I hope. In real estate, you can't have one without the other."

Stiles is vice president of the Poudre School District Foundation board, and serves on the boards of the Northern Colorado Food Cluster and Colorado State University's Everitt Real Estate School.

## McShan Walker

Co-owner  
Elkins Distilling Co.



Spurred on by his sidekick, Ollie — a blue heeler-border collie mix with thousands of followers on his own Instagram account — McShan Walker has been part of starting what he calls a "crazy new venture" in Estes Park.

Walker, an Alabama native, partnered with Joe Elkins and Nathan Taylor to open Elkins Distilling Co., the first distillery in the mountain resort town that doesn't specialize in beer or wine.

"A little over two years ago, my business partners and I took after the wild idea of making whiskey in the Rocky Mountains," Walker said. "We worked with local officials to change laws, drastically renovated a vacant building where we could both sell and manufacture, and I moved 1,400 miles from home to become part of a small, history-rich community where we hoped to become a tax-paying business, employer and producer of a locally made product great for drinking and keepsaking."

Walker does it all at Elkins, as a founder, co-owner, bartender, human-resources director, sales and marketing manager, tour guide and janitor.

He has sold various things throughout his career, from commercial lawn mowers to industrial packaging for military weapons, but said his greatest achievements and rewards have come from small-business consultation — "helping friends and clients grow their own businesses and preparing myself for the dream-nightmare of starting my own."

The partners are in the process of launching story-telling nights at the distillery and offering their space for activities as diverse as Board of Realtors meetings, yoga practices and gatherings of elementary-school teachers.

## Ralph Will

Broker  
Cushman and Wakefield



Ralph Will focuses on helping clients acquire and sell commercial real-estate investments.

As a broker for Cushman and Wakefield in Fort Collins, Will also manages more than 25 commercial real-estate assets in the United States and Mexico.

"I am proud to be an active part of the highest-producing commercial brokerage firm in the Northern Colorado market in dollar volume and square footage brokered."

He came to Cushman and Wakefield in 2014 after seven years as president and managing broker at North American Real Estate Brokerage in Fort Collins and six as a public-policy consultant in Washington, D.C., where he lobbied for changes to the Dodd-Frank Financial Reform Act.

He was vice president of his family's business, MM Holdings Inc., which started in Northern Colorado and grew to become the largest privately owned pawn-shop chain in the United States, with more than 350 employees. In 2012, he was instrumental in selling the company for an industry record sum.

In the past three years, Will has given an average of 350 hours a year of his time in volunteer work for charitable organizations. He is the incoming president of NoCo Unify, formerly NoCo Active 20/30, and has chaired several of that organization's committees. He also has worked with Partners Mentoring Youth and serves on the board of Voices Carry Child Advocacy Center, an organization that serves more than 300 physically or sexually abused children a year, and is a third-year charitable-giving member of the Bohemian Foundation's Give 10 Emerging Leaders program.

## Erin Zimmermann

Community impact director  
United Way  
of Larimer County



Children's reading skills are a prime focus for Erin Zimmermann — at home as well as at work.

"As a mother of an 18-month-old, we do a lot of reading in our home," she said. "My son will pick out book after book to read together."

"Early childhood literacy is critical to ensure that children enter school ready to learn," she said.

In her professional role as community impact director for United Way of Larimer County, Zimmermann said, she has "helped bring the Colorado Reading Corps to our community to help foster the love of reading for other children" by writing and securing a \$417,220 AmeriCorps grant. In its first year, the program served 422 students — and 393 of them showed academic progress. It now operates in both the Thompson Valley and Estes Park school districts.

A Leadership Loveland graduate, Zimmermann was accepted this year as one of 30 participants in United Way Worldwide's fellowship program, a yearlong accelerated leadership experience that identifies, engages and develops a diverse group of top-performing mid-career professionals to build a pipeline of future leaders.

She has been involved in several community efforts, including Be Ready, a school-readiness program, and LEAP, an initiative focused on young children's emotional well-being.

"A mentor once told me that the key to success is finding something as a career that you would do even if you weren't getting paid to do it," Zimmermann said. "I feel fortunate that I get to give back to my community through my job."

# CANDLELIGHT

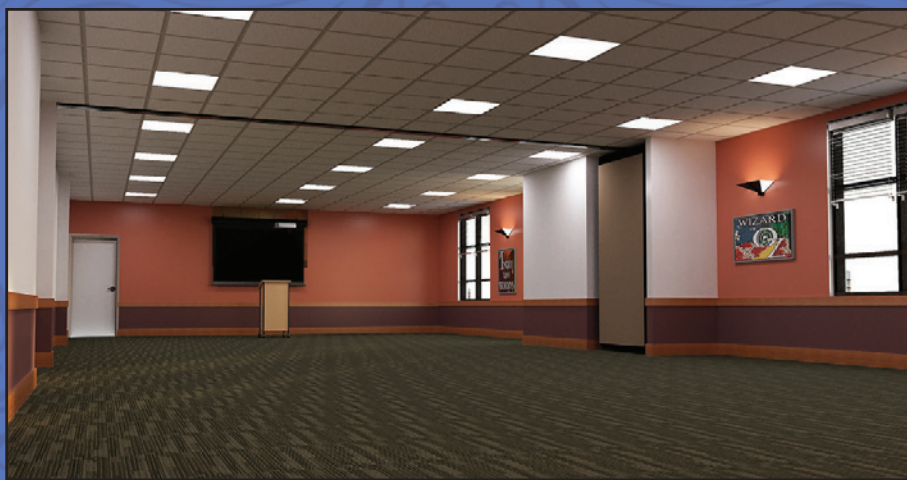
D I N N E R P L A Y H O U S E

## *Sophisticated Hospitality is Our Business!*

Business Meetings • Award Ceremonies • Company Parties • Training Conferences • Fundraisers & More

### *Now offering Northern Colorado's newest event center facilities!*

Featuring over 3,000 square feet of brand new, state-of-the-art meeting and conference space.



As Colorado's largest dinner theater venue, Candlelight provides everything you need to create a truly memorable experience for you and your guests.

- Leading edge lighting and sound equipment
- Professional sound and lighting technicians
- Projection services
- Ample free parking
- Nearby hotel partners
- In-house catering
- Entertainment options

**Schedule a tour today!**

Allison Clark, Events Manager

970.744.3748

[allison@coloradocandlelight.com](mailto:allison@coloradocandlelight.com)

4747 Marketplace Drive • Johnstown, CO 80534  
970.744.3747 • [www.ColoradoCandlelight.com](http://www.ColoradoCandlelight.com)

