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Pressing Forward

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Pressing forward

Paris Cleaners changes hands after 110 years of family ownership

BY HOLLY WHISLER

Nathan “Nate” Klughart is living the American dream. As of June 1, the 18-year-old entrepreneur is the new owner of Paris Cleaners, a business owned and operated by the Franke family for the past 110 years. Klughart, a native of Atlanta, Georgia, moved to Springfield about two years ago.

Evan as a child, Klughart had an inclination to become an entrepreneur: “When I was about 10 years old, I thought I could probably do a business by myself. My dad ran a karate school in Georgia and I helped out a lot,” Klughart said. He didn’t picture himself running a karate school, but it made him start thinking about finding the right opportunity.

The youngest of four siblings, Klughart says he was also inspired by his oldest brother, Charles Klughart, Jr., who owns a heating and air conditioning business. He originally thought he could see himself doing the same type of work, so he attended Midwest Technical Institute in Springfield and graduated from the HVAC program in May 2018. Klughart even job shadowed with his brother prior to graduation, but after working in the field for a little while and moving heavy pieces of machinery in the weather extremes of Illinois, Klughart decided this was not the career path for him.

So, back to square one, Klughart embarked upon a new job search. While scrolling through a job seeking website he found an opening at Paris Cleaners, 1013 E. Ash St., for a pants presser. He had never worked in the dry cleaning industry but lived nearby and thought it was worth a shot. He applied, was asked to interview and then, Klughart explained, “I had to talk with Mrs. Franke.”

Bette Franke, 96, is the matriarch of the Franke family, and along with her sons Shep and David, has been an integral part of the day-to-day operations of the family business for decades. Franke later shared with Klughart that during their initial conversation she knew right away that he was the one for the job. And so Klughart began his career at Paris Cleaners as a pants presser.

During his first week on the job, Klughart said, “I didn’t think I would find it appealing when I first started, but that first day — I absolutely adored it. I’ve always enjoyed helping people and making sure they’re happy. With this, I can make people happy in a big way, making sure they look nice and spiffy.”

Klughart caught Franke’s attention with his dedication, enthusiasm and work ethic. She said, “I watched him. He’s a serious young man — the kind of person that is the future of America.”

At the end of his first week as a pants presser, Franke told Klughart that she could see him running the dry cleaning business. Klughart said, “I went out to my car that day thinking she must be joking — does she say this to every new employee? The next day she bugged me about it, which made me think she must be serious.”

Franke was serious and encouraged him

to discuss such a big decision with his father, Charles Klughart, Sr. Klughart said, “My father was supportive and said to move ahead if it’s what I wanted to do and see where it goes.”

Klughart said he waited about a week before

disagreements home with them. That philosophy has served them well so far.

Klughart said, “In the mornings, he helps me get the cleaning out. I’m amazed Shep Franke was able to get that much cleaning out by him-



At 18 years old, Nathan Klughart has recently become the new owner of Paris Cleaners.

PHOTO/ FOTO GRAPHICS BY TIM KLASINSKI

giving Franke his answer. In that time, Shep Franke, 64, who has been in the business for over 30 years, started training Klughart on the entire dry cleaning process and how to use each piece of equipment. It was during this training period that Klughart said he gained confidence and could see himself running the business. He then told Franke that he was ready to take on the challenge.

For her part, Franke said she was not concerned about Klughart’s age. She pointed out that Carl Franke, the founder of Paris City Cleaners, as it was originally named, was 19 when he decided he would not follow in his father’s footsteps and be a tailor, but instead he would travel to Denver, Colorado, to learn the dry cleaning process

and embark upon what his father referred to as a “new fangled business.”

Additionally, Franke said, “The young people of this generation are not all going to college. He’s making an investment in his future.”

Klughart’s father is helping him with the new business, although the two made an agreement to leave work matters at work and not take any

self. We’ve been running the operations for a few months now, and people say that nothing’s changed.”

Klughart is proud of the fact that the staff have remained, including Dee Dee Lee and Diane

“I’ve had some time to think about it, and I want it to grow. I want to have more locations again, not the same locations, but maybe the north side and it would be nice to have a store on the west side again. Maybe home delivery and delivery to offices.”

Shep Franke has now retired, but he remains on call for the inevitable questions that arise. Klughart said, “A belt broke on a machine the other day, and I gave Shep a call to ask the belt size. He told me the size, we got the belt and were back up and running.”

Franke credits Shep Franke for keeping the business going for the 30-plus years that he invested his time and talents into Paris Cleaners. She said he stopped in one summer and noticed

that some machinery needed repaired, so she asked him to help out over the summer and he never left. Franke said, “I could have never accomplished this without him.”

Klughart recognizes all the Franke family has done in order to keep Paris Cleaners going since 1909. For one, they were environmentally aware before it was fashionable. They had re-usable dry cleaning bags, coat hangers made of wood, and when it was necessary to use plastic, it was carefully measured so that there was no waste.

Klughart also said, “I love that the solvent we use to dry clean is petroleum-based and not bad for the environment.” However, during WWII, the war effort needed petroleum and Paris City Cleaners had to answer

the call and stop dry cleaning. At the end of WWII, Franke’s husband, “Coke” Franke, the son of Carl Franke, picked up where they left off and built an even better dry cleaning facility.

Klughart is now doing his best to carry on the traditions of Paris Cleaners while also learning



Klughart originally applied for a job as a pants presser and is hands-on in all aspects of the business

PHOTO/ FOTO GRAPHICS BY TIM KLASINSKI

Gray, who have been employed at Paris Cleaners for 35 years. Klughart said there was a reason the Franke family kept their employees for so long. “They keep good relationships, talk to people and accommodate them.”

Although he’s not been at the helm long, Klughart has had a some time to develop a vision for the future of Paris Cleaners. Klughart said,

something new every day.

“Today, I learned how to fix one of the presses that broke down. We were down two people and needed the presses, but I got out the schematics and tools and fixed it.” Klughart says his HVAC education was not a waste, but good preparation for the next chapter in his life. ♦

COVER PHOTO

Nathan Klughart outside of Paris Cleaners at 1013 E. Ash St.

PHOTO/ FOTO GRAPHICS BY TIM KLASINSKI

Growing opportunities for hemp in Illinois

BY ASHLEY MEYER

After decades of prohibition, Illinois farmers are once again learning what it takes to grow one of the world's oldest and most versatile agricultural crops. For centuries, hemp has been cultivated for fiber and food. Although it has been grown in Europe, China and Canada for the past century, cultivating hemp has been illegal in the United States for decades.

However, many of the restrictions preventing farmers from growing hemp were lifted with the passage of the 2018 Farm Bill, allowing for widespread cultivation of hemp as well as the transfer of hemp products across state lines. In the spring of 2018, the Illinois legislature unanimously passed the Industrial Hemp Farming Act, which was signed into law by Gov. Bruce Rauner in August of that year.

Liz Rupel, a policy organizer with the Illinois Stewardship Alliance, said that there will be much to learn from Illinois' first legal hemp growing season. Although hemp was widely grown in this state for fiber and oilseed generations ago, today few, if any, Illinois farmers are familiar with cultivating the crop. "I'm looking forward to seeing what happens with this first experimental growing season," Rupel said. "There are still hurdles that we need to get past. I know there are farmers, small and large, who are having issues with banks and insurance -- there's no crop insurance for this -- but once we get past those hurdles, I think this is going to be really beneficial to the rural farming economy. The policies that have been put into place are very inclusive. A small, diversified farm like Oak Tree Organics can apply for a license that's good for one or up to three years and you need just a quarter-acre of land, so you don't need to be a mega-farmer to take advantage of this industry."

Chad Wallace, owner of Oak Tree Organics in Ashland, Illinois, was making the most of the last few hours of daylight on a windy Monday evening in June, tilling long strips of soil in preparation for planting his carefully grown hemp seedlings. The variety of hemp that Wallace is growing is a strain that has been bred to be especially high in cannabidiol (CBD), a phytocannabinoid



Hemp seedlings waiting to be planted at Oak Tree Organics farm in Ashland.

PHOTO BY ASHLEY MEYER

thought to have medicinal properties. "Folks keep calling me and asking 'What's wrong with my plant?' and I say could be a thousand different things wrong with it. I tell them to start with the soil and work their way up," said Wallace, who has been heavily involved with bringing legal hemp farming to Illinois. "There are people that are struggling... they have land, but no experience. I've been relying on help from other farmers in Wisconsin and Kentucky," Wallace explained. "Normally, I would have just rolled this field over and planted melons here, but now it's going to be all hemp," said Wallace, who estimated that

the potential value of the hemp crop could be well over 1000% greater than the value of a crop of melons planted in the same plot. "On paper, the numbers are just crazy," Wallace remarked. However, the potential reward tied up in these first experimental hemp crops are countered by significant risk. "One day last October, it was 90 degrees, and I remember thinking

it would be bad if we had hemp in the field, because that heat is going to make the THC content higher," Wallace explained. "THC is like sunscreen for the plant, and if the TCH levels are too high you're out of luck and the whole crop would have to be destroyed. If it molds while it's drying, you can't sell it. The payout could be huge, or you could get nothing. It's all a pretty big experiment." Wallace noted that there is a strong demand already for dried CBD flower. "It's out of stock on a lot of websites. We're hoping to hang and dry it in our greenhouse, then package the finished product and sell it directly to customers, kind

of like we've done with the Oak Tree Organics brand. The profit is in the flower," Wallace said. While producing hemp for CBD flowers may be the most accessible and readily profitable method of production for small farmers, large-scale demand for hemp products has the potential to create thousands of jobs in Illinois, according to Rachel Berry, CEO of the Illinois Hemp Growers Association. There are more than 25,000 products that can be made with hemp, from nutrient-rich food to fiber for clothing to biofuel. "Ford, Mercedes, and Volvo use European-sourced hemp composite in their cars," Berry said. "Small farmers will always play a role (but) they aren't going to be able to cover the amount needed to crank out product." Berry went on to explain that the benefits of hemp production go beyond economics. "This crop pulls carbon out of the air. It uses bioremediation to pull contaminants out of the soil; it helps to clean the waterways, it reduces erosion. It uses limited water and there are no approved pesticides or herbicides for use in hemp production. Hemp is a crop that gives back to the soil." A critical, limiting factor for industrial hemp in Illinois is the lack of processing infrastructure. "Facilities are needed around the state so that farmers can process their product locally," Berry said. "There are different types of processing facilities needed for different products. Investing in these facilities has the potential to create thousands and thousands of jobs in Illinois." Back in Ashland, Wallace was hopeful as he surveyed his freshly planted field. "Farming has changed, and it's hard to make a living if you're not huge," he remarked. "With processing and all the potential here, hemp is something that could give my kids a reason to come back to the farm." ♦

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Jordan Powell's journey to CEO

Former Forty Under 40 recipient selected for statewide position

BY CINDA ACKERMAN KLINKNA

Jordan Powell believes in working hard and says he always “strives to be the best.” Both have paid off. Six months ago, he was named the president and CEO of the statewide Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA). He is only the fourth CEO in the group’s 36-year history and the first African-American to hold the position.

The work finds him traveling across Illinois, visiting with the members: 51 community health centers that operate in 380 sites, all providing a variety of health care services to the most vulnerable residents of the state. IPHCA serves 1.4 million patients annually in the areas of medical, dental, behavioral health and vision, as well as support with pharmacy needs, insurance enrollment and transportation. Six out of 10 patients are Medicaid beneficiaries; two out of 10 are uninsured.

Powell explains the structure of IPHCA by saying, “There are federally qualified health centers called FQHCs who help Medicaid patients and others who need services. Providing these services leads to reduced reliance on emergency room visits, improved outcomes in health and reduced costs.” Nationwide, there are around 9000 centers in all areas of the country, from rural to urban.

The IPHCA headquarters is located at 500 S. Ninth St. and two community health care centers operate in the city, Central Counties Health Center (2239 E. Cook St.) and the SIU Center for Family Medicine (520 N. Fourth St.).

Of his career path, Powell says, “Representing health care services spoke to me. My moth-

er was diagnosed with MS and breast cancer, and because she had access to good quality health care, she is alive today. I wanted to help others, especially the underserved, who don’t always have access to good quality care.”

Powell was born in Decatur and moved to Springfield when he was 10. His mother was a single parent who worked multiple jobs. Powell attended Iles Elementary School and then Calvary Academy from sixth grade through high school. He was on the basketball and track teams and was an outstanding athlete in both.

Powell graduated from Calvary Academy in 2003 and entered Notre Dame on a track scholarship, where he earned a degree in political science. Awarded the James H. Dunn Fellowship, he worked a short time in the Governor’s office during the Blagojevich administration and later held several jobs that connect to his interests in lobbying and advocacy work. In 2012, he was named to



Jordan Powell, president and CEO of IPHCA

PHOTO COURTESY IPHCA

the *Springfield Business Journal's* annual Forty Under 40 list at the age of 27.

Powell’s career changed in 2013 when he was named the senior vice president of public policy and governmental affairs with IPHCA. In 2017, he began an MBA at Washington University in St. Louis; the program required four week-long residencies, in addition to the classes. It was the first day of a residency week when he got an urgent call from the IPHCA board chair who said the CEO had resigned and Powell needed to come back home. Powell was then named the acting president and CEO.

Powell explains, “It was a stressful time with the departure of the CEO for reasons that put us under scrutiny; the attorney resigned also. I had to step back and review my values. I realized that defending those most vulnerable was what I wanted to do. Their issues, compared to the stress of my job, helped me see that I needed to stay and make things better.”

Six months later, in December 2018, Powell was named the president and CEO after a national search. In the last few months he finished his MBA.

Powell often meets with business leaders, learning from their experiences. “I pick their brains about leadership styles, training, just anything that helps me improve,” he says. Powell often spends his time driving between sites in Illinois or flying to Washington, D.C., where he advocates for the continued support of the federally qualified centers.

When Powell is not traveling, he may be working out – something he tries to do most days – or coaching his 9-year-old daughter’s basketball and volleyball teams in Rochester. His wife, Terah, is an information technology manager for HSHS.

Powell says, “I want to give back to Springfield that has given so much to me. I often see myself in those we serve. This role is my opportunity to give back and support the vulnerable.”

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Flying high with HISO

Entertainment empire expands exponentially

BY SCOTT FAINGOLD

“One thing I don’t like is spending money on things where I have to use a middleman,” said HISO Music CEO and founder Ayo Abitogun. “After a while I like to own the stuff myself; I’ve always been like that. There are great establishments in town that you can contract out to, but I know that when you take things into your own hands and own it yourself, it becomes cheaper.”

Abitogun began taking things into his own hands in 2014, when he quit a job at Bunn-o-Matic to start HISO Music, a Springfield-based multiple-platform entertainment conglomerate which provides video, photography, recording, broadcasting and other services. After a few years of operating via various local businesses, he opened a self-contained complex at 1401 S. Fifth St. in 2018. The HISO building contains a recording studio, a production department employing four producers and a music talent agency representing several musicians, vocalists and songwriters. All of this is in addition to a photography and videography lab, complete with green screen, black screen and white screen capability.

Along with entertainment production and promotion, HISO also does advertising for local businesses, helps put together talent shows for area high schools and collects donated musical instruments, among other charitable activities. “I want people to see that a normal person can do this,” Abitogun told *Illinois Times* last year. “I didn’t sell drugs; I don’t have a rich family member.”

Abitogun says that his company has proven to be a magnet for talent since opening the new building. For example, in November 2018, a

23-year-old, Nashville, Tennessee-based musician named Shawn Brooks approached HISO while visiting the area over the Thanksgiving holiday. “He wanted to work on some stuff at a



HISO Music is headquartered at 1401 S. Fifth St.

PHOTO/ STACIE LEWIS

studio before he went back to Nashville,” recalls Abitogun.

At that point, two months after opening the doors to the Fifth St. location, HISO had amassed a large amount of audio equipment but had yet to figure out how to set it all up. “It was the worst feeling in the world to have spent thousands and thousands of dollars and we still didn’t have it working,” Abitogun said. He had a conversation with Brooks, who looked at the

equipment and proceeded to wire everything together. The studio was operational within 45 minutes. “I asked Sean to head our engineering department – and his work at HISO and with other producers have helped take our sounds to another level.”

Abitogun says that Brooks is just one example of the kind of talent that has found its way to HISO. “We have 13 or 14 other employees, all in their early 20s. Some of them crawled out of

caves, some of them jumped out of holes – they are all a blessing and have helped the company.”

Another development is the recently opened HISO event hall, located in The Yard Shopping Center at 1650 W. Wabash in Springfield. The hall will be used for concerts, weddings, receptions, banquets, parties and speaking events. “I would love to get a dance class in there, or yoga,” said Abitogun. The main room seats 200-

250 people, with a smaller room with a 40-50 person capacity and a kitchen that is free to use for renters. “Our prices are super-low,” Abitogun says, with the the main room renting for \$100 an hour or \$350 for four hours. “We don’t charge for bringing in drinks but if you do want liquor, we have a person we have contracted with to provide that,” he said. “What’s really cool, that I didn’t exactly plan on, was I ended up owning the chairs, tables, speakers, the cables, the stages – so if you need chairs or tables for an event or a PA system for any event in the area, I’ll be able to help you with that.”

Always expanding, HISO has recently been working with Downtown Springfield Inc. providing sound, lights and marketing for the weekly Levitt AMP concert series every Thursday evening throughout the summer on the Y block downtown. They also preparing to shoot the second season of homegrown comedy series “The Meeting,” which follows the exploits of a Midwestern entertainment company called SOHI. In addition, the company recently acquired the FM broadcasting license previously held by Abundant Faith Church and will soon be launching a new nonprofit radio station, 107.9 The WAVE, which will focus on “playing music that is often overlooked in the mainstream market,” according to Abitogun, including R&B and hip-hop.

For now, Abitogun is in the rare position of watching his dream in action nearly every day – and on some special days, this happens on multiple fronts simultaneously. “When we have people in the building working in the videography lab, the photography lab, and also have a concert going on, an interview happening in the radio station, people recording in the studio, also some people doing work in the production room...” He pauses, conjuring up the image. “When all of that is going on at the same time and there are between 60 and 80 people here and it’s all controlled and they’re all doing what they love or else are being entertained – I don’t think there’s a greater feeling.” ♦

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The *Springfield Business Journal* proudly features 40 leaders who are under the age of 40 in the Springfield and neighboring business communities. These individuals are selected based on their contributions to our local business community and the community in which they reside. They represent, in part, the future of business in our community and in central Illinois.

The selectees' career paths, educational background, and community affiliations are varied. They represent the best and brightest from a wide range of occupations. You can expect to hear more from and about these leaders in the years ahead. The program is able to continue due to the commitment of local businesses that realize the importance of acknowledging these up and coming business leaders and supporting community business programs.

Visit springfieldbusinessjournal.com to view selectees from previous years.

FORTY UNDER 40 2019

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THE POWER OF A U OF I MBA



Sonja Hilson

Age: 35

Email: shilson@my.nl.edu

Occupation: Lead consultant and president, Htrav Consulting, adjudicator at Illinois Department of Employment Security and a community psychologist

Education: Ph.D

Family: Husband Alonzo Travis III, son Jay, daughters Vinny and Kael, stepson AJ and stepdaughters Alonah, Kaylynn and

Kayla

Affiliations/Community Activities: Racial Justice Action Group, Psychologists for Social Responsibility, Black Student Union, Notarized Inc.

What's your guiding principle in life? "We must be the change we want to create."

Why did you choose your current career? Since I was a young girl, I've proactively sought out ways to create equity, cure deficiencies and create positive pathways for growth to elicit holistic societal change. My role as a public servant for state government allows me to positively impact our home communities. My role as a consultant seeks to help small businesses manifest and become sustainable, thereby growing the state economy and creating opportunities. As a community psychologist, I collaboratively seek to find solutions to social injustices.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? It is my hope that Springfield seeks to be the pillar of diversity, economic stability, transparency, opportunity and equity for not only its residents, but for the entire state.



Ayo Dele Abitogun

Age: 28

Occupation: Owner of HISO Music, HISO Event Hall, 107.9 FM - The Wave, AoA Real Estate

Email: Hisomusicentertainment@gmail.com

Education: High school graduate

Family: Mother Kate Abitogun, father Michael Abitogun and three brothers

Affiliations/Community Activities: I built a recording/production studio at the Boys and Girls Club and the employees at HISO teach kids how to use the software or to engineer, do audio production and how to DJ. I do a talent show for high schools in Springfield and donate instruments to the elementary schools. We also work with the Urban League and many other nonprofit groups.

What is your guiding principle in life? To help a million people reach a million dollars. While on this journey as a businessman and trying to figure out who I am as young adult, I realized helping people is more important to me than being a businessman. I realized if I help people, the money will come - it works hand-in-hand.

Why did you choose your current career? My love for music.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I hope that we let go of so much judgment. No one is perfect. If we work together, we can build a better city that's more involved in the community.



Lisa Badger

Age: 39

Occupation: Community affairs specialist, Illinois State Treasurer

Education: Master's degree in conflict resolution

Family: Daughter Alexandra and son Chayce

Affiliations/Community Activities: Springfield Park District board trustee, Springfield Jaycees, American Bar Association (Division of Dispute Resolution), Association for Conflict

Resolution, Molina Enrollee and Community Advisory Committee, The Gregory Youth Foundation, Harvard Park Neighborhood Watch, Greater Springfield Democrats, Lincoln Land ABATE, precinct committee person, union steward for Teamsters Local 916, various community organizations

What's your guiding principle in life? "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

Why did you choose your current career? Transitioning from health care (as a nurse) to government is not as dramatic as many people seem to think, as each is a public service. Many of the communication skills I obtained both in health care and through my master's degree program are used quite frequently. Working on state treasurer Michael Frerichs' staff allows me the great opportunity to travel throughout the state meeting with constituents and community leaders alike. I am able to make a positive impact on the lives of others through both our college and savings programs, as well as through financial literacy.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? That everyone is afforded equity in resources and opportunities to reach their full potential.



Raychel Yokem

Age: 34

Occupation: Human resource business partner at Horace Mann

Education: Master's degree in human resource management

Family: Fiancé Richard McBride and daughter Raya Johnson

Affiliations/Community Activities: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Illinois board member, Illinois Women in Leadership board member, Springfield Building Board Diversity task force committee chairperson, Leadership Springfield, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority - Kappa Sigma Zeta chapter member, Toastmasters, Society for Human Resource Management, Abundant Faith dance ministry leader, United Way and Illinois State Alumni volunteer.

What's your guiding principle in life? To always remember that I didn't get here alone. It is because of my family, mentors, friends and faith that I have been able to live out my passion and purpose daily. I know that many people before me have opened doors that have allowed me to do the work that needs to be done. Keeping that in the front of my mind allows me to remain grateful and humbled by every opportunity.

Why did you choose your current career? Much of human resources is bound by policy and law; however, there is a part that is flexible and built by the culture in which it resides. It is in that space that I have the opportunity to explode with creativity and innovation. It allows me to mix my passions around diversity, equity and inclusion with workplace culture.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? That we will build a community where everyone will want to raise a child - a community that values differences and creates opportunities for all of its residents.



Sierra Senior-Moore

Age: 33

Occupation: Attorney, currently the chief investigator for the Office of the Inspector General at the Department of Children and Family Services

Education: Juris Doctorate

Family: Husband Patrick Moore Sr., son Patrick Jr. and a baby due in October

Affiliations/Community Activities: Springfield Park District trustee, Sangamon County Juvenile Justice Council member, American Bar Association member

What’s your guiding principle in life? “Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time.”

Why did you choose your current career? I decided to go back to law school because I believe everyone is entitled to justice and equitable opportunities. I wanted to assist members of my community in obtaining those equitable opportunities.

What’s your greatest hope for Springfield? My hope is for Springfield to continue to grow and provide its residents with excellent educational, cultural and entertainment experiences in a safe and nurturing community.



Paul Kmett

Age: 38

Occupation: Deputy general counsel at the Illinois Capital Development Board

Education: Juris Doctor from DePaul University College of Law in Chicago

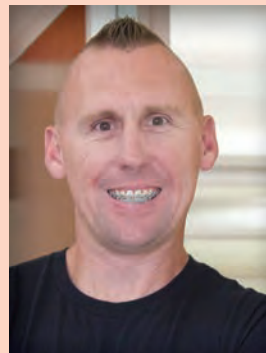
Family: Wife Leslie, children Nola and Edison

Affiliations/Community Activities: Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Illinois (golf classic committee), Downtown Springfield Inc. (Adopt-A-Street), Friend-In-Deed, Sangamon County Bar Association, Government Bar Association

What’s your guiding principle in life? Give. The secret to living a full life is to give back to your community. Donate money to your favorite charity, volunteer at an animal shelter, pick up garbage downtown, play golf in a charity outing, purchase a raffle ticket from a charitable organization, run in a charitable 5k event – just do something and I guarantee you will feel a greater sense of fulfillment in your life.

Why did you choose your current career? I have always been a huge proponent of public service. During my time as an engineer and now as an attorney, working for the government provides me the opportunity to see firsthand the impact my work has on the citizens of Illinois. I feel incredibly lucky to be able to combine my love for both engineering and the law at my current job with the Capital Development Board.

What’s your greatest hope for Springfield? I would like to see downtown Springfield continue to thrive with its amazing restaurants, bars, breweries, shops and summer festivals. I also hope something amazing happens with the vacant Y block.



Matthew Evans

Age: 36

Occupation: President and co-owner of Heartland Heating and Cooling, Inc.

Email: heartlandheatingcooling@yahoo.com

Education: Trade school, Capital Area Career Center

Family: Wife Samantha Evans and daughter Adrian

Affiliations/Community Activities: Warming the Hearts of Springfield with Midwest Family Broadcasting and Rheem

What’s your guiding principle in life? Helping others and not putting off until tomorrow what can be done today

Why did you choose your current career? I like to work with my hands and I enjoy problem-solving.

What’s your greatest hope for Springfield? That we can work together and grow to become a stronger community.



Michelle Clatfelter

Age: 37

Occupation: Vice president legal affairs, Hospital Sisters Health System, Central Illinois Division

Education: Juris Doctorate

Family: Husband Trevor; children Harrison, Adeline and Theodore; and our beloved dog, Emma

Affiliations/Community Activities: Member and immediate past chair of the Sparc board of directors, St. John’s Society for Service and Leadership, American Health Lawyers Association and the Illinois Health Lawyers Association

What’s your guiding principle in life? My first and foremost “must do” is to be consciously aware of God’s presence in my life – both personally and professionally.

Why did you choose your current career? As the daughter of two clinicians, I was sensitive to both the opportunities and the challenges faced by health care providers. For many years, I thought I was destined to become a clinician myself. As I grew older, it became obvious to me that my place was not going to be at the bedside, but rather supporting those at the bedside. Fast forward to today, I am grateful to be doing that each and every day at an organization in which my values and its mission align and in support of people whom I respect and value.

What’s your greatest hope for Springfield? It is my hope that we as a community continue to invest and reinvest in making Springfield a great place to live, work and build relationships and families. While the complexion of what exactly that looks like may change from time to time, the need for active, engaged community members, coupled with thoughtful planning and economic development, will not.



Megan Luckey

Age: 37

Occupation: Sign language interpreter and co-owner of Serious Lip Balm

Education: Bachelor of Arts

Family: Parents, Dan and Vanessa Luckey and son, Gabriel

Affiliations/Community Activities: Innovate Springfield, Local First Springfield, Illinois Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

What’s your guiding principle in life? Leave it a little better than you found it.

Why did you choose your current career? I became fascinated with American Sign Language as a kid and knew I wanted to be part of bridging the gap in communication between hearing and deaf people. As far as the business is concerned, I did not set out to start a small business, but I have always wanted to make things better for those around me. Serious Lip Balm is the way the universe made sure I was able to do that

What’s your greatest hope for Springfield? That its citizens embrace and embellish on its small town sensibilities. The greatest part of Springfield is how its size lends you the ability to get involved in many things. In the world you may experience seven degrees of separation, but in Springfield, you have two to three degrees at the most. Also, if you search hard enough, you are bound to figure out that that person is actually a cousin or former co-worker. If we all joined forces and improved our already existing connections, this place can, and will, become even more amazing.



Kimberly Fuiten

Age: 35

Occupation: Superintendent, Sangamon County Veterans Assistance Commission

Email: kimberly.banister@co.sangamon.il.us

Education: Master’s degree in human services

Family: Children Matthew and Parker

Affiliations/Community Activities: Veterans Service Officer, Senior Vice Commander VFW 4763, Sangamon County veterans treatment court mentor coordinator, education chair for the Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions, volunteer with Land of Lincoln Honor Flight, member of Team Red, White and Blue, Disabled American Veterans volunteer driver, volunteer with St. John’s Breadline.

What’s your guiding principle in life? Do what you love! Think bigger than you are – anything is possible if you put your mind to it.

Why did you choose your current career? I served on active duty in the United States Navy from 2002-2006. When I returned home, I began working for the Veterans Assistance Commission. As a veteran myself, I have always wanted to work with veterans and their families to help them get the benefits that they have earned. I want to continue to work with the community and help others who are in need.

What’s your greatest hope for Springfield? My first hope is for more supportive housing for the homeless population. I would also like our community to come together in an effort to link local services, allowing for a more seamless and smoother transition from homeless to housed.

Congratulations

Jeffrey T. Baker

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Jeff Baker

Age: 38

Occupation: Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Illinois REALTORS®

Education: J.D., Loyola University Chicago School of Law

Family: Wife Kim, son Micah and daughters Macy and Mylee

Affiliations/Community Activities: Westside Christian Church, Hope (Ambassador of Hope), St. John's Breadline

What's your guiding principle in life? Nothing is impossible.

Why did you choose your current career? My career has evolved quickly in a short period of time. It is a blend of business, law and politics. I want my work to serve as many people as possible, and I'm fortunate to get to do that in the areas in which I am strongest.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? That our community is willing to think outside the box, try new things and be innovative. An historic town can still be driven by new ideas and practices.



Brian Wojcicki

Age: 36

Occupation: Chief executive officer of Illinois Capitol Group

Education: Chicago-Kent College of law

Family: I have immediate family in the area including my parents and sister, who is

married with two boys (the oldest of which is my godson) as well as an aunt and uncle, along with two cousins, who are both married.

Affiliations/Community Activities: Downtown Springfield, Inc. executive board member, The Outlet board member, member of Springfield Jaycees, and volunteer for the various downtown festivals

What's your guiding principle in life? Don't complain if you haven't given it your best.

Why did you choose your current career? As an attorney and lobbyist, I'm often able to conveniently combine legal work with government relations, which helps with my professional sanity. It also provides a variety of opportunities to help businesses and associations in the community.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I hope Springfield has a sustainable future that balances homegrown and recruited talent.



William Davis

Age: 37

Occupation: Attorney at Brown, Hay & Stephens LLP

Email: wdavis@bhslaw.com

Education: Juris Doctor, Southern Illinois University School of Law

Family: Wife Ashley Davis

Affiliations/Community Activities: Sangamon County Bar Association and Illinois State Bar Association

What's your guiding principle in life? To live by the four cardinal virtues – wisdom, justice, temperance and fortitude.

Why did you choose your current career? Originally, I

chose to be a lawyer to do civil litigation defense with a focus on medical malpractice. I spent years in criminal prosecution and then defense and eventually found my way to the spot I wanted in law school.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I would like to see the expansion of private sector businesses to fill the gap left by the outsourcing of state government jobs. It would require multiple parts working together and supporting one another to expand the base in all areas, not just one.

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CONGRATULATIONS to Darlene Kmett!



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Jokima Christison

Springfield Clinic TeleNurse Manager

on receiving recognition in the **SBJ Forty under 40.**



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Darlene A. Kmett

Age: 38

Occupation: Senior vice president retail – regional manager, United Community Bank

Education: B.A. speech communication, Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Family: Husband Robert Kmett

Affiliations/Community Activities: Illinois Women in Leadership board member, Illinois Women in Leadership

Athena chair

What’s your guiding principle in life? Dream big, work hard and surround yourself with good people!

Why did you choose your current career? It actually started as a part-time job when I was in college. Looking back over the 20 years I have been in banking, I continued to choose it because of my customers. I enjoy being able to help people in my community. They are my neighbors, people I went to school with, kids who play sports with my nieces and nephews and friends. That is what makes it great, being able to help the people I care about in a community I love.

What’s your greatest hope for Springfield? One of my hopes for Springfield is the continued growth of local and family-owned businesses. I would also like to see all parts of Springfield develop and grow into a place where families will continue to want to build their lives.



Jokima Christison

Age: 38

Occupation: TeleNurse Manager, Springfield Clinic

Education: Bachelor of Science, nursing

Family: Husband Chris and children Dallas, Evan and Owen

Affiliations/Community Activities: My passion is helping at-risk youth and disabled children. Compass for Kids, Refuge Ranch, Camp Courage, Leadership Springfield, Sigma Theta Tau International and Toastmasters.

What’s your guiding principle in life? Be decisive, trust your instincts and stand your sacred ground.

Why did you choose your current career? As a registered professional nurse, I am passionate about helping people achieve the best possible outcomes so that they can live their best lives. In my position as TeleNurse Manager, I am afforded the opportunity to help the people in my community on a much greater scale by ensuring that my team of nurses and access staff provide the highest quality care when people need it most. I am incredibly blessed to work with a great team of people who believe in the mission and advocate for our patients 24/7/365. I love what I do, but more importantly, I love the team with which I do it.

What’s your greatest hope for Springfield? That we continue to work together as a community to remove barriers and improve access to health care and mental health services for all people and also improve the social determinants of health for all of our citizens.



Corrin McWhirter

Age: 37

Occupation: Gallery director, Springfield Art Association

Education: Bachelor of Fine Arts

Family: Husband, Christian McWhirter and son, Dylan McWhirter

Affiliations/Community Activities: Downtown Springfield Inc. Image and Design Council, Hoogland Center for the Arts resident building board member, Lincoln Memorial Gardens

land art support, Ball Elementary School volunteer, artist and curator

What’s your guiding principle in life? Support each other because “it’s chaos, be kind.”

Why did you choose your current career? I believe that art has the power to communicate across barriers and lift a community. Supporting and facilitating visual art in Springfield has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career.

What’s your greatest hope for Springfield? I look forward to seeing Springfield continue to progress as a city, but it should remain open to change. Springfield is full of amazing, innovative, talented people who are passionate about the community. We need to let them shine.



Katie Patsche

Age: 37

Occupation: Vice president of collections/COO-elect at Heartland Credit Union

Education: Bachelor of Science in business administration with a focus in marketing and human resources from Southern Illinois University in

Edwardsville

Family: Spouse Mike, children Mikey and Rylee, parents Charlie and Carol Hayes, siblings Lori Sabo (husband Tom) and Jess Hayes (wife Heather)

Affiliations/Community Activities: United Way of Central Illinois financial stability vision council member, Illinois Credit Union League Sangamon Valley Chapter chair,

Central Illinois Fraud Group member, volunteering at several local charities including United Way Day of Action, Memorial's Festival of Trees and Habitat for Humanity.

What's your guiding principle in life? Hard work, honesty and integrity will always pay off in the end. Kindness matters! You never know what someone else is going through.

Why did you choose your current career? I love being able to work for a local organization that serves and gives back to the community where I live and raise my family. I truly enjoy working with the membership and with my co-workers at HCU.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I hope that young professionals choose Springfield as a place to start their career. I have loved growing up in the Springfield area and moved back to this area after college to start my career and family. Springfield is the perfect mix of city life while still having the small community atmosphere.



McKenzie Smith

Age: 38 years old

Occupation: National child welfare consultant; program manager for Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System at DCFS

Education: Master's degree in social work

Family: Significant other Jake Lohrenz, daughter Irie Lohrenz and son Nash Lohrenz

Affiliations/Community Activities: Big Brother Big Sister of Central Illinois board member, Ronald McDonald House, Contact Ministries, Helping Hands, Family Service Center, Illinois Stewardship Alliance, Illinois Women in Leadership, Friends of Chatham, Hope Church, Storm Fastpitch 08, Chatham Blaze, SBSA White Sox, National Association of Professional Women, National Association of Social Workers

What's your guiding principle in life? Being brave is not the absence of fear. Being brave is having that fear but finding a way through it.

Why did you choose your current career? I was blessed with two loving and supportive parents who did everything in their power to make sure I felt love, support and consistency. They put me and my sister first in order to afford us opportunities to maximize our God-given potential. I want the same experience for every child born into this world.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? My greatest hope for Springfield is that it continues to develop into a more community-minded city – more sidewalks, more walking paths, more communal areas, development of downtown areas, farm-to-table dining, local musician opportunities, increased diversity, etc. "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."



Brian Matthew Moore

Age: 35

Occupation: Optometrist, Prairie Eye Center

Education: Doctor of Optometry, Indiana University

Family: Wife Chelsey, and daughter Elise

Affiliations/Community Activities: Chatham Jaycees past president and management vice president, American and Illinois Optometric Association, Midstate Optometric Society

What's your guiding principle in life? I seem to constantly be adding to my list of guiding principles. I annoy my wife with inspirational quotes every time I read a book or listen to a new podcast. One of my all-time

favorites is:

"To laugh often and much, to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children...to leave the world a bit better...to know even one life has breathed easier because you lived. This is to have succeeded." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Why did you choose your current career? I think most of us choose a career because we want to make a difference in the lives of others. I needed vision correction from a young age and always enjoyed going to the optometrist more than the dentist or primary care physician. This positive experience from a young age, coupled with the ability to help people by diagnosing and treating their ocular diseases, made optometry a natural choice.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? As a parent of a young child I hope most for a chance to make Springfield a place my daughter is one day proud to call home.

Congratulations Katie Patsche



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Bryan Tippy

Age: 39

Occupation: Federal grant compliance monitor, U.S. Department of Commerce

Education: Bachelor's degree

Family: Partner Kelly and stepdaughters Haley, Kaytlynd, Lorena and Joshlynn

Affiliations/Community Activities: Big Brothers Big Sisters, Illinois Senior Olympics, Springfield Ball Charter School board, Legacy of Giving Music Festival, Springfield Oyster and Beer Festival, Prairie Center Against Sexual Assault

What's your guiding principle in life? Try your best to leave the world a better place than how it was when you came into it.

Why did you choose your current career? After a successful stint in the local brewing and hospitality sector – which is a very fun industry – I sought a more professional role with Clark Kent-like hours to allow time to focus on extracurricular activities.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I hope that we embrace necessary changes for a brighter future, including changing the “old guard status quo” in a way that benefits all of Springfield; that downtown Springfield becomes a hip, active and vibrant place again that has regular traffic of all sorts during more than just daytime business hours; that Springfield embraces technological trends in both businesses and educational offerings in order to beat the curve in the economy of the future; and that Springfieldians understand and embrace the incredible power and benefits of keeping their activities and dollars going towards local businesses.



Korey Davis

Age: 36

Occupation: Vice president of finance, Memorial Health System

Education: Master's degree in professional accountancy, Illinois State University

Family: Wife Melissa and children Jared, Tyler and

Megan

Affiliations/Community Activities: Active member of Elkhart Christian Church, board member of Myanmar Agape Christian Mission, advisory board member of Illinois State University Department of Accounting, member of the Healthcare Financial Management Association

What's your guiding principle in life? Matthew 22:37-39.

Why did you choose your current career? Health care is a challenging and fast-paced industry which is professionally gratifying, and MHS is a special organization with bright and compassionate colleagues who serve together to achieve its mission.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? For its leaders to be humble but to lead with courage and conviction in doing what is good. For its citizens to always represent their community with dignity and honor. To be a place where people desire to live, grow and serve.



Tamar Kutz

Age: 37

Occupation: System administrator for Home Services and Post-Acute Care, Memorial Health System

Education: Master's degree, business administration

Family: Husband, Todd Kutz, and children, Regan and Reed

Affiliations/Community Activities: Member of FACHE, school board member, District 27, Lincoln Elementary School District

What's your guiding principle in life? “Everything happens for a reason.”

Why did you choose your current career? I chose to go into health care as it is a fast-paced and ever-changing environment that provides the ability to make a difference in people's lives.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? To be a more connected and caring community that values and respects others.

Congratulations

All of us at Memorial Health System are extraordinarily proud to contribute to the health of our community. And now, we're delighted **Korey Davis** and **Tamar Kutz** are Forty Under 40 recipients. This achievement is a symbol of their dedication and commitment to our mission to improve the health of the people and communities we serve.



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Home Services and
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Justin Creasey

Age: 37

Occupation: Real estate broker at The Real Estate Group

Email: jwcreasey@yahoo.com

Education: Bachelor of Science in marketing at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

Family: Wife Jennifer Creasey, children Mac and Quinn and parents Lisa and Jan Creasey

Affiliations/Community Activities: Treasurer of MacArthur Boulevard Association, Young Philanthropists, Ambassador of Hope, YMCA, Capital City Crossfit and active member of Blessed Sacrament

What's your guiding principle in life? My guiding principle is pretty simple – work hard and always strive to be better, but don't forget to take time to have fun and enjoy life with friends and family.

Why did you choose your current career? My mother is a realtor and my father owns Creasey Construction. I liked the idea of using the knowledge I had in construction but combining it with my education in marketing and using it for good in real estate. My mother and I worked together as The Creasey Team at The Real Estate Group for 10 years and recently merged with Killebrew Real Estate.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I feel like we are close to getting over that hump in making Springfield a really great city again. With a little less red tape and more people getting involved, I believe that not only can we get there, but can exceed expectations and make this a place our citizens get excited to call home.



Kristi Jones

Age: 37

Occupation: Management consultant at Kerber, Eck & Braeckel

Education: Masters in public administration, University of Illinois Springfield

Family: Husband Brian and children Hannah and Sydney

Affiliations/Community Activities: Hope Ambassador, Catholic Charities advisory board, Christ the King Parish discipleship and stewardship council, Illinois Agri-Women, Illinois Farm Bureau Agricultural Leaders of Tomorrow, Girls on the Run of Central Illinois, former board member for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Illinois Capitol Region

What's your guiding principle in life? Kindness inspires kindness.

Why did you choose your current career? Consulting provides the opportunity to use your experiences and skill-set to help others. When an organization is working through an issue, it is difficult for them to look at the big picture because they are so involved. As a consultant, you are able to offer a new lens for clients to see through and ultimately create effective processes.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? My greatest hope for Springfield is that it continues to adapt, but always remains a big "small town" with Midwest values.



Kara Rapacz

Age: 39

Occupation: Principal at Sacred Heart-Griffin High School

Education: Master of Arts in educational leadership

Family: Husband Chris and children, Joseph, Emily and Wyatt

Affiliations/Community Activities: Associate for the Springfield Dominican Sisters, member of Christ the King Parish, member of the Illinois Principal's Association, participant in Illinois Women in Leadership

What's your guiding principal in life? This is all God's plan and it is our responsibility to surrender and listen to his message. Working with high school age students has given me the unique opportunity to share this message so that they can learn the lesson at a much earlier age than I did. True success and happiness occurs when these connections are made.

Why did you choose your current career? With the help of my extraordinary high school guidance counselor, Mrs. Karen Hoffek, I identified at a fairly early age that I wanted to go into the field of education. It was a tremendously rewarding career choice and I honestly had no intention of moving into administration. On the advice of a very wise mentor, I chose to explore the idea of high school administration as a career shift, and now I cannot imagine doing anything else. It is by far one of the most challenging, but at the same time, rewarding experiences of my entire life.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? My greatest hope for Springfield is that we can foster a love for our community so that our young people can be proud of where they came from, and in turn, choose to start their own careers and families here in Springfield.

FORTY UNDER 40 2019



Jennifer Sylvia

Age: 38

Occupation: Financial adviser with Ameriprise Financial

Email: Jennifer.j.sylvia@ampf.com

Education: Bachelor's degree in business and Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor designation, College for Financial Planning

Family: Husband John and children Leeora, Charlie and Zoey

Affiliations/Community Activities: King's Daughters Organization, Catholic Charities, Christ the King Church and School, Philanthropic Educational Organization Chapter MI, Illinois Women in Leadership, Women Entrepreneurs in Central Illinois

What's your guiding principle in life? Strive to do the right thing in each choice I make for the good of all, not just myself, and to lead and teach my children by example. Finding a balance between family, work and community can be a challenge, so I try to include my family where I can when volunteering in the community or through work events.

Why did you choose your current career? I love people, numbers and helping people. Financial planning is a perfect marriage of all three. I have to think quickly and look for solutions outside of the box, keeping me engaged and challenged.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I have been in Springfield just over 10 years and have fallen in love with the big, little town. I hope this vision continues while adding additional opportunities for big and small businesses and continuing to focus on our children and their education opportunities.



Sherry Grable

Age: 39

Occupation: Controller and CPA at Crawford, Murphy & Tilly, Inc. (CMT)

Email: sgrable@cmtengr.com

Education: MBA, University of Illinois Springfield

Family: Husband Sean, parents Patty and (the late) Mike Stinson and siblings Christy Toland and Matt Stinson and their families

Affiliations/Community Activities: Treasurer of the Springfield Old Capitol Art Fair, treasurer of my hometown church, member of my local American Legion Women's Auxiliary, member of the Sangamon - Menard Chapter of The Well Armed Woman

What's your guiding principle in life? "The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing." I don't know for sure if Walt Disney really said that, but I believe it is true. We often talk too much about what we need to do or how something needs to be done instead of just digging in and getting it done.

Why did you choose your current career? After several years of working in public accounting and assisting clients with their business needs, I decided it was time to move to the other side of the desk and be a part of the private sector. At CMT, I am able to use my experience from various industries and past situations to assist with the ever-changing ways of the business world.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? That it continues to grow and thrive while retaining the feel of a small community. I would like Springfield and the surrounding communities to once again become the face of Illinois and remind outlying areas that we have a voice.



Annie Elble Todt

Age: 35

Occupation: CEO and co-founder of Give Hope, Fight Poverty

Education: PhD

Family: Parents Dr. Rodger and Suzanne Elble, husband Tyler Todt and daughter Tinlie


Affiliations/Community Activities: West Side Church, International VIPKid teacher

What's your guiding principle in life? Use your gifts to serve others.

Why did you choose your current career? It chose me. I aspired to use my Ph.D. to make money and have a real

job. But on my first visit to Eswatini, Africa, during my Ph.D./MPH program over a decade ago, I fell in love with the orphaned children, saw their needs that we could fill and have never looked back.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? "Be fearless in the pursuit of what sets your soul on fire." We have all been given a passion for something local, national or international. The world is a mess. It needs us to be fearless.




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Congratulations to Staunzie Grady
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Please join us in congratulating
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**Congratulations,
Julie!**



Julie Beveridge has been part
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Julie Beveridge
Age: 38

Occupation: Assistant vice president and assistant to the vice
chairman of the board, Bank of Springfield (BOS)

Email: JBeveridge@bankwithbos.com

Education: Attended University of Alabama

Family: Husband Patrick and son Rory

Affiliations/Community Activities: Chair of the 2020
Springfield Old Capitol Art Fair, United Way Employee Campaign Coordinator for BOS, co-
chair of the BOS Success Team, Christ the King School, member Christ the King Parish.

What is your guiding principle in life? Life is not fair. Be content and do your best even
when things are not going your way.

Why did you choose your current career? I have always enjoyed talking with and helping
people. I started with BOS as a teller which gave me the opportunity to talk to customers
daily and assist them in a variety of ways. I grew to love the banking industry and have
continued in it to this day. My job has changed over the years, but I still enjoy the interaction
with customers that a career in banking gives me.

What is your greatest hope for Springfield? I hope that we continue to support and build
up small, local businesses. My father was a local business owner who always said to support
local because it helps to improve the local economy. Small business owners are a big part
of our communities. They are our neighbors and our customers. When they succeed, we all
benefit.



Staunzie Grady
Age: 30

Occupation: Artist, community event coordinator, banker

Education: Bachelor's degree in art with a minor in science

Family: Mother Sherry Grady; father Gary Grady; sisters Haley
Grady, Ally Williams, Chanell Hamilton and April Wilson; an
amazing boyfriend, Christopher Pugh; and three cats.

Affiliations/Community Activities: Coordinating and hosting
The POP! Art shows monthly at Arlington's, The POP! Does
Comedy, The POP! Variety shows and The POP! Murder Mystery events, curating the Anvil
and Forge monthly art rotation, coordinating and hosting The POP! Talks in partnership with
Sala, St. Patrick's Day Memorial Breakfast, St. Patrick's Day Parade Council.

What is your guiding principle? You can always do something better tomorrow than you
did today.

Why did you choose your current career? I have always had a passion for helping people
succeed. I have been in finance for six years and I have been able to show people the tools
they need to accomplish lifelong financial success. I have been creating art for 15 years and I
started my very small business (Staunztastic Art) just a few short years ago. These avenues
have allowed me to help people succeed in different ways. Art has allowed me to tap into my
creative side and bring joy to people's lives.

What is your greatest hope for Springfield? I hope to continue to aid in the growth of
Springfield's art community by implementing more programs for art education outside
of traditional options for all ages and skill levels. I also hope to continue to help cultivate a
warm, welcoming and inclusive art community.



Shane Adkins
Age: 35

Occupation: Financial adviser for Wells Fargo Advisors

Email: Shane.Adkins@Wellsfargoadvisors.com

Education: Bachelor's degree

Family: Wife Maggie and sons Nolan and Archer

Affiliations/Community Activities: Treasurer for Compass
for Kids, Young Philanthropists, former board president of
Community Connection Point.

What's your guiding principle in life? Meet your fears with faith.

Why did you choose your current career? Being a financial adviser has allowed me to
develop lifelong relationships with clients who I can now call friends. I cannot think of another
career that lets you celebrate successes and persevere through failures together like the one
I have chosen.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I would love to see Springfield flourish
and become a welcoming, sought-after landing spot for both young and experienced
professionals. If that doesn't pan out, I'll settle for a healthier version of the horseshoe.



Scott Germeraad

Age: 38

Occupation: Lighting and design sales manager for Springfield Electric's showrooms in Springfield, Bloomington and Champaign

Email: sgermeraad@SpringfieldElectric.com

Education: Bachelor of Science in kinesiology, Western Illinois University

Family: Wife Colleen, son Declan and daughters Merrin, Verity and Isla

Affiliations/Community Activities: Lincoln Memorial Garden, United Way, Compass for Kids, Sparc, Leadership Springfield, Springfield Area Home Builders, Home Builders Association of Illinois, National Association of Electrical Distributors, American Lighting Association

What's your guiding principle in life? Give more than you take. Find time to help those who are in need.

Why did you choose your current career? Life has an amazing way of providing you with great opportunities that you wouldn't think of taking. I was a teacher in Michigan; life happened and now I have the incredible opportunity to work for a company that my great-grandfather started 87 years ago. I love what I do for a living, but I love what this job allows me to do for the communities we serve as well.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? To continue to see it be a great city in which to raise a family and provide a positive impact on those that live and work here.



Jacob Godar

Age: 30

Occupation: CEO at Scooter's Lawn Care, Inc.

Email: jacob@scooterslawncares.com

Education: Routt Catholic High School graduate

Family: Wife Nicholle, sons Blake and Jace, one daughter on the way and father Rich Godar.

Affiliations/Community Activities: Member of Local First Springfield, Central Illinois Food Bank and a sponsor of regular community events like Pridefest, Zara's Collision Center annual benevolence program, Cigars for the Troops by Cigars for Aficionados, FatAss 5k and Patrick Sheehan's annual memorial golf outing.

What's your guiding principle in life? I start every single morning by writing down my daily and long-term goals. Those goals include being a husband that my wife is proud to be married to and a superhero father to my children. I strive to create a life beyond my family's wildest dreams - embracing the opportunities of entrepreneurship and its journey, wherever it takes us. Professionally, my goals are to continue building a positive, nurturing company that serves its clients as well as its employees, and where our team will find unlimited growth.

Why did you choose your current career? I've always known I wanted to own my own company. When it came time to open Scooter's Lawn Care, I was working at Zara's Collision Center. Brad Zara has been a longtime mentor and close friend throughout my adult life.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I hope Springfield continues watching and participating in the growth of its local businesses. This community is so unique in its social network of like-minded business owners. Meanwhile, we are all helping serve the residents of Springfield in our own ways through our own businesses, while supporting each other.



Marcus Passoni

Age: 37

Occupation: Owner/operator and dealer principal at Sports and Imports Affordable Car Care

Education: Bachelor's degree

Family: Wife Jacquelyn Passoni and two fur babies, Macy and Ava

Affiliations/Community Activities: St. Jude Children's Hospital. Fight for Air Climb, Wet Nose Wednesday on 99.7 the Mix, Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, Dancing With the Stars, local youth baseball, Relay for Life, Children's Miracle Network, Powerlight Fest, Abraham Lincoln Car Show sponsor, Friends of Sangamon County Animal Control, developer of Passoni Park

What is your guiding principal in life? I want to be everyone's friend, whether it is showing a young car buyer how to change a tire, attending a local community event or just being available for anyone who needs my assistance. My goal is to be a giver, not a taker.

Why did you choose your career? I felt the car industry needed an alternative to the stereotypical car salesperson.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? I hope that Springfield can remain a place where honesty, integrity and hard work can help entrepreneurs flourish in small businesses.

CONGRATULATIONS Scott Germeraad!



Springfield Electric is proud to congratulate Scott Germeraad and all of the Springfield Business Journal 2019 40 Under 40 Winners.

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Stacy Lynn Feldmann

Age: 36

Occupation: Director of clinical services for LeadWell, Occupational Health and Anytime Care - HSHS Medical Group

Email: stacy.feldmann@hshs.org

Education: Master of Science in kinesiology

Family: Parents Terry and Elisa Feldmann

What's your guiding principle in life? You can't always choose the path that you walk in life, but you can always choose the manner in which you walk it.

Why did you choose your current career? I've always been a natural caregiver, and after many years of participating in sports, the decision to become an athletic trainer felt very easy and natural. From there, my career has been about working hard and seizing opportunities as they came to me. I've been very fortunate to have people see my potential and offer me the chance to make my mark.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? My hope is that Springfield becomes a more

inclusive community where we support our local small businesses, find ways to decrease violent crimes and become a city anyone would be proud to call home for their families or businesses.



Natalie Nale

Age: 31

Occupation: Operations manager - Springfield and interim practice manager of Gastroenterology, General Surgery/Trauma & Children's Surgical Services at HSHS Medical Group

Education: Master of Arts in health care administration

Family: Children Bradyn and Tess, and my biggest supporter/significant other, Joey and his two children, Brynn and Colin.

Affiliations/Community Activities: Army National Guard, Medical Operations and Planning with the U.S. Army Reserve at Scott AFB, Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Chatham Chamber of Commerce, Children's Miracle Network volunteer, mental health advocate and Hope Learning Academy supporter

What's your guiding principle in life? Be at the right place at the right time in the right uniform. Live a routine. Be two steps ahead, always.

Why did you choose your current career? I consistently announced the intention to be a brain and heart surgeon as a child. After joining the Army, life took me down many roads,

but medical school was not one of them, although I never strayed from the avenue of health care in my military or civilian careers. With the help of many good and bad leaders, I found satisfaction in conducting health care operations, planning and strategizing. Like oil cannot run without a rig, practitioners cannot practice without health care administration, which is what I do now in my military and civilian careers.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? The same hope I have for the world -- that adult men and women pursue dreams that will set our children up for success. It is important to me that we create an inclusive community so children in our communities can have an individualized avenue to approach success. I hope Springfield can achieve additional resources to support individual children's needs to succeed both physically and mentally.



Mark Cortesi
State Farm Insurance

Allow me to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of the Springfield Business Journal's Forty Under 40 recipients for 2019.

Thank you for the leadership and contributions you have provided for our community.

I look forward to hearing about many more of your future successes.

Mark Cortesi

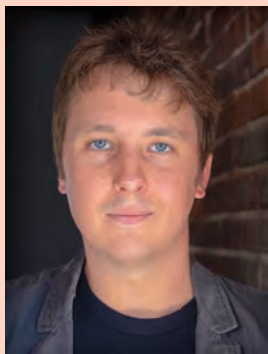
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Springfield, Illinois 62704





Adam Nicholson

Age: 38

Occupation: Executive director of Sala Creative Association, sole proprietor of Nicholson Communication, editor and contributing writer for Springfield's Own Magazine

Email: nicholson@salacreative.org

Education: Master of Arts in english

Family: Mother Marcia Langsoen, brother Graham Nicholson and father Henry Nicholson

Affiliations/Community Activities: Sala Creative Association, Sangamon Aikikai, Springfield's Own Magazine, The Studio, Lincoln Land Community College, The Pharmacy Gallery and Art Space, Quiddity International Literary Journal and Public Radio Program, Springfield Art Association, Springfield Poets and Writers, The Springfield Renaissance, Twelve Winters Press, University of Illinois Springfield

What's your guiding principle in life? Your passive qualities define you much less than your effect on the world around you. Health, strength, wealth, influence, beauty, intelligence—what

have you—are assets to be valued and nurtured but, more importantly, should be applied to some purpose.

Why did you choose your current career? Rather than a career, per se, I have tended toward several, often concurrent, short- and long-term pursuits. But the projects that captivate me, from independent art to mass communication, bring critical analysis and creative problem-solving to bear on issues of meaning-making and the various codes we use to make ourselves understood.

What's your greatest hope for Springfield? Springfield is raw material and potential energy; well-poised geographically and politically, and rich in creative and entrepreneurial talent. Oakland didn't produce Andre Iguodala. Los Angeles didn't produce Brendon Small. Minneapolis ... arguably produced Morris Day, but look, he was at least born here. We won't be a global city any time soon but could and should be a GaWC gamma city or better within the decade – really, should have been by now. I believe the key is not in governance or community organization but rather in the aggregate of individual action. My hope is that talented locals will aspire not merely to meet or exceed some perceived benchmark but to be and do the best they can, here at home. Whatever you find yourself wishing existed in Springfield, make it happen. Be the change you want to see in your city.

Congratulations STACY & NATALIE!



Stacy Feldmann, MS, LAT, ATC, ITAT
Director of Clinical Services for
LeadWell™ Occupational Health
and Anytime Care



Natalie Nale, MHA
Manager of Operations
CID - Springfield

40 Under 40 Recognition!

“HSHS Medical Group congratulates our very own Stacy Feldmann and Natalie Nale for their recognition as two of Springfield Business Journal’s 40 under 40 recipients.

Stacy, Director of Clinical Services for LeadWell Occupational Health and Anytime Care, and Natalie, HSHS Medical Group Manager of Operations for Central Illinois Division in Springfield, are outstanding colleagues with dedication to patient-first care. Their recognition is very well deserved.”

Melinda Clark, CEO
HSHS Medical Group

Loren Hughes, MD, President
HSHS Medical Group

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Check your blind spots

BY KAREN ACKERMAN WITTER

Horace Mann hosted the “CEO Action Check Your Blind Spots” mobile tour on May 30, which was open to every staff member. The company promoted it as a continuation of its commitment to having a diverse and inclusive work environment, facilitating open and honest conversations and increasing awareness of unconscious biases.

“Everyone has implicit biases,” says Jennifer Gill, superintendent of Springfield School District 186. “It is a personal journey to discover your own.” Gill was one of several community members invited to tour the bus and participate in the interactive games and virtual reality experiences. Gill says the videos provide conversation starters about how to have conversations in open, honest and safe ways.

CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion, which organizes the nationwide tours, is a consortium of CEOs that advances diversity and inclusion within the workplace, driven by a realization that these tasks are a societal issue. Marita Zuraitis, president and CEO of Horace Mann, is one of more than 600 CEOs who have signed the pledge to make workplaces trusting places to have conversations about diversity and inclusion, conduct unconscious bias education, and share best — and unsuccessful — practices. Signing the pledge is “a natural extension of what we foster every day at Horace

Mann,” says Zuraitis.

The event on May 30 brought increased recognition to unconscious bias. The bus featured video games where participants clicked a button when observing unconscious bias in an interaction between co-workers, virtual reality



Horace Mann employees trying out the “Check Your Blind Spots” activities.
PHOTO COURTESY HORACE MANN

demonstrations, videos of people talking about their experiences with biases and questions designed to reveal how culturally diverse your own environment is.

Zuraitis says understanding unconscious bias is important in creating an environment where everyone can reach their full potential. She says it goes beyond traditional biases. For example, men can feel biases if it assumed they don’t have child care responsibilities. The goal is for people to realize everyone has unconscious biases and to consider that when making decisions.

There was a constant stream of employees touring the bus who appeared genuinely excited about the opportunity. One employee called the experience “super cool” and said it helped to promote open and candid conversations. Another commented that it makes you stop and think about things that you don’t always think about.

“It creates awareness across the community,” said Beth Moore, chief human resource officer for Horace Mann. “What’s powerful is that it makes it possible to have conversations that would have been more difficult to have in the past.”

John Kelker, president of United Way of Central Illinois, was another community member who experienced the mobile tour. “We all have blind spots, and this gives clues to slow down and check yourself before you wreck yourself,” he explained. He thanked Horace Mann for its leadership in raising awareness about unconscious biases.

Horace Mann was one of 100 stops the CEO Action mobile tour bus is making across the country in 2019. For more information about the mobile tours, the CEO pledge and a list of companies that have taken the pledge, go to www.ceoaction.com/ceos. ♦

Karen Ackerman Witter started freelance writing after retiring from a 35-year career in Illinois state government. Her goal is to connect people, organizations and ideas to achieve greater results.

CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion also encourages individuals to take a pledge to check your own biases and speak up for others.

The pledge asks people to take meaningful action to understand and mitigate their biases, initiate meaningful and difficult conversations with friends and colleagues, move outside one’s comfort zone to learn about the perspectives and experiences of others and to share insights about what you’ve learned.

To sign on and take the I Act on Pledge, go to

www.ceoaction.com/pledge/i-act-on-pledge.


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Take a ride to Springfield Carriage Co.

BY TOM PAVLIK

I love the kind of place that you only hear of by word of mouth - it's like getting let in on a secret. And from the restaurant's perspective it can be a gutsy play, but is also indicative of pride in what's being served. And that's Springfield Carriage Co. - a gem that I've heard about from a handful of friends and acquaintances.

Carriage Co. is located just south of the Lincoln Home on Edwards Street. It inhabits a quaint and historic two-story brick structure that was brought back from the brink of ruin in 2007 and that operated as a restaurant of the same name until closing in 2011.

With a front porch extending across the whole front of the building, Carriage Co. offers an appealing sight to hungry visitors. Everything is freshly painted and clean. Walls are dark colored but brightened by various messages scribbled in chalk. (We were invited to add our own offerings but declined.). There's a tin ceiling, homey accents, a separate bar area and table seating up front. Although we didn't check it out, we were told that additional seating was available on the second floor.

My guest and I arrived around 11:30 and were one of the first lunch diners. By the time we left, however, Carriage Co. was pretty full. Our fellow diners were a mix of out-of-town tourists who had just checked out Lincoln's Home and locals. We were particularly pleased to hear a family from Michigan claim that Carriage Co.'s horseshoe was the best thing they had had on their 10 day vacation through the Midwest.

Service was exceedingly friendly. One of the owners works the front of the house and the other the kitchen. Our server was related to an owner. All took pride in what they were doing and were happy to answer our questions and to

give us their background and motivations. Carriage Co.'s menu looks big but is actually pretty tight - after all, it's open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Breakfast offerings were largely takes on traditional items and the dinner menu is limited to a few steaks, chicken and salmon. For picky little ones there is even a kiddie menu. The rest of the menu is comprised of barbecue, shoes, sandwiches and burgers and that's where we concentrated our efforts.

As we were only two and yet wanted to cover some serious culinary ground, we asked for starter-sized samplers of the smoked beef brisket and pulled pork. Carriage Co. was happy to oblige. Usually a full order costs \$12 and comes with fries. Each was clearly made with love - we both appreciated that each sampling came with some delicious bark. Our samples were accompanied by a sweet and tangy BBQ sauce. It was a good way to start the meal.



Philly sandwich with sweet potato fries.

PHOTO/ STACIE LEWIS

We then had to decide what to get as our entrees, and the shoes lost out. The burger shoe costs \$10 and all others (like the Cuban, Reuben or candied bacon) cost \$12. Signifi-



Springfield Carriage Co., just south of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, is located in a historic building that was constructed in 1840.

PHOTO/ STACIE LEWIS

cantly, we were told that they use the original recipe from the Leland Hotel for their version. The sandwiches and burgers each come with a choice of fresh hand-cut fries or sweet potato fries.

My guest opted for the Philly sandwich (\$12), given that our server said it was one of the more popular offerings. It came piled with chopped steak, green peppers, red onion and provolone. I decided on the blue cheese burger (\$12). Other offerings that tempted us included the Cuban sandwich (\$12 - endorsed by an acquaintance) and the Reuben horseshoe (\$12).

For those looking for something different than fries, Carriage Co. has macaroni and cheese, smoked baked beans, potato salad and corn fritters, purported to be a fave of Abe himself (each \$4).

My burger, a thinner burger best cooked on the griddle, came out medium-rare as ordered with a very generous helping of pungent blue cheese. Sadly the onion, pickle and tomato were missing. A simple request would have fixed the problem, but I decided to go without and let the burger speak for itself. As good as it was, it needed some brightness from the veggies to pull it all together. My bad.

My guest enjoyed his Philly. Although it was a bit of a mess to eat, I think that's the point of a Philly - dripping meat and gooey cheese. It looked like a winner.

We both opted for the hand-cut fries at the suggestion of our server. She advised that, literally, the fries were transformed from a whole potato to fries moments before being

dumped into the fryer. I will generally avoid hand-cut fries as I prefer them crispier, but Carriage Co. did a good job with these - they weren't flaccid like so many of its peers and were well-salted. We also liked that we were offered malt vinegar to add that necessary shot of acid.

Carriage Co. certainly has something going on. And if it gets the necessary zoning approval for beer and wine, I can see that dinner service will take off. It's certainly a place that I hope Springfield embraces, rather than another run to a pedestrian national franchise. ♦

SPRINGFIELD CARRIAGE CO.

Address: 724 East Edwards, Springfield

Phone: (217) 572-1457

Hours: Monday-Sunday 7:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/Springfield-carriage-co-565614520625274/>

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Credit Cards: Yes

Atmosphere: ★★★★★

Service: ★★★★★

Food: ★★★★★

Price: ★★★★★

Suitability for business lunch: ★★★★★

OVERALL: ★★★★★



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Professional Women's Calendar of Events

You play a key role and we thank you for your contributions to our community.

Association for Women in Communications (AWC)

AWC offers opportunities to stay at the top of your game with opportunities for learning, committee involvement and networking opportunities. AWC holds monthly professional development programs with a variety of educational speakers. Members can also participate in AWC national webinars at no cost. For more information or to make reservations for an upcoming event, visit www.awcspringfield.org.

Illinois Women in Leadership (IWIL)

On Thursday, July 25 AWC will present the annual Athena Awards. The dinner and ceremony will be held at Erin's Pavilion beginning at 5:30 p.m. The cost is \$55 per person or \$60 per person after July 11. The ATHENA Leadership Award is presented to an individual who is honored for professional excellence, community service and for actively assisting women in their attainment of professional excellence and leadership skills. For more information or to register, visit iwil.biz.

Women Entrepreneurs of Central Illinois (WE-CI)

WE-CI was created with the goal of supporting women entrepreneurs through promoting economic development, creating innovative changes in business culture and building strategic affiliations. Our monthly meetings are designed to promote networking and feature speakers with topics relevant to women in business today. For more information on upcoming monthly programs, visit weci.wildapricot.org/events.



To have your event added to the Women's Calendar of Events, please email your information to info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com



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MEDICAL NEWS

Dr. Sameer Vohra chosen as 40 Under 40 in public health

Dr. Sameer Vohra is the founding chair of SIU School of Medicine Department of Population Science and Policy and was recognized as one of Springfield Business Journal's Forty Under 40 in 2017. Vohra has now been recognized by the de Beaumont Foundation as one of the inaugural 40 Under 40 in Public Health. The 40 rising stars of public health were chosen by a panel of judges for their fresh perspectives, creative problem-solving and innovative health solutions in communities across the country.

"I am honored and humbled to be named a 40 Under 40 in Public Health by the de Beaumont Foundation," said Vohra. "I'm excited to learn from this influential group of public health leaders and I am especially thankful for the de Beaumont Foundation's focus on building healthier communities both here in Illinois and throughout the US."

Under Vohra's leadership, the Department of Population Science and Policy aims to improve health and wellness in central and southern Illinois by identifying community-based interventions and studying how factors such as poverty, access to health care, education and housing affect people living in rural communities. The department provides a new approach to health care that bridges data, health care delivery and social and environmental determinants of health. The Department of Population Science and Policy also educates medical students on how to incorporate population health principles into their future practice.

"We launched 40 Under 40 to humanize the public health field and show the diversity of the individuals who commit to strengthening the health of our nation's communities," said Brian Castrucci, president and CEO of the de Beaumont Foundation. "Public health is different from health care, and by elevating the work and voices of these inspiring leaders, we hope to attract and motivate other professionals to bring creativity and innovation to the future of public health."

Nominees were evaluated by a distinguished panel of professionals from the nonprofit, business, and higher education sectors on their demonstrated leadership, their contributions to their community's health, and their collaboration with other organizations in public health and other sectors.

For more information about 40 Under 40 in Public Health, including detailed eligibility and selection criteria, visit debeaumont.org/40Under40. ♦



Dr. Sameer Vohra, chair of SIU School of Medicine's Department of Population Science and Policy.

PHOTO COURTESY SIU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Dr. John Flack named inaugural Endowed Chair of Internal Medicine at SIU

Internationally renowned hypertension expert John M. Flack, MD, MPH, was named the inaugural holder of the Sergio Rabinovich, MD, Endowed Chair of Internal Medicine at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine in an investiture ceremony on Monday, June 3. An endowed chair represents one of the highest achievements in academic medicine, both for the person for whom the chair is named and also for the person who holds the chair.

Flack, who joined SIU Medicine in 2015, is an internist who specializes in treating resistant hypertension in minority populations. Flack has authored more than 200 peer-reviewed publications and serves on several NIH and American Heart Association scientific peer-review panels.

The ceremony also honored Professor Emeritus Sergio Rabinovich, MD, who served as chair of the department of internal medicine at SIU School of Medicine from 1974-88. He retired as

chief of the division of infectious diseases in 1996. Rabinovich has served on numerous committees at the state and national level and is a member of the American Society for Microbiology and the Infectious Diseases Society of America.

Memorial Medical Center is contributing \$1 million to launch the Sergio Rabinovich, MD, Endowed Chair of Internal Medicine.

"Memorial Health System is honored to support this endowment, which recognizes the immense contributions Dr. Rabinovich made to SIU School of Medicine and Memorial Medical Center during his tenure," said Ed Curtis, Memorial Health System president and CEO. "We're also pleased that Dr. Flack will be the first to hold this chair, in light of his internationally recognized achievements in research and education. We're confident that the creation of this endowed chair will strengthen and inspire the next generation of internal medicine physicians." ♦



Dr. John Flack has been named Endowed Chair of Internal Medicine at SIU School of Medicine.

PHOTO COURTESY SIU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Advanced Medical Transport to acquire Medics First

Peoria-based Advanced Medical Transport of Central Illinois (AMT) has announced plans to acquire Springfield-based Medics First Mobile Intensive Care and expects the transfer of ownership to occur later this summer.

Medics First, headquartered at 1600 Taylor Ave. in Springfield, was founded in 2008 by Larry Daugherty, Tracy Daugherty, Mike Dozier and Mark Ballinger. The company has grown to employ around 75 EMS personnel and includes a fleet of 13 ambulances.

AMT is a private, nonprofit organization that was founded in 1991. Greg Chance, vice president of strategy for AMT, said the intention is to create a new subsidiary company called Advanced Medical Transport Springfield that would do business under the Medics First name. The existing Medics First staff and headquarters will also remain the same, although Chance said AMT intends to begin recruiting a board of directors to oversee the Springfield location, in order to fulfill the nonprofit's mission. "We're looking forward to the opportunity to work

with the current team at Medics First as well as other medical stakeholders in the community," said Chance.

Based out of Peoria, AMT current serves 60 communities in central and western Illinois, and the acquisition of Medics First will allow for an expanded coverage area. While Chance noted that AMT is in the process of due diligence before the transfer of ownership can be finalized, he said, "We're enthusiastic about the opportunity that this acquisition represents." ♦



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- 2** Register Before August 15th and save \$25!
- 3** To learn more about: "Finding or Being a mentor for season, Reason or Lifetime"
- 4** To network with over 300 other women and enjoy a "rooftop" after party.
- 5** Sign up 5 attendees and get the 6th one **FREE!**
- 6** To learn more about "Successful Leadership"
- 7** To visit over 30 exhibitors
- 8** Bring your curiosity and learn about subjects like "Taboo Topics in the workplace" and "Unconscious Bias"

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Succession planning

BY SARAH DELANO PAVLIK

Every business needs a succession plan. If you are a business owner, you will cease to own and control your business at some point due to death, disability, sale, gift or liability reasons. If you plan in advance, you may be able to control whether or not your departure is successful.

Your succession plan may be for your benefit (When can I sell this business to maximize my retirement?), for the benefit of your family (How can I pass this business to my family in the best way?), for the benefit of your employees (I want them to be able to carry on the business after I am gone), or for some combination of these or other reasons.

Why is a plan important? Statistics show that approximately 30% of all family-owned businesses survive into the second generation, 12% into the third generation and 3% into the fourth generation and beyond. This result is universal, as seen in various "proverbs" from many countries – "Shirt sleeves in three generations" (America), "Wealth does not survive three generations" (China), "The third generation ruins the house" (Japan), and "The father buys, the son builds, the grandchild sells and his son begs" (Scotland).

One reason businesses don't survive is that there is no succession plan in place at the founder's death, leading to a void in leadership, family fighting, lack of financing or other critical problems. Succession planning is often not started or completed because of the emotional issues involved. The business and the owner often seem like one, and the owner may refuse to relinquish any control. If the



PHOTO/ PEXELS

owner fails to properly train a successor, the business may flounder.

So how do you begin succession planning? The criteria will vary based on the circumstances of the business and the owner, but fundamental questions are:

When do I intend to leave the business?

Who should control the business after me?

Who should own the business after me?

How should the successor owners acquire their interest? For no cost by gift or under my will, or by sale?

If a sale, how will the price be determined?

Will the purchase price be all at once or over time?

Will the buyer be able to afford the purchase price?

Who should not own the business? The black sheep child? Anyone who is not a member of the family?

Each of these questions should be answered under three scenarios – retirement, death and disability of the owner.

The owner must discuss the plan with the intended new owners. For example, does the owner's son really want to run the business after mom or dad? Do the children need money more than shares in a closely held business, meaning they will look to sell as soon as dad is gone? Would the children love to run the business, but they aren't capable – maybe for now or maybe always?

Once the owner has considered these factors, whether or not he has been able to make any decisions, he should consult with his advisers – legal, accounting and financial. They can help the owner realize his goals in the most efficient manner while raising issues the owner may not have considered.

Once the owner makes decisions and signs the necessary documents, succession planning is not over. According to a study by Roy Williams and Vic Preisser, 70% of estate plans fail to successfully transition wealth. People generally assume this is because of estate taxes, economic conditions, bad advice, or something similar. In contrast, Williams and Preisser concluded that 60% of the failures were due to issues with trust and communication and 25% were due to lack of preparedness of heirs. If a succession plan is to be successful, it requires participation, monitoring and adjusting by all interested parties.

Succession planning may seem like something that can wait, but waiting too long could jeopardize your financial future and that of your family. ♦

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An exhibit currently on display at the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum.

PHOTO COURTESY AAHM

African American History Museum shares both local and national stories

BY JANET SEITZ

Across from the gates of Oak Ridge Cemetery lies a passageway to another history. The Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum (AAHM), established in 2012, tells authentic stories about African-American life in central Illinois, past and present, celebrating and sharing history and culture.

Originally incorporated as the Springfield Illinois African American History Foundation in 2006, related Nell Clay, president of the AAHM's board of directors, the organization was determined to record the history and contributions of African-Americans through first-person oral histories. The oral history project initially concentrated on seniors, then the next generation.

The Foundation focused its efforts on interviewing Springfield's African-American community in order to record and preserve its history. Dr. Cullom Davis, a professor emeritus at University of Illinois Springfield and a pioneer in the field of the collection of oral histories, trained and led volunteers for the project. The Foundation collected 65 oral histories, 45 of which have been transcribed, and a number of which are available to hear through the AAHM website.

After the success of the oral history project, Clay stated, the members of the Foundation made the decision to establish the museum. "This board has worked diligently to create the best little museum in central Illinois," Clay added. "We do that by committing to develop and present programs and exhibits with unapologetic honesty. So much of the history of African-Americans is dark, but we show the tenacity and the ability of our people to overcome enormous odds by sharing their great accomplishments.

"We stress that African-American history is Springfield history, Illinois history and national history," Clay continued. "The military history of African-Americans spans from the arrival of the first enslaved Africans during the colonial history of the United States to the present day. In every war fought by or within the United States, African-Americans participated. How many people know this?"

Subject matter for the museum abounds. Clay pointed out explorers such as Matthew Henson, Bessie Coleman, George Gibbs, Dr. Guion Bluford, Sophia Danenbuurg and Dr. Mae Jemison. "There are so many scientists that made enormous contributions in their specialized areas," she added. "African-Americans inventions include the gas mask, stop light, ironing board, the carbon filament for the light bulb, the multiplex

telegraph, the super soaker, sugar and more. So many historians have documented our history, wonderful authors have written phenomenal books of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Artists, actors, sports figures, entrepreneurs and educators have secured their mark in history."

Clay said, "We haven't scratched the surface of the contributions and accomplishment Illinois African-Americans have made. People like Jameson Jenkins, Henry Ford Douglas, Gwendolyn Brooks, Roland Burris, Rev. James Cleveland, Cardiss Collins, Marva Collins, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Daniel Hales Williams, Richard Wright, Percy Julian, Kevin Gamble, Andre Igoudala and more need to be highlighted."

Because the museum is a relatively small space, explained Clay, new exhibits must replace older ones. The Museum has been in its current location for three years and has outgrown the space for what the organization would like to do. The challenges are the same as many nonprofits face: maintaining volunteers, members, and of course, funding. "As president, you are acutely aware of the fact that it is absolutely necessary to raise funds, or you won't exist and be able to remain a vital part of our community," said Clay.

The AAHM's 8th Annual "Honoring Our Heritage Award: Celebrating Organizations That Support and Empower the Black Community by Paying It Forward" gala will be held in October. It will recognize organizations, companies, foundations, churches, or charities that have made significant contributions to the African-American community in central Illinois and/or the AAHM.

While challenges exist, Clay finds many rewards. Visitors have come from many states and countries such as Canada, Japan, Australia, Africa, China, England, and areas of Central and South America. Many comment that the museum has packed much information into a small space and that the exhibits are "awesome and well-done." Reactions to the exhibit can be emotional with "visitors leaving the Middle Passage exhibit with tears in their eyes," according to Clay.

Clay said the community support is amazing and there is "humble pride you feel knowing that you are contributing to telling African-American history in your own way and in your own words."

For information on the museum, exhibits, scholarships, October event and more, visit www.siaahm.org. ♦

Janet Seitz is a local communications professional, writer and artist. To share your story, contact her at janetseitz1@gmail.com.



The Dog House has opened at 210 S. Fifth St., next to Floyd's Thirst Parlor. PHOTO/ STACIE LEWIS

The Dog House opens downtown

BY MICHELLE OWNBEY

In April, *SBJ* reported that Tacology 101 was closing its second location at 210 S. Fifth St., next to Floyd's Thirst Parlor, which was previously occupied by the sushi restaurant Stop and Roll. The space has now reopened as The Dog House, a custom hot dog restaurant owned by Rosh Mahmood, a familiar name in the local restaurant scene.

Mahmood, who is originally from Chicago, said he wanted to provide a fast and affordable lunch option in the downtown area. "Who doesn't love a hot dog? But we'll also have Italian beef, brats, chicken and even vegan dogs," he said, noting that the menu will include a variety of specialty hot dogs such as bacon wrapped and chili cheese dogs. "We have a dog for everybody's appetite."

Since the restaurant is attached to Floyd's Thirst Parlor, Mahmood said he also intends to have late night hours on Fridays and Saturdays for the downtown bar crowd. The Dog House had a soft opening the weekend of June 14. ♦

Sangamon County new business registrations

Sangamon County New Business Registrations, May 16 – June 15, 2019
Thrive Center for Wellness P.C., 8795 River Birch Rd., Dawson. 303-5331. Stillwater Center for Wellness.
Abbe African Hair Braiding, 1420 E. Sangamon Ave. 761-5468. Kokovi Abbey.
MingLang Photography Studio Corp., 3609 Sundance Dr. 381-7378. Mingxuan Li and Xiaoxuan Yang.

Pup E. Tails, 110 W. Laurel St. 679-6128. Ashley Brown.
Yellow Daisy Boutique, 613 S. Kennedy Ave., Auburn. 685-8718. Brooke Sampson.
The Dog House, 210 S. 5th St. 679-0694. Rashid Mahmood.
KindSip, 442 Lawrence St., Illiopolis. 486-8044. William Kessen.
Independent Childcare, 3200 Sheridan St. 618-365-5562. Tearetha Plair and Cynthia Daniels.
Recovery Masters, Inc., 1513 N. 30th St. 801-3221. William Meacham and Diana Meacham.
Patriot Salute, 332 Wagon Wheel Ln., Chatham. 741-8307. Kevin Kirk.
Bulldog Construction & Concrete, LLC, 413 N. Sixth St., Auburn. 899-8543. Timothy Stewart.
Lanya's Fashion, 101 N. Illinois St. 595-1227. Lisa Lewis-Williams.
Next Step, 519 W. Monroe. 299-0163. Next Step Wellness, LLC.
Taylor Ann's Mobile Dog Grooming, 385 Teal Dr., Chatham. 361-8086. Taylor Newberry.
JLanay Fashion, 1509 E. Edwards St. 572-6083. Jayla Craig.
JW's Excavation Services, 4100 Clearwater Ln. 553-7282. William Webster Jr.
Flawless Finish Electrolysis, 3022 Happy Landing Dr. 698-0997. Denise Wend.
Flora Roasting Co., 2012 S. College St. 816-2356. Jacob Bradshaw, Brie Bradshaw and Mollie Moore.
Kathy Lynn Photography, 7000 Fulton Rd., New Berlin. 416-4788. Kathy Dunlap.
MS Seed Company, 206 S. 8th St., Auburn. 652-3996. Weston Seifert, Cathryn Seifert and Daniel Mau.
OSR Ventures, Ltd., 5 Pickering Ln. 620-1018. Peters Wagner.
Essentially Shelly, 2308 Tara Ln. 836-5075. Michele Pawelczak.
Precision Home Improvement, 811 W. Highland Ave., Apt. A. 816-0461. Daniel Allen.
MaisonDeLaurent, 1644 Toronto Rd., Unit 2. 224-944-4537. Whhitney Lewis.
Minder Tree Service, 1309 N. Ledlie Ave. 481-5130. Jason F. Minder.
Roberts Properties, 3989 Springer Ln. 899-1811. Charles Roberts and Verna Roberts.
Cookies and Stuff, 2501 Wabash Ave., Suite D. 314-255-5721. Johnetta Chandler.
Harmon Engineering – Mechanical and Electrical Design, 2709 Cheshire Rd. 801-8444. Robert Harmon.
Lightsoft Consulting, 717 W. Monroe St., Auburn. 801-6416. Christopher Bell.
ADJ's Lawn Service, 1697 W. Sunset Ave., Decatur. 827-1692. Allen D. Johnson.
Bobcat of Springfield, 4475 Camp Butler Rd. 636-225-2900. BCP-G Partners, LLC.
Kemzya Design, 131 Chatham Rd. 271-9215. Judith Bosonga Tofeko.

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PHOTO COURTESY CBCDR

New prototype for Dunkin' Donuts to open in Springfield

BY MICHELLE OWNBEY

It's been several years in the making, but the Dunkin' Donuts at 2730 S. Sixth St. is finally preparing to open. In April 2017, *SBJ* reported that Nick Bhatt, owner of the existing Dunkin' Donuts franchise at 102 Chatham Rd. in Springfield, was seeking approval to develop an outlet in the Habitat for Humanity parking lot.

The proposed project had to be reviewed by the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission, along with the Illinois Department of Transportation, and Bhatt said much of the delay was the result of negotiations with IDOT over the Sixth Street entrance to the property. "IDOT wanted to take that entrance,

but Dunkin' wouldn't have approved us to go into the facility," he said. "We ended up keeping the same curb cut instead of subdividing the property."

Bhatt's company, Shiva Developments, filed permits in August 2017 to begin construction on the 5,200-square-foot building, which is anchored by Dunkin' Donuts but includes additional retail space available for lease.

“We are currently marketing the excess space, which is about 3000 square feet,” said Blake Pryor, a realtor with Coldwell Banker Commercial in Springfield. He noted that the suite may end up being divided into two bays and said Bhatt was also open to building out the space for a tenant.

Joyner Construction Services served as the general contractor for the project. Owner Corky Joyner said, “It’s a great high traffic and very visible location. One of the things Dunkin’ Donuts looks for is morning traffic, and this is on the right side of the road for lots of people coming to town along I-55 and the South Sixth St. corridor.”

Joyner also noted that the store is one of the first new prototypes unveiled by Dunkin' Donuts, which Bhatt described as "a really cool inside build-out" but said that also led to some delays in the project. "The original permits were for the old design, so when Dunkin' came out with the NextGen prototype we had to go back and redo the architectural drawings and get

more permits," Bhatt explained.

Bhatt said he now hopes to have the store open by the second week of July and is in the process of hiring a store manager, along with shift leaders, crew members and bakers. "We're completely done with the construction, just waiting on signage and training the crew members."

In addition to the two Springfield locations, Bhatt is the franchisee for the Dunkin' Donuts in Jacksonville and Lincoln, along with multiple locations in California. He also said he has not ruled out additional expansion. "We'll be looking for one more location in Springfield or central Illinois," Bhatt said. ♦



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The image is a composite graphic. The top section features the Tremco logo in a stylized, italicized teal font, with the word 'TREMCO' in all caps. Below the logo, the words 'ROOFING & BUILDING MAINTENANCE' are written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The bottom section has a dark orange background with a subtle, wavy texture. Overlaid on this background is the text 'COMMERCIAL LOW SLOPE ROOFING PRODUCTS & SERVICES' in a large, white, distressed, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines. At the very bottom, a black horizontal bar contains the phone number '217-306-5610' in white, followed by a teal diamond icon and the email address 'djanssen@tremcoinc.com' in white.

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Listen to how Springfield works on The Brian Pierce Show on News/Talk 94.7 & 970 WMAV every weekday from 10:00am - Noon, followed by Springfield's only place for a full hour of local news, business and sports with The News Feed. You can depend on us for the most live and local news and talk programming in Springfield.

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