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SEPTEMBER 2023

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RICK FULLMER



NATE HAROLD

KASSY HERRIG

RENEE HESSELMAN



SARAH KNABEL

ARANTXA MARTINEZ  
RESENDIZ

JACK MESCHER



KEVIN MEYERS

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September 2023  
Volume 32, Issue 1

## FEATURES



Coming Attractions: Noodles & Company and Sierra Trading Post coming to the area 32



## COLUMNS

Quiet hiring and its effect in the workplace <i>Gerald Koppes</i> .....	35
Leadership: Ignited from within <i>Gretchen Brown</i> .....	36
Personal discovery is what leads to personal growth <i>Kathie Rotz</i> .....	37
Where are you in these eight stages of financial well-being? <i>Scott Burns</i> .....	38
Chinese markets looking at trouble ahead <i>Richard Baker</i> .....	39
If things stay this good with the economy, what will we complain about? <i>Evan Ramstad</i> .....	40
Educating within: How Baylor Scott & White is using training to confront staffing issues <i>Marin Wolf</i> .....	41
When jobs disappear in the shadow of AI <i>Brian Merchant</i> .....	42
Farewell to John Warnock, an internet pioneer whose invention made the world better <i>Michael Hiltzik</i> .....	53

## DEPARTMENTS

Snapshots .....	28
People .....	31
Look, Listen, Learn .....	34

# Rising Stars class of 2023

A hearty welcome and congratulations to the Rising Stars class of 2023.

Between work duties, volunteer activities and family time, this year's class stays involved and works toward a healthy community year round.

Join us in celebrating this year's class:



- Sailu Aryal, Dupaco Community Credit Union.
- Kevin Finke, Dubuque Bank & Trust.

- Rick Fullmer, Dubuque Police Department.
- Nate Harold, MedOne Pharmacy Benefit Solutions.
- Kassy Herrig, Cottingham & Butler.
- Renee Hesselman, Honkamp, P.C.
- Sarah Knabel, Bob and Lou's.
- Arantxa Martinez Resendiz,



Megan Gloss



Anthony Frenzel

University of Dubuque.

- Jack Mescher, Hills and Dales.
- Kevin Meyers, Kunkel and Associates Inc.
- Andy Ney, Paramount Ambulance.
- Erin Powers-Daley, Northeast Iowa Community College.

Enjoy learning more about them starting on page 6.

## IT'S ALMOST TIME

The breakfast event celebrating the honorees will take place Wednesday, Sept. 13, at the Diamond Jo Casino. Watch it live at [TelegraphHerald.com](https://www.TelegraphHerald.com)

*Have a story idea? Interested in writing for BizTimes? Email [megan.gloss@thmedia.com](mailto:megan.gloss@thmedia.com) and [tony.frenzel@thmedia.com](mailto:tony.frenzel@thmedia.com).*

## CONTACT US

Megan Gloss  
Managing Editor  
563-588-5638  
[megan.gloss@thmedia.com](mailto:megan.gloss@thmedia.com)

Bob Woodward  
Publisher  
563-588-5749  
[bob.woodward@wcinet.com](mailto:bob.woodward@wcinet.com)

bizTimes.biz  
P.O. Box 688

Anthony Frenzel  
Managing Editor  
563-588-5679  
[tony.frenzel@thmedia.com](mailto:tony.frenzel@thmedia.com)

Andy Kamentz  
Advertising Account Executive  
563-588-5699  
[andy.kamentz@thmedia.com](mailto:andy.kamentz@thmedia.com)

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# ★ RISING STAR EVENT

**Wednesday,  
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8 a.m. Presentation



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A portrait of Sailu Aryal, a woman with dark hair, wearing a black leather-style short-sleeved dress with a belt. She is smiling and has her hand on her hip.

# Sailu Aryal

BY MICHELLE LONDON

As a corporate governance specialist for Dupaco Community Credit Union, it is Sailu Aryal's job to ensure that the organization complies with all government policies and regulations.

It is a job that encompasses nearly every department and branch of Dupaco. And while Aryal's work is an important component of that organization's everyday operations, never was it more important than in 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic saw businesses having to shut down or severely alter the way in which they operated. The launch of the government's Paycheck Protection Program in response to those alterations meant that Aryal had to become a subject expert in a matter of days in what was an in-depth and complicated program with daily changes to its guidelines.

Danielle Grafton, who nominated Aryal for Rising Stars, is Dupaco's CFO.

"Sailu's dedication to implementing a successful PPP at Dupaco in a time of immense uncertainty allowed 654 businesses to keep their doors open and continue operating during COVID-19," said Grafton in her nomination application.

Aryal, who came to Dupaco as a senior internal auditor in 2017, said administering the PPP was, to say the least, interesting.

"The pandemic was this crazy thing that disrupted everyone's lives," she said. "Everybody needed relief, and we wanted to help as many businesses as possible. The first thing I did every morning was check for rule changes. And those changes had to be communicated across several different departments."

Grafton said Aryal's behind-the-scenes efforts were essential in administering the program.

"(Sailu's) leadership and commitment (allowed) Dupaco to keep hundreds of businesses doors open, paychecks continuing for thousands of individuals and families and business services continuing to be offered throughout the communities Dupaco serves," she said. "She did this with a smile on her face, always providing a helping hand in whatever capacity she could."

Aryal also gives back to the community in other ways. She has served on the board of directors at Mary's Inn, which supports young and expectant mothers. She also is involved with Junior Achievement, visiting classrooms and teaching children about financial literacy.

"These children are so adorable and they are so smart," Aryal said. "They are just bright little kids, and it blows my mind how much they want to learn."

Grafton said Aryal is a true asset to the Dubuque community.

"Her passion for financial literacy and commitment to serving others has enriched the lives of so many individuals," she said.

Aryal, who came to Dubuque from her native Kathmandu, Nepal, to attend Loras College in 2003, said she has found a home in Dubuque.

"The difficult thing is not coming from another country," she said. "It's finding your people. It doesn't matter where you're from or what your background is or what language you speak. It's finding that human connection. Finding the place where you belong. For me, that is absolutely here."

"The difficult thing is not coming from another country. It's finding your people. It doesn't matter where you're from or what your background is or what language you speak. It's finding that human connection. Finding the place where you belong. For me, that is absolutely here."

**Sailu Aryal**

## SAILU ARYAL IN DETAIL

**Age:** 39.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Corporate Governance Specialist, Dupaco Community Credit Union.

**Volunteer activities:** Junior Achievement of the Heartland.

**Education:** Bachelor's degree in accounting from Loras College; certified public accountant and Masters of Business Administration from the University of Dubuque.

**Family:** Husband, Girvan Aryal, and son, Shray Aryal, 7.

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** The real reason for everything I am today is because of the people I am blessed to be surrounded by. My mother is purely love and courage, her ability to care for others and her strength to face challenges inspire me the most. She has the biggest dream for me and her belief inspires me to live up to her vision.

I have two sisters who look up to me and

that inspires me to make a positive impact in the world. My husband inspires me to choose peace at all times. My son, who is continuously learning the ever-changing environment around him, inspires me to accept and embrace change.

I'm inspired to another level by some of the most genuine people at Dupaco. My colleagues are the epitome of humility, servant leadership and empathy. They lead by example and inspire me to be the best version of my authentic self. I am truly blessed to "do this life," in the words of one of my inspirations, with my people.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** Create memories with my family.

**One word to describe me:** Grateful.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** I'm an introvert, yet if I believe in the purpose, there aren't many things I wouldn't dare to do.

**Greatest fear:** Losing curiosity and the desire to learn and grow.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** I love people.

We are blessed to be here, together in this journey of life connected by the invisible human bond. One of the memories I cherish of my grandpa is of him sitting outside our house on a busy street in Kathmandu, Nepal, on a hot summer day.

Next to him were huge pitchers of homemade lemonade. He offered a glass of lemonade to anyone interested in quenching their thirst. From strangers to little children to adults passing by the street, they took a break to indulge in this treat and offered thanks to him and even blessings to our family.

I'm passionate about carrying the legacy of generosity, kindness and empathy my family instilled in me at an early age and helping others at every opportunity I receive. I'm also grateful for my place at Dupaco where we strive to serve people and communities, which fulfills my passion to contributing to the happiness of people.

# Congratulations, Sailu Aryal,

on your rocketing ascent  
to become a Rising Star!



S A I L U   J O I N S   T H E   U N I V E R S E   O F



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Jennifer Hanniford



Andrew Houy



Meggan Heacock



R.J. Montes



Andy Schroeder



Ellen Goodman-Miller



Katie McClain





# Kevin Finke

BY MICHELLE LONDON

While Kevin Finke's official title at Dubuque Bank & Trust is that of a vice president in the commercial banking department, the people he has worked with both professionally and through his community endeavors would add several others behind his name — leader, volunteer, role model and advocate among them.

DB&T commercial banking senior vice president Nate Patrum nominated Finke for Rising Stars.

"In the three short years that Kevin has been with DB&T, he has made a significant impact with his leadership," he said in the nomination.

"Not only is Kevin available for our clients, but he is always available and an advocate for his teammates. He is a role model each day in his work and personal life."

Finke's philosophy is that you don't need a formal title to step up.

"I've always been of the belief that you don't need a leadership title at work (to be a leader)," he said. "You just set that example."

Patrum pointed to DB&T's increase in asset size, streamlined processes

and more opportunities for cross-selling and relationship management as just a few of the ways that Finke has contributed to the organization's growth during the past three years.

"He has shared his techniques and strategies with colleagues," Patrum said. "He is collaborative and consistently works across departments to find solutions that will help our clients and the whole organization."

Finke also serves on the North Region board of Junior Achievement, and enjoys getting into the classroom to teach children how to do everything money-related — earn, spend, save, donate — and how all of that affects them and their community.

"My favorite part of Junior Achievement is volunteering in the classroom," he said. "The kids are very engaged. They want to learn. Third grade is where I've found my niche. They still think I'm cool. And if we can connect with kids and put them on the right path, that's important."

Patrum said that Finke's achievements both in his career and personal life have made him a valuable employee.

"Kevin is a role model each day in his work and personal life," Patrum said. "He is a consistent advocate for his teammates, his customers and his community. He is high energy and always willing to guide new coworkers or jump in to help when it's needed. He demonstrates a true balance of work and personal life."

"I've always been of the belief that you don't need a leadership title at work (to be a leader). You just set that example."

Kevin Finke



## KEVIN FINKE IN DETAIL

**Age:** 36.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Vice President and Commercial Banker, Dubuque Bank & Trust.

**Volunteer activities:** Board member for Junior Achievement of the Heartland and teaches third grade Junior Achievement.

**Education:** Bachelor's degree in busi-

ness administration from Winona State University.

**Family:** Wife, April, and children, Liam, 9; Kennedy, 7; and Maverick, 3.

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** My parents, Jen and Janet.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** Bowhunting whitetails in the Midwest.

**One word to describe me:** Patient.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** Though I am an avid hunter, I absolutely hate the cold and winter.

**Greatest fear:** Failure.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** My family.

“Kevin is a role model each day in his work and personal life. He is a consistent advocate for his teammates, his customers and his community. He is high energy and always willing to guide new coworkers or jump in to help when it's needed. He demonstrates a true balance of work and personal life.”

Nate Patrum



Dubuque Bank & Trust congratulates

# Kevin Finke

on being named a 2023

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# Rick Fullmer

BY MICHELLE LONDON

Rick Fullmer has been a police officer with the Dubuque Police Department since 2012. He was promoted to lieutenant in 2020, and is a patrol supervisor as well supervising the department's crisis negotiation team.

Assistant Chief Joe Messerich, who nominated Fullmer for Rising Stars, said Fullmer's passion for emotional intelligence training, his volunteer work in the community and his continuing education have made him a great leader within the department.

"He uses the knowledge he has gained to develop and deliver coaching for officers in the area of emotional intelligence and verbal de-escalation," Messerich said.

Fullmer admits it was initially a hard sell.

"We had generations of officers thinking work is work and home is home, and never the two shall mix," he said. "But we have to talk about it and deal with it and find the best way to manage it. Imagine walking into a room of police officers and saying, 'OK, we're going to talk about our thoughts and feelings today.' It's daunting."

Fullmer was teaching the D.A.R.E. program at Hillcrest Family Services and knew that he needed some additional skills to reach the population that Hillcrest serves. Soon he realized that all police officers needed these skills.

"I knew we had to talk about this," he said. "Mark Dalsing was our chief at the time, and he said it was interesting and to delve into it."

As a result, Fullmer partnered with the University of Dubuque and Six Seconds, an organization that assists businesses in learning and practicing emotional intelligence skills to create a program for Dubuque's police officers.

"There was nothing — nothing — on this for law enforcement," he said. "We dove head-first into it. In the academy, emotional intelligence was something they kind of breezed over, but things are changing."

Fullmer said the way officers are onboarded at the department now is different from the way it used to be.

"We do an emotional intelligence assessment," he said. "I debrief them, and then we strongly encourage them to go to the psychologist once a week and work on mindfulness. By the time they hit the street, we've talked about emotional intelligence and mindfulness. That's huge for us. That doesn't happen in many places."

Fullmer also serves on the board of Two By Two Character Development, as well the Dubuque Community School District's Community Education Equity Advisory Committee. He serves on the executive board of the Iowa Crisis Negotiators Association and also heads up the department's Police Explorer program.

"(Rick) is an excellent role model for the Explorers who participate in the program," Messerich said. "He's worked hard with his staff to put on a great program for the youth of Dubuque who are interested in law enforcement."

Fullmer's work in the area of emotional intelligence within the police department and the community is making an impact.

"The city has received a lot of training, and the school district has done a lot of training," he said. "It has become a movement, and it's taken off like a rocket."

"There was nothing — nothing — on this for law enforcement. We dove head-first into it. In the academy, emotional intelligence was something they kind of breezed over, but things are changing."

**Rick Fullmer**



## RICK FULLMER IN DETAIL

**Age:** 36.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Lieutenant, Dubuque Police Department.

**Volunteer activities:** Board member, Two by Two Character Development and board member, Iowa Crisis Negotiators Association.

**Education:** B.S. in criminal justice from University of Wisconsin-Platteville; M.A. in communication from University of Dubuque; emotional intelligence coaching

certification, Six Seconds.

**Family:** Husband, Michael; dogs, Tank and Seamus; and cat, Chloe.

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** My two grandmothers. They're great: A combination of grace, kindness, grit, determination and resilience. They always provide sound advice, much needed reassurance and the occasional reprimand followed up with a lesson. I would be a much different person if I didn't have their guidance.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** I started fishing recently and I really enjoy it.

**One word to describe me:** Determined.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** I'm incredibly shy.

**Greatest fear:** Heights and spiders.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** Teaching and learning. I live for those "lightbulb" moments.

“(Rick) is an excellent role model for the Explorers who participate in the program. He’s worked hard with his staff to put on a great program for the youth of Dubuque are who are interested in law enforcement.”

**Joe Messerich**

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Alleged shooter withdraws plea 2A  
Hinson tops Mathis in Q1 fundraising 5A  
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**TELEGRAPH HERALD**  
THURSDAY  
FALLING LEAFS: THE DUBUQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S "FALLING LEAFS" PROGRAM IS BACK FOR ANOTHER YEAR.

**Investors plan \$80 million expansion at Dyersville movie site DREAMING BIG**  
The expansion of the field at Dyersville includes a hotel, restaurants, entertainment, a golf course, and more. The project is expected to create thousands of jobs and boost the local economy.

**Roadwork in E. Dubuque begins today**  
The \$1.2M project aims to improve safety by converting a stretch of U.S. 20 from 4 lanes to 3.

**Man arrested in NY subway shooting 1A**  
A man was arrested in New York City after a shooting in a subway car.





# Nate Harold

BY MICHELLE LONDON

Nate Harold began his career at MedOne Pharmacy Benefit Solutions in 2014, when the company had only five employees.

Today, Harold is MedOne's vice president of clinical services, and the company has more than 100 employees, many of them falling under Harold's purview.

Wes Hartig, MedOne's CEO, nominated Harold for Rising Stars.

"Nate has all-around leadership DNA," Hartig said in his nomination. "It shows in how he carries himself both personally and professionally."

Harold has a vested interest in helping his direct reports succeed.

"We do weekly one-on-one meetings so I can understand where they want to go professionally and how I can help them do that," he said. "I never micro-manage my team. I just make sure the work they're doing is aligned with their interests. I want them to hit the ground running and go and build and create."

Harold will often take walks with a colleague around Allison Henderson Park, which is across the street from MedOne's offices.

"If I really want to connect with them and foster a meaningful relationship, that's what we'll do," he said. "When you

go on a walk with somebody, it's a very different way of interacting."

Hartig said Harold's ability to connect with others has been a critical part of MedOne's growth.

"Nate has been absolutely key to our success as a business," he said. "He carries himself in a way that brings tremendous respect and inspires others. He always interacts with others with an approach of helping them grow and develop."

Harold also mentors at least two pharmacology students per year from the University of Iowa and Drake University, and has served on the Greater Dubuque Development Corporation's Future Leadership Team. He and his wife, a veterinarian, have fostered collies for several years. He also joined a group of Dubuquers who traveled to Tanzania last year as part of Sisters of St. Francis Sister Water Project.

"The sisters provide funding to Safe Water for Life and Dignity, a nonprofit in Tanzania that provides safe and clean water in areas where they don't have access," Harold said. "As a group, we funded construction of a well, and inspected 20 to 30 wells to make sure what had been built so far was in good working order."

Harold said he is inspired by the amount of civic involvement, philanthropy and economic development happening in Dubuque.

"I'm a transplant to the area," he said. "My hometown had a very different approach. People in Dubuque care about Dubuque, and that stood out to me when I first came here in 2006. I continue to be impressed that the people here have a desire to be involved in improving their community."

"I'm a transplant to the area. My hometown had a very different approach. People in Dubuque care about Dubuque, and that stood out to me when I first came here in 2006. I continued to be impressed that the people here have a desire to be involved in improving their community."

Nate Harold

## NATE HAROLD IN DETAIL

**Age:** 38.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Vice president of clinical services, MedOne Pharmacy Benefit Solutions.

**Volunteer activities:** Founding member of the University of Iowa College of Pharmacy Genesis Alumni Board; member of the Iowa Pharmacy Association House of Delegates; past member of Greater Dubuque Development Corp.'s Future Leadership Team; foster dog parent with Collie Rescue of Greater Illinois; adjunct faculty and preceptor with Drake University College of Pharmacy; adjunct faculty and preceptor with the University of Iowa College of Pharmacy; professional mentor of student pharmacists through the University of Iowa College of Pharmacy.

**Education:** Yakima Valley Community College, Yakima, Wash.; Torchbearers International, Capernwray, England; Moody Bible Institute, Chicago; St. Ambrose University, Davenport, Iowa; Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa; Doctor of Pharmacy, University of Iowa College of Pharmacy, Iowa City.

**Family:** Spouse, Emily (Meyer) Harold; parents, Lahre and Sherry Harold; in-laws,

Karen (Gilligan) and Merle Meyer; collies, Auto and EV.

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** My grandfather. When he passed away in 2015, I had the opportunity to reflect and share the life lessons he had imparted to me. He taught me that anything worth having in this life is worth working for. Don't be a part of something that could hurt another person. It matters more that you are respectable than likable. There will always be someone better, stronger or faster than you. That is OK, but never let someone beat you because they outworked you. Lastly, always go for first place no matter how hard it seems. It's always worth it in the end.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** I'd say work, but that would be a little "tongue in cheek." Honestly, I enjoy a wide variety of activities from playing music to playing sports. I enjoy the company of friends and family. I like traveling, going to concerts and attending motorsport events.

But I think my favorite thing to do is try new things. I love new experiences and venturing into the unknown. I am that person who is up for anything simply for the sake of

saying I know better because I have done it.

**One word to describe me:** Dedicated.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** People often say that I am smart — and eventually I did well in school — but as a child I was in remedial classes and couldn't pronounce the letter "R" correctly in words. Bless those teachers because the remedial classes must have worked. Now I can say very complex names of medications incorrectly with absolute confidence.

**Greatest fear:** I worry that I will lose the ability to be of service to those around me, either because my level of ability has changed or because I became apathetic to the needs of others. And bees, I'm not a big fan of bees.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** I gain an immense amount of fulfillment and satisfaction in helping others identify and achieve their potential. I am most in my element when I am encouraging others to strive for something better and helping determine how best to achieve it.

"Nate has all-around leadership DNA. It shows in how he carries himself both personally and professionally."

Wes Hartig

## CONGRATULATIONS DR. NATE HAROLD!

Your contributions to MedOne have been integral to our success and growth. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to helping move MedOne forward.





A portrait of Kassy Herrig, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a grey plaid blazer over a black top and black pants. She is smiling and has her hand on her hip.

# Kassy Herrig

BY MICHELLE LONDON

Kassy Herrig began her career at Cottingham & Butler as a marketing intern right out of college and never left.

Seventeen years later, she is the assistant vice president of marketing, playing a pivotal role in one of the largest insurance brokerages in the country.

Cottingham & Butler senior vice president Angie Long nominated Herrig as a Rising Star.

"Kassy's commitment to continuous improvement and her unwavering dedication are evident in every aspect of her work," Long said in her nomination. "Her mantra is 'How can we do better next time?' Under Kassy's guidance, marketing has transitioned into truly impactful experiences for our clients and prospects, as well as our employees."

Herrig's creative mindset has led to a number of successful marketing campaigns, including organizing the Transportation Summit, an annual event that brings together industry leaders and trucking company executives.

"Transportation is one of our largest business segments," Herrig said. "We came up with this idea of a transportation summit that would give people two days of really solid training and networking with their industry peers. I thrive off of experiences, and I wanted to make sure it was an experience that hadn't been seen

in the industry before."

The first summit attracted 70 attendees, and now draws more than 500 to the annual event.

The growth of the event doesn't surprise Long, who said that it's not unusual for Herrig to seek out opportunities for professional development, whether it's for herself, fellow employees or clients.

"Kassy's thirst for knowledge is insatiable," Long said. "She participates in workshops, conferences and programs to enhance her skills. She researches new ideas and brings them to fruition, driving innovation in the organization."

Herrig is one of four employees who started the C&B Better initiative, and she continues to serve on its board. The program encourages employees to donate a portion of their paychecks, which in turn is awarded quarterly to a community organization that applies for the award.

"We're constantly asked to support any number of groups," Herrig said. "C&B Better was started to bring people together who were passionate about giving. You may not have the biggest paycheck, but you can do a little good where you are. That's the power of the program, and we've collectively given over \$100,000 (to groups in the community)."

Herrig also helped found the Bobcat Legacy Foundation, which supports fine arts and athletic extracurricular activities in the Western Dubuque Community School District.

"We're really trying to fundraise for things that live outside the district's budget, whether that's arts, music, business, technology or athletics," she said.

Whether it's her career or volunteer work, Herrig is modest about her achievements.

"I give of my time when I can," she said. "I go where I see the need and where I'm able to contribute."

"C&B Better was started to bring people together who were passionate about giving. You may not have the biggest paycheck, but you can do a little good where you are. That's the power of the program, and we've collectively given over \$100,000 (to groups in the community)."

Kassy Herrig



## KASSY HERRIG IN DETAIL

**Age:** 37

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** AVP, marketing

**Volunteer activities:** Bobcat Legacy Foundation; C&B Better Initiative.

I'm actively involved in various community projects like organizing blood drives, helping at the local food bank, mentoring in schools and supporting several other local needs.

**Education:** Bachelor of Arts in marketing from Loras College.

**Family:** Husband, Jayden Herrig, and children, Bella, 16; Charlie, 13; Lucy, 11; Tally, 7; and Jack, 5.

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** My greatest inspiration comes from my parents. They're the hardest workers I've ever known, teaching me the value of persistence and pursuing my goals. They've shown me that the easy way isn't

always the best way, instilling a sense of responsibility, accountability and high expectations from a young age.

They are also some of the most generous people I know — always willing to help others, even when facing their own challenges. Their selflessness has taught me so many lessons about giving and kindness.

Their strong work ethic, integrity and compassion have not only inspired me but have helped guide my personal and professional growth in making a positive difference in the lives of others.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:**

Spending time with my family — we are always on the move, rarely having a quiet night or weekend. But, honestly, I wouldn't want it any other way. I love watching my kids go after what they love, diving into new experiences and just being active.

We are big sports fanatics and really love

our Iowa Hawkeyes — whether it is baseball, basketball or football, we love to go to as many games as we can as a family.

**One word to describe me:** Dynamic.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:**

I won the pig-calling contest at the Iowa State Fair, despite never having owned pigs. I'm always game for some friendly competition.

**Greatest fear:** Looking back and having regrets. I want to look back knowing I gave my all, embraced new experiences, had a ton of fun and expressed what truly matters.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** Creating unforgettable experiences. Whether it's at home or in my work, creating experiences and memories that stick with people is what drives a lot of what I do and how I live.



*Congratulations!  
Rising Star  
Kassy Herrig*

Cottingham & Butler



# Renee Hesselman

BY MICHELLE LONDON

Renee Hesselman has a head for numbers.

As a shareholder and CPA at Honkamp, P.C., Hesselman knew she had landed where she belonged the moment she began her internship there.

"I was a business major at Clarke (University)," she said. "Once I started taking accounting classes there, I knew it was my thing. I started an internship (at Honkamp) after my sophomore year, and I've been here ever since."

Honkamp's president and CEO, Katie Thomas, nominated Hesselman for Rising Stars.

"Renee's career at Honkamp has been a business success story," she said in her nomination. "She became a leader, garnered promotions, and by 2017, she had become one of the company's shareholders."

Hesselman said her volunteerism outside of her professional life was inspired by those she worked with at Honkamp.

"When I was first hired here, Arnie Honkamp (who has since passed away) and the rest of our leadership did a tremendous job of

being involved in the community," she said. "I saw how hard they all worked in the community. We work hard, but we like to give back."

Hesselman has a special place in her heart for the Four Mounds Foundation, where she has served on the board for 15 years, many of them as treasurer. She has particularly enjoyed seeing the growth of Four Mounds' HEART (Housing, Education and Rehabilitation Training) program to include young adults beyond high school.

"If higher education isn't their role, it can be so hard to make a connection and figure out what's next," she said. "I think it's important to give back to the community where we live and work and where we raise our children."

Hesselman also gives of her time and expertise as the treasurer of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Spanish Immersion School's parent association. She assists with a number of events, including the school's largest fundraiser in the fall every year.

"It would be easy for Renee to just write a check in support of those organizations," Thomas said. "To give of her time is more valuable."

Hesselman said her colleagues at Honkamp, both past and present, provided a solid model of exactly how to do that.

"It's so important to try to help where you can, however you can," she said.

"When I was first hired here, Arnie Honkamp (who has since passed away) and the rest of our leadership did a tremendous job of being involved in the community. I saw how hard they all worked in the community. We work hard, but we like to give back."

**Renee Hesselman**



## RENEE HESSELMAN IN DETAIL

**Age:** 39.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Partner, Honkamp, P.C.

**Volunteer activities:** Treasurer, Four Mounds Foundation; treasurer, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parent Association.

**Education:** Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, Clarke University.

**Family:** Husband, Ted; son, Max, 11; daughters, Madeline, 10, and Mira, 4.

**Person most inspirational to me and**

**why:** My parents — they instilled the importance of strong marriage, hard work ethic, prioritizing family, compassion for others and enjoying life to its fullest.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** I enjoy spending time with my husband and three kids, whether it's attending their various events and sports activities or traveling.

**One word to describe me:** Passionate.

**What's one thing that most people**

**would be surprised to know about you:** I am an only child.

**Greatest fear:** Flying.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in life:** I am passionate about building strong and meaningful relationships. One of my favorite aspects of work and the charitable activities I am involved in is the relationships I have been able to build with my coworkers, clients and community members.

“Renee’s career at Honkamp has been a business success story. She became a leader, garnered promotions, and by 2017, she had become one of the company’s shareholders.”

Katie Thomas



HONKAMP CONGRATULATES

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**RENEE HESSELMAN**

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ON HER RECOGNITION AS A  
**2023 RISING STAR**

**RENEE HESSELMAN**  
HONKAMP SHAREHOLDER



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# Sarah Knabel

BY MICHELLE LONDON

Sarah Knabel, owner of Bob and Lou's Coffee, started her life after college the way many newly minted college graduates do — with a corporate gig.

"I worked in a cubicle for a while," she said. "But I knew that wasn't for me."

When COVID-19 hit in 2020, Knabel's corporate position ended, which she saw as an opportunity.

"I probably should have been upset, but I wasn't," she said. "I had told my friends for a long time that I could totally see myself owning a coffee shop one day. I love the vibes. Everyone is happy in a coffee shop. I just loved everything about it."

Sarah's mother, Laura, one of Knabel's early investors in the business, nominated her for Rising Stars.

"Sarah began her business in 2020 in the midst of the COVID pandemic," Laura Knabel said in her nomination. "She started with a vintage mobile camper and within three years has a storefront and a custom coffee camper that she travel with all over the tri-states."

Between Knabel's brick-and-mortar shop on University Avenue and her custom camper, there are seven employees working for Bob and Lou's.

Knabel, who handles everything from marketing and purchasing to waiting on customers, has also found time to mentor other future entrepreneurs.

"I went to Wahlert (Catholic High School), and they had reached out to me with questions on how I started my coffee shop," she said. "I said if they were interested, I would love to help mentor and get a coffee shop up and running (by students within the school). I'm glad that shop is still successful today. It's cool to see young kids starting to get into that entrepreneurial mindset."

In addition to running a successful business, Knabel also give back to the community through her volunteer work.

"She is a role model for her employees and other female entrepreneurs through her involvement with Empower Her Dubuque," Laura Knabel said. "She is an active volunteer with the Women's Giving Circle and does social media for them. She also enjoys helping local charities raise money with matched coffee sales."

Knabel, who chairs the social media committee and is a member of the outreach committee for Women's Giving Circle, said she was hooked when she attended her first event with the group.

"It was eye-opening about who they're helping and what they're doing within our community," she said. "It's a group of women who raise money and put that money into nonprofits that are helping women and children in our community. I hope to bring in more women from my generation, because they are amazing."

Knabel said she's far from done growing her business.

"That's always the end goal," she said. "I would love to see us in a bigger space. I'm hopefully going to be able to make those dreams come to life someday. Ideas are always brewing in my head."

"I went to Wahlert (Catholic High School), and they had reached out to me with questions on how I started my coffee shop. I said if they were interested, I would love to help mentor and get a coffee shop up and running. I'm glad that shop is still successful today. It's cool to see young kids starting to get into that entrepreneurial mindset."

**Sarah Knabel**



## SARAH KNABEL IN DETAIL

**Age:** 27.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Owner and Founder of Bob & Lou's Coffee.

**Volunteer activities:** Marketing Chair for Women's Leadership Network; occasional volunteer at Convivium Urban Farmstead; and my collaboration with Secondhand Soulmates pet rescue to find homes for homeless pets.

**Education:** Majoring in public relations and marketing, with a minor in apparel merchandising and design, at Iowa State University.

**Family:** Austin Willenborg (fiance), Laura and Jim Knabel (parents), Bob and Mary Lou Johanningsmeier (grandparents).

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** Joanna Gaines — I have always

appreciated her work-life balance, her humble nature and her support for other businesses. She started with a love for home decor and just continued to work hard and brand off of that original love, all while keeping her family close and never forgetting her roots.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** Nothing will beat a beautiful summer night on the deck with family and friends and a delicious, home-cooked meal. I grew up with horses so they will always be one of my favorite hobbies, there is so much to learn from those beautiful animals. I also love going for hikes, practicing yoga and traveling to new places.

**One word to describe me:** Spirited — my family and friends have always used this word when describing me. I would say if I am passionate about something I put my

whole heart into it.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** I lived in Los Angeles, Calif., for an internship after college.

**Greatest fear:** Losing someone I love too soon.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** Achieving my goals. Not a day goes by that I am not working toward my goals. I continue to think about what I have to do and the steps I have to take to get to my next goal stair (I always consider each goal as a staircase and taking it one step at a time rather than looking at the top of their staircase). I am so grateful for the family and friends I have that push me and support all of my lofty goals.

“She is a role model for her employees and other female entrepreneurs through her involvement with Empower Her Dubuque. She is an active volunteer with the Women's Giving Circle and does social media for them. She also enjoys helping local charities raise money with matched coffee sales.”

Laura Knabel



## Congratulations

Sarah Knabel, on your 2023 Rising Stars award! Your hard work, creativity, and passion have created a beautiful community surrounding your coffee business, Bob & Lou's. We are so proud of all that you have accomplished and the exciting road ahead for you as an entrepreneur. Your ability to empower women, give back to your community, and foster a welcoming environment at each coffee event you host is inspiring. Thank you for spreading so much joy and positivity in Dubuque through coffee and community!

Love,  
Your Family & Employees

**Bob  
& Lou's**

# Arantxa Martinez Resendiz

BY MICHELLE LONDON

Arantxa Martinez Resendiz came to Dubuque from her hometown of San Luis Potosi, Mexico, in 2014 to study at the University of Dubuque. After getting her degree in business administration with an emphasis in marketing in 2018, she began working for the university as a social media coordinator. Soon, she transitioned into the position of marketing analyst for the university.

"I look at the back end of the website and all the data that comes in," she said. "Bounce rates, social media and a lot of other things. I analyze that data and create reports that go to other departments like marketing."

Martinez Resendiz admits that when she first came to UD, she didn't venture far from campus.

"When I was a student, to be honest, I never left campus," she said. "I never felt the need to do that. When I graduated and started working, suddenly I realized there was a lot more out there, and I needed to go out and explore it."

Clara Lopez, of the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, nominated Martinez Resendiz for Rising Stars, and the pair have gotten to know each other through their volunteer work in the community.

"Arantxa is a role model for many women who aspire to be successful, charismatic and approachable," Lopez said in her nomina-

tion. "She came to Dubuque as a student from Mexico, and decided to continue to make this community her home and uplift the voices of the Latinx community."

Martinez Resendiz first got involved volunteering for Dubuque Regional Humane Society and the Dubuque Farmers Market. She soon got involved with planning for Dubuque's Latin Fiesta.

Those planning meetings, along with the relationships forged among the group, led to the founding of Dubuque Unidos, a group of young professionals who bring cultural awareness to the community through organizing educational and social events. Dubuque Unidos recently joined with LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens), and now has even more resources that it can bring to the community with the national affiliation.

Martinez Resendiz is vice president of the Dubuque chapter, and recently took on public relations duties for all LULAC chapters in Iowa.

"The main thing that we plan is the fiesta, but we have so many more resources now," Martinez Resendiz said. "There are resources for Latin farmers, so we're planning a workshop where we can introduce them to those resources."

She also is the codirector of social media for the Young Professionals program at the Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce, and is on the Dubuque Farmers Market committee.

"(Arantxa) exemplifies leadership through her role in events and community engagement," Lopez said.

Martinez Resendiz is determined to make an impact in her home of Dubuque.

"I do find that it is my home now," she said. "I've always said to people that you so often hear what's wrong in a community. But if you want to make changes, you have to be involved and active."

"When I was a student, to be honest, I never left campus. I never felt the need to do that. When I graduated and started working, suddenly I realized there was a lot more out there, and I needed to go out and explore it."

**Arantxa Martinez Resendiz**



## ARANTXA MARTINEZ RESENDIZ IN DETAIL

**Age:** 27.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Market Research Analyst, University of Dubuque.

**Volunteer activities:** Dubuque Main Street, depending on events; Young Professionals of Dubuque, co-director of social media; translator for those in need of it in Dubuque County; Dubuque Unidos, vice president; Dubuque Farmer's Market Committee, member; LULAC Iowa State, director of publicity.

**Education:** Bachelor of business administration (2018) from University of Dubuque; Master of Arts in Communication (2020) from University of Dubuque; Master in Management — Communication Management (2020) from University of Dubuque.

**Family:** Mother, Francisca Resendiz Lara, union leader and economist in San Luis Potosi, Mexico; Father, Tereso Martinez Onofre, real estate agent in San Luis

Potosi; Sister, Siglinde Martinez Resendiz, senior analyst, data and consumer insight at Warner Bros., Paris, France.

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** My parents. My mom has taught me to be fearless, humble and fight for what is right, and my dad has taught me how to love deeply, be truthful and care for the people around me. Thanks to them, I am where I need to be today.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** When the weather allows it in the Midwest, I love to explore nature. It helps ground me and be centered when things around me might be hectic. I also like to read, preferably sci-fi, because it allows me to imagine the world the author is depicting.

**One word to describe me:** Adaptable.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** One thing people get surprised about is when I add ketchup to my Hawaiian pizza (yes, love pineapple on my pizza, too).

**Greatest fear:** Not living life to the fullest. In high school, one of my dearest friends passed away from leukemia. She was a remarkable person — full of resilience and brilliance — and she had a way of brightening up the lives of those around her.

I remember one day when we were at her house, she told us to live life to the fullest because we never know when our time on Earth will end. Three months later, she passed away, and her words have stayed with me ever since. I try to live by her advice and make the most of every moment.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** When I was younger, my passion was tennis, which led me to come to the United States to play and pursue an education. Nowadays, my passion is to be a positive force for change — challenge the status quo, relearn and hold spaces for people — in any environment I find myself in.

THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE  
CONGRATULATES

ARANTXA MARTINEZ RESENDIZ

on her recognition as a  
**2023 RISING STAR**

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[www.dbq.edu](http://www.dbq.edu)

**Arantxa Martinez Resendiz**  
Market Research Analyst  
Office of University Relations







# Jack Mescher

BY MICHELLE LONDON

After serving as a direct support employee at Hills & Dales during college, and then working for the federal government post-graduation, Jack Mescher returned to Hills & Dales, first in direct support, and then as assistant director.

He stepped into the role of CEO in 2021 following the long tenure of Marilyn Althoff, who had been with the organization for 32 years, including 17 as CEO.

As if that wasn't daunting enough, he did it in the midst of a pandemic.

"It was a very challenging time," Mescher said. "We had to really struggle through understanding regulations that didn't really contemplate our population, and we had to implement a federal vaccine mandate alongside the worst job crisis in health care in a century."

But Clairra Sieverding Kapraun, of Brain Health Now, who nominated Mescher for Rising Stars, said there was no doubt he was the man for the job.

"Jack has demonstrated exceptional leadership," she said in her nomination. "He is a visionary and a strategic thinker.

He is always five steps ahead, identifying emerging trends and opportunities."

One of those opportunities was opening the Weber Autism Center this year. Named for principal donors Jim and Jane Weber, Mescher was involved in everything from fundraising for the project to programming. The center will double Hills & Dales' ability to serve the autism community to at least 80 young people.

"The center serves children who live at home and are working on goals like communication, social behaviors, works skills for older teenagers," he said.

Because the center is the third largest provider of autism services in the state of Iowa, Mescher said it's important to him to articulate how rare it is to have such a center in a city the size of Dubuque.

"It's pretty much us and two other groups in the state," he said. "To have that in Dubuque is pretty amazing."

Kapraun pointed out that Mescher is completely dedicated to his role, not only as CEO, but as a servant leader.

"He selflessly puts the needs of others before his own, fostering a culture of collaboration, empathy and growth," she said. "He will sacrifice his weekends and holidays to ensure adequate coverage and in order to allow direct support professional to spend weekends and holidays with their families."

Mescher said it's just part of the job.

"We're 24/7 at Hills & Dales," he said. "There's no work-life balance. It's work-life alignment. The important thing is to serve our population in an excellent manner."

"It was a very challenging time. We had to really struggle through understanding regulations that didn't really contemplate our population, and we had to implement a federal vaccine mandate alongside the worst job crisis in health care in a century."

Jack Mescher



## JACK MESCHER IN DETAIL

**Age:** 30.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** CEO of Hills & Dales.

**Volunteer activities:** Various initiatives and committees promoting human dignity and supports for vulnerable populations. Various initiatives and work with the Catholic Church.

**Education:** St. Francis Xavier Elementary, Dyersville, Iowa; Beckman Catholic High School, Dyersville.; Loras College,

Dubuque.

**Family:** Wife, Karan; sons Richard, 2, and Elmer, 6 months.

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** Mother Teresa of Calcutta: She modeled that major human impact is possible through small and otherwise inconsequential acts of kindness and sacrifice.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** Meeting and visiting with friends, family and new people. Having engaging conver-

sation and learning. Observing the wonderment and playful spirit of my children.

**One word to describe me:** Curious.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** Not too much.

**Greatest fear:** Apathy, in all its forms.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** People, not things.

“He selflessly puts the needs of others before his own, fostering a culture of collaboration, empathy and growth. He will sacrifice his weekends and holidays to ensure adequate coverage and in order to allow direct support professional to spend weekends and holidays with their families.”

**Claira Sieverding Kapraun**



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# Kevin Meyers

BY MICHELLE LONDON

Skill, determination, exceptional leadership and unwavering commitment to excellence.

These are just a few of the terms Lauren Minert, human resources manager at Kunkel & Associates, used to describe Kevin Meyers in her nomination for Rising Stars.

"Throughout his tenure, Kevin has consistently demonstrated exemplary leadership qualities that have earned him the respect and admiration of his colleagues," she said.

Three years ago, Meyers took over Kunkel's summer college internship program.

"Once we started getting traction behind the internship program six years ago, I had a huge interest in it," he said. "I talked to our CEO and said I had a passion and skillset for it, and they were gracious enough to give me that opportunity."

Minert said she believes that Meyers has developed one of the best internship programs in the Midwest.

"Kevin's ability to build up that program has had a significant impact on our company results," she said. "We have hired over 90% of the interns back full-time, and last year we had five new hires from the internship program that finished in the top 20 of our sales group."

Meyers is a huge fan of not only Kunkel's internal internship program, but interns in general.

"Internships have really changed the workplace, and that was something we recognized," Meyers said. "This is an opportunity to really scout young talent. They're very malleable, and we can teach them our tricks of the trade and really be that first true professional office experience. We're seeing another level of success with that. A lot of our young salespeople are really crushing it."

In addition to his commitment to Kunkel & Associates and its internship program, Minert said Meyers is a huge contributor to the company's overall culture.

"He has a strong commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive work culture," Minert said. "He prioritizes open communication, seeks input from team members and encourages diverse perspectives. His inclusive leadership style has created an environment where everyone feels valued, empowered and motivated to do their best."

Those qualities carry over into Meyers' commitment to his community as well. As a member of the Dubuque Chamber of Commerce's Young Professionals, he has served on the board as a member, as vice president and most recently as president. He is also on the board of Opening Doors.

"I believe that once a mentor, always a mentor," Meyers said. "I think that way in the workplace and personally. It's a lifelong thing. You build relationships with these people, so even five or 10 years down the road, you're still there to help."

"I believe that once a mentor, always a mentor. I think that way in the workplace and personally. It's a lifelong thing. You build relationships with these people, so even five or 10 years down the road, you're still there to help."

**Kevin Meyers**



## KEVIN MEYERS IN DETAIL

**Age:** 33.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Account executive with Kunkel & Associates.

**Volunteer activities:** Opening Doors board of directors, sponsor couple at church, Knights of Columbus member. Formerly on the Young Professionals of Dubuque board of directors and a mentor for Dubuque Community School District.

**Education:** 2013 graduate of Loras College.

**Family:** Wife, Stephanie; sons Gage and Will.

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** My wife, Stephanie. She has been my biggest supporter and cheerleader with all I do while crushing it as a parent, professional, friend and wife. She is able to balance everything and we love solving the world's problems together any chance we get.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** I'm often told that I missed my calling as a chef. I love to cook. I also love to host people at my house for cookouts or bonfires.

I'm an avid Iowa Hawkeyes fan and I love to travel.

**One word to describe me:** Personable.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** I have a degree in elementary education.

**Greatest fear:** Drowning.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** Bringing others with me and catapulting them forward. It's one thing to help others run but it's another to want them to run faster than you.

“He has a strong commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive work culture. He prioritizes open communication, seeks input from team members and encourages diverse perspectives. His inclusive leadership style has created an environment where everyone feels valued, empowered and motivated to do their best.”

**Lauren Minert**

*Congratulations*  
**KEVIN MEYERS**



**ANOTHER KUNKEL  
RISING STAR!**



# Andy Ney

BY MICHELLE LONDON

As director of operations for Paramount Ambulance, Andy Ney has a big job: Managing the fleet, scheduling EMT and paramedic crews, overseeing training, protocol reviews, overseeing inspections and managing operations for the three states (Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin) in which Paramount operates.

Ney's parents, Marvin and Maria, founded the service in 2003, when Ney was 10. Maria nominated Ney for Rising Stars.

"Andy has been involved (with Paramount) since his senior year in high school when he obtained his EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) certificate," Maria said in her nomination. "He has advanced to become a critical care paramedic along with operations director. He is the youngest serving president of the Iowa EMS Association."

Andy's path in the EMS field began when his parents started the ambulance company.

"I watched it all happen," he said. "And I really fell in love with it. In 2012, (Paramount's) call volume doubled, and I saw that my parents really needed some help on the business and management side. So I kind of changed my path. I was thinking of

law enforcement, but I think this was really my passion. It's been a fun path to get here."

While Ney oversees much of the administration and business side of Paramount, he still keeps his paramedic credentials current.

"That's the lucky thing about my position," he said. "If we're busy, I can jump on an ambulance and go on a call. I really have the best of both worlds. I do my certifications every year and stay involved in continuing education."

Ney also has a passion for education, and was involved in establishing a state-approved EMT program at Loras College.

"Andy was a key person in establishing that partnership," Maria said. "His passion for EMS really shows through in all of his involvements."

Ney worked for seven years in the field as an EMT and paramedic prior to taking on the director of operations role. He also gives much of his free time to volunteer work, including as a volunteer firefighter and paramedic with the Peosta-Centralia Fire Department, hosting a podcast for the Iowa EMS Association and volunteering as a paramedic for motocross and snowcross snowmobile events.

"I'm one of those people who takes a break from work to do more work," Ney said. "But I fell in love with taking care of people. That's really where it all started. This is what I've been put on this earth to do."

"That's the lucky thing about my position. If we're busy, I can jump on an ambulance and go on a call. I really have the best of both worlds. I do my certifications every year and stay involved in continuing education."

**Andy Ney**



## ANDY NEY IN DETAIL

**Age:** 30.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Director of operations/paramedic with Paramount Emergency Medical Service.

**Volunteer activities:** Volunteer firefighter/paramedic at Centralia-Peosta Fire Department. President of The Iowa EMS Association.

**Education:** Bachelor of arts degree at Loras College in business management; critical care certificate from Creighton University; paramedic certificate from Northeast Iowa Community College.

**Family:** Maria and Marvin Ney (parents), Alicia (twin sister), Christina (sister) and

Emily (sister).

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** Both of my parents are my biggest source of inspiration. My dad for his innovative thinking and charismatic personality and my mom for her intelligence and thoughtfulness. My dad has helped me build a network of mentors and resources in EMS that I am extremely grateful for. My mom has kept me humble and rooted in my faith to be the best person I can be.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** Motocross. I started riding dirt bikes when I was 7 years old, and to this day, it is my favorite hobby outside of work. It is getting much more difficult as I get older, but it keeps me young. Other things I enjoy are

waterfowl hunting, fishing, snowboarding and traveling.

**One word to describe me:** Ambitious.

**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** I have my own podcast called The Voice for Iowa EMS.

**Greatest fear:** Losing my sense of purpose in my career.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** Making an impact on someone's life and inspiring them to reach goals they thought were not obtainable. This can apply to a patient I transport in an ambulance or any co-worker with a dream.

“Andy has been involved (with Paramount) since his senior year in high school when he obtained his EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) certificate. He has advanced to become a critical care paramedic along with operations director. He is the youngest serving president of the Iowa EMS Association.”

**Maria Ney**



*Congratulations*  
to our Rising Star  
Andy Ney!



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A full-length portrait of Erin Powers-Daley, a woman with long brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a white short-sleeved top and bright red high-waisted pants with a large bow at the waist. She has her hands on her hips.

# Erin Powers-Daley

BY MICHELLE LONDON

As the director of student and community development at Northeast Iowa Community College, Erin Powers-Daley's responsibilities span the width and breadth of the college.

"In her role, she wears many leadership hats," said Amy Green, NICC's director of program sales, contract training and outreach services, in nominating Powers-Daley for Rising Stars.

Powers-Daley is regularly involved with the e-sports program, a new initiative that was unveiled last year.

"Kara Popp and Shannon Dirks, of our student life team, were instrumental in helping recruit for that program and really put the pieces together for that," she said. "It was an opportunity to engage with a different population of students and be inclusive, and we thought it was a great opportunity to build on the momentum of that."

Powers-Daley has been with NICC since 2012, starting as a center director and moving into a director of recruitment role in 2017. As she took on new tasks and responsibilities, the title was changed to director of student and community development.

"In a former life, I was a counselor for many years, and that really integrated well into the student development role," she said.

Green said Powers-Daley is always looking for new ways to help students and staff.

"Erin is a role model for so many," Green said. "She is a strategic thinker who is always looking for way to improve and to set our team up for success. She has a district-wide presence and leads with passion for her job, students, business and community partners, and she inspires her team to do the same. She juggles all of that with family and her passion for health and wellness while giving back through her volunteer efforts."

Powers-Daley volunteers at her children's schools and with their sports teams, and is going into her eighth and final year as school board president at Notre Dame Catholic School in Cresco, Iowa. She also is an avid runner, and often runs marathons or trail runs in order to raise funds for local organizations and NICC's student crisis fund.

"I feel like a lot of what I do in my job is in the heart of the community," she said. "So if there's any opportunity where I can help, I'll do what I can. I'm always asking, 'How can I be of service today?'"

Powers-Daley chalks her servant's heart up to her grandmother's example.

"We were very close," she said. "She was just always a woman who was consistently giving to others, and she taught me that what I have been given are my gifts, and I should always be seeking a way to give them back."

"In a former life, I was a counselor for many years, and that really integrated well into the student development role."

**Erin Powers-Daley**



## ERIN POWERS-DALEY IN DETAIL

**Age:** 40.

**Job title/occupation/place of employment:** Executive Director of Community and Student Development for Northeast Iowa Community College.

**Volunteer activities:** Serve on various community and activity boards, related to both work and leisure.

Notre Dame School Board president, 2017-present. Winneshiek County Economic Development Board, February 2023-present. Dubuque WORKS member, September 2019-present. Dubuque County Re-Entry Committee, chair/member, September 2021-present. Regional Health Services of Howard County Foundation Board of Directors, secretary/treasurer, December 2016-2017. Cresco Iowa Sesquicentennial Planning Committee, executive board member, August 2015-2016. RAGBRAI Hospitality Planning Committee, member, February 2017-July 2017. Dubuque County Child Care Coalition Team, member, September 2019-present. Project Hope, member, September 2019-present. Cresco Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, October 2012-2017.

**Education:** Doctor of Philosophy in higher

education administration and leadership, September 2020, Iowa State University; Master of Arts in marriage and family therapy, July 2009, Argosy University; Bachelor of Arts in psychology and family services, May 2006, University of Northern Iowa.

**Family:** I have been married to my husband, Matt, for 16 years. We have three children, Ava, 14; Liam, 12; and Preston, 9. We live on my husband's family farm in northeast Iowa. We stay busy with the activities of our three kids and enjoy doing anything outdoors.

**Person most inspirational to me and why:** My grandma, Lois. She was someone who always gave more than she received. She was consistently present and thankful for all that she had and was a hard-working woman who never complained. She was an inspiration to me growing up and I was fortunate to spend much of my childhood with her. She taught me the value of hard work and giving back to others.

**Favorite thing to do outside of work:** I enjoy anything outdoors and spending time with my husband and kids. I find my peace in running and it helps me to center myself every single day. Running has been a part of me since I discovered it after

graduating high school. It pushes me to strive for reaching new goals and pushing myself beyond what, at times, seems physically impossible. It's also kept me humble and teaches me that failure is just another opportunity to try again.

**One word to describe me:** Integrous.

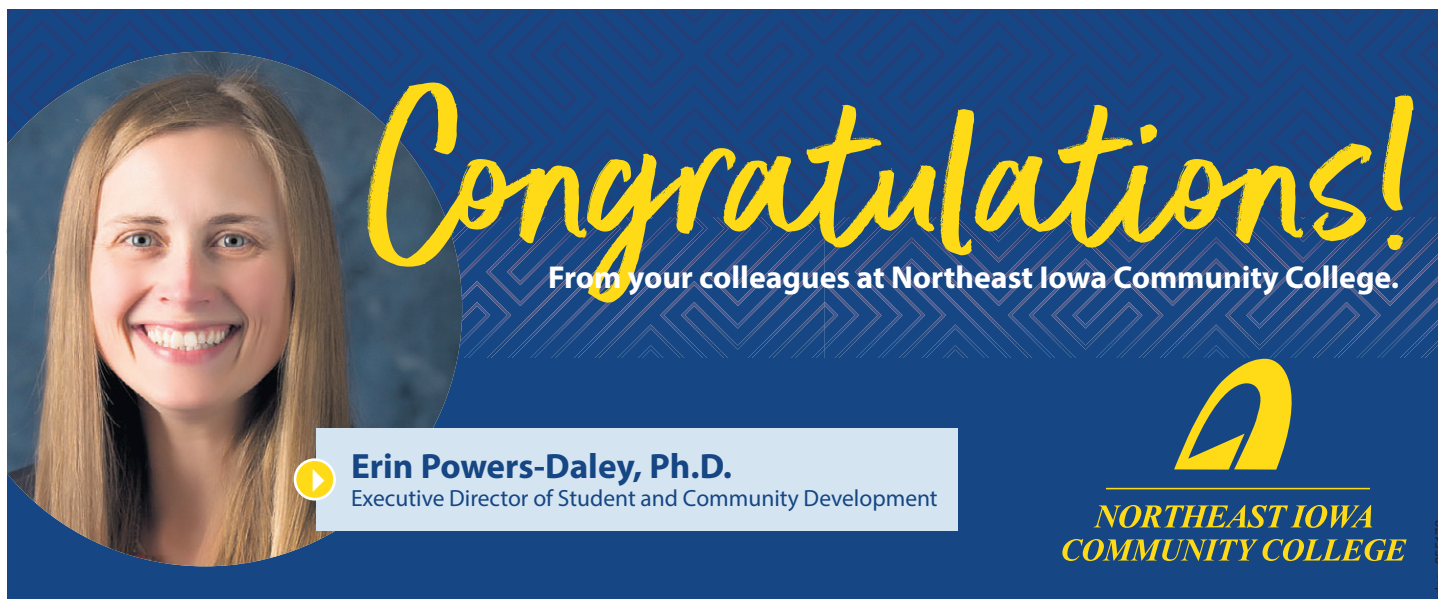
**What's one thing that most people would be surprised to know about you:** I am not a strong swimmer and do not enjoy being in the water. But, I find peace in sitting by the water and I hope someday to be able to retire on a lake.

**Greatest fear:** Not using all the gifts I have been given to help make an impact.

**What's the one thing you are most passionate about in your life:** I want to help make the world a better place and that is a big task. But making sure that people have equal and equitable access to the basic needs of quality of life is a huge driver of motivation for me. This comes in a wide variety of areas and it can be intimidating. But I believe that small changes, with people at the heart of the decision making, is a positive step in the right direction. But we have a long way to go and the journey will never be completely done.

“Erin is a role model for so many. She is a strategic thinker who is always looking for way to improve and to set our team up for success.”

Amy Green



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**Erin Powers-Daley, Ph.D.**  
Executive Director of Student and Community Development

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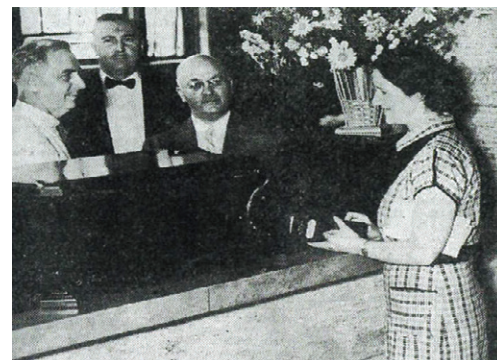
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# Noodles & Company headed to Wacker Plaza



Jessica Reilly

Noodles & Company will open a franchise in Dubuque's Wacker Plaza.

## Restaurant franchise will take over space previously occupied by Caribou Coffee

BY KAYLI REESE

A popular noodle restaurant announced it will open a franchise in the Dubuque market.

Officials with Noodles & Company confirmed that they plan to open a franchise at 800 Wacker Plaza, the former Caribou Coffee location.

"We are excited to be growing our footprint with a new location in Dubuque," said Brian Anderson, communications manager for Noodles & Company, in an email. "While it is still too early to share an exact date, we are aiming for later this year or early 2024 (for opening)."

Anderson added that additional details will be shared once the opening date is closer.

Anderson said Noodles & Company typically employs 25 to 30 people at their locations and plans to do so for the Dubuque one as well. Current job postings on LinkedIn and Indeed are seeking a restaurant general manager, assistant general manager and restaurant shift manager.

"It also looks like this (Dubuque) location will have a pickup window, which allows our guests the convenience of ordering ahead through the app or website, and then going

Continued on page 33



# Sierra Trading coming to Asbury Plaza

**Outdoor apparel and gear retailer is slated to open local store later this year**

BY KAYLI REESE

**A**n outdoor apparel and gear retailer is coming to Dubuque.

Sierra Trading Post will open in Asbury Plaza later this year. The new 20,000-square-foot store will occupy the space that previously housed Bed Bath & Beyond.

“They’re hoping for an opening in time for the holiday season this year,” said Joe Bell, director of corporate communications for Cafaro Co., which owns a majority of storefronts in Asbury Plaza. “They’re hoping to get construction done by then.”



Stephen Gassman

Sierra Trading Post will occupy the space vacated by Bed Bath & Beyond in Asbury Plaza in Dubuque. It is expected to open later this year.

A building permit filed in late June described \$448,000 of work for the new store, which will be the first Sierra Trading Post location in Iowa.

The chain currently has about 85 loca-

tions in 29 states, including soon-to-be-five locations in Wisconsin and five in Illinois. The closest location to Dubuque is in Mad-

**Continued on page 34**

## Continued from page 32

through a lane similar to a drive-thru to pick up their food without leaving their car,” Anderson said via email.

Caribou Coffee closed its Wacker Plaza location in April this year after moving into the space in July 2017.

Online property records state that 800 Wacker Drive is owned by Metro Investments Dubuque LLC. Multiple requests for comment were not returned.

Noodles & Company is known for its menu of pasta dishes. The company was

founded in Denver, Colo. in 1995.

Since then, the company has grown to more than 450 restaurants across 26 states, including 58 locations in Illinois and 55 locations in Wisconsin.

Noodles and Company’s website lists nine current locations in Iowa: Ames, Cedar Rapids, Coralville, Davenport, Des Moines, Iowa City, Waterloo and West Des Moines.

City of Dubuque Public Information Officer Randy Gehl said that the city has not yet received any documents about the Noodles & Company project.

Rick Dickinson, president and CEO of

Greater Dubuque Development Corp., said he knew there had been discussion of a possible franchise location for the Dubuque market, but he was not aware of the location’s imminent arrival to Wacker Plaza. He added that the GDDC office isn’t typically involved with retail or hospitality openings unless asked to be involved with things such as zoning or infrastructure issues arise.

“In this particular case, if they decided where they’re going, the infrastructure is there, they’ve done negotiations with the property owner, if they see that they can make money, then they’ll come,” he said.



## Continued from page 32

ison, Wis.

"They specialize in outdoor apparel, footwear and gear and it is non-team-specific," Bell said. "It's for your campers, hikers, anglers, folks who like to do rock climbing, kayakers."

Sierra Trading Post started as a catalog company in Reno, Nev., in 1986, with the first retail store opening in Nevada in 1990. The retailer's website states Sierra Trading Post was also one of the first catalog companies to establish an online presence in 1998.

Sierra Trading Post was acquired by TJX Companies Inc. in 2012. The company also operates T.J. Maxx, HomeGoods, Marshalls and HomeSense.

Dubuque already has a T.J. Maxx location at 2591 Northwest Arterial, near the future Sierra Trading Post site.

Bell said work continues on a HomeGoods location at Kennedy Mall, which is expected to be open next year. The store will take up the space currently occupied by Books-A-Million, as well as four other vacant store spaces. Bell, whose employer also owns the mall, said Books-A-Million will be opening at its new location in a portion of the former Younkers women's store "any day now."

"(Sierra Trading Post) will follow the TJX format of looking for high-value products to sell for a lower price," Bell said. "They claim to have prices 20% to 60% below the full-price retailers."

The new store will fill the former Bed Bath & Beyond space that has sat empty for several months. Dubuque's Bed Bath & Beyond location had operated there since 2003.

Following the addition of Sierra Trading Post, Bell said, there will be two open spaces

in Asbury Plaza: the former Dress Barn and former Pier 1 locations, which closed as a result of the companies that ran those stores declaring bankruptcy. However, Bell noted Spirit Halloween will move into Asbury Plaza as a temporary tenant in this month.

"I'm sure it will be very popular," Bell said of Sierra Trading Post. "We have a lot of folks in the community who enjoy the outdoor activities."

Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Molly Grover said she applauded any new retailer moving into Dubuque.

"It's awesome any time we hear about new businesses coming to the community," she said. "It's important to have goods and services residents can access, especially retail. That is awesome news."

Requests for comment from Sierra Trading Post were not returned.



Stephen Gassman

Work is underway inside the future home of Sierra Trading Post in the space vacated by Bed Bath & Beyond in Asbury Plaza.



# Quiet hiring and its effect in the workplace



**GERALD KOPPES, SPHR**

He is a retired instructor from Northeast Iowa Community College and the University of Wisconsin-Platteville

I knew it wouldn't take long after the term "quiet quitting" was popularized a few years ago in national business magazines and newspaper articles. Now we have its not so silent twin sibling, "quiet hiring," showing up in those same publications and news websites such as nbcnews.com.

In both cases they describe work activities that have been commonplace for many decades but were retitled during and shortly after the recent pandemic.

Quiet quitting merely describes employees, due to personal or workplace issues, performing their duties at a level just above that which would cause either discipline or dismissal. I saw lots of that kind of bad behavior during a 30-year career in human resource management.

Quiet hiring refers to employers, many seeking to maintain a lean workforce in anticipation of a recession, encouraging existing and high performing employees to accept extra work with an offer of more money. Given the current shortage of workers, it is practical to do so, and employers have been using this tactic

## GERALD SAYS

Quiet quitting merely describes employees, due to personal or workplace issues, performing their duties at a level just above that which would cause either discipline or dismissal.

in tight labor markets for many years.

Here are a few of the advantages and disadvantages that quiet hiring offers to both the employee and employer.

**Employer abuse.** A few unscrupulous employers will use quiet hiring as an instrument to intimidate workers into accepting more duties without receiving more pay and making it clear that acceptance is not negotiable, and refusal might jeopardize employment. In any case, management needs to comply with federal and state labor laws regarding overtime pay for non-exempt workers and resist the urge to improperly place employees in independent contractor status. A leakage of valuable employees might occur when heavy-handed tactics are used to force compliance.

**Extra income.** In the current volatile economy, where workers' pay isn't keeping up with inflationary pressures, employees are often compelled to look

for a second job and might find the additional income con-

Continued on page 36

## BIZ LOCAL

### 4 LOCALS RECEIVE VOLUNTEER AWARDS

The following individuals received 2023 Governor's Volunteer Awards: Barb Otting, of Cascade; and Tamara Prenosil, Judy Wolf and Jim Vansteenburgh, of Dubuque.

### DUBUQUE RESIDENT WINS TECHNICIAN



Gross

### SKILLS COMPETITION

Will Gross, of Truck Country's Dubuque location, won second place in the Daimler Truck North America Technician Skills Competition in the Vehicle Category.

### HONKAMP, P.C. PICKED BY INSIDE PUBLIC ACCOUNTING

INSIDE Public Accounting named Honkamp, P.C., of Dubuque, as No. 109 of its Top 200 Firms for 2023.

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# Leadership: Ignited from within



**GRETCHEN  
BROWN**  
Stonehill  
Communities

She is a senior  
leadership advisor  
with the organization

My experience in health care leadership during the past 40-plus years has taught me many lessons.

When I first started out, people talked about becoming a leader as an accomplishment — a goal met — check that off the list and go to your next goal. Some made it seem like it was rocket science and, of course, if you achieved status as a leader, you wore the suit to show it.

Most of us followed whatever direction the leader gave with little questioning and trusted it was right. So who was assessing the leader's effectiveness?

Quantitative achievements such as managing budget, exceeding revenue projections and success with new initiatives were a measure of their effectiveness, but they don't fully encompass what it is to be successful as a leader. Leadership is not an endpoint; it is a journey.

Yes, it is important to meet these types of organizational goals, and they are part of the responsibilities of a leader. But true leadership effectiveness or presence is measured by your relationships and your ability to develop others. The number one goal of a truly effective leader is to recognize the sparks of potential in those around them, at every level of the organization, and to stoke those sparks into a blaze.

Investment in this type of leadership is the foundation for organizational success. Changing our focus from not just what we do, but how and why we do it creates a ripple effect that is felt throughout the organization. When we all know our "why" and focus intentionally on how we influence and complement each other, the return on investment is a strong, positive, cohesive employee culture. This unity of purpose and recognition of the value of diverse personalities and skill sets leads to staff retention and exceptional customer service, which will result in a better bottom line.

To grow these sparks of potential, it is important to build a safe, supportive environment. Growth involves vulnerability, identifying areas for improvement. Remember, individually, we are all incomplete. No one is equipped to handle every situation optimally. We benefit from the

differences in each of our personalities.

In my experience, one of the most effective tools to support a culture of leadership is individual leadership coaching. This is personalized, one-on-one coaching that focuses on the individual's goals and their supervisor's goals for their growth and development.

Once their goals are defined, the coach spends intentional time with the individual enhancing their self-awareness and exploring leadership behaviors that will elevate their overall effectiveness.

After a few coaching sessions, it is helpful to have the individual take a leadership assessment. One of the most effective assessments I have used identifies specific behavioral tendencies that influence their success in leadership responsibilities including establishing a shared vision or goal, achieving team alignment and successfully executing the goals of the team. This assessment identifies specific areas where they can increase their effectiveness by exercising specific leadership muscles or behaviors.

These results become part of the one-on-one coaching discussion. The

results enhance self-awareness and the coach helps move them toward meeting their personal and professional goals by becoming a more effective and successful leader.

Being an effective leader is a continuous process. Our teams, our goals and our environments are perpetually changing. No matter how experienced a leader might be, they should still be engaged in their self-awareness and self-development and understand how they can complement the abilities of the team to achieve shared success.

Check yourself by asking after every real-time interaction or situation: Did I contribute to the other person's or my team's success, and, if not, what will I hold myself accountable to do differently next time? This ongoing self-evaluation is the mark of true leadership effectiveness.

There is nothing more rewarding than contributing to the growth of others and seeing that growth translate into real results for your team, organization and community.

Be the leader to ignite the fire in others.

## GRETCHEN SAYS

The number one goal of a truly effective leader is to recognize the sparks of potential in those around them, at every level of the organization, and to stoke those sparks into a blaze

### Continued from page 35

veniently available from their current employer. This practice provides the employer with an opportunity to meet the temporary spike in demand for their services and products while controlling payroll expenses. Overtime compensation for existing workers costs much less than the pay and benefit package needed to bring new employees on board.

**Employee training.** Offering additional work to highly motivated and high-performing employees gives them the opportunity to gain new skills that better prepares them to seek more challenging and better paying jobs

with the current employers. Companies offering additional work that includes training and incentive pay increases the chances of productive employees remaining with the organization. From the workers' perspective, they gain valuable skills and experience that make them more attractive to future employers.

**Psychological effects.** To the extent that assigning additional work involves imposing responsibilities on unwilling employees, the effects on morale must be considered. Burdening employees with more work than they might wish to take on might result in poor quality and a desire

to find more suitable employment elsewhere. Unwittingly, the company could be encouraging the use of quiet hiring's evil twin, "quiet firing." For more motivated employees, the availability of additional work might improve morale and increase their value to the company.

The current buzz over quiet hiring highlights an employment strategy that offers substantial benefits for both employers and employees in the current economic environment. For that reason, re-imagining and using this effective business practice is a no-brainer.



# Personal discovery is what leads to personal growth



## KATHIE ROTZ Unity Consulting

She is a leadership consultant and John Maxwell certified speaker, trainer and coach with the Dubuque business

"My goal is to help you be the best version of yourself" I have heard many speakers say this as their mission for your growth. I have said it. Full transparency — I do not like this maxim. What does it mean anyway? How do I know what the best version of me is?

Then I heard Pastor Steven Furtick, from Elevation Church, say, "Personal development is just the path to self-discovery."

This I agree with.

According to Wikipedia, "personal development" consists of activities that develop a person's capabilities and potential. These activities might include:

- Reading a book to learn a new skill.
- Listening to successful people share their life tips and tricks.
- Learn how to speak a new language or play an instrument.
- Master a hobby that is different than your day job.

Decades ago, I was introduced to personal development when I purchased a book at the Denver airport while traveling for work. A witty book title caught my eye: "Thinking for a Change," by John C. Maxwell.

I did not consider myself a reader, but I took a chance and bought the book anyway. One week later, I returned home with a fully read copy. For the past 20 years, I have consumed numerous development books by various authors.

My friend, Nicole, is a school teacher who helps young

people increase their literacy. While on vacation, she toured a lavender farm, which sparked creativity in her and her husband to construct a new hobby as lavender farmers. By connecting with other lavender farmers, Nicole is learning how to produce healthy lavender products with her harvests.

Both of these examples are helping us discover our paths in life. I have found that I connect with content that challenges me to think, feel and act differently. This approach is empowering for me and the clients that I serve.

Nicole is finding a relaxing hobby that is turning into a successful business. We would have never found this "version of ourselves" if we did not take the personal development challenge.

The difference between personal development and formal education is our desire to want to learn. No one is making me personally develop or assigning homework to complete by a deadline date. That makes this learning more exciting and empowering. We will grow at our own desired pace.

What are you interested in that might not match your degree? It might be something to develop. It might be your path to self-discovery. It might lead you to a better version of you.

Personal development is the path to self-discovery. By discovering myself I have learned who I want to be, what I want to do and what my best version looks like.

### KATHIE SAYS

I have found that I connect with content that challenges me to think, feel and act differently. This approach is empowering for me and the clients that I serve.

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# Where are you in these eight stages of financial well-being?



SCOTT  
BURNS

The Dallas  
Morning  
News

He is a columnist  
with the  
publication.

Defining wealth isn't easy. It also tends to be a morbidly serious topic.

That's why I'm including my own "down and dirty" definition just to keep the conversation from getting too high and mighty:

"You know you've got it made when your kids make bail on their own."

I also like a definition from a Dallas real estate investor long ago:

"You're wealthy when more money won't change what you eat, what you wear, what you drive, where you live or who you sleep with."

Most efforts in measuring wealth focus on the obvious — money. The IRS estimates "top wealth holders" among the living by examining the net worth of the recently dead. They also do it by analyzing the distribution of income on federal tax returns.

Sociologists tend to measure income and net worth in distribution deciles, also assuming it's mostly about the money.

Banks like to set a dollar minimum for their wealth accounts, letting you know that if your net worth isn't (pick a sum), well, you're not eligible to be a "private client." This is their way of telling you that no one at the bank will walk your dog while you're skiing in Gstaad.

Basically, it's always about the money and nothing but the money.

Until now.

The Charles Schwab Modern Wealth Survey for 2023, released in June, breaks rank with habit by discovering something quite amazing. While those surveyed felt you need \$2.2 million to "be wealthy" these days, they feel wealthy at a mere \$560,000. The survey also found that having large amounts of money wasn't the strongest measure of wealth. Having time was more important than having money. So was being healthy. (You can read the survey here.)

Unfortunately, that's pretty soft and mushy. More recently, for instance, a Bankrate survey found that U.S. adults thought they needed \$233,000 per year to "feel financially secure" and "\$483,000 annually to feel rich."

Still, the Schwab study informs us that there is more to life than money.

Most of us know that. But we're still curious about what the metrics are.

Here's my effort to define, in stages of financial well-being, where the money rubber meets the existential road.

## THE EIGHT STAGES OF FINANCIAL BEING

**Level 1: Down and out.** This group of people simply can't function in their society, wherever it is. They live day-by-day with no reserves and literally no concept of the future. They use cash, don't have a bank account and probably haven't filed a tax return, or registered and insured a car. If they have one. They might have an addiction or an untreated mental illness. Some have a hustle

going. It's not about malice or criminality, it's just how they cope. Wealth: zero. Income: less than spending.

**Level 2: Living on the edge.** This group pays its bills most of the time. They rent but often come up short. They can be disadvantaged by their family of origin. Or limited by their lack of education. But the rent-to-buy and we-tote-the-note lenders couldn't live without them. They're likely not to have health insurance. They can lose their job because their car breaks down. That's why it's just about impossible to plan anything.

**Level 3: Almost making it.** This group has regular work but limited job mobility. They hope for overtime. They might own a house with a hefty mortgage payment. They do their best for their children but college, or help with college, isn't in the cards. Without a pension and with very little in savings, they might squeak through retirement if they use the equity in their house, typically their only significant asset. Social Security is a make-or-break deal.

**Level 4: Covering the basics.** This group is confident that they can pay their bills, enjoys job mobility, owns a house, saves regularly, helps their children with college and, perhaps, a home down payment. But even if they are lucky enough to have a pension, they still have significant worry about financing retirement. If they are flexible, they will cope.

**Level 5: Locked and loaded.** This group has worked, saved and planned. They might also have been at the right place at the right time for their home purchase(s) and their jobs. Their biggest issue is choosing when to retire. They can actively consider retiring early rather than working to 65 or 67. Even so, their wealth might not survive them due to medical or other expenses.

**Level 6: It's all about the kids.** This group enjoys an income that is large and secure. They can afford whatever college their children hope to attend and have enough resources to think actively about how much (and when) to provide for the kids. They can be generous with their adult children with no impact on their standard of living. Secure retirement is a done deal.

**Level 7: Treats for the grandchildren.** This group has assets large enough to allow their grandchildren to live well in their first job, should they choose to be employed. Most people would consider them wealthy. They have enough income that prices for goods and services are pretty much irrelevant.

**Level 8: Generous for all.** This group, which is smaller than 1% of all Americans, has the kind of wealth that F. Scott Fitzgerald described in "The Great Gatsby." They can easily live on a portion of their investment income. Their wealth is beyond familial spending. Much of their time can be devoted to thinking about good ways to give money away. Their philanthropy can become their vocation. Or not, of course.

I hope readers who would like to add to, comment on or modify these stages of wealth to write to me at [scott.burns@dallasnews.com](mailto:scott.burns@dallasnews.com).

### SCOTT SAYS

The survey also found that having large amounts of money wasn't the strongest measure of wealth. Having time was more important than having money. So was being healthy.



# Chinese markets looking at trouble ahead



**DR.  
RICHARD  
BAKER, AIF**  
Fervent  
Wealth  
Management

He is the founder  
and executive  
wealth advisor

"Did you pull up the anchor?" I was trying to steer the boat west, but something under the water was pulling me east.

In the same way, China's economic problems are beginning to affect the stocks in the West negatively.

Any long-term investor trying to build a diversified portfolio will likely have some international stock holdings. Usually, those holdings are split between large foreign stocks and emerging markets stocks. The emerging market sector is easily the more aggressive of the two, and of all emerging market countries, China is by far the big fish in that small pond.

China's stock market makes up roughly 30% of the MSCI Emerging Markets Index. Also, because China is the major trading partner with Taiwan (15% of EM) and South Korea (12% of EM), it influences more than half of the MSCI Emerging Market Index. Any investor with emerging market

investment might be surprised that they likely own a sizable position in Chinese stocks.

The market is getting concerned about China's recent economic struggles. The MSCI China Index is negative 51% since its February 2021 highs. The Hong Kong Stock Exchange, where many large Chinese companies list their shares, has declined almost 10% year-to-date as of Aug. 24. China's exports and imports have declined year-over-year, and foreign investment in China dropped 80% this year compared to last year.

Most significantly, China is showing signs of a full-on real estate crisis as its largest property developers have begun filing for bankruptcy.

I am underweighting emerging markets in my port-

## RICHARD SAYS

The U.S. and Japanese economies are doing well, but it seems the economies of Europe and China have some difficult days ahead, which could provide some buying opportunities.

Continued on page 40



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# If things stay this good with the economy, what will we complain about?

BY EVAN RAMSTAD

You can't argue that illegal immigrants are stealing Americans' jobs. The unemployment rate is too low for that.

You can't argue that gas prices are too high. There's too much travel going on.

You can't argue that inflation is too high. That's especially true in areas where the rate has been below the Fed's 2% target for at least three months.

And you can't even argue that high interest rates will trigger recession, something textbooks teach and very accomplished people preach. We've probably only got one more rate hike to go before they start to fall.

Wow. Our biggest economic problem is that we've run out of things to complain about the economy.

You won't be able to tell that from listening to politicians and the media.

The politicians never play it straight, of course. Those in the majority, Democrats, nationally, overemphasize positive developments in the economy. Those in the minority, Republicans, nationally, focus on the pain from before.

And journalists always see the glass as half empty. Being wrong is a crime in a newsroom. But it's a misdemeanor to be overly negative and wrong about something, while it's a felony to be overly positive and wrong.

A few journalists are sticking their necks out though. Heather Long, one of the Washington Post's economics-focused columnists, in December forecast a painful recession for 2023. But last month, she was one of the first to capture the nation's changing mood.

"This summer could end up marking the end of the 'vibe-cession,' the term that has taken hold to explain why so many Americans give the economy a failing grade despite a half-century low in unemployment," Long wrote.

After this month's jobs and inflation data, it's time to stop using conditional words like "could" and "might."

The U.S. economy is doing well, even though our workforce remains smaller than it was before the pandemic. Consumer confidence is the highest in two years.

There are plenty of economic drags out there — like the war in Ukraine, stalled growth in China and drought in the U.S.

But as the probability of U.S. recession started to wane, economists and other analysts began seeking explanations.

The most reasonable is that the rapid swings in economic demand moderated and so did the supply shocks associated with them. In short, the availability of goods and services at last caught up with demand for them.

The federal government's stimulus helped when demand plunged. The interest rate hikes of the Fed helped cool things when the recovery grew heated.

Another poorly-understood contributor in the demand for workers is the energy transition. Whatever you think about climate change, the rise of alternatives to fossil fuels is sparking innovation and competition for capital, muscle and brainpower.

Two weeks ago, during one of the forums at Farmfest near Redwood Falls, Minn., some oft-heard worries came up about weather, government trade policies and commodity prices — with corn now the lowest it's been in three years.

But then a farmer stood up, started talking about biofuels and declared, "I have never seen a better opportunity for farmers than we have today."

"Exactly right," Robert Bonnie, a USDA under secretary, said in response. "There's enormous opportunity."

There is always something in the economy that could be better. The price increases of the past three years won't reverse. The opportunity gaps for some workers will still take time to diminish. Nonprofits still need workers.

However, the signal inside the noise right now is that the economy is humming.

Continued from page 39

folios, with only 2-4% holdings depending on the client's risk level. This is about half of my neutral setting (benchmark). International stocks are a key piece of a diversified portfolio, especially when the dollar is weaker against other currencies. Though I'm a little pessimistic about broad-based emerging markets, I am looking for opportunities for my clients that will eventually present themselves.

The U.S. and Japanese economies are doing well, but it seems the economies of Europe and China have some difficult days ahead, which could provide some buying opportunities. However, I would avoid investing directly in Chinese stocks for several reasons and favor emerging market funds for diversification in an ever-changing market sector. Of course, your investment strategy needs to align with your goals, time frame and risk level.

We had anchored the boat just off some bluffs that our teens enjoy jumping off (much to their mother's displeasure). Sometimes, the anchor gets so stuck in the rocks under the water we have to cut it loose, but on this occasion, we were able to pull it up.

China has some challenges, but I don't think we need to cut the rope. Maybe we should just pull in some of our exposure and plan to return later.

Have a blessed week.

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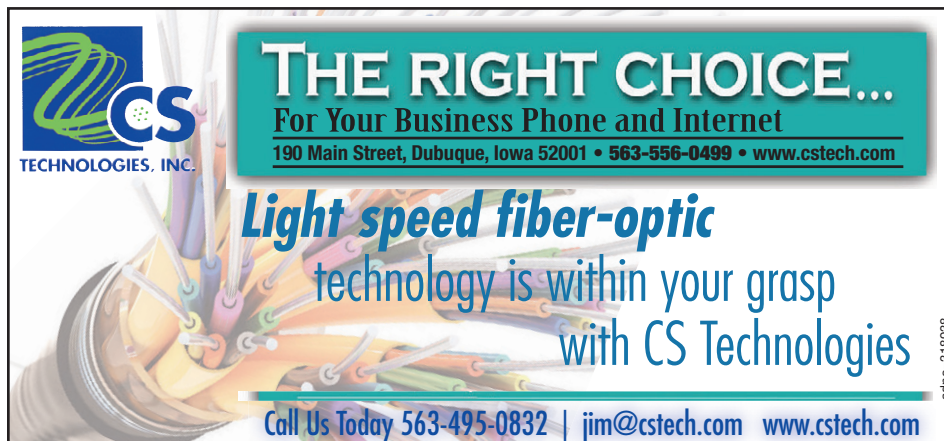
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## RICHARD SAYS

The market is getting concerned about China's recent economic struggles. The MSCI China Index is negative 51% since its February 2021 highs.



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# Educating within: How Baylor Scott & White is using training to confront staffing issues

MARIN  
WOLF  
The Dallas  
Morning  
News

She is a health  
care reporter with  
the publication.

DALLAS — Belinda Ellison, 50, always wanted to go to college. Life kept getting in the way.

The oldest daughter in her family, Ellison cared for her brothers and mother while also serving as a caretaker for her then-boyfriend's diabetic mother. She raised her three children on her own while working as an X-ray technician and later a pulmonary tech at Baylor Scott & White Health, the state's largest not-for-profit hospital system.

Spending money on a bachelor's degree felt frivolous. "Financially, the money just wasn't there," said Ellison, who has lived in Dallas for most of her life. "It was just my paycheck. No help, no assistance from anyone, no government assistance."

After more than 30 years of taking care of everyone else, Ellison is finally focusing on herself. She'll begin classes at the University of Arizona for a bachelor's degree in business management in August, paid for through Baylor's new workforce education program.

The program through Guild Education, a platform that manages companies' education benefits, pays directly for employees' college-level classes instead of requiring them to front the cost and later get reimbursed. Paying out-of-pocket for expensive courses, even with the promise of repayment, was a significant barrier to many Baylor workers such as Ellison.

Baylor rolled out the program in March as health care companies across the nation grapple with chronic staffing shortages and provider burnout. Compensation remains the top concern of employees today, but professional development remains a key concern. About half of workers do not see a career advancement path at their current company, according to the 2023 Total Talent Guide by recruitment and staffing company Tandym Group.

Matching the trends seen across the health care industry, job vacancy rates at Baylor jumped about 400% at the height of COVID-19, said Baylor chief human resources officer Nakesha Lopez. Getting that number down — and keeping it down — required a multi-pronged approach including short- and long-term solutions.

The Guild Education program, part of Baylor's broader workforce development strategy, is a win-win for both the hospital system and its employees, said Baylor CEO Pete McCanna. Workers can pursue free or discounted training and schooling that can progress their careers, while Baylor can train employees for high-need positions.

"It's one of the best investments we make as an organization," McCanna said. "In the current workforce, they're going to change jobs a lot throughout the course of their working career. It's even better if they can do that within one organization."

Baylor has committed more than \$8 million per year on the new professional development efforts.

Full-time employees and part-time employees who work more than a certain number of hours per week qualify to access the Guild Education benefit program. Already, more than 10,000 Baylor staff members have started the process of choosing a continuing education program.

External degree and certificate opportunities aren't the only professional development options for Baylor em-

ployees. The health system also offers on-the-job training programs for certified medical assistant and sterile processing technician positions.

The CMA Academy and Sterile Processing Technician Academy serve as entry points into the health care industry that requires only a high school diploma. Each academy is 12 weeks long and offers trainees full benefits from their first day of classes.

Alex Suarez, 25, knew he wanted to work in health care since he was a student at Coppell High School in Coppell, Texas. He initially pursued a nursing degree, but stepped away from classwork before moving to Pennsylvania, where he worked as a dental assistant.

When Suarez decided to move back to North Texas, a family friend alerted him to Baylor's certified medical assistant program as an opportunity to get closer to becoming a nurse. Suarez started classes in September and learned skills like giving injections, drawing blood and administering electrocardiogram tests.

Once Suarez graduated with his cohort of 12 CMA students, he was placed at the Baylor Scott & White Primary Care at The Star in Frisco. The program requires a two-year work commitment from academy graduates.

Suarez plans to finish his nursing degree after completing his two years at the practice. He knows now more than ever that nursing is the career he wants.

"I didn't really go to the doctor's normally until I started this, so this was all very foreign to me," Suarez said. "But the academy kind of brought me up to speed on how things work and the basics of what I need to know."

That's exactly how Baylor wants these programs to function, Lopez said. Entry-level positions, like medical assistant and sterile processing technician jobs, help guide North Texans into an industry where they can continue to learn. A technician can become a licensed practical nurse, or a nurse who provides basic patient care. A licensed practical nurse can study to become a registered nurse.

"The pathways are there, the educational opportunities are there, and it's all about the appetite of the employee to grab hold of that and engage in those programs that are available to them," Lopez said.

Ellison is only months away from beginning her online classes, which she'll take while continuing her full-time job. She's told a handful of patients about her plans.

"I told a few of them and they're very happy for me. One of my patients ... he just told me to keep going. I told him I will and he said, 'Let me know when you're finished,'" Ellison said.

Ellison expects to graduate in December 2024, although graduating with her bachelor's degree won't be the end of her educational endeavors. Ellison plans to pursue a master's degree in legal studies so she can transition to the legal field to support people who have been wrongly incarcerated.

"It's going to be a new chapter in my life and I'm going to be helping someone else. So there's not going to be a patient, there'll be a client," Ellison said. "It's the same thing to me, though. Everybody needs help at some point in their life."

# When jobs disappear in the shadow of AI

BRIAN  
MERCHANT  
Los Angeles  
Times

He is a columnist  
for the publication.

What will it look like when AI comes for your job? How will it happen? Will it happen at all? These are the questions on so many minds in the age of OpenAI and Google's Bard, of the suddenly ubiquitous text and image generators such as ChatGPT and Midjourney.

The maddening thing is that, at least at first, it's probably not going to look like much of anything. There will be no cybernetic android that lumbers over to your desk and takes over your work duties, no disembodied robot voice that suddenly assumes command over your department. It might just look like routine layoffs, or a freelancer having more trouble finding work.

A friend of mine, a veteran artist and prolific freelance illustrator, told me it's been a "really weak year," and believes the rise of AI image generation is to blame. He's spoken to art directors at ad agencies, where he's made much of his past income, who told him they've begun using Midjourney internally. The work isn't published publicly, so there are fewer concerns about copyright and no working illustrators who might see the material and shame them.

That is what it will look like to many as managers turn to AI to meet their needs to cut costs: Not a fiery robot apocalypse, but a slowly declining rate of work on offer.

More maddening still, few are likely to agree on what constitutes technological replacement and what does not.

Case in point: Since the text generators burst onto the scene late last year, a number of digital media companies have been experimenting with AI-generated content. CNET quietly started publishing AI-written stories in November, and BuzzFeed and Insider have announced that they're trying out different forms of AI-generated content too.

At the same time, all three companies also have been experimenting with laying off their staff. CNET fired 10% of its newsroom in March, and Insider followed suit in April. BuzzFeed shut down its entire Pulitzer Prize-winning news division, which was home to around 60 journalists, and laid off 15% of employees companywide.

Now, digital media is a particularly punishing business — another former heavyweight, Vice, declared bankruptcy just last week — and one that's no stranger to layoffs at any given time. Yet the timing struck many as alarming, especially at a moment when executives in other industries are explicitly stating their intent to use AI to take over jobs previously done by humans. IBM Chief Executive Arvind Krishna, for instance, estimated AI would replace around 8,000 of the firm's jobs in coming years.

Not two weeks after the News division was shut down, BuzzFeed held its annual Investor Day, at which Chief Executive Jonah Peretti spoke about, among other things, the ways his company was embracing AI.

"BuzzFeed has always lived at the intersection of technology and creativity," he said at the event. "And recent developments in artificial intelligence represent an opportunity to take this convergence to the next level."

AI, he said, was making brand new kinds of content possible and would soon replace the "static" content we've grown accustomed to reading on websites with "new formats that are more gamified, more personalized and more interactive."

BuzzFeed, he continued, is using generative AI to "establish the blueprint for AI-driven revenue growth across the company. And with the developments with both creators and AI, we see the opportunity to build a content creation model that makes our creative team more efficient and sustainably expands our output without increasing fixed costs."

When I shared the observation that BuzzFeed seemed to be going all-in on AI on the heels of laying off its news staff on Twitter, the reaction was, uh, strong.

"Unrelentingly bleak," MSNBC host Chris Hayes commented.

"None of this has to happen," writer Molly Jong-Fast tweeted. "Writing doesn't need to be automated."

Displeased for a different reason was Peretti, who sent me a direct message accusing me of "completely misrepresenting" what he said. But what started as a hostile exchange — "totally irresponsible," he called my gloss on his speech — soon became something more productive, as Peretti explained his views on how BuzzFeed would be utilizing AI. Our conversation via DM offered a window into the thinking of an executive in a field that generative AI stands to affect.

"In the future, AI will replace static content because content will become more personalized and dynamic," Peretti said. "For example, you'll be able to 'chat with an article' to get related information or background on a story you might have missed earlier. This has nothing to do with replacing writers or having AI write articles."

Peretti said he was not automating the production of news articles, or replacing writers with AI.

"I was talking about the industry as a whole when I described 'static content' being replaced," he said, "and my prediction is it will be replaced with formats like the BuzzFeed AI quizzes, i.e. human-created content with interactivity added with AI."

I pointed out that laying off the people whose jobs were to write articles, and then pointing to the company's embrace of AI, is nonetheless to make the case to investors that said new technology will make up the difference. On Investor Day, Peretti said the use of AI "sustainably expands our output without increasing fixed costs," after all.

"What happened to News and AI are unrelated," he said, "I shut down BuzzFeed News because it was losing millions of dollars, and I still supported it for years and years despite the losses."

He went on: "Some investors might misunderstand what we are doing and think it is about 'automated output' as you say. I've never said that, and I think it is a big misunderstanding of how AI will ultimately be used in media. Think of AI as a new medium, not as a labor replacement. We won't be replacing BFN output. We'll be making totally different types of content. We'll need creative people to make these new

Continued on page 44



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## BIZ LOCAL

## FORBES NAMES LOCAL TO BEST-IN-STATE LIST



Johnson

Forbes magazine named Bret Johnson, of Ameriprise Financial services in Dubuque, on its “Best-in-State Next-Generation Wealth Advisors” list of financial advisors.

## MERCYONE TAKES HOME 9TH CONSECUTIVE AWARD

MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center received the Get With The Guidelines — Stroke Gold Plus Award for the 9th consecutive year. The award recognizes

institutions’ commitment to ensuring that stroke patients receive appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines.

## DUBUQUE-BASED SOFTWARE COMPANY PURCHASES E-LEARNING SERVICES PROVIDER

A Dubuque-based software company has acquired a provider of e-learning services for engineers.

Eagle Point Software, creator of the Pinnacle Series e-learning solution, acquired CADLearning from 4D Technologies, according to a press release.

The release states that CADLearning provides “learning experiences for archi-

tectural, civil, construction, product design and manufacturing engineers.”

CADLearning customers will continue to use the company’s existing platform and content. Eventually, CADLearning clients will be able to access additional resources through the Pinnacle Series platform, including KnowledgeSmart skills assessments and personalized learning paths.

## EAGLE POINT SOLAR NAMED TO FASTEST-GROWING COMPANIES LIST

Inc. Magazine named Eagle Point Solar of Dubuque on its 2023 Inc. 5000 list of fastest-growing private companies in the U.S.

Continued from page 42

formats.”

And herein lies the crux of the matter. I believe Peretti when he says he’s not looking at this as a way to replace workers — even if I am absolutely convinced that he’s trying to replace their value.

But when automation unfolds in a historical context, it’s rarely a one-to-one affair. It’s not as though there’s going to be a staff writer who specializes in science news one day, and a bot that is trained to reproduce her output that will be deployed the next. In the world of news-gathering, anyway — workers like voice-over artists and illustrators have found their art vacuumed up and spat out by generative AI trained on their work, though the legality of such practices is still very much in question, and humans are still needed to edit the final output.

Automation is uneven and messy, and it’s far more likely to proceed the way we’re seeing unfold at BuzzFeed — previously there was a big expensive team of humans doing difficult and labor-intensive work, and now they are gone and there is a different content product altogether, one built by a combination of new technology and input from a more precarious worker. (In his Investor Day speech, Peretti also spoke of the growing importance of partnerships with independent content creators. “The shift will allow BuzzFeed to produce more with a smaller headcount, while also leaning into new internet trends,” as Axios reported.)

When I asked if he would try to maintain the same output without the news desk, he didn’t answer, and that certainly appears to be the plan.

The way he sees it, I think, is that Buzz-

### BRIAN SAYS

But when automation unfolds in a historical context, it’s rarely a one-to-one affair. It’s not as though there’s going to be a staff writer who specializes in science news one day, and a bot that is trained to reproduce her output that will be deployed the next.

Feed News was simply no longer viable — it had never made money, and it was unlikely to in the future. Shuttering that department was one decision. Embracing AI for a different part of his business was another.

But it’s hard to say whether Peretti would have been comfortable jettisoning BuzzFeed News if there wasn’t a buzzy technology to create new kinds of content to intrigue investors with. News might not have been profitable in a strict sense, but it lent the entire BuzzFeed operation credibility and prestige, and generated knock-on value that the rest of the enterprise benefited from. If generative AI hadn’t exploded when it did, would BuzzFeed be able to jettison its news division? Maybe not.

That’s speculative, and Peretti insists otherwise. But AI is above all an ambiguity generator. It allows those who hold the power to justify making all kinds of calls, in the name of embracing the future, improving efficiency and so on. And in this still very young AI-infested moment of ours, we can’t be sure which way many of those calls will break.

There are, however, plenty of worrying signs — studio executives refused to agree not to use AI that would displace writers, in a sticking point in the ongoing writers’ strike, for one — and ample anecdotes in the form of all those Twitter threads about workers getting the boot in favor of ChatGPT. But it’s still hard to know how, when and if AI will have a major impact on the jobs picture. Peretti says he’s sympathetic to this.

“So many journalists are losing their jobs, and it is a real crisis,” Peretti said. “People should be worried. And history has valuable lessons for sure. The irony is if our AI entertainment efforts had started sooner and performed better, I could have had enough surplus profit to continue underwriting losses at news like I’d done for years previously.”

In the end, we’re still getting more AI and fewer humans — even if the AI is not doing the humans’ job, exactly. AI will be used by executives and managers much this way, I think: To help gin up investment in future-forward products that require less labor costs to make, to buffer layoffs or attrition in human departments and to hire more part-time or project-based workers.

There’s no jobs apocalypse coming. There’s just a series of managers making the calls they think will best benefit their bottom line and serve their boards. Just like they’re supposed to — AI or no.



## BUSINESS AFTER HOURS



Stephen Gassman

Attendees chat during Business After Hours at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium in Dubuque.

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## BUSINESS AFTER HOURS



Stephen Gassman

The August Business After Hours took place on Aug. 15.



Clare Gill and daughter Olivia, 1, look at the fish during Business After Hours at the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium.



## BUSINESS AFTER HOURS



Stephen Gassman

The next Business After Hours will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 19, at FEH Design.



Attendees mingle during Business After Hours at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium.



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Attendees gather during Business After Hours at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium.



BLACK BUSINESS EXPO



Dave Kettering

Tika Sykes (left), owner of KLS Kreation, talks with fellow businesswoman Jackie Hunter during the third annual Black Business Expo held at the Q Casino.



The third annual Black Business Expo was held at Q Casino on Aug. 26.



Attendees browse products.



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## BLACK BUSINESS EXPO



Dave Kettering

Chief of Equity and Human Rights for the City of Dubuque, Dr. Gisella Aitken-Shadle (right), talks with Tika Sykes, owner of KLS Kreation during the third annual Black Business Expo held at the Q Casino.



People browse products during the third annual Black Business Expo.



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# Farewell to John Warnock, an internet pioneer whose invention made the world better



MICHAEL  
HILTZIK

Los  
Angeles  
Times

He is a columnist  
for the publication.

In June 1969, John E. Warnock achieved a milestone of sorts at the University of Utah by producing the shortest Ph.D. dissertation in the university's history.

A masterpiece of conciseness at 32 pages, the paper set forth a solution to the "hidden line problem," which applied to how computers could draw the outline of a form partially hidden behind another — for example, part of a triangle obscured by a ball — so that all the visible sides and angles line up convincingly.

Warnock, who died recently, went on to become one of the leading computer scientists of his era and co-founder in 1982 of Adobe Inc.

For those of us tethered to the computer in our professional or personal lives, his more momentous role is that of co-inventor of the PDF, the "page description format" that allows documents to appear on screen and be printed out as their creator intended, no matter which software or hardware is used to create them.

The PDF standard revolutionized desktop publishing. It's a required, or at least preferred, format for court filings, academic papers, consumer manuals — virtually every imaginable document in our increasingly paperless society.

And it originated in a project code-named "Camelot" that

Warnock launched at Adobe in 1991, when the company was still working to establish a comfortable niche in what was turning into an internet-connected world.

Camelot yielded another concise paper — six pages that outlined a vision for a software suite that would allow users to "capture documents from any application, send electronic versions of these documents anywhere and view and print these documents on any machines." The suite that followed was known as Acrobat, and its underlying format was the PDF.

Warnock's career traces the path of the computer industry in its earliest days. In the 1960s, the University of Utah became an important center of the still-fledgling discipline of computer science — so important, indeed, that in December 1969 it was among the first four nodes (along with UCLA, UC Santa Barbara and the Menlo Park-based research firm SRI) to be interconnected by the ARPANET, the network funded by the Pentagon's Advanced Research Projects Agency and the precursor to the internet.

Utah's specialty was computer graphics. Among War-

Continued on page 54



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—**Amber Vaske**, RN Charge Nurse

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## Continued from page 53

nock's fellow students was Edwin Catmull, who would eventually become president of Pixar and Walt Disney Animation Studios and who created, as a student project, a short video in which his left hand was converted into a computer image, a landmark in 3-D rendering. Warnock's Ph.D. thesis advisors were Utah professors David Evans and Ivan Sutherland, whose company, Evans and Sutherland, produced pioneering flight simulators.

Warnock was a member of a generation whose work transformed ordinary life as never before. The 1970s (including a few years preceding and following that decade) were a period of extraordinary innovations.

In 1968, Douglas Engelbart of SRI staged what has gone down in history as "the mother of all demos," introducing hyperlinks, the mouse, videoconferencing and other inventions to a rapt audience in San Francisco. ARPANET was launched in 1969.

Xerox's Palo Alto Research Center, the legendary Xerox PARC, was established in 1970. In 1973 its first personal computer — the first personal computer — became operational, with an animated image of Sesame Street's Cookie Monster flashing across its screen.

The IBM Personal Computer was introduced in 1981 and the Apple Macintosh, arguably the first consumer desktop computer, in

1984.

Since then, technological innovation seems to have regressed into a morass of cryptocurrency scams, new ways to invade personal privacy and robotaxis that collide with emergency vehicles, block traffic and drive themselves into wet cement. (One notable exception: The truly life-saving development of COVID-19 vaccines in record time.)

Warnock and his longtime professional partner, Charles M. Geschke, first collaborated at Xerox PARC. As I reported in my 1999 book about PARC, "Dealers of Lightning," there they worked to create a program to reconcile the incompatible image resolutions of computer screens and laser printers (another PARC invention).

Documents that looked perfect on the screens of PARC's personal computer, the Alto, turned into unintelligible gibberish when printed out. That made a mockery of another PARC innovation, Bravo, a word processing system built on the principle of "what you see is what you get," or WYSIWYG, meaning that the image on the screen could display varied fonts, boldface, shadows, even Russian cyrillic or Japanese kanji characters — and that the same features would appear on a printed page.

Warnock, Geschke and several collaborators finally invented Interpress, through which a printed document appeared exactly as it did on the screen. They then entered the hell of

trying to persuade Xerox to integrate Interpress into its laser printers and other typographical products.

The experience prompted them to leave Xerox, joining a vanguard of PARC scientists and engineers who carried PARC's DNA into the outside world, frustrated at the company's inability to market their inventions to businesses and consumers.

"We spent months traveling around to all the divisions within Xerox and back to corporate selling this idea," Warnock would recall.

Xerox eventually agreed to make Interpress a component of its entire product line, but refused to announce it until every product could be re-engineered to accommodate it, a process that would take years.

Crestfallen, Geschke and Warnock told themselves, "We've spent two years of our lives trying to sell this thing and they're going to put it under a black shroud for another five," Warnock said. "You were seeing PCs get announced, and Apples, and it became sort of depressing."

They left to found Adobe. After some false starts they settled on a business plan that would turn Adobe into a billion-dollar company by 1999: The development of an Interpress-like typesetting program. This became Postscript, which was first bundled into Apple printers and soon became the de facto standard for computer printing. (Geschke died in 2021. He and Warnock served as Adobe's co-chairmen until 2017.)

Adobe became known for other aids to desktop publishing and professional imaging, notably Photoshop, which enables photographs to be altered in seemingly infinite ways. Its digital software, including Photoshop and Acrobat, its PDF-producing tool, remains the core of its business, which recorded \$4.8 billion in profits on \$17.6 billion in sales last year.

Acrobat was an offspring of Postscript. To Warnock's dismay, Acrobat was an unaccountably hard sell.

"Nobody got it," Warnock recounted. In a meeting at IBM, "I explained how it worked, what its advantages were and how, from any application, you could send a completely portable document across platforms. They just sat there in the meeting with blank stares. They had no idea what I was talking about."

Soon, influential users did get it.

"The Centers for Disease Control was one of our earliest and most fanatical adopters," Warnock recalled. "They said, 'Do you know how many people's lives we can save by sending these documents out to all of the field offices?'"

Yet most people still "didn't understand how important sending documents around electronically was going to be. And in 1994, the world wide web hit, and then everybody said, 'Oh, well, you can use Acrobat to send documents.' What a concept!"

Before then, even the Adobe board had toyed with killing Acrobat.

"I said, 'There's just no way. This is solving an important problem, and we are going to hang in there until it works.'"

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## BIZ LOCAL

MERCYONE MAKES  
BEST HOSPITALS LIST

U.S. News & World Report named MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center on its 2023-2024 Best Hospitals list as a High Performing Hospital for heart attack, hip fracture, maternity (uncomplicated pregnancy) and stroke care.

EAGLE POINT SOLAR  
MAKES NATIONAL LIST

Solar Power World magazine ranked Eagle Point Solar, of Dubuque, No. 170 in the nation on its 2023 Solar Contractors List. The magazine also ranked the company as No. 159 in its Solar + Storage Installers sub list.

## Prime Class A Office Space for Lease

### 801 Bluff Street • Dubuque



Located at 801 Bluff Street, this beautiful, historic, building has it all. TH Media will occupy the first floor, with partial space available on the second floor and the entire third floor!

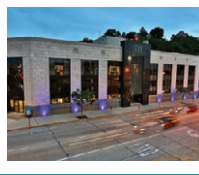
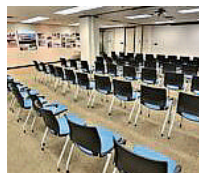
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## MEDICAL ASSOCIATES

**HIRED:** Kelsey Weinschenk as director of clinical services.

TWO BY TWO CHARACTER  
DEVELOPMENT

**APPOINTED:** The following people to its board of directors: Susan Hess, of Hammer Law Firm; Jane Kuhle, a Dubuque-based human resources and business consultant; Justina Reisch, of Premier Bank; JJ Rupprecht, of Atlantic Bottling Company; and Katie Schueller, of Dupaco Community Credit Union.

**RE-ELECTED:** The following board members: Shane Burtzlaff as president, Wendy Knight as past president, Ryan Kilburg as vice-president, Meggan Heacock as treasurer, and Rick Fullmer as secretary, as well as Amy Errthum, Amy Printz, Matt Theisen, Stephanie Vondal and Kristin Woodward-Vaassen.

## CITY OF DUBUQUE

**APPOINTED:** Arielle Swift as the public works director. In her new role, she will supervise personnel and maintenance of city infrastructure.

**HIRED:** Laura Bendorf as budget manager and Brian DeMoss as finance manager.

Continued on page 57





Harper



Melahoures



Schraad



Lucas



Potter



McClune



Meyer



Hoppman



Lopez



Lutgen



Carter



Banfield



Steffen



Brown



Nebel

Continued from page 56

## MEDICAL ASSOCIATES CLINIC

**HIRED:** Holly Melahoures to its hospital medicine department, where she will work with physicians, families and patients to deliver inpatient care.

## HONKAMP, P.C.

**PROMOTED:** Elizabeth Harper to accounting manager and Shelly Schmitt to billing and administrative specialist.

## DIAMOND JO CASINO

**PROMOTED:** Dave Schraad and Gabriel Lucas to casino managers and Lisa Potter, Ian McClune and Haley Meyer to assistant casino managers.

**PROMOTED:** Jim Hoppman to IT director.

**PROMOTED:** Alfredo Lopez to FanDuel senior supervisor.

## EASTERN IOWA MEDIA GROUP

**PROMOTED:** Beth Lutgen to group publisher for its Iowa and Illinois weekly newspapers and shoppers. In her new role, Lutgen will oversee revenue, editorial and distribution for the Iowa and Illinois weekly publications.

## WOODWARD COMMUNICATIONS CORP.

**PROMOTED:** Mindy Carter to general manager of its Wisconsin shopper group. She will oversee revenue and distribution.

**PROMOTED:** Lisa Banfield to sales manager for the Grant-Iowa-Lafayette Shopping News. In her new role, Banfield will supervise the group's sales staff while continuing to work with existing advertising clients.

## UNIFIED THERAPY SERVICES

**HIRED:** Kathleen Steffen as a physical therapist. In her new role, Steffen will work with adult and pediatric patients in both Dubuque Pennsylvania Avenue clinics as well as Area Residential Care, 3355 Kennedy Circle, Dubuque.

## WANDERWOOD GARDENS

**APPOINTED:** Jared McGovern was appointed as director.

## MI-T-M CORP.

**HIRED:** Tony Anderson to engineering.

**HIRED:** Tyler Brimeyer to sales.

**HIRED:** Allen Carper, Thomas Lange, Brandon Sams and Cooper Shimkus to fabrication.

**HIRED:** Brett Boffeli, Landen Deutmeyer, Shane McGreal, Jessica Raymond and Luke Soppe to production.

**HIRED:** Josh Thomas to shipping and receiving.

## WESTPHAL & COMPANY

**PROMOTED:** Adam Brown to estimator and project manager.

**PROMOTED:** Dave Nebel to shop superintendent.

## BIZ LOCAL

## METAL SERVICE CENTER WITH DUBUQUE LOCATION ACQUIRES MEXICO COMPANY

A steel and metals service center and materials supplier with a location in Dubuque announced the acquisition of a Mexico company.

Kloeckner Metals Corp., the U.S. subsidiary of Klöckner & Co., recently acquired National Material of Mexico, which serves automotive and industrial end markets in North America with 10 facilities throughout Mexico, according to a press release.

Kloeckner Metals Corp.'s Dubuque plant at 14806 W. Ridge Lane is one of 56 branches across North America.

The release states that the acquisition will allow Kloeckner Metals Corp. to "significantly expand its footprint in Mexico and increase its presence where the key automotive and industrial customers are located."

"With National Material of Mexico, we have found the ideal complement for the future progress of Kloeckner Metals Corporation," said John Ganem, CEO of Kloeckner Metals Corp., in the release. "We look forward to working with the strong team at National Material of Mexico and are convinced that we will continue our success story in the North American market as a combined company."

## MEDICAL ASSOCIATES HEALTH PLANS TABS NEW CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



Mitchell

A Dubuque-based regional health plan has appointed a new chief operating officer.

Jill Mitchell was promoted to the position at Medical Associates Health Plans, according to a press release.

Mitchell was most recently the director of finance for the organization. In her new role, Mitchell will manage the company's day-to-day operations.

The organization offers a range of employer health plans, Medicare plans and other services and marked its 40th anniversary in 2022.

# Business tycoon Carlos Ghosn's rise, fall and dramatic escape

BY MARK KENNEDY

NEW YORK — Carlos Ghosn, the former rock star businessman who fell from grace and fled authorities smuggled in a music instrument box, is getting what his dramatic story deserves — a multi-part documentary series.

“Wanted: The Escape of Carlos Ghosn” is the juicy real tale of how the auto executive went from attending red carpets as the head of both Nissan and Renault to fleeing to Lebanon with the help of a former Green Beret.

“The Carlos Ghosn story is unbelievable in the sense that it’s a Shakespearean tragedy in which we have an archetypal tragic hero who everybody wants to root for but knows the train crash is coming,” said Sean McLain, a consulting producer on the Apple TV+ series and Wall Street Journal reporter.

The four-part series takes a wider lens to Ghosn’s story, tracing the childhood and rise of the auto executive who Time magazine once put ahead of Bill Gates among the 15 most influential global business executives.

Voices included are Louis Schweitzer, former CEO of Renault; Andy Palmer, former COO of Nissan; Arnaud Montebourg, former French minister of economy; Takashi Yamashita, former Japanese minister of justice; and Hiroto Saikawa, former Nissan CEO.

Most crucially, director James Jones went to Lebanon and sat down with Ghosn and his wife, Carole, on camera. Jones got the job before he’d secured access to the couple but knew he had to have them participate.

“You need to hear from the people in the room. You can’t just have pundits commenting on what happened or kind of rehashing the story second-hand,” Jones says. “For me, getting Carlos and Carole Ghosn to talk frankly was a huge thing and I think that the series would have been a struggle to make without that.”

Many viewers might tune in because of the brazen way Ghosn left Japan in 2019 after being accused of financial improprieties. He turned to Mike Taylor, a former Green Beret, who hid the executive in a large music instrument box — with breathing holes drilled in — and got him out on a private jet.

“My initial reaction was like, ‘Is there enough for four parts?’ I know he’s an interesting guy who is a brilliant businessman, and the escape is thrilling,” said Jones. “But then when I spent the time reading up about it, it did feel rich and the kind of thing that’s quite satisfying to really get your teeth into.”



Koji Sasahara • The Associated Press

Then Nissan Motor Co. President and CEO Carlos Ghosn speak during a press conference in Yokohama, near Tokyo in 2012. Ghosn, the former rock star businessman who fell from grace, is the subject of a multi-part documentary series, “Wanted: The Escape of Carlos Ghosn,” on Apple TV+.

The Brazilian-born Ghosn took refuge in Lebanon, his ancestral homeland, which has no extradition treaty with Japan. He denied the financial improprieties charges and said Japan’s justice system was unfair.

“I did not escape justice. I fled injustice,” he said at the time.

The series also investigates Japan’s legal system, which critics say amounts to “hostage justice,” allowing suspects to be questioned for days without a lawyer present while they are kept in solitary confinement in a small, spartan cell. The conviction rate of more than 99% has raised questions over forced confessions.

The case against Ghosn centers on elaborate calculations to compensate him after retirement for a pay cut he took beginning in 2009, when disclosure of big executive pay became a legal requirement in Japan.

Ghosn argues the case against him was concocted in a power struggle within Nissan’s boardroom. And the series does show a conspiracy by Nissan officials to get rid of Ghosn because they feared a merger with Renault.

“He was wronged and yet these allegations look very bad,” said Jones. “And by hiding out in Lebanon, he’s not helping the appearance of innocence.”

Ghosn might have escaped but not everyone who helped him did the same. Taylor was sentenced to two years in prison, while his son, Peter, was sentenced to one year and eight months for his part. They claim in the series that Ghosn never paid them for their work helping him escape.

Jones sees the Ghosn saga as a cautionary tale of a leader who lost his bearings. The executive might have believed that because he’d saved Nissan and Renault that he deserved extra compensation.

“He thought he had saved these companies from extinction and made them successful and made them in his own image and therefore was kind of entitled to play by his own rules to some extent,” he said.

McLain, whose book with fellow Wall Street Journal reporter Nick Kostov “Boundless” informed the series, said Ghosn’s fall illustrates the need for checks and balances in the C-suite.

“He was going to retire a very wealthy man, but because he wanted more, what he’s going to be known for from now on is spiriting himself away from Japan by hiding in a box.”

Kennedy writes for The Associated Press



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