

Pressdemocrat.com Petaluma360.com Towns Watch Sonoma County PDPreps.com Search

North Bay Business Journal

SONOMA, MARIN AND NAPA COUNTIES

HOME LISTS ONLINE NEWS WINE INDUSTRY EVENTS PEOPLE COMMENTARY RESOURCES CONTACT

Monday, August 11, 2014, 6:24 am

2014 CFO Awards: Kelley Nowrouz, Boisset Family Estates

Business Journal Staff Report

Print Friendly

Share this item

Chief financial officer


849 Zinfandel Ln., St Helena 94574; 707-963-6900; boissetcollections.com

Employees: 200

Professional background: Ten years in public accounting and 17 in corporate accounting.

Education: Accounting, Golden Gate University

Age: Old enough



Kelley Nowrouz

I started my career in public accounting after coming home from my first year of accounting studies in Vermont. The job started out as a summer internship, but grew into full time permanent work within a short period of time. Getting the opportunity to learn on the job, meeting many interesting clients and the immediate immersion into accounting and tax was a thrill for me. I knew I have chosen the right field for my interests and talents.

I put myself through college by attending night school and working days. With the assistance of two very generous bosses, I attended Golden Gate University, studying accounting, and there, I was able to apply some of my work experience against college credits.

After working in the public accounting for 15 years, 10 with a firm and five being self-employed, I accepted a position with Boisset; a client which I had worked on throughout the 15 years.



At Boisset I have learned, and continue to learn, the ever changing intricacies of the wine industry. I have had the opportunity to be part of a company which has its own electrifying energy; one that pulses throughout the company and give us our individual uniqueness.

It's an energy which fuels and drives proprietor Jean-Charles Boisset. It's like an air he needs to breathe. It motivates him, gives him his innovative edge, and makes the company what it is today.

After 17 years at Boisset, I feel I have learned the rhythm — not yet mastered it — but a rhythm that I can work within and of which feel proud I am a part.


What do you see as the essential role of a financial leader in the current environment?:

I believe any leader would be best received and respected, if the person is leading by



AUG	19	CFO Awards Luncheon Registration deadline: August 15, 2014
AUG	28	Impact Napa Conference: Wine Registration deadline: August 25, 2014
Nonprofit Leadership Awards nominations Submission deadline: August 29, 2014		
SEP	18	Best Places to Work awards gala Registration deadline: September 15, 2014

[View the full Business Journal events calendar.](#)



example. At Boisset, it's very much an environment where you roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty!

And you see this daily from the very top down. We expect all to handle their parts and contribute to the overall success of the company. I often say, "If you see me doing it, you know that I expect you to do it too."

What are the biggest changes you've seen in your industry?: The wine industry has become ever more competitive; with consumers becoming more educated and suave. The recession taught wine drinkers to challenge themselves to find that excellent bottle of wine at the most affordable price. Our challenge is to get the consumer's attention, not only with excellent wine, but by displaying who we are through our values.

Tell us about the particular challenges and opportunities your organization has met in the recent past?: Working for, and with, a very dynamic and energetic leader of a family owned international corporation which is continually striving to grow provides its own challenges.

New opportunities are presented continuously. The ability to stay focused on the daily needs while juggling the requests for additional information is a new talent which one must be able to conform to. The fast pace and diversity of activities is always enjoyable, but the challenge to stay focused on the big picture and the end result needs to remain always in the forefront.

What advice would you give to young emerging financial leaders?: Do not undervalue the price of a solid education. It is so easy to settle for the money today without thought to what is truly around the corner tomorrow. Find a mentor, and stay on top of technology!

What's the best advice for weathering today's economic environment?: Invest in your employees; they are the foundation of any successful company. A happy employee base is like a free marketing campaign, making them your best asset.

How do you think your business will change in the next five years?: We will continue to grow while maintaining our top-of-the-line wines. We also will strengthen our effort and dedication to being environmentally friendly and self-sustaining at all our properties.

What is a decision you wish you hadn't made? What did you learn from it?: I strive to leave regrets behind and reflect only on learning from my mistakes. I am constantly reminding myself that the grass is rarely greener on the other side.

Early in my career I struggled with this concept, and made a decision or two that were not as beneficial as I would have liked.

What is your most memorable business experience?: Working with such fabulous, dedicated people. The wine industry is 90 percent passion! It's a wonderful feeling to be able to mentor an employee who wishes to learn more, and the payback is such a reward, making for a circle of learning and teaching.

What is your greatest business success?: I'm very proud of having the opportunity to contribute to our decision to go solar. We are 100 percent solar at two of our three winery properties.

What was your toughest business decision?: To objectively review and focus on numbers without getting caught up in the human side of what those results may represent. It's tough! I continuously remind myself that I, too, am an employee, and any business decision affecting the mass also affects me. I try hard not to lose sight of that.

What would your friends be surprised to find out about you?: My co-workers were pretty shocked that I know how to crochet.

Most admired businessperson outside the company: Rob Levi, my mentor throughout my early phase of my career. Without his influence, patience and teachings I would not be where I am today.

Current reading: Brene Brown

Most want to meet: Ben Franklin

Stress relievers: Quiet weekend, a comfortable sofa and a really good book! Or, watching

Select a list

New NBBJ publication

2014 Guide to Health Care & Healthy Living in the North Bay

See all NBBJ publications



click one for Journal or Book of Lists digital replica

Get news alerts & reports with E-NEWSLETTERS from the North Bay Business Journal

SUBSCRIBE

Click to subscribe to our newsletters

NBBJ Pulse Poll

Will health care reform encourage more routine medical visits than before?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

vote

This NBBJ Pulse Poll ends August 20, 2014 @ 12:00 pm.

[View past polls](#)

Latest Top News

[North Bay jobless rates rise in July](#)

[Amy's Kitchen to employ 150 at new Santa Rosa plant](#)

[Keysight third-quarter revenue rises 8%; Russia market to drop](#)

Most popular recent items

[North Coast plays host to 20 Cuban sommeliers](#) 6,497 view(s) | posted on July 23, 2014

[#ReadThis: How to use the hashtag effectively](#) 4,402 view(s) | posted on July 14, 2014

[Vintners uncork retail tech for direct sales](#) 4,224 view(s) | posted on July 21, 2014

[Solar tax credit expiration raises concerns](#) 4,149 view(s) | posted on August 4, 2014

[Custom microcrusher buys Napa winery](#) 3,695 view(s) | posted on July 30, 2014

Latest reader comments

my cat.

Favorite activities outside work: Walking, enjoying our back yard and life when both the boys are at home.

You also might like:

- n Facilities Managers Recognition Awards 2014: Sean Ashby, Trincherro Family Estates
- n Manufacturing Awards 2012: Leadership: Trincherro Family Estates
- n North Bay CFO Awards 2011: Mark Smithers, Trincherro Family Estates
- n Top Manufacturers Awards 2014: Bear Republic Brewing: Family company crafts double-digit growth
- n 2014 CFO Awards: Scott Smith, Silverado Investment Management Company

*Copyright © 1988–2014 North Bay Business Journal
View the policy for linking to website content.*

Topics: Boisset Family Estates, CFO Recognition Awards, CFO Recognition Awards 8-11-2014, North Bay Business Journal 8-11-2014 | Categories: Accounting, Alcoholic Beverages, Consumer Products, Food and Beverage, Manufacturing, Napa Report, North Bay News, People, Wine Industry Business Journal

[Back]

Print Friendly

SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS

Your name	<input type="text"/>	Required
Your email	<input type="text"/>	Required, will not be published
Your website	<input type="text"/>	
Comment	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div>	

Comments are moderated and generally will be posted if they are on-topic and not abusive. For more information, please see our [Comments and Letters Policy](#). To share this item by email or social media, use the links above.

Do not use this form to contact people, companies or organizations mentioned in this story. Contact them directly. Private messages left here will be deleted.

Counselor on Wal-Mart plans small-format store in northeast Rohnert Park
Dalton on Is Cotati's Shipbird the next Uber?

Previous articles

Select Month

Business Journal connections

Site Index

[Book of Lists](#) | [People](#) | [Photos](#) | [Resources Guide](#) | [Commentary](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Industry News

[Accounting](#) | [Banking and Finance](#) | [Commercial Real Estate](#) | [Construction](#) | [Education](#)
[Employment](#) | [Green](#) | [Health Care and Senior Living](#) | [Hospitality and Tourism](#) | [Insurance](#) | [Law](#)
[Residential Real Estate](#) | [Technology](#) | [Wine Industry](#)

Events

[Upcoming Events](#) | [Conference Reports](#)

Mobile

Tags

After Hours Bank of Marin earnings expansion Healdsburg Kaiser Permanente
Marin County Mendocino
County mergers and acquisitions
Napa Napa County North
Bay Novato office real estate Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010
Petaluma Rohnert Park San Rafael
Santa Rosa Solano County
Sonoma County Sonoma
State University - SSU St. Joseph Health Sutter Health