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Twin Cities BUSINESS

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January 2012 Contents

FEATURES FEATURES FEATURES FEATURES

Corrections and clarifications

After the publication of "200 Minnesotans You Should Know" (December), *TCB* discovered that it should get to know some Minnesotans a little better:

- Ken Powell's title at General Mills is chairman and CEO, not CEO and president.
- Juliana Clegg's correct title at General Mills is senior vice president; she also is president of the the company's meals division. As such, she has responsibility for overseeing business operations of five convenient-meal categories in the U.S.
- Also at General Mills: The company does not own 100 percent of yogurt brand Yoplait. In July, General Mills announced that it had completed the acquisition of a 51 percent controlling interest in Yoplait S.A.S., and a 50 percent interest in a related entity that holds the worldwide Yoplait brands.
- The Schwan Food Company's annual sales are about $3 billion.

In addition, two of the 200 were given the wrong faces. The correct photographs (and subjects):

Steve Rothschild
Twin Cities Rise!

Daniel Ryan
RedBrick Health

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Bill Moran's firm, Blinc Publishing, brings "analog" designs into the digital age. Its clients include Target and other up-to-date firms.

COLUMNS

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index

Names of companies and people in this issue are indexed to the first page of the articles in which they're mentioned.

COMPANIES

PEOPLE

letters
LETTERS@TCBMAG.COM

Family Business Recognized

Thank you very much for the *Twin Cities Business* and Hubler for Business Families Family Business Award event. Every aspect of the event—the reception, the dinner, the program, and the video presentations—was carried out with great care and careful attention to detail.

You provided our family and our company leaders with a memorable evening. We all enjoyed hearing stories of the wonderful family businesses, their products, services, and community involvement. We are humbled and deeply moved to be included among this group of genuine and distinguished family businesses.

Thank you for recognizing family businesses and the foundation on which they are built. Your Editor's Note, "People Before Profits" [November], is emblematic of family businesses. Seeing these businesses gives us energy and excitement to learn in new ways, and affirms our belief in a bright future for our global community.

M. A. Mortenson, Chairman, M. A. Mortenson Company, Golden Valley

Ageless Wisdom

The last thing I expected to see in glancing at your current column [Editor's Note, December] was a picture of the Edwin W. Rawlings article I had read the night before. I have found that I obtain an excellent business education reading *Fortune* magazines that are 75, 50, or 25 years old.

William Norton, President, Viking Industrial Center, Inc., St. Paul

editor's note

DALE KURSCHNER | DKURSCHNER@TCBMAG.COM

Toasting the New Year

We have the solid foundation; now for some growth.

When presenting opening remarks during our Smart Solutions panel discussion in September, I jokingly told the audience that—even though it was unseasonably cold and Minnesota had experienced its first major frost of the season that same morning—it could rest assured that we would have at least one more month of mild autumn weather. How I knew this, I said, is because I saw dozens of geese flying north that morning. Not east or west on the way south, but north.

These comments were made in the context of all the reports and studies—and daily newspaper headlines—pounding us with negative estimates, projections, and findings, many of them no more substantive or accurate than my avian weather forecast.

As we head into 2012, we're all wondering, what will this year bring? Given how so many thought 2011 would be much better than 2010—and it wasn't—it's hard to find anyone willing to stick his or her neck out and say anything with confidence. Plenty will say they remain cautiously optimistic, or hopefully guarded.

When you ask business leaders around Minnesota specific questions, though, such as whether they expect to increase head count or R&D spending during the next quarter, their answers paint a more confident picture of the state's economy.

There's a bedrock foundation of financial stability and slow but steady growth among Minnesota businesses, according to our quarterly economic indicator surveys. This research collects responses from 500 to 600 business executives throughout the state, and it continues to find healthy levels of hiring, R&D and capital spending, and productivity improvements.

It isn't considered news to report "Minnesota Companies Growing at Slow Pace." But hundreds of corporations are hiring, a little here, a little there. Collectively, the hiring and investing continues to fuel our economy.

Results from our next quarterly economic indicator survey, which asks business leaders to share with us their plans for January–March, will be reported in our twice-weekly Briefcase e-newsletter in mid-January, and then more extensively in the February issue of *Twin Cities Business*.

We anticipate seeing a slight increase in the percentage of businesses planning to hire during the first quarter, based in part on a surge in positive news reports in early December:

- According to the December 13 *Wall Street Journal*, "a number of economists have increased estimates for fourth-quarter growth, pointing to stronger-than-expected readings on trade, consumer spending, and other gauges." This pace was "much stronger than economists were expecting."

- That same edition of the *WSJ* reported the French Champagne industry was preparing for a bumper holiday season, "a significant recovery from just two years ago." Sales were up 15 percent from a year earlier, and on the way to possibly tying the record 339 million bottles shipped in 2007.

- Temp-staffing firm Manpower Group reported in December that 15 percent of 220 Twin Cities-area employers say they plan to add jobs during the first quarter of 2012. Factoring in others who plan to reduce head count during the same period, the survey projects net job growth of 7 percent compared with only 4 percent in the same period a year earlier.
- In October, Americans' incomes rose by the largest factor in seven months.
- The number of houses listed for sale in the Twin Cities metropolitan area during November plunged 24 percent from a year earlier—the lowest inventory level since the start of 2005. Meanwhile, there were 3,321 pending sales in November—30 percent more than a year ago.
- The National Federation of Independent Business reports that its index of small-business optimism increased for the third consecutive month in November. It also found more firms plan to hire in the near future.
- The American Staffing Association's index of temporary and contract employment continued to drop during November. Temporary employment tends to decrease when employers hire temp workers or others into permanent positions.
- The U.S. job market is improving. Job gains averaged 143,000 per month September through November, compared with an average of 84,000 per month in the previous three months.

Here's hoping the positive trends continue.

Did You Know?

Some of you may not have known about our quarterly economic survey. It's the only statewide survey of its kind and it covers all industries and sizes of companies. You can learn more about it in next month's issue.

Another "Did You Know" involves our Business Information Guide, *The B.I.G. Book*, an annual (published in December) compilation of rankings, rosters, and resources covering the entire state. It's the go-to source for readers looking to build or expand their business, hone in on a target market, size up the competition, or get up to speed with a particular company or industry.

Other list books send out a survey or two and include whomever replies until the total reaches 25. We're sticklers for accuracy, with a team that works all year to ensure each line is precise and current. If you're serious about your research, this is the book for you.

When you ask business leaders around Minnesota specific questions . . . their answers paint a more confident picture of the state's economy.

One last "Did You Know" is about our signature events. In addition to the September panel discussion mentioned earlier, we produced events last July, October, and November. And coming up January 12, we have our Small-Business Success Stories event (see page 22).

Though our articles deliver core insights, such as in our Small-Business Success Stories feature, some of the best content associated with such a project can be found only at its related event, when the introductory and acceptance speeches are made. I know, you're thinking, "Egads, acceptance speeches?" I did too, before I started attending the events and found their quality to be exceptional. To see what I mean, visit **tcbmag.com/halloffame/index**. You'll see and hear insights from leaders such as HealthPartners CEO Mary Brainerd and Arctic Cat Chairman Christopher Twomey, who were inducted into the Minnesota Business Hall of Fame last July.

I encourage you to join me at our events—starting this month—not just for the leaders you'll meet and hear from while there, but for the interesting professionals and compelling networking opportunities you'll find at your table. And for those times you can't make it, we're working to have highlights available through our Web site. **TCB**

Starters

news | trends | personalities

A Deli Grows in East Isles

Can David Weinstein's Rye succeed where so many other Twin Cities delicatessens have failed?

The Twin Cities are littered with the bones of failed attempts to transplant an authentic Jewish delicatessen to the land of white sauce and white bread. The Jacobs brothers (Irwin and Shelly) gave it the college try with Sasha's and Louie's Habit, respectively. The Zaroff's had their eponymous place off 394. Who can forget the Lincoln Del? (Its long tenure can't be regarded as a failure.) Others remain in business, from Cecil's to Mort's, providing aspects of, but rarely a complete NYC or LA deli experience.

David Weinstein isn't deterred. The Connecticut-bred lawyer has fired the latest salvo in the deli dramas, and it is an ambitious one.

Weinstein purchased the old Auriga building (empty five years) at Franklin and Hennepin, just a few blocks from his East Isles home, with the intent of creating an authentic Jewish deli. The food brains of the operation are those of longtime consultant and restaurateur (and full time Jew) Tobie Nidetz.

"I kept expecting to find a reason not to do it," Weinstein explains. He didn't get cold feet talking to Irwin Jacobs or obsessing about the local palate. Instead he spoke to banks and Small Business Adminstration while Nidetz prepared revenue forecasts.

Early reviews have been mixed, and opening week crowds were heavy. *Tzimmes* and *kishke* are already off the menu for technical reasons, and no one really knows if Rye can teach the town to love *kreplach* (meat dumplings) and bialy (a flat bagel-like thingy).

"What we're going to be known for is our meats," says Nidetz, "our smoked meats, corned beef; most good delis

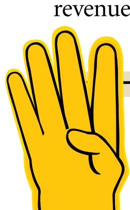
> Rye is deliberately casting a wide net, rather than preaching to the congregants at nearby Temple Israel.

purchase their meats from outside vendors." Rye employs the same "sensibility" as local chef-driven restaurants, Nidetz says, using natural, organic, and locally raised ingredients wherever possible.

With a small bar, a couple TVs, and a menu that includes omelets, cheesecake, and burgers, the 90-seat, all-day Rye is deliberately casting a wide net, rather than just preaching to the congregants at nearby Temple Israel. "We're trying to fill an unmet need," says Weinstein.

So, come for the hummus, stay for the *matzo brei*. —*Adam Platt*

David Weinstein with a classic deli breakfast: lox and bagels.



We're Number 4! We're Number 4!

Travel + Leisure readers rank the Twin Cities and the results are list worthy.

Cleanliness: #1

Intelligent People: #2 (after Seattle)

Safety: #3 (behind Portland, ME and Santa Fe)

Theater: #4 (behind NY, Chicago, and Providence!)

No doubt Minnesotans love rankings; they reinforce our worst hubris and deepest insecurities. We're the best educated, longest-lived, fattest, coldest, smartest, least desirable to move to . . . you can find a ranking to tell you about anything you want, except the balmy winter one. Can't even bribe our way into it.

So every year *Travel + Leisure* magazine polls its readers about American cities, and of the 23 categories (Singles Bars to Flea Markets to Barbecue), we came up top five in four of them.

We did not rank in Cocktail Hour, Stylish People, Ethnic Food, or Flea Markets, for that matter. Skeptics will regard Providence showing up more often than MSP as evidence of suspect methodology.

The CVBs are happy to get the ink for sure, but clean, smart, safe, and theatrical aren't usually the primary criteria on the global traveler's wish list. On the other hand, Des Moines and Milwaukee failed to show at all. So there. —*A. P.*

The box design, introduced in late 2010, makes it simple for customers and retailers to find the right shoe faster.

New Balance Rebalanced

Minneapolis design agency Knock wins an international design award for its shoebox.

"New Balance had over 100 different boxes" for its shoes, says Todd Paulson, chief creative officer for Minneapolis design and branding agency Knock. "Every time they came out with a new shoe, they used an entirely different box."

Thanks to Paulson and Knock, New Balance has a single box design—and one that earned the agency an international packaging award in late September. Knock's box won a bronze in the Pentawards, a worldwide competition for packaging design.

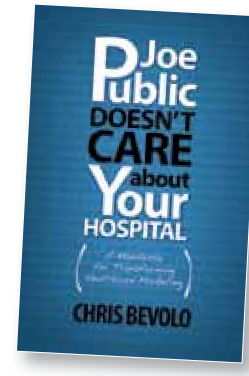
New Balance tapped Knock to "globally reposition the brand connection in all its stores," Paulson says. What Knock did, he adds, "was simplify the look." The resulting design makes shopping easier for shoe customers; Knock also incorporated a labeling system that helps store staff quickly find the right product.

According to Paulson, Knock was one of the few U.S. design firms that the Pentawards honored this year. All the winners will be on display in February at the DesignPack Gallery in Paris. "To be honored internationally is really cool," he says.

—*Gene Rebeck*

Beyond the Smiling Billboard

Health care providers should take better care of their marketing, Chris Bevolo says.



Chris Bevolo—whose Minneapolis marketing agency, Interval, works primarily for hospitals and clinics—has published a new book, *Joe Public Doesn't Care About Your Hospital*, that lobs a few bombs into those quiet zones. According to Bevolo, whose client list includes North Memorial Medical Center and Virginia's Inova Health System, the vast majority of hospitals and clinics just don't think good marketing is important. Bland billboards with stock-art photos of smiling people or shiny new high-tech gizmos remain standard operating procedure.

So why should Joe Public care about this? Bevolo admits that his book's target is a fairly small niche. But he does provide a sharp-elbowed, cogent, and often amusing read on the health care market—a world we all live in, one way or another.

Chris Bevolo

Providers that continue a standard approach may soon find themselves facing hospice care, Bevolo says. Patients are digging up information and taking advantage of more treatment options, whether that means MinuteClinic or Mayo. The increasing prevalence of high-deductible plans and consumer-directed health coverage are forcing health "customers" to be even more discerning. And even if the courts trim back health care reform, insurers are likely to fight against the traditional and spendy fee-for-service model. In short, providers are going to need to compete more—and become better marketers.

Bevolo believes most health care marketers get it. Physicians and the C-suite? Not so much. His book, Bevolo says, is something that those marketers "can accidentally set on the physician's desk or in their boss's office." —*G. R.*

The O Factor

Minnesota Opera's original productions are reinventing opera's historical business model.

ANTHONY BRETT SCHRECK

Ponder the most tradition-bound of tradition-bound art forms and opera springs to mind. So what then to make of Minnesota Opera's SRO world premiere of *Silent Night*, which tells the story of the 1914 Christmas truce between Allied and German soldiers? It wrapped up a sellout run in late November.

"It's counterintuitive in the opera business," says Patrick Dewane, the Minnesota Opera's vice president of advancement. "New works were historically box office poison." Not anymore: "We're doing more than any opera in the country, but [new works] are doing well all over."

At a time when the Minnesota Orchestra is running large deficits, the Opera is stable and regards new works as part of staving off creeping fine arts obsolesence. *Silent Night* is part of a seven-year, $7 million commitment to present original works, including three world premieres.

The Opera got the message in 2007 when its first world-premiere production, *The Grapes of Wrath*, drew big crowds. "So we decided to go all in," Dewane explains. "But you still need the right subject matter and the right artists."

New works have been viewed as risky in the opera world because they generally cost twice as much to produce as an old standard. "There are rights to obtain, and the performers don't know them, so there's a learning curve," says Dewane. The Opera has borne the cost via a New Works Initiative fundraising campaign, which has brought in $6 million to date. Much of that money has come from outside Minnesota, with the Mellon Foundation in New York and the Seaver Institute in Los Angeles providing large donations.

Dewayne says the equation is a simple one: "It's the way they responded to Verdi in the 19th century—great storytelling is great storytelling." —*A. P.*

DINING Tricia Cornell

Warm Flavors for Cold Nights

Saffron relies on harissa for complexity and just enough heat

After your first bite of the grilled kofta meatballs at Saffron, they start to warm you up just a little bit. Not to five-alarm chili levels, but more like the gentle flush of wine across your cheeks. There's a little warmth in the tomato sauce, too—something you just can't put your finger on that makes that sauce perfect for those very meatballs.

That "something" is harissa, a North African chili paste that is one of the basic building blocks of Saffron's pan-Mediterranean cuisine. Chef Sameh Wadi uses it to build flavors in many dishes, even those that might not say so on the menu, such as those delicate meatballs.

"Harissa works as a marinade or a finishing touch," Wadi says. "It can be an ingredient or a dip on its own. We've also used it in desserts, which is not traditional at all."

Take the grilled blue prawns. These are marinated in a harissa vinaigrette, grilled, and then tossed in the same vinaigrette again just before serving. "It's not the heat, it's the complexity," Wadi says. "It's not a spicy dish, but it has those notes. You get the spectrum of nutty, sweet, sour, spicy."

Harissa also lends complexity and just enough heat to marinated anchovies and to a lamb shank bathed in a harissa-scented broth.

The chile-mixture is making its way onto menus around the Twin Cities. The fried egg and harissa sandwich has been a favorite at 112 Eatery since it opened its doors, and the new Pat's Tap offers a grilled chicken sandwich (with harissa notes) on focaccia. The North African flavors, it turns out, blend well with American comfort food.

Wadi is Palestinian, so harissa is not something he grew up with, but at Saffron, he says, "any land that uses olive oil is fair game." His kitchen uses three kinds of harissa: a dry rub that is his innovation (traditional harissa is a paste), a recipe from an Algerian grandmother that employs reconstituted dried chilis, and a fresh-chili harissa that has a livelier taste.

And the recipes themselves? "Those are top secret," Wadi says. "I've been playing around with six different chilis to get an authentic flavor without getting too hot." So that "something you just can't put your finger on" in those kofta meatballs must remain a secret, after all.

Saffron
123 N. 3rd St.
Minneapolis
612-746-5533
saffronmpls.com

CRAIG BARES

Harissa is front and center at 112 Eatery. Its bacon, egg, and harissa sandwich (with housemade pickles) is an addictive but messy sensation.

SELLING IT John Rash

More Than a Workout

Preston Kelly's YMCA campaign suggests a higher calling.

To everything, there is a season. Only rarely do seasons shift as dramatically as they do between the holidays and January: Festive, frosted trees become a bleak winter landscape; Christmas morning yields to late nights calculating credit card bills; and holiday spreads move from tables to tummies. For many Minnesotans it's a time to reboot, including stepping into a health club. But if the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities and its longtime ad agency Preston Kelly have anything to say about it, people will "not just join a health club, but a health movement," according to Chuck Kelly, the agency's president.

The Strategy

Preston Kelly, the 45-employee Minneapolis-based agency that claimed $55 million in billings in 2010 (the same year it won *Advertising Age*'s Midwest Small Agency of the Year) is trying to differentiate the non-profit Y from its corporate competitors by focusing on community.

It's a sharp turn from the individualism of last year's notable campaign, in which a woman ate an entire stick of butter.

The Creative

The campaign employs a clever split-screen visual motif, in which the legs of one person carry another. Arms are substituted too, set to moving, motivational music that suggests the quest for a healthier lifestyle isn't a solitary pursuit.

"We're a team without a uniform," begins the TV copy, which continues, "We're a league without stars . . . who come together and strengthen our community as we strengthen ourselves. . . . we pull together as a community. Become part of something bigger than a health club. Join together at the Y."

People have. Preston Kelly claims its campaigns over the last 10 years have driven many of the six figures worth of new Y memberships, representing hundreds of thousands of people. But Kelly believe the inspirational quality of the new direction sold the Y on change.

"The work is brilliant," said Bette Fenton, the Y's vice-president for marketing and communication, who described it as "a blend of brand positioning and member acquisition strategy."

The Buy

Fenton wouldn't reveal overall investment for the multi-media campaign, which will have 30- and 60-second TV spots, radio, print, billboards, online, and social media components. In fact, the only number that Fenton and Kelly would divulge was zero: The amount Preston Kelly charges for its Y work—reflecting a holiday spirit that knows no season.

TOP TICKETS Megan Wiley

Meshell Ndegeocello

Moody Emotive Crooner

Vocalist and bass player Meshell Ndegeocello blurs the lines between funk, soul, R&B, rock, jazz, and hip-hop. This month, the genre-crossover artist sings at the Dakota for two nights in support of her latest record, *Weather*. Her tenth album is a moody and emotive pop

CHARLIE GROSS

record that highlights the singer-songwriter's versatility, perfect for a cold winter's night in a hot club. January 22–23, 7 P.M., $40, Dakota Jazz Club & Restaurant, Minneapolis, 612-332-1010, **dakotacooks.com**

Foreigner

Unplugged and Intimate

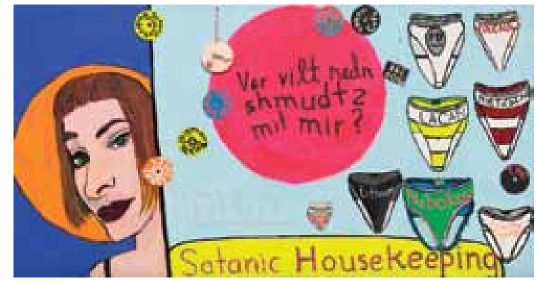
Arena rock gets intimate at the fittingly titled concert "Foreigner Acoustique: The Classics Unplugged." In addition to playing a slew of hits—the band has seen 16 songs chart in the Top 30 in its 35-year career—they'll perform rare B-sides as well as covers of influential cuts by The

Beatles and Elvis. What will Feel Like the First Time is singer Mick Jones' "behind the songs" stories. January 20, 8 P.M., $43.50–$59.50, State Theatre, Minneapolis, 800-982-2787, **hennepintheatretrust.org**

ARTS PICKS Camille LeFevre

Frank Gaard

Drawing From the Edge



He cites *Mad* magazine as the work of art that most affected him as a child. For 20 years, he published the underground zine *Artpolice*, in which he combined his razor-sharp social criticism with a brutal style of drawing often compared to that of R. Crumb.

Minneapolis artist Frank Gaard, in other words, has enjoyed a long and idiosyncratic art practice, which the Walker Art Center celebrates with a new exhibition featuring Gaard's latest obsessions: panties and ponies, as well as past work. Opens January 26, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 612-375-7600, **walkerart.org**

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

Elizabeth Taylor (in a slip) and Paul Newman (in a bathrobe) created indelible portrayals of Maggie the Cat and her alcoholic husband Brick when Tennessee Williams' play was made into the 1958 film. Lisa Peterson directs the Guthrie Theater's second staging of the explosive play, in which death, desire, and the fate of an inheritance drive a family to emotional extremes. January 14–February 26, Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis, $24–$68, 612-377-2224, **guthrietheater.org**

Concierge

star treatment for VIP clients and guests

Progressive Boat Show

Resolve to Enjoy January

Introduce your clients to wintery entertainment.

By Melinda Nelson

January takes its name from Janus, the two-faced god of doorways, transitions, and beginnings, so appropriately, we have a divided relationship with the first month of the year. There are those who love January for its icy, pristine beauty, while the haters make a sport of complaining about the snow, the wind chill, and the potholes. In the spirit of new beginnings, we offer an array of January-specific pleasures and distractions, both indoors and out.

January 1

Minnesota Vikings vs. Chicago Bears

In 2010, when the roof of the Metrodome collapsed, local football fans helped shovel out the four-foot snowdrifts at TCF Bank Stadium, only to watch the Vikings lose to the Chicago Bears, 40–14. A year later, the Bears devoured the Vikings again, 39–10, at Soldier Field. This New Year's Day, snowfall permitting, we anticipate that the Vikings will be loaded for—dare we say it—bear. Metrodome, Minneapolis, **vikings.com**

January 19–22

Progressive Boat Show

If your out-of-town clients don't believe that Minnesota has the highest per capita boat ownership in the country, invite them to the Progressive Boat Show, now in its 40th year. Check out the latest boats and equipment and don't miss the Antique and Classic Boat Display, including "Stella", a 1907 Fay & Bowen Standard Launch from the Minnesota Lakes Maritime Museum. After you visit the new Marina and Yacht Club Experience, complete with boats docked in water, rest your weary Topsiders at the Seven Sushi & Steakhouse outpost. Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, **minneapolisboatshow.com**

January 20–22

U.S. Pond Hockey Championships

For those attorneys, investment bankers, and other clients who still play hockey in the old guys' leagues, show them how it's really done. Created by local PR honcho Fred Haberman in 2005, this event brings former NHL legends, Division 1 hockey players, and high school heroes from all over the country (and Canada, of course) to Lake Nokomis for three days of bliss "the way nature intended," and the chance to win the Golden Shovel, the Stanley Cup of pond hockey. Women, rink rats, and boot hockey players also welcome. Lake Nokomis, Minneapolis, **uspondhockey.com**

January 21

Minnesota Wild vs. Dallas Stars

Nearly 20 years ago, the Minnesota North Stars left town (and a big hole in the hearts of local hockey fans), only to resurface as the Dallas Stars. Last April, the Minnesota Wild messed with Texas, and eliminated the Stars from the Stanley Cup playoffs. Could be a grudge match on January 21. For more fun and games, check out the Wild vs. the San Jose Sharks on January 10, and the Nashville Predators on January 31. Xcel Energy Center, St. Paul, **xcelenergycenter.com**

January 21

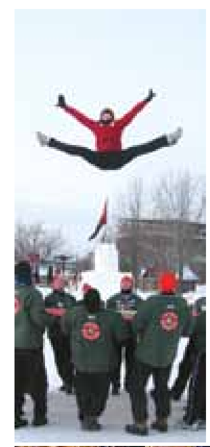
Pond Hockey North America Championships

Denny Loving and Jeff Markus created the Pond Hockey North America Championships (PNAC) in 2009, instantly creating competition for the incumbent U.S. Pond Hockey Championships. Fortunately, we've got more than enough ponds (and hockey players) for two events. For spectators, PNAC wins by virtue of its easy access to nearby Dunn Bros., Maynard's, and Bayview if the action gets too hot (or the weather gets too cold). Excelsior Bay, Lake Minnetonka, **pondhockeynac.com**

January 26 – February 5

The 2012 Saint Paul Winter Carnival

Show your clients that innovation has always been a feature of life up here in the frozen north. In 1886, when a New York newspaper reporter described St. Paul as "another Siberia, unfit for human habitation in the winter," local business leaders created the St. Paul Winter Carnival, complete with a sparkling ice castle, to prove him wrong. Over a century later, this impressive event, which bills itself as "the coolest celebration on earth," continues to bring magic (and commerce) to the lovely Rice Park, even without a castle. St. Paul, **winter-carnival.com**



January 28

Winterfest

Why should Scandinavians have all the winter fun? Join the equally fun-loving German-American community for a mug of warm Glühwein at their annual Winterfest Tent Party, followed by a Euro Dance Party in the Ratskellar, complete with retro 70s and 80s Europop (Der Kommissar, anyone?) and classic Karneval party music. Germanic-American Institute, St. Paul, **gai-mn.org**

{ Plugged In }

The best opportunities for networking this month.

BY ANNA BEFORT

{ January 12 }

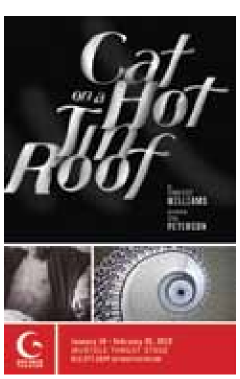
2011 Small-Business Success Stories

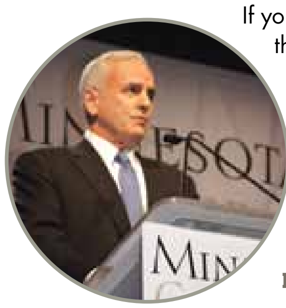
Twin Cities Business magazine's annual event is a big celebration for small businesses in Minnesota. You can network with 200 other businesspeople and hear the inspiring stories of some successful entrepreneurs. This year's honorees include Cortec Corporation, Pawn America, Garelick Manufacturing Company, Tortilleria La Perla, and six others. (See page 22 for information on all the winners.) **5:30 P.M., $75, Radisson Plaza Hotel, Minneapolis, 612-336-9288, tcbmag.com**

{ January 14 }

***Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* opening night**

Tennessee Williams would have turned 100 last year, a milestone that was commemorated with festivals, plays, and even a "Stella!" shouting contest in New Orleans. The Guthrie seems to be paying its own tribute, with its new production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* coming just a year and a half after *A Streetcar Named Desire.* Lisa Peterson directs this tale of cotton tycoon Big Daddy Pollitt and his dysfunctional Southern family. Opening night is the best time to run into other local businesspeople, says Faegre Baker Daniels managing partner Andrew Humphrey. For the VIP treatment, a $2,000-a-year donation will get you into the Tyrone Guthrie Circle, which comes with invitations to opening-night dinners and access to the private Kitchak Lounge during intermission. **7:30 P.M., $40–$68, Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis, 612-377-2224, guthrietheater.org**





{ January 24 }

Minnesota Chamber of Commerce's Session Priorities Dinner

If you want to hear about the state's political agenda—from the politicians themselves—this annual event invites the governor and legislative leaders to talk about their priorities for the upcoming session before a crowd of "primarily business leaders from all over the state," says Peg Birk, president and CEO of Interim Solutions. "It is at the beginning of the legislative session before the issues heat up and get 'nasty.'" **4 P.M., $95–$130, Saint Paul RiverCentre, St. Paul, 651-292-4699, bit.ly/vSYgBg**

{ January 26 }

Minnesota Twins' Diamond Awards

The TwinsFest weekend kicks off with the Diamond Awards, an exclusive event that's both an awards program for current and former Twins and a fundraiser for the Minnesota Medical Foundation's research into brain, nerve, and muscle disorders. The crowd of about 500 is a mix of corporate sponsors, University of Minnesota doctors and researchers, sports media, fans, and community supporters. The silent auction will include top-notch baseball memorabilia. Act fast if you want to attend: Last year's awards sold out the first week of January. **5:30 P.M., $150, Target Field, Minneapolis, 612-626-5170, bit.ly/u9RLvv**

{ January 28 }

Pacer Rocks for Kid

Pacer's fundraiser focuses specifically on young professionals, inviting a few hundred to enjoy live music and raise money to support children with disabilities. "Rocks for Kids is a relatively low-cost event that has a great benefit and yet it's fun," says Tom Lindell, managing director of Exponent PR. And attendees are not all young professionals: Last year's event saw the likes of Jim and Donna Pohlad and presenting sponsor Doug Nill. (In other words, they'll still let you in the door if you're older than 40.) **8 P.M., $30–$35, Fine Line Music Cafe, Minneapolis, 952-838-9000, partyoftheyear.com**

{ January 28 }

Minnesota Opera's *Werther* opening night

This tragic tale of unrequited love catapulted Johann Wolfgang von Goethe to literary stardom. Turned into an opera by Frenchman Jules Massenet in 1887, it's also the theatrical event that Simon Stevens, executive vice president of UnitedHealth Group, is most excited about this month. "The show has a stellar cast led by Roxana Constantinescu and international rising star James Valenti," Stevens says. Opening night is when you'll find the biggest crowd, including many members of the opera's board of directors and major donors. For the under-40 set, the mingling continues later with a post-show after-party with the cast. **7:30 P.M., $35–$200, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, St. Paul, 651-224-4222, mnopera.org/season**

{ January 28 }

Junior League of Minneapolis' Duets: An Evening of Perfect Pairings

The Minneapolis Junior League has been hosting a "One Night" fundraiser for years, but it's taken various forms. After last year's success, it's reprising its "Duets" theme, which refers to pairings of wine and food from local eateries. There's no sit-down dinner, but rather 12 chef stations with dishes from different restaurants in town. (Last year's event included La Belle Vie, Sea Change, Crave, and Barbette.) The roughly 400 attendees are mostly Junior League women and the men who support them; previous years' attendees have included John and Nancy Lindahl, and local food maven Sue Zelickson and her husband, Al. **7 P.M., $125, BMW of Minnetonka, Minnetonka, 612-238-8460, bit.ly/sJjUGM**

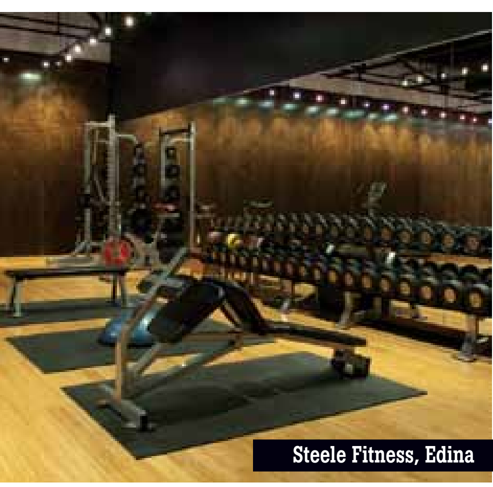
BY ELIZABETH DOYLE

New Year, Updated You

What better time to call on a few local experts to update your look? Here are five who can help **take your personal image to a new level.**

1. Personal Training

It's not a novel idea to kick off the New Year on the right foot with an updated workout regime. Leave it to the pros at Steele Fitness to keep you on track with personalized workouts made to sculpt, tone, and trim you into the best (looking) version of you. Embarrassed to take to the gym after adding on the holiday 10? No worries: They do house calls, too. steelefitness.com



Steele Fitness, Edina

Bob Fisher of Bob's Shoe Repair

2. Shoe and Leather Repair

Keeping your leather goods in tip-top shape is one of the greatest tools in any stylish wardrobe. How often should upkeep be done? The rules of thumb: shoes, conditioned and shined once a week; leather briefcases and jackets, once a year; everything else, as needed. Much of which you can handle on your own, but if you have items in need of a little more TLC, look to Bob's Shoe Repair in Wayzata. wayzatabaycenter.com/shoerepair

3. Personal Shoppers

For all things sartorial, we look to Todd Fliginger at the best men's department in the city, Neiman Marcus. He can deliver looks best fitting your personal aesthetic faster than you can say Ermenegildo Zegna. For women, our money is on Ann Prentice. She specializes in image consulting with her signature four-step process involving a full closet clean-out and personalized style blueprint. annprentice.com

4. Tailoring/Alterations

A well-fitting suit can be a man's best asset and locally, we look to Top Shelf for touching up, taking in, and letting out—and for custom suits, too. John Meegan, the proprietor has an eye for both modern-day fashion and timeless style, plus he is a good listener and knows construction well. We have it on good authority that Meegan and his team are the only tailors who will peg a pair of Loro Piana tuxedo pants without a mistake—that's a true test. topshelfinc.com.

"For alterations, Josephine's on Excelsior Boulevard. She is great at what she does, and offers up a dose of attitude. I've been talking smack to Josephine since hundreds had small faces. Speaking of hundreds, she only takes cash, which is also amazing."

—Ben Hertz,
creator of Benjo's Colored Boot and Shoelacing

Josephine Stonebraker

5. Grooming

What is better than a fresh haircut? Gent, the newly opened "men's club" on St. Paul's Grand Avenue, offers the usual shave and a haircut, but with a bit more finesse. Here, find finely tuned stylists with a penchant for both classic and trendy cuts. Looking for a full overhaul? Opt for the Classic Cut and Executive Shave, complete with a detoxifying clay masque, and walk out feeling like a new man. For ladies, treat yourself to a blowout or two between cuts. It helps retain the shape of the cut and will last several days, cutting down on getting-ready time in the morning. For this, beauty insiders rave about Jon Charles Salon in Uptown. gentcg.com, joncharlessalon.net

Gent, St. Paul

PHOTOGRAPHS OF BOB FISHER AND JOSEPHINE STONEBRAKER BY ANTHONY BRETT SCHRECK

EXPERT ADVICE

ON ORGANIZATION

We turned to Chris Plantan, founder and creative director of Minneapolis-based Russell & Hazel, **for her advice on getting our offices and lives in order.**

Q: What are three steps for jump-starting organization?

A: First, a good purge is always necessary. Toss anything that is over a year old, any office accessories that are torn or highly worn, and start with a clean slate. Secondly, invest in organizational tools, like items from [Russell & Hazel's] White Collection. My favorites include the center-tabbed high-stock file folders. Third, enlist a little help. Whether [you're using] a professional organizer or going to a store for advice, it is important to play an active role in organization so you know where everything is when it's in its right spot.

Q: How important is an organized office?

A: Very. But that doesn't necessarily mean the same thing for everyone. We are either pilers or filers, so the key is finding what works best for your method. Binders and other desktop filing devices provide a great place to tuck away papers. I am a firm believer in starting with a clean, minimalist palette and layering on colors like you would an outfit, to add a bit of personality.

Q: Aren't we turning away from paper and other tangible organizational methods?

A: Currently, the Internet provides us access to so much more information . . . so the need still exists to pile or file. While we may put events into our smart phones and on our digital calendar, we are still so used to planning on paper that I don't see a change happening anytime soon.

OUR LITTLE BLACK BOOK

While not an all-inclusive list, here are some of our favorite places in and around the Twin Cities for sprucing up our personal brand.

> GROOMING

Winston's (Downtown and Uptown Minneapolis)
Our Take: Cigar club meets barbershop.
612-375-5091 (downtown)
612-822-4323 (Uptown)
Cost: $$

Denny Kemp (Northeast)
Our Take: Highly skilled stylists, highly styled space.
Cost: $$$
612-676-0300

Dick's Sports Barber (Edina)
Our Take: Old-school barber—no appointments, get there early, bring the paper.
952-926-6924
Cost: $

Spalon Montage (Edina)
Our Take: The salon/spa to see and be seen.
Cost: $$$
952-915-2900

KEY
$ Inexpensive
$$ Moderate
$$$ Getting pricey
$$$$ Whoa

Jon Charles (Uptown)
joncharlessalon.net
Our Take: Perfect blowouts at the salon, and now a mobile blowout unit.
612-724-2444
Cost: $$$

Rocco Altobelli (8 metro locations)
roccoaltobelli.com
Our Take: All over the metro, for whenever you need a touch-up.
Cost: $$$

Gent (St. Paul)
gentcg.com
Our Take: Old-boys' club with new-wave haircuts.
651-797-4294
Cost: $$

> SHOE AND LEATHER REPAIR

Bob's Shoe Repair (Wayzata)
wayzatabaycenter.com/shoerepair
Our Take: No job too big or too small; they handle it all.
952-473-8248
Cost: $

Don's Leather Cleaning (Minneapolis)
leathercleaning.com
Our Take: We'll trust anyone with 40-plus years of experience with leather goods.
612-721-4881
Cost: $$-$$$

Moses Leatherworks (Downtown Minneapolis)
Our Take: Skyway outposts (there are several) offer drop-off shoe repair and shoe shining.
612-338-8226
Cost: $

Skyway Shoe Repair & Dye Service (Downtown Minneapolis)
Our Take: The spot to fix wear and tear on high-end designer shoes.
612-338-1467
Cost: $

> TAILORING/ALTERATIONS

CY Alterations and Curtains (Downtown Minneapolis)
Our Take: Drop if off in the morning, they'll have it done by lunch. And well.
612-332-9059
Cost: $-$$

Heimie's Haberdashery (Downtown St. Paul)
heimies.com
Our Take: They will have you looking as structured as a pair of wingtips.
651-224-2354
Cost: $$$

Mashek Tailors & Cleaners (Hopkins)
Our Take: Quick, efficient tailoring, magicians at dry cleaning.
952-938-8052
Cost: $$-$$$

Top Shelf (Uptown)
topshelfinc.com
Our Take: Custom suits and shirting, impeccable fit.
612-338-1467
Cost: $$$-$$$$

> PERSONAL SHOPPERS

Ann Prentice
annprentice.com
Our Take: Closet clean out, style blueprint, and personal shopping.
612-719-2181
Cost: Price available upon request

Macy's by Appointment (Downtown Minneapolis)
Our Take: Experienced shoppers with an entire store at their fingertips.
612-375-2200
Cost: Free

Todd Fligninger at Neiman Marcus (Downtown Minneapolis)
Our Take: Local men's expert.
612-339-2600
Cost: Free

> PERSONAL TRAINING

Discover Strength (Minneapolis)
discoverstrength.com
Our Take: Personalized strength training, rapid results.
Cost: $$

Steele Fitness (St. Paul, Edina, and Wayzata)
steelefitness.com
Our Take: In home or brick and mortar, trainers turn abs from flab to steel.
Cost: $$$

Cross Fit (Downtown Minneapolis)
crossfitminneapolis.com
Our Take: The lumberjack of workouts originally designed for military and police.
Cost: $$$

The Firm (Downtown Minneapolis)
thefirmmpls.com
Our Take: One-on-one training, addictive group classes, in-house boutique.
Cost: $$$

The Firm, Minneapolis

SUZY BROCKMAN

Spotlight

people and companies to watch

In addition to digital graphic design, Blinc founder Bill Moran specializes in older styles of printing, including wood type and letterpress.

Where Old is New Again

Blinc Publishing is a local pioneer in the use of "analog" printing and graphic design. Target, for one, digs the look.

Blinc Publishing's place of business feels like a magical realm—the magic of history and old machinery. It's located atop the national-landmark Northwestern Building in St. Paul's Lowertown, on the only floor the building's leisurely elevator doesn't reach. Once you get to the eighth floor, you have to climb a set of stairs to what Blinc founder Bill Moran calls "the penthouse."

Entering Blinc's 1,000-square-foot space, you should first notice the 1927 Chandler and Price letterpress, which Moran had moved in from his family's printing business in Green Bay, Wisconsin. And yes, Moran does use it.

The past few years, he's been using it a lot. Even in the digital age, or perhaps because of it, dozens of letterpress printing shops (names include Studio on Fire, Lunalux, and Dude and Chick) have sprung up locally. Though letterpress primarily has been used for business cards, wedding invitations, and other stationery, the newer generation is printing posters and other designs that blur the line between commerce and art. And Moran's been doing that kind of work since he opened his studio (after stints at 3M, where he earned a "record of invention" for a intravenous flow regulator dial he designed, and Norwest Banks) in 1996.

Letterpress projects aren't the only example of Moran's taste for what might be called "modern analog." Not far from Moran's hometown of Green Bay, in the small Wisconsin town of Two Rivers, stands another palace of magical history: the Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum. It's housed in an 85-year-old factory that was home to the Hamilton Manufacturing Company, which among other things produced fonts carved from Wisconsin rock maple for the printing industry. Wood type has long given way to offset printing (not to mention digital); in 1999, the facility was converted into a museum.

Moran paid his first visit there in 2002 and found himself instantly enchanted. He volunteered his services making posters, designing the museum's Web site, and writing, designing, and printing a promotional book. In 2009, Moran became the museum's artistic director, developing educational and promotional programs.

In 2009, Chicago's Kartemquin Films released *Typeface*, a documentary about the Hamilton Museum. Moran, who was in the film, made a presentation when it was shown at the Walker Art Center. Afterwards, "I got a lot of encouragement from my friends and local designers to market the museum harder," he recalls.

At this point, Target enters the tale. Moran connected with a friend in the retailer's trends and forecasting department, "who quickly saw the visual value" of wood type, he recalls. "She got a lot of her colleagues excited about it." This summer, Target released its Vintage Varsity collection of back-to-school clothing and accessories, which incorporates wood type and vintage advertising images from the Hamilton museum's archives.

"It's no Missoni—we didn't crash the Web site when it went live," Moran notes. But he's heard that the Vintage Varsity items have sold well. "Target really the saw the value of things that feel analog," he adds. "Credit Target and its design team for taking some mid-century art and making some stunning clothing from it."

All this might make Moran and his two employees sound as though they're spiritual descendents of Ned Ludd. Not true: Blinc has digitally designed numerous logos, Web sites, brochures, and other marketing materials for clients including 3M, Wells Fargo, St. Paul–based med-tech firm Minnetronix, and Minneapolis's Blue Plate Restaurant Company.

This diversity does allow Moran to pursue projects where commerce and art intersect. Like letterpress, the Twin Cities poster industry—it has become more than just a "scene"—has flourished, and Moran has found a market for his poster designs both for commercial clients and among collectors. A year ago, he says, about 80 percent of Blinc's work was corporate, with the remainder comprising poster design and letterpress. Now

ON THE WEB

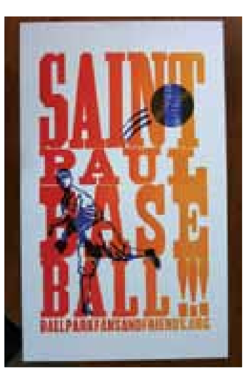
Tales from the Wood
Get a look inside the Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum, where "cool never fades": **bit.ly/jnjESc**

Why just print a brochure? For an early Geek Squad promo, Blinc turned a brochure into a paper toy that mirrored the distinctiveness of the then start-up.

the latter makes up about a third of his shop's revenues. Also part of his diverse income base: Moran teaches a course on the history of printing and typography at the University of Minnesota, and leads an annual three-week educational trip to two European typographic museums, the Gutenberg Museum in Germany and Tipoteca Italiana in Venice.

Blinc worked with Target to create clothing and accessories using vintage wood type. Its poster work also incorporates wood type and old-school ad images.

Robert Stephens, chief technology officer at Best Buy Company, who began working with Blinc in the mid-'90s when he was starting the Geek Squad computer repair service, praises Moran for creating work that's not meant to be "disposable." Stephens particularly admires the brochure Moran created for the Geek Squad that could be assembled into a model of a Squad VW Beetle. Not something people would discard, Stephens says, who has even seen it used as a prop on *The Office.*



"If Steve Jobs had to work with a graphic designer," Stephens says. "Bill would pass muster."

Moran calls the Geek Squad car-brochure "paper engineering," and sees design as creative problem solving for businesses. And those solutions, he suggests, are rooted as much in the past as the future. (A few years back, Moran picked up from Minneapolis-based Lutheran publishing house Augsburg Fortress a supply of long-unused wood type, which he keeps and uses at his studio.)

Blinc itself is moving into the future by moving away from its old home in the Northwestern Building. As 2011 becomes 2012, Moran will take over space inside Big Table Studio, the new poster work space on the first floor of Lawson Commons. The space may not have the magic of "the penthouse," but it will save Moran some rent and equipment costs. And no worries: He's bringing his wood type with him.

—*Gene Rebeck*

Globally Local

Software developer Warecorp unites offshoring with a social entrepreneurial focus.

Minneapolis-based software development company Warecorp has been built on a foundation 4,700 miles away—in Minsk, the capital of the former Soviet republic of Belarus. There, 60 employees, working with the 10 in Minnesota, design Web sites and develop software for clients ranging from Fortune 500s to start-ups including Minneapolis "social learning" company Sophia. It's been a solid business model for seven years: Warecorp projected its 2011 revenue to approach $3 million.

That blend of Minsk and Minnesota has been providing good work, according to clients. Kasey Hatzung, a principal with Minneapolis marketing firm Fusion Hill, has worked with Warecorp on the programming of her own firm's Web site and also those for clients in health care and financial services. "They're a great complement to our design expertise," Hatzung says, whether that means providing "standard Web coding" or more specialized online capabilities. "Warecorp is well suited to ideating and providing customized approaches," she adds.

But Warecorp sees itself not only as an IT company but also as a social venture. "About 70 to 80 percent of our revenue comes from development projects that have a social angle or direct mission," says cofounder Chris Dykstra, who is a social activist as well as tech entrepreneur. "We have steadily evolved towards a goal of spending 100 percent of our professional time working on market-based solutions to systemic [social] problems." As an example, Dykstra cites CharityPanda.com, which Warecorp designed as an easier way for people to host events for charities.

And in the past few years, Warecorp has either launched or purchased companies that reflect its social enterprise ambitions. In 2007, it started Zanby, an online community collaboration platform. Zanby was modeled on Meetup, a digital program that helps communities and political groups organize meetings and forums.

One of Zanby's strengths, Dykstra says, is helping local governments to become more transparent and promote civic engagement. For instance, County Communitywide Forums, in Washington State's King County, uses Zanby to support several annual rounds of simultaneous town hall–style meetings. "Citizen councilors" are recruited and trained to participate in forums where attendees watch a brief video overview of a community issue (budget priorities, for instance), discuss the topic using the techniques of deliberative dialogue, and take a survey to register opinions.

Warecorp believes that Soapblox and the Uptake could be interconnected to provide citizen-journalist news sources for communities and regions across the country.

In 2007, Warecorp began its development connection with the Uptake, an organization originally created to post video coverage of the 2008 Republican National Convention shot by private citizens. During that election year, the Uptake covered primaries in 22 states using a blended staff of professional and citizen journalists. Since then, the Uptake has produced more than 3,000 individual political stories on video and Webcast thousands of hours of political events, winning several professional-journalism awards in the process. Like Zanby, the Uptake is now run separately from Warecorp.

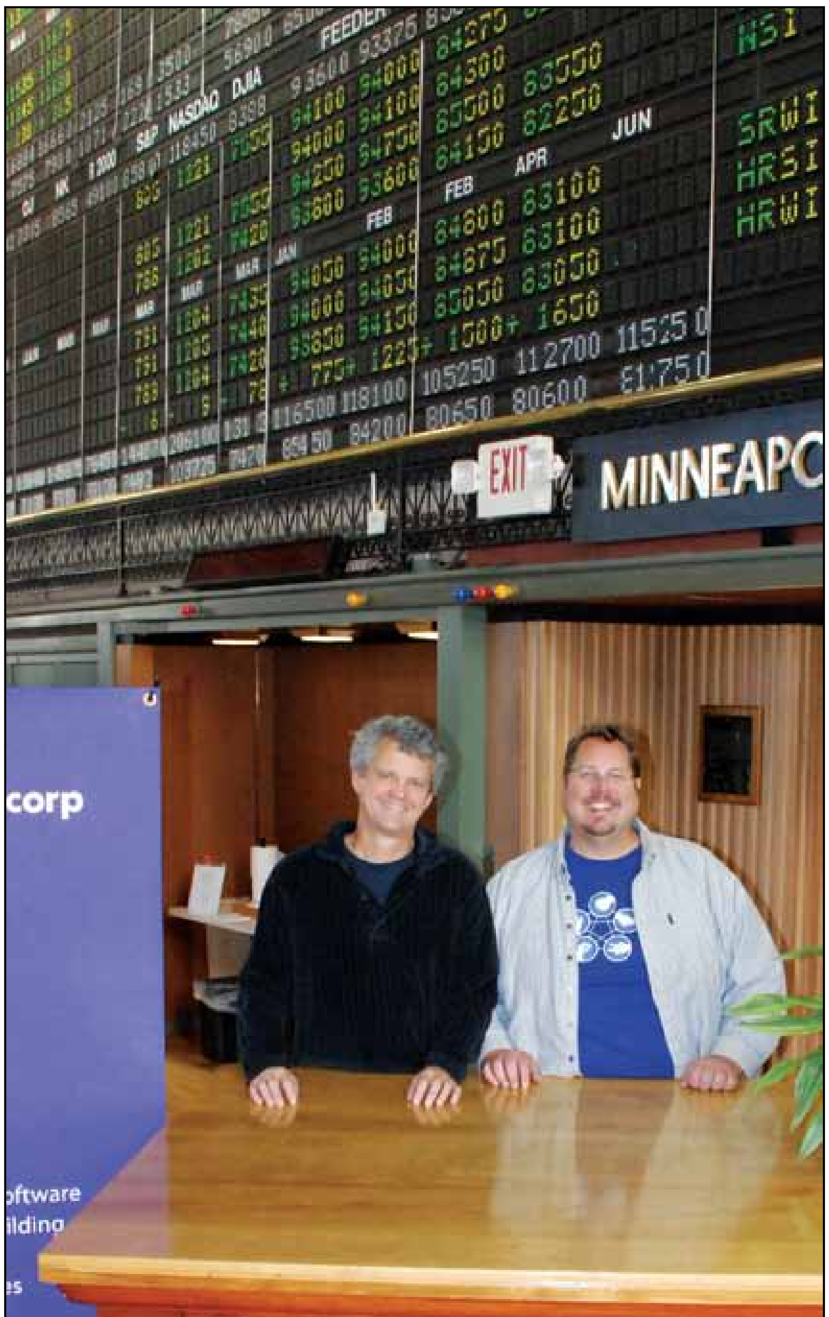
Most of the programming for these community-centric sites is performed by Warecorp developers in Belarus. Dykstra first made the Minsk connection while vice president for EPAM Systems, Europe's largest offshore software developer. During the Soviet era, the Communist government made Minsk the USSR's engineering center, providing it with the necessary educational infrastructure. Those schools still graduate numerous engineers.

In January 2011, Warecorp acquired Soapblox, a network of state- and location-based blogging communities supported through a common software platform. There are more than 100 Soapblox blogs in the network, generating more than a million unique visits per month, according to Dykstra.

Dykstra believes that Soapblox and the Uptake could be interconnected to provide citizen-journalist news sources for communities and regions across the country.

"We are exploring the intersection of passionate communities of political commentary and research with an aggressive, civic-minded journalism organization that collects and distributes the video record of U.S. political life," Dykstra says. "I think it might be possible to reconnect the market with the demand for political transparency and trusted data." TCB

—Dan Heilman, G. R.



Warecorp principals Chris Dykstra (left) and Lee Rogas recently moved their firm to the CoCo coworking space in Minneapolis's Grain Exchange.

Mike Meyer chose auto repair and salvage over law school—and cofounded a business that's a top source for rare original parts.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETE CROUSER

TwinCities BUSINESS 2011 SMALL-BUSINESS SUCCESS STORIES

SMALL-BUSINESS SUCCESS STORIES

Ten tales of tenacity, determination, and inspiration.

Small businesses face big challenges. Particularly if you're the founder, CEO, and (some days, it seems) just about everything else, you know about the interminable hours, the financial frustrations, the learning that comes only from doing (and often failing, at first). Even then, most new small businesses don't survive more than a few years. But when they do succeed, they create new jobs, new wealth, and happier lives for their constituents.

Small businesses don't need to create the Next Big Thing. But they do need to see an opportunity—and then possess and cultivate the desire, drive, and the right mix of hard-nosed realism and hope-against-hope optimism to turn that opportunity into a story of success.

The following 10 stories, all from companies with 500 employees or fewer, offer useful insights to other small-business owners and executives. These stories also offer something that every businessperson needs, at least from time to time—inspiration.

So read, learn, and fuel the fire.

Cortec Corporation .... Industrial supplier
CTS (Corporate Travel Solutions) .... Travel services
Garelick Manufacturing .... Manufacturing
Horizontal Integration .... IT services
McNally Smith College of Music .... Education
Nilan Johnson Lewis, PA .... Legal services
PAM's Auto .... Specialty supplier
Pawn America .... Specialty retail
Tortilleria La Perla .... Food products
Terrybear and River of Goods .... Retail supplier

By Dan Heilman

INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIER

GLOBAL AMBITIONS

Corrosion control may not be sexy, but it put Cortec on a growth trajectory few local companies can match.

Have you ever told yourself that one day you would tell off the boss and start your own company? Boris Miksic is one of the relative few who made that angry promise pay off.

"I had a boss who was a real idiot," recalls Miksic, founder of White Bear Township–based Cortec Corporation. "I quit in 1977, but I couldn't find another engineering job. There was no one hiring. It seemed as though I didn't have any other option but to start my own company."

That's what Miksic did, and it's worked out well for him. From humble beginnings, Cortec has grown to a 215-employee operation with manufacturing facilities in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Canada, and Miksic's native Croatia.

Cortec makes and distributes corrosion control products for a variety of industries including packaging, metalworking, construction, electronics, and energy. Its VpCI (Vapor Phase Corrosion Inhibitor) line has become a signature product, addressing tasks from surface preparation to water treatment.

Miksic moved from his native country in 1974—a result, he says, of being blacklisted from finding work as an engineer due to his participation in anti-Communist rallies. He wound up in Minnesota. After some time in and out of the corporate world, Miksic started at ground zero.

"I began like a typical start-up: in the garage," he says. "I rented a farm in Hugo and mixed chemicals in the garage."

A decade and a half of slow growth saw Cortec grow to 25 employees. In the early '90s, a benefactor in the form of a former 3M executive joined the company and helped take Cortec to the next level. Art Ahlbrecht guided the establishment of Cortec's quality assurance program, and he applied what he knew about corrosion engineering.

"It was easy to fit into the Cortec culture," says Ahlbrecht. "Boris always followed the 3M style of having the highest-quality product on the market—with the highest price."

Years of steady momentum allowed Miksic to implement what he calls the company's 20-20-20 plan: 20 percent growth, 20 percent new technologies, and 20 percent operating cost reductions—every year.

"We've been able to do that," says Miksic. "If you get people to buy into these ideas, they really work hard to get there. And if you look at our top-selling products, most of them are less than five years old."

Twenty percent growth might seem like a lofty goal, but there's no denying that it has been happening at Cortec. Company sales have gone from $28 million in 2009 to $34 million last year to projected revenues this year of $42 million. Likewise, the number of employees has grown during that same period from 168 to 215.

Cortec has also recently put a greater focus on sustainable technologies, a move that has earned it new, sometimes surprising clients. The company recently completed a project to help the Minnesota Zoo upgrade its composting program, supplying it with Cortec's proprietary Eco Film, a biodegradable and compostable film designed specifically for compost.

"Cortec provided the Minnesota Zoo with a generous donation of EcoFilm compostable bags," says Tara Harris, director of conservation at the Minnesota Zoo, "and this has really allowed the zoo's new composting program to be successful."

The company's main initiative for 2012 is getting a new facility in Shanghai, China, up to speed to serve its existing network of Chinese distributors. It also recently purchased one of its primary materials suppliers and folded it into Cortec.

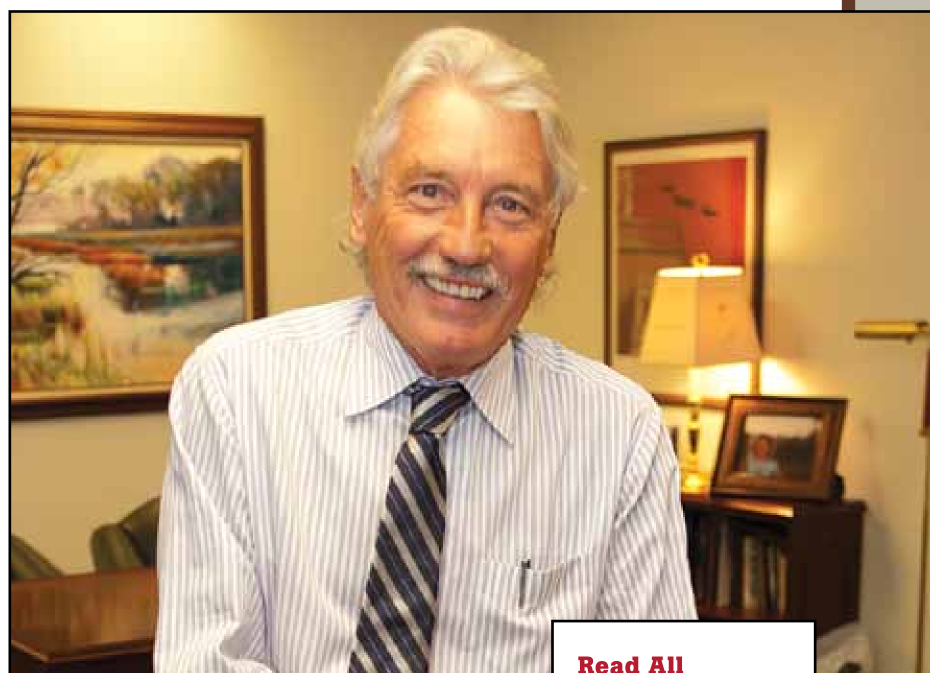
"In the past, we've been able to reduce costs through global outsourcing," says Miksic. "With the new purchasing office in China, we basically have no middlemen. We buy raw materials in India and Europe, and instead of having materials shipped to China for processing, we make the materials there and process them in our own facilities in North America and Croatia."

The new resources will continue to make Cortec what it's been since the beginning: fast on its feet and ready for anything.

"We supply a lot of 'just in time' products," says Miksic. "So we like the idea of having a plant that's closer to our clients."

CORTEC CORPORATION

White Bear Township
Founded: 1977
Locations: 4 (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Croatia, Canada)
Employees: 215
2011 revenue: $42 million (est.)



Read All About Him

Besides running Cortec, Boris Miksic is an author. His autobiography, *American Dream: A Guy From Croatia*, is available for download at **americandreamguyfromcroatia.com.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA JORDE

Twin Cities BUSINESS 2011 SMALL-BUSINESS SUCCESS STORIES

By Fran Howard

TRAVEL SERVICES

BUCKING THE TREND

Corporate Travel Solutions flies high while its competitors lose altitude.

Minutes after the epic tsunami hit Japan in March 2011, Lisa Buckner's phone started to ring. As president and COO of CTS (Corporate Travel Solutions), Buckner had several clients with employees on the ground in Japan. She immediately fired up the Sabre Travel Network's security function, focused in on the map of Japan, and received detailed itineraries of the employees. She then began living up to the "solutions" part of her company's moniker.

"When the riots were occurring in Greece, we had a company that was having a meeting over there, and we had to move people to different hotels," Buckner recalls.

With three decades of travel industry experience, Buckner knows what kind of risks to take. Hired by Minnetonka-based CTS in 2009—just when companies were slashing their corporate travel budgets—Buckner did the opposite of what many travel agency CEOs were doing. Instead of cutting staff, she increased her head count by 10 percent. Her growth strategy also included rebranding the company, which included changing its name from Capital Travel, and moving from St. Paul to Minnetonka, where she purchased a building to serve as an upmarket headquarters.

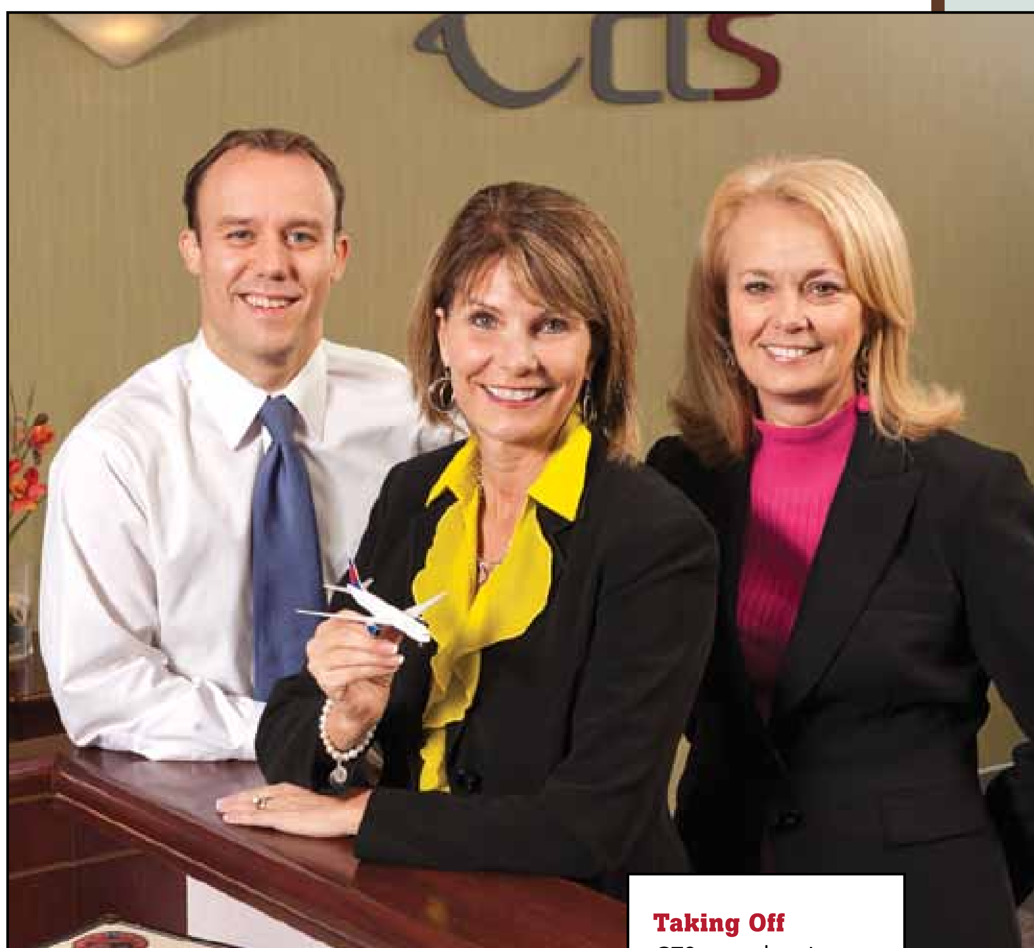
"It was a down economy. Travel agencies were laying people off, downsizing; companies had sliced their travel budgets," says Buckner. "We had cash in the bank and money to work with, and we knew if we didn't position the company for an industry turnaround, then we would have to play catch up. We also knew it was a good time to hire; we would be able to hire the best people. Thinking about it now, it was pretty risky. We didn't know whether we would get the return on investment." At the same time, she streamlined internal costs and instituted some salary cuts.

The company's aggressive growth plan paid off. Head count has increased from about 45 in 2009 to 60 today; CTS brought in key management people as well as highly experienced travel agents. The firm's ticket sales have jumped 30 percent since 2009, giving CTS a 15 percent average annual increase. By comparison, ticket sales industrywide increased only 7.3 percent in 2010, according to Virginia-based Airline Reporting Corporation (ARC).

"The travel management services business is an extremely tough business," says Mike Premo, president and CEO of ARC. In 1995, 46,000 travel agencies operated nationwide. By the end of 2009, the number had dropped to 16,000, and today there are 14,000, says Premo. The sales trend has been on a downward trajectory, about 1 percent per year. "For a company like CTS to be growing and be successful, running against the grain of what is occurring in the overall industry, speaks very highly of Lisa and the team at CTS."

CTS also offers customized meetings, events, and trade show planning and operation as well as vacation travel booking, but 95 percent of its travel business comes from the corporate sector.

CORPORATE TRAVEL SOLUTIONS
Minnetonka
Founded: 1974
Employees: 60
2011 revenue: Not provided



Taking Off
CTS president Lisa Buckner, flanked by Michael Nelson (vice president for account management) and Terri Kragness (director of operations), has her firm flying high during a tough time for the travel business.

The Sabre platform's "optimizer" feature allows Buckner and her clients to optimize contracts with various hotels and airlines. Companies receive discounts based on their volume of bookings with preferred suppliers, making up-to-date data imperative.

"We are paid based on how we perform against our contract with various suppliers," says Buckner. "Now I can see in real-time how I am performing on my contract." That gives CTS time to make changes to keep in-house costs down while offering its customers better rates.

But the main reason for the company's success, according to Buckner, remains the expertise of a travel agent that has your back. "If you book on the Internet," Buckner says, "you aren't going to get assistance if there is a natural disaster."

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA JORDE

By Ingrid Case

MANUFACTURING

KEEPING AFLOAT

Garelick Manufacturing trimmed expenses, streamlined manufacturing, and diversified its customer base to stay buoyant.

Your company's main product is an optional accessory for an expensive leisure activity. How do you weather a major economic downturn?

That's the problem that Ken Garelick, president of Garelick Manufacturing in St. Paul, has wrestled with for the past three years. The company, which Ken co-owns with cousin and company senior vice president Rick Garelick, designs and manufactures ladders, seats, and hardware for pleasure boats.

Ken and Rick have run the company since the late 1980s; their fathers founded the firm just after World War II. The senior Garelicks built something that they hadn't been able find: a double-hook, floating boat ladder. They began selling it from a hardware store, where the stable, unsinkable new product quickly found favor with recreational boaters.

Over the years, Garelick branched out into niches including upholstered seats and medical products such as walkers—a product line the firm sold off about 15 years ago—and roof rakes for snow removal. All was well until early 2008. Then revenues began to sink, falling by half from 2007 to 2009.

"We're in a discretionary market, so we're first to feel a recession's effects and the last to recover," Ken Garelick says. In early 2008, the company began to see reduced demand from boat builders, because few customers were buying new boats. Those with older boats stopped upgrading what they already owned, pushing the company's aftermarket business down as well. At the same time, the cost of metal went up, further pinching margins.

Garelick Manufacturing responded by changing its sales forecasts—a job helped by the intelligence gleaned from strong relationships with boat builders and wholesalers—and shrinking inventory.

Then the company reduced operating costs. "We went line by line over expenditure requests," Ken Garelick says. "Nothing was sacred." Garelick Manufacturing laid off about half its work force, going from 155 employees in 2007 to 75 in 2011. Workers who kept their jobs worked shorter weeks; the company also closed entirely for several weeks in 2008 and 2009.

Everyone took pay cuts. Employees gave up negotiated raises, 401(k) account matching, and profit sharing arrangements. The employee union, IUE-CWA Local 1140, was a cooperative partner in the changes, Garelick recalls: "Our workers really rallied." At the same time, suppliers worked with the company to keep prices down, and the company's banker "stood by us and understood our situation, helping us through a rough patch," he says.

"They were transparent and passionate about their plan, and we were convinced that they would be able to execute that plan, and they did," agrees Rich Ogle, vice president at Edina-based Fidelity Bank. "They did everything they said they were going to do."

Responding to the support, Garelick staff innovated and implemented Lean manufacturing methods. Some components, for instance, used to travel a mile and a half through the factory, but now the same items travel three blocks within a streamlined flow that keeps materials at workers' fingertips. "In these tough times, customers can't afford to pay more, so becoming more efficient inside has helped," Ken Garelick says.

GARELICK MANUFACTURING
St. Paul Park
Founded: 1952
Employees: 75
2011 revenue: $16 million

Co-Captains
Cousins Ken (right) and Rick Garelick have taken the manufacturing company that their fathers founded into new markets in response to the marine industry's recessionary doldrums.

Diversification has helped, too. Garelick Manufacturing has seen good sales from its roof rakes, which have blade rollers that prevent the blade from touching (and damaging) shingles. A related line of telescopic extension poles, which provide window, paint, and maintenance workers with longer "arms," has been a hit.

"We're also very big into custom upholstered products that we sell to boat builders," Ken Garelick says, products that appeal to the top end of the luxury market, which bounced back in 2011. In 2012, Garelick plans to begin shipping seating and hardware for commercial boats such as law enforcement vessels, tugs, and working harbor boats. The firm also hopes to expand its export business.

Solving problems with new designs and tweaking older products may keep the company in safer waters, but Ken Garelick doesn't expect a huge recovery on 2011's P&L statement. "2011 wasn't as strong as we'd hoped, but we're holding our own," he says. "We'll finish 2011 in probably as good a position as we had in 2010, and that's an accomplishment."

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA JORDE

By Phil Bolsta

IT SERVICES

TECHNICALLY CREATIVE

By thinking beyond the horizons of a traditional tech company, Horizontal Integration has doubled its revenues in a year.

Scour the Twin Cities for Web site developers, and you'll find numerous companies offering front-end user experience and creative design or back-end development services. Horizontal Integration is the rare firm that offers both. What's more, it can supply the IT and creative staffing for companies looking to manage their projects in house.

"By combining three distinct service lines, we not only separate ourselves from our competitors, we can offer a flexible engagement model," says CEO Sabin Ephrem, who had been a management consultant at Ernst & Young before going out on his own in 1999. "A lot of large corporations need that sophisticated back-end development but don't want to sacrifice the creative aspect and user experience."

Horizontal Integration was initially positioned as a Web development company that designed and built turnkey Web sites, but evolved to an a la carte provider in response to customer needs. "The first thing we now do is ask about a customer's pain points," says Jeremy Langevin, executive vice president of sales and marketing and former business development manager at TEKsystems, a technology staffing firm. "Together with the customer, we determine whether it's better for us to take ownership of a project from start to finish or whether we should just supply them with the pieces they're missing."

The partners believe their varied professional backgrounds and skill sets allow Horizontal to design, deliver, and implement integrated solutions. "In the beginning, there was a lot of healthy debate among the three of us," says Chris Staley, executive vice president of interactive marketing practice and a former account executive at McCann Relationship Marketing. "We've all become multi-disciplined as a result of our varied backgrounds."

The Horizontal Integration story started in 2003 when Ephrem won a project with McCann to help Microsoft build a marketing automation platform. Ephrem called Langevin to supply him with a tech support team. At McCann's Seattle office, Ephrem was paired with Staley, who was managing the project's design and business strategy. As Ephrem and Staley flew back to Minneapolis after a weekly Seattle meeting, they discussed how ad agencies excel with strategy and creative but struggle with technology, and how IT companies were skilled at execution but lacked business discipline and interest in the user experience. It was a proverbial light bulb moment. In early 2006, Langevin came on board as the firm's third partner.

A point of difference for the company is follow-through. "A lot of big ideas coming from ad agencies get watered down because they can't be executed as designed all the way into enterprise technology architecture," Staley says. "We make sure that a big idea is still a big idea the day it goes live."

Horizontal's ability to deliver end-to-end solutions has been recognized by the marketplace. "Saying that Horizontal Integration redesigned our recruitment portal is a real understatement," says a marketing director for a Fortune 50 health care company that has been a longtime Horizontal Integration customer. "I told them our vision and they brought their brains to the table; they're not just order takers. They asked questions I hadn't thought about and at times challenged me, appropriately and respectfully. We've gone back to them with additional significant projects. We trust them, they execute our vision in a way that is compliant with our very strict IT parameters, and the end result is always exceptional."

These days, Horizontal's most pressing initiative is hiring ahead of the curve. "We've embraced the notion of hiring talent when we find it and creating opportunities for that talent," Langevin says.

HORIZONTAL INTEGRATION
Minnetonka
Founded: 2003
Employees: 210 (permanent and contract)
2011 revenue: $20 million–plus (est.)

From Both Sides
Horizontal Integration principals (from left) Chris Staley, Sabin Ephrem, and Jeremy Langevin built their Web IT firm as a one-stop shop supplying both creative and technical capabilities.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA JORDE

By Suzy Frisch

EDUCATION

THE BEAT OF THE CITY

McNally Smith College of Music's sound strategy has put it on the cultural map locally and nationally.

From humble roots as a place for music lovers to take guitar lessons, the McNally Smith College of Music has grown into a well-regarded school that prepares students to make a life and career in music. McNally Smith, now just over a quarter-century old, is growing at an impressive clip in a down economy—and bringing some seriously playful cultural energy to downtown St. Paul.

The accredited college offers degree programs in all aspects of the music business. It especially focuses on popular music from rock, pop, and country to jazz and hip-hop—unlike traditional music colleges that concentrate on classical music and, sometimes, jazz—as well as specialties such as producing, promoting, and engineering.

McNally Smith is thriving in its for-profit model that, in session, draws nearly 700 students and more than 125 faculty to downtown St. Paul. When the college moved from Minneapolis to the Capitol City in 2001, it had $3.5 million in revenue; it will hit between $18 million and 19 million next year—achieving 18 percent annual growth.

"It's a young, fresh-faced, enthusiastic institution with nothing but upside," says President Harry Chalmiers, who came from the Berklee College of Music in Boston to lead McNally Smith in 2007. "This is a very solidly run business . . . . We've grown in terms of numbers, and we have substantially grown in terms of enrollment, new programs, and options. We're growing in vision and goals, and our objectives are quite ambitious."

Those objectives include becoming one of the premier contemporary music colleges in the country, on par with Berklee and the Musicians Institute in California. Burnishing McNally Smith's reputation and name recognition is one of Chalmiers' chief aims right now.

McNally Smith offers bachelor's degrees in music business, performance, and composition, as well as a master's degree in performance. It also has a variety of associate's degrees and diploma courses, including the country's first diploma in hip-hop. Since 2005, 466 students have received associate's degrees while 205 have earned bachelor's degrees.

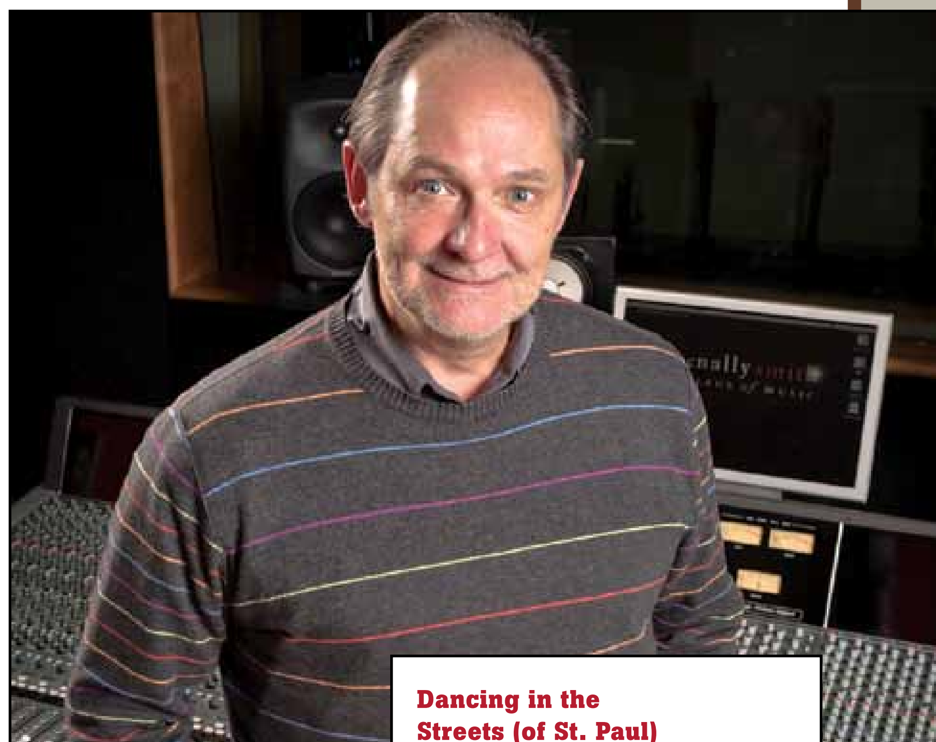
Students learn from music professionals with deep experience in the field, including Grammy Award nominees, Broadway veterans, and Billboard chart toppers, says Todd Walker, McNally Smith's senior director of strategic communications. The faculty includes Chopper Black, who produced recordings for the Virgin, Capitol, and Motown labels; Steve McClellan, who spent 32 years as general manager and talent booker for First Avenue; and Jeremy Messersmith, a Minneapolis singer-songwriter whose music has gained national exposure on MTV and National Public Radio. Artists-in-residence Dessa and Dan Wilson give students the chance to learn from working musicians.

Since founders Jack McNally and Doug Smith started offering guitar lessons in Minneapolis in 1985 under the Guitar Center name (and, later, Music Tech), the school has evolved into a practical liberal arts college accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music. By 2001, McNally Smith had outgrown its Warehouse District digs and sought a new home. St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman, then a member of the City Council, recruited the school to take over the vacant Science Museum building on Exchange Street. He believed it could serve as a catalyst for creating a lively music scene in St. Paul.

"They had a great reputation, and I knew the vibe that a place like that could create in the community," says Coleman. "You have students living in downtown St. Paul who are spending money in the community, and you have great artists coming to town on a regular basis to teach and participate in the music scene. There is no question that McNally Smith adds to the vibrancy of the community. I view them as an integral part of the soul of the city."

MCNALLY SMITH COLLEGE OF MUSIC

St. Paul
Founded: 1985
Employees: 75
2011 revenue: $17 million



Dancing in the Streets (of St. Paul)

Under President Harry Chalmiers, McNally Smith has staged cultural events at the college and in the broader community. The college's Live at Five concert series features faculty performances with a student opener; the Sound Bite program draws nationally known artists to perform free for students—and the public, if tickets remain. McNally Smith also made itself heard during the St. Paul Art Crawl with the Fall SoundCrawl, featuring faculty, students, and other musicians parading and playing through the streets of Lowertown.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA JORDE

By Suzy Frisch

LEGAL SERVICES

VALUE AS A CORE VALUE

Frugal and focused, Nilan Johnson Lewis is the boutique law firm that plays with the big boys.

A few years ago, Target Corporation was facing two potentially costly class action lawsuits that sought billions of dollars in damages. The company certainly would have been in its rights to retain a large, heavyweight firm to fight the case, but its legal department instead went with a Minneapolis boutique—Nilan Johnson Lewis.

Why entrust such weighty matters to a 48-attorney firm? Because Nilan attorneys have worked closely with Target for more than 13 years, proving the firm to be an effective, responsive, flexible, and knowledgeable partner on numerous matters, says Jim Rowader, Jr., a Target vice president and the company's general counsel for employee and labor relations. In this instance, the Nilan team defeated class certification in one case, convinced the plaintiffs to drop their class claims in the other case, and successfully resolved the remaining claims in both cases.

Nilan's attorneys, Rowader says, are "extremely smart and good at what they do, and they have such a deep knowledge of our business and our operations so there is no ramp-up time for them. Their desire to spend the time and get to know the client and understand our business pays off in situations like that."

When 27 lawyers came together to form the Nilan Johnson Lewis firm in 1996, they aimed to offer premium client service in a few practice areas. Currently, those areas of practice are product liability and mass tort defense, commercial litigation, labor and employment, health care law and consulting, and business law.

The firm's founders sought to provide world class legal services through a cost-effective approach. "It was the universal feeling of being client-centric, and everything we did was focused on our clients and very little on us," says Mike Nilan, a director and a founding shareholder of the firm. "Some things were unique at the time but more common now, like not giving anyone window offices or bigger offices. That's a small example, but we try to take absolutely everything we do and focus on what our clients need, and [we] think about what brings more value to our clients."

In Target's case, that means Nilan attorneys spend time in the company's stores, visit distribution centers, and work hand-in-hand with in-house counsel. When a Target attorney takes time off for maternity leave, a Nilan lawyer often fills in at corporate headquarters. "Their fee structure is very attractive, and it makes it feasible for us to have them spend the time to learn our business and build close relationships," says Rowader. "It helps them be very effective in the legal work they do for us."

NILAN JOHNSON LEWIS, PA

Minneapolis
Founded: 1996
Employees: 92 (48 attorneys)
2011 revenue: $23 million

The firm uses this approach with all of its clients, giving it a unique formula for success. Notable achievements include representing one of the largest chemical manufacturers in the country for 20 years on nearly 200 cases and never losing one. Nilan handles diverse and complex litigation for clients including Cargill, Siemens, Polaris, ING, and Johnson & Johnson.

More than half of the firm's attorneys and 48 percent of its shareholders are women—the national average is 19 percent, according to the National Association for Law Placement. In 2010, the firm won the Minnesota Women Lawyers' Leadership Award and was named one of the 50 Best Law Firms for Women by the National Association for Female Executives and Flex-Time Lawyers. "Across the board, our clients are looking for diversity as an important part of providing services to them," Nilan says, "just as they are trying to maintain a diverse work force."

The Green Legal Team: LEED by Example

Since late 2009, Nilan Johnson Lewis—led by (from left) Mike Nilan, Donald Lewis, and Brian Johnson—has worked out of offices in One Financial Plaza in Minneapolis, which were LEED certified in 2011. The firm built out the 77,000-square-foot space with Forest Stewardship Council–certified renewable walnut, low-flow water faucets, and motion sensor lighting for those times when the space's abundant natural daylight isn't sufficient. Employees are encouraged to commute by bike.

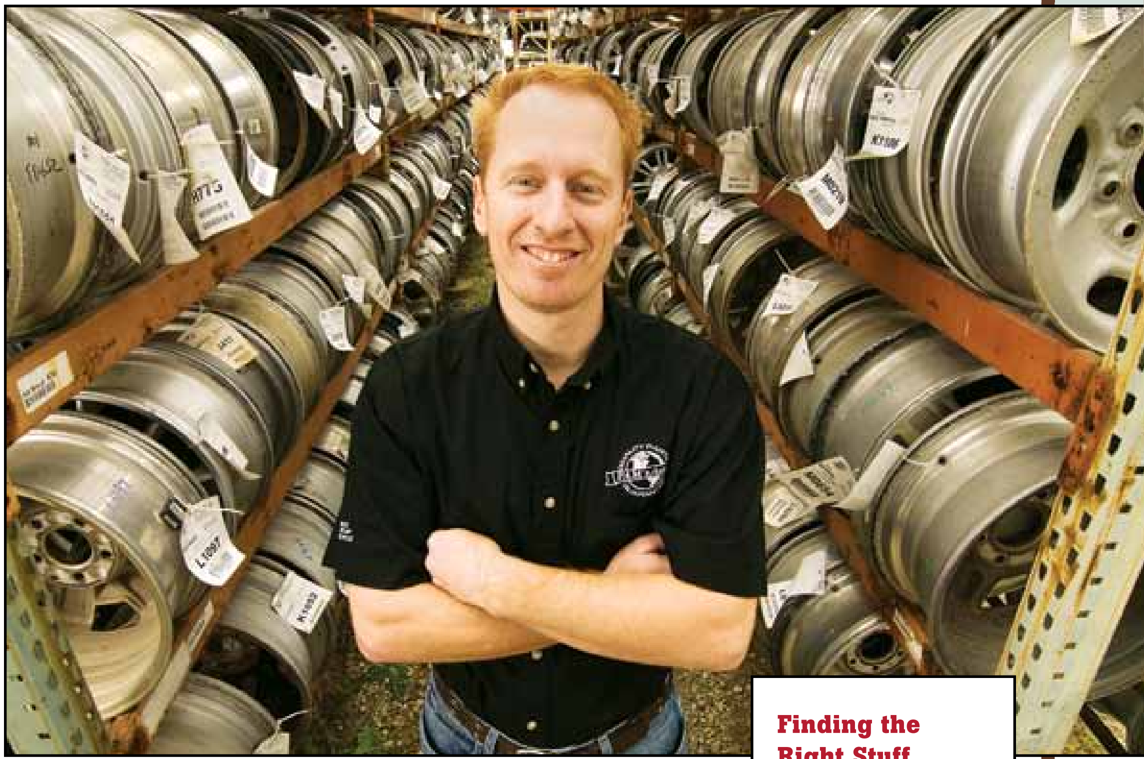
PHOTOGRAPH BY PETE CROUSER

By Dan Heilman

SPECIALTY SUPPLIER

SALVATION THROUGH SALVAGE

PAM's Auto has built a profitable niche from wrecked and disabled automobiles.



Most young adults face a professional crossroads. But few forks in the road are as stark as the one faced by Mike Meyer at age 20.

"It was either fix cars or go to law school," says Meyer, co-owner of PAM's Auto in St. Cloud. "I was going to St. Cloud State and was fixing cars on the side to make a few extra dollars. I had already been admitted to William Mitchell."

A soul-searching trip to Thailand to visit a brother in the Peace Corps convinced Meyer to go where he'd already built some groundwork. With partner Pat Huesers (who's a co-owner), he started PAM's Auto in 1991 as a body repair shop. By 1995, PAM's was doing mechanical repair, body work, and auto salvage.

These days, PAM's (the acronym stands for Pat and Mike's) is something of a high-end auto salvage yard. In addition to auto repair, the company specializes in recycling auto parts—especially sought-after original factory parts.

"We recover vehicles that were totaled through an insurance claim, and we part them out," says Meyer. "One of our main markets for reselling product is insurance repairs. The products we look for are [original] pieces versus aftermarket knockoffs."

Glen Sunder, co-owner of Peter's Body Shop in St. Cloud, has been buying used parts from PAM's since it opened. "We have really good luck with them," Sunder says. "They help us find unique body parts and mechanical parts on a regular basis."

Using computer databases, the company manages and distributes an inventory of more than 100,000 coveted domestic and foreign parts. By supplying original parts, insurers are less likely to have to fill a new claim based on the failure of an inferior part down the road, making PAM a useful supplier.

"In that fashion, whether we're in a recession or a strong economy, there's always a place for us," Meyer says. "Insurance companies are always looking to save money, regardless of what the market is like."

Started in a humble two-car garage, PAM's now employs 55 (with more hiring on the horizon in 2012), and is in the middle of a major expansion of its physical facilities. "We were on a 20-acre parcel, but we recently bought 36 additional acres," says Meyer. "Now we're doing a 25,000-square-foot building expansion. Our intention is another growth spurt."

That sort of small but dramatic growth has always been part of the plan for Meyer and Huesers. It's taken them two decades, but by employing incremental steps and a realistic attitude about their prospects, they've been able to tap a significant market.

"We didn't anticipate being at the point where we are now," says Meyer. "We were always looking to move forward. We're making decisions that are scalable—always something we can build on. Our infrastructure and product flow is very strong, so we'll just continue to build on that."

Meyer hopes to create a new image for the humble repair and salvage service. The company's facilities are clean and welcoming, indicating to visitors that they can come in and do business without encountering the grime of the job.

"We come from an industry that's associated with junkyards," says Meyer. "There are a lot of stereotypes about what we do. We've taken it to a different level, where we operate a very professional, very clean, very environmentally friendly business, and provide a product that's high quality, with a fantastic warranty."

The "green" aspect is a crucial part of what PAM's does: Its very business model is built on the environmentally sound triad of reduce, reuse, recycle—a philosophy that Meyer sees other, similar companies throughout the country adopting more and more. "We're trying to change the image of not only our company, but of the industry as a whole."

PAM'S AUTO

St. Cloud
Founded: 1991
Employees: 55
2011 revenue: Not provided

Finding the Right Stuff

PAM's Web site allows Mike Meyer's customers to plug in the year, make, and model of their vehicle and get an instant report on whether the part they're after is available.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CROUSER

By Ingrid Case

SPECIALTY RETAIL

BREAKING THE PAWN MOLD

Pawn America's Brad Rixmann runs a thoroughly modern yet time-tested business.

One of the few reliable truisms about business is that a recession is a pawn shop's boom time. Ask any pawnbroker, right?

Well, wrong, says Brad Rixmann, CEO of Burnsville-based Pawn America Minnesota. "People seem to think that poor economic times makes the best times for pawnbrokers, and that's not the case," Rixmann says. "It's Economics 101. If there's more supply, the value of merchandise goes down, and we have to wait for demand to pick up."

It took Pawn America a while to get that balance right during the economy's most recent trough. Beginning in 2008, the company saw larger numbers of people pawning or selling their stuff.

"For the most part, we don't say no to customers," Rixmann says. "We buy merchandise even if we end up throwing it away." Some items—leather jackets that didn't sell, for instance—went into the garbage bin when demand, in the form of more sales, didn't immediately keep pace with supply.

It took about a year, but Rixmann says that demand has picked up, roughly balancing increased supply at Pawn America. Even so, the firm has felt the downturn. In 2007, Rixmann says, the average purchase at a Pawn America branch was more than $100. In 2011, by contrast, the average sale is about $85. Pawn America has seen its profit margins thin as a result.

The key to raising those margins lies in making Pawn America an attractive place for newly value-oriented customers to shop, Rixmann believes.

Rixmann got interested in the pawn business in 1989, on a shopping trip with his father. "I was 24, but at this store I could afford things!" Rixmann recalls.

Rixmann has overtly avoided the shady image and practices of the pawn trade. "We have all the policies and procedures that a Fortune 100 company would have," he says. Pawn America has one-, two-, and five-year business plans and a marketing strategy designed to help reach those goals.

Just the existence of a marketing plan makes Pawn America stand out from many of its peers. Traditionally, Rixmann says, pawnbrokers haven't advertised. "The industry is archaic, often handed down from generation to generation," he says. Rixmann's Pawn America, however, isn't a mom-and-pop operation, and he isn't running it according to personal whims.

Pawn America operates 25 stores in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. The most recent branch opened October 13 in Eau Claire. Once customers arrive, Rixmann is determined that they have a pleasant experience. "We need our customers to know what they can expect when they come through the door, whether they're in Fargo or in Madison," Rixmann says.

Since 2007, Pawn America has increased per store staffing by about 25 percent. (Ninety percent of its workers are full time.) The reason? "People don't like to wait in line," Rixmann says. Employees follow a dress code and can't have visible tattoos. "We can't afford to have somebody make a negative judgment about our business based on an employee's personal taste," he adds.

Rixmann focuses on presenting stores that are clean, brightly lit, and comfortable, with strong curb appeal. Pawn America's marketing stresses warmth and friendliness, values Rixmann tries to make visible in his operations. "Our stores are developed to be family friendly," he says. "We don't sell adult-oriented material or firearms. We sell things that you'd find in a Best Buy or a Target, plus maybe a jewelry store."

Rixmann's modern approach has caused his peers to take notice. "Brad is in a unique industry, and I think his growth and success has come because he takes good care of his employees and his customer base," says Wayne Johansen, a co-owner of Coon Rapids–based HOM Furniture, who participated in a small-business support group with Rixmann.

Pawn America is looking to expand, and is scouting new cities and locations.

Don't Call It a "Pawnshop"

"Pawn store" is the term Pawn America CEO Brad Rixmann prefers. His newer shops have floor plans that span 20,000 to 30,000 square feet—larger than traditional pawn establishments.

PAWN AMERICA

Burnsville
Founded: 1991
Locations: 24 (in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin)
Employees: More than 400
2011 revenue: $70 million (est.)
Average sale: $85

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTHONY BRETT SCHRECK

By Phil Bolsta

FOOD PRODUCTS

CIRCLES OF LIFE

Tortilleria La Perla thrives as the Twin Cities' first hometown tortilla manufacturer.

Fresh Opportunity
Noemi and Jose Payan (with son Jose, Jr.) sought in vain for fresh tortillas when they moved to Minnesota—so they decided to make and sell their own.

If you've tasted even one tortilla in the Twin Cities over the last dozen years, chances are it was made by Tortilleria La Perla. Since 2006, La Perla has been headquartered in a 16,000-square-foot factory in south Minneapolis that's capable of cranking out 27,600 tortillas an hour. "La Perla means 'the pearl,'" says Noemi Payan, who founded the company with her husband, Jose, in 1999. "For Mexican people, the tortilla is like a pearl because they eat it at breakfast, lunch, and dinner."

Tortilleria La Perla's $3.2 million in annual sales and prominent standing in the local Latino community belie its humble beginnings. The Payans relocated to Minnesota from Chicago in 1994, settling into a one-bedroom apartment on Park Avenue with their five children. As they acclimated, they wondered: Where are the tortillerias? The Payans were forced to drive to a St. Paul supermarket to buy frozen tortillas, a pale substitute for the fresh tortillas they had enjoyed all their lives. Given the growing Latino population in the area, the lack of even one tortilleria—a shop that produces and sells freshly made corn tortillas—was unfathomable.

While Jose, who was raised in Mexico, and Noemi, a native of Puerto Rico, toiled away at low-paying jobs, they began formulating a plan to rectify the tortilleria shortage. After a number of banks turned them away for lack of a professional business plan, Noemi's networking efforts led to John Flory, then the economic development director for the Whittier Community Development Corporation. "We had been trying to get a loan for almost three years," Jose recalls. "We had come too far to give up. Once you have a dream, you want to make it come true."

Flory was impressed with the Payans. "I spent twenty years working with entrepreneurs," says Flory, who today is special projects director for the Latino Economic Development Center in Minneapolis. "What I look for is entrepreneurial spirit, and I saw that. They had come here and started at the very bottom; Jose was a dishwasher at D'Amico and Sons and eventually worked his way up to kitchen manager at the Wayzata location."

Ultimately, Marquette Bank agreed to serve as the lead lender in a participation loan with local economic development groups. Flory also steered the Payans to the Mercado Central project, which would open on Bloomington Avenue and Lake Street in August 1999. Tortilleria La Perla proved to be a key anchor in the development, which includes an open market featuring 40 Latino-owned businesses. The Tortilla La Perla menu was simple: fresh corn tortillas, tortilla chips, tostadas, masa (dough for tamales), and two soups popular in Mexico, menudo and pozole.

For that first year and beyond, Jose and Noemi redefined the phrase "work ethic," showing up at 5 A.M. seven days a week, with their six kids pitching in whenever possible after school. Still, they couldn't keep up with demand. In 2001, they opened a second location on Payne Avenue in St. Paul (which they closed in September 2011; they opened another location, which is still operating, in 2006). Three years later, it was time to take a giant leap forward in the form of a $1.8 million headquarters in the Seward Industrial Park. "We needed a production and warehouse area and a loading dock." Jose notes.

While corn tortillas account for roughly 70 percent of Tortilleria La Perla's revenues, the 45-employee tortilleria also produces flour tortillas, tortilla chips, fried tortilla chips (cut versions of the whole tostadas), and masa. Sales to supermarkets account for a third of the company's revenues, followed by distributors (another third), restaurants (29 percent), and direct sales to the public (4 percent). The Payans are looking for a distribution company that can help extend their reach beyond Minnesota.

Although revenue at Mercado Central is on a trajectory for a 15 percent drop in 2011, total revenues are on pace for a roughly 4 percent increase. A major financial thorn continues to be the cost of corn, the principal ingredient in the company's products. "It's better to raise prices than cut corners," Jose says. "We're not going to sacrifice quality."

TORTILLERIA LA PERLA
Minneapolis
Founded: 1999
Locations: 2
Employees: 45
2011 revenue: $3.5 million (est.)

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS ANDERSON

By Fran Howard

RETAIL SUPPLIER

FROM VAN TO SATELLITE

Terry Commerford's start-ups became multi-million-dollar businesses, continually evolving with the marketplace.

Some entrepreneurs enter business with a focused vision that burns like a flame inside them. Others find success by approaching the market with flexibility to morph and evolve toward the most lucrative opportunities.

Terry Commerford is the latter. He and his wife, Margie, embarked on what would eventually become two multi-million dollar businesses in 1983, selling stuffed animals from the back of a van, calling the business Terrybear. By 1985, they were selling stuffed toys in Eden Prairie Center, and soon added imported brass items—vases, giftware, elephants, giraffes, and other figurines—from India.

In the 1990s, the couple expanded their business to include Tiffany-style lamps, and in any given year averaged 12 to 13 retail locations. But that was the peak. "Brass giftware started to become less desirable to the public; it was going out of fashion," says Commerford. Their ceremonial urns from India, however, had caught the attention of a pet crematory in northern Minnesota, so they decided to limit their brass imports to urns while widening other product offerings.

In need of funds to buy inventory to pitch their wares on television shopping networks, the Commerfords approached venture capitalists to raise cash, but the investment groups interpreted Commerford's flexibility as a lack of focus given his businesses' complex and fluid history.

Credit Where It's Due
River of Goods CEO Lavina Lau (left) and Terrybear CEO Tom Wozniak (right) flank Terry Commerford, who cofounded both companies—and who praises his CEOs for turning both around.

Hearing that feedback, Commerford and his executive team decided it would be easiest and cleaner to launch a second business and turned to family and friends, who invested $500,000 to launch River of Goods in 2000. TV sales of imported Indian vases and giftware jumped to about $22 million in three years.

Meanwhile, the stuffed animal and urn business was becoming more focused as well. Tom Wozniak, who had been the company's general manager, stepped into the CEO position. "I saw the opportunity in the urn business," Wozniak says. "I had a sense then that cremation was up and coming." Today 80 to 85 percent of Terrybear's sales are to distributors of urns for cremated human remains. The rest are to pet crematories that work directly with veterinary hospitals.

Terrybear's sales have increased from about $300,000 in 1998 to $8.6 million in 2009. This year, Wozniak expects total revenues to hit $10 million and the company had its first $1 million month in August. Staffing has risen from about four to 16, including three employees in China.

Today, Terrybear designs its own urns, which the company has custom-manufactured in China and India. "It's a very competitive and dynamic industry. It's changing very rapidly," Wozniak says. Competition is increasing from casket manufacturers, who also see the trend toward fewer traditional burials and more cremations.

TERRYBEAR/RIVER OF GOODS
St. Paul
Founded: 1983
Employees: 23 (Terrybear Urns & Memorials)/45 (River of Goods)
2011 revenue: $10 million/$18 million

Commerford's other business, River of Goods, found itself struggling by 2008. This business also needed to evolve—Commerford credits its recent run of success to understanding when to transition from entrepreneurial zeal to focused professional management. Under the direction of Lavina Lau, who became CEO in 2008 (she started as the company's sourcing and product development manager in 2002), River of Goods began a major restructuring.

"We changed the focus to sourcing and product development, rather than just importing," says Lau. River of Goods now provides sourcing and product development services—in categories including lighting and home furnishings—to TV shopping networks, catalogs, online retailers, and specialty gift stores. In any given month, River of Goods comes up with 100 to 300 designs.

Lau has added more employees in Vietnam, China, and India for a total of 20 overseas and 25 stateside. Revenue for 2011 will reach $18 million.

Commerford's two companies, which share only one employee (the CFO), recently moved into a shared office space in St. Paul, and though synergies might surface, Commerford is wary of synergies, but keeping his options open. "We might start by getting the same garbage hauler." TCB

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTHONY BRETT SCHRECK

SMALL-BUSINESS SUCCESS STORIES FINALISTS

Twin Cities Business recognizes the following Minnesota companies as finalists in the Small-Business Success Stories program for their notable achievements.

Engineered Network Systems
Burnsville

The company designs, manufactures, and distributes cabinets, carts, flat panel mounts, shelves, kiosks, payment terminal stands, security stands, and other custom display and service products for retailers. Founded in 2000, the company has grown from two to 35 employees; its annual revenue growth rate since 2003 has been 38 percent.

Granite Equity Partners
St. Cloud

This private equity group provides not only funding to growing companies but also offers strategic guidance and support. The group focuses its investments on small to midsize companies in outstate Minnesota and elsewhere in the Upper Midwest. Granite Equity portfolio companies include manufacturers of industrial and high-tech products and software development firms.

JNBA Financial Advisors
Bloomington

Founded in 1979 by Judith Brown and now directed by her son, Richard, and Richard's wife, Kim, JNBA focuses on investment strategies for families' practical goals, notably saving for college and retirement planning. In the last five years, a rough time for investing, JNBA has experienced a 65 percent increase in assets under management. The company opened a new office in Duluth last year.

Maverick Software Consulting
Lakeville

Maverick offers IT staff augmentation through a distinctive model: It provides low-cost, U.S.-based staff in the form of top computer science students to major corporations needing short-term help on specific IT projects. Over the past four years, the company has quadrupled in revenue; its number of student employees rose from 10 on one college campus in 2006 to 113 across five schools.

Peterson Companies
Chisago City

In March 2011, the office and shop of this construction firm burned to the ground. Peterson Companies, whose services include excavation, landscaping, irrigation, road building, and athletic field installation, quickly moved operations to a temporary location and began its own rebuilding. Despite this catastrophe, the 60-employee firm experienced an increase in business in 2011, and is moving into a new facility.

Sage Electrochromics
Faribault

Sage Electrochromics develops electronically tintable "smart glass" for windows and skylights that can be programmed to switch from clear to various levels of tinting depending on changing sunlight and heat conditions. It is now constructing a new facility that, when complete in late 2012, will be the world's largest glass manufacturing plant, according to the company.

Waterfilters.net
Zumbrota

Consistently listed the past several years in *Inc.* magazine's fastest-growing U.S. companies rankings, Waterfilters.net is an online "superstore" that stocks and sells water filtration systems and replacement cartridges for major brands including GE, Culligan, Pur, and Brita.

Winco
Le Center

With 62 employees and approximately $20 million in annual sales, Winco designs, manufactures, and sells electric and fuel-driven power generators for consumers and businesses. Even during slow periods in the industry, the company has been able to avoid layoffs during the past 18 years.

Xylo Technologies
Rochester

Founded in 2000, Xylo Technologies provides Web application design, database development, and client server programming. The company currently has a national customer base of leading health care organizations, Fortune 500 firms, and governmental agencies, and added to its client base even during the recession.

Zumbro River Brand
Albert Lea

Zumbro River Brand is a contract manufacturer of food ingredients and food products with plants in Albert Lea and Owatonna. Its specialties include high-protein snacks and cereals. Average sales in the first half of 2010 were up 20 percent over the year before; 2011 has seen continued growth in sales and employee numbers.

SHORING UP THE FOUNDATION

Minneapolis Mayor R. T. Rybak explores his decade in office in an exclusive Q&A with editor Dale Kurschner.

January marks 10 years in office for Minneapolis Mayor R. T. Rybak. During his tenure, the city has reduced its debt by $200 million while weathering two recessions and a significant decline in revenue. It also has achieved a drop in serious crime; increased high school graduation rates—especially among Hispanics and Asians; landed the new Twins ballpark; and maintained a quality of life that continues to earn "best of" designations by various major media.

How much credit does the mayor deserve for all of this? Actually, quite a bit. Despite the city's "weak mayor" leadership structure, Rybak sets the budget, and has veto power over the City Council (a mayor in a typical weak-mayor system does not). More important, he says, is his ability to create coalitions and partnerships that transcend often fractious (different shades of DFL) city politics.

We sat down and talked about his first ten years in office.

When you ran for mayor, what were the initiatives where you told yourself, 'If I'm elected, I'm going to hit these?' And how have you done?

I grew up in a city that believed in itself and did big things. And one of the reasons I ran is I felt that we weren't reaching high enough, and weren't getting enough big things done.

So the points I made back then were that we needed to quit subsidizing so many individual projects and do more to help build the common infrastructure that helps everybody succeed. The second thing I talked about is that the city should be doing more to get the work force ready for tomorrow. So in those two areas, we've done a lot.

We put a screeching halt to the very liberal use of tax increment financing to fund many different projects, and instead used it only in a couple of key spots that I think are very defensible [Denmark-based Coloplast, which relocated its North American headquarters and 600 jobs to Minneapolis; and Midtown Exchange on East Lake Street, where Allina Hospitals and Clinics relocated 1,600 employees, and Midtown Global Market became home to 60 small-business food vendors].

What have you done to spur economic development in Minneapolis?

We shifted resources into things like the Two Percent Loan Program, which has stimulated scores of small businesses around the city—corner stores, new restaurants, new one-of-a-kind businesses. [The program has made 1,000 loans totaling $28 million, which have helped create 2,000 jobs and retain 9,000 jobs. It provides financing to small businesses to purchase equipment and make building improvements. A private lender provides half a loan at market rate, and the city provides the rest, up to $50,000, at 2 percent interest.]

We focused more on the common ground. I'll give an example. Instead of putting our time and our money into an individual project, we focused on getting $130 million in federal funds to remake Marquette Avenue and Second Avenue South into transit corridors that dramatically sped up the rate at which buses can come into the center of town, delivering more riders than a new light rail line. That helped us attract businesses who came to the city not because of a check from us, but because they had better access to downtown.

We also took an idea that had been on the table since way back in the '80s, when I was with the Downtown Council, and made it happen—the creation of a Downtown Improvement District . [The DID is a nonprofit that provides services to make 120 downtown blocks cleaner, safer, and easier to navigate. It has assisted 212,637 pedestrians, picked up 2.4 million pounds of street litter, and saved more than 24 lives since it launched in 2009.] There's a friendly face out there on the street. And those little things benefit everybody and positively impact economic growth.

What's been your greatest achievement as mayor?

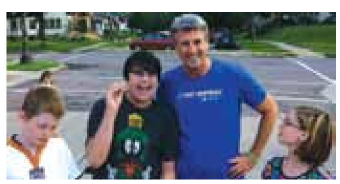
The Minneapolis Promise. No question. It's seeing thousands of kids get a better future.

[The Minneapolis Promise is a multifocal effort to help kids succeed after high school. Achieve Minneapolis provides privately funded college and career centers located inside all seven Minneapolis public high schools. Step-Up is a youth summer jobs program that provides 1,300 individuals with summer work aligned with their career interests. In addition, the Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Metro State University, the University of Minnesota, and Augsburg College provide free tuition to qualifying Minneapolis public high school graduates.]

Seven years ago is when we started the Minneapolis Promise and when we began saying to ninth graders, 'Every kid has to develop a life plan'. We've really focused on that, and graduation rates for kids of color are going way up. I'm not in charge of the schools. But we said, 'OK, that's one thing that we can really focus on and move the dial.' In the past seven years, I've spoken to every ninth grader in Minneapolis schools about careers. That's my favorite thing to do.

For those who may wonder, why is this important for our economy?

I can guarantee you, I will be able to walk through the skyway system 10 years from now and see a more diverse work force filled with kids from Minneapolis schools who've been through their Step-Up jobs and are working at every good business in the city. I can also guarantee that those businesses are going to be



more competitive globally because of the language and cultural skills of their employees.

You mentioned that Minneapolis wasn't reaching high enough before. In the last 10 years, what are two instances in which it reached as high as it should?

Workforce development is one piece of it. The other would be Access Minneapolis, our vision for transit—fusing light rail and bus rapid transit and making Minneapolis the number-one bike city in America. Six years ago, we envisioned all this, and we're implementing it, even though we have gone through a period where resources have shrunk so dramatically.

Let's talk about those resources. The city's revenue streams are likely to decrease again as the economy stays soft. How do you maintain what you're doing and go even further with fewer resources?

I knew there were some financial problems when I came into office. But in the first couple weeks, my jaw was almost on the floor. I had no idea it was as bad as it was. By month two, it was really clear that we were going to have to change our focus. And I was going to have to spend a lot of time fixing the finances.

We went to the core issues. The first was debt. As of [2011], we have paid down $200 million in debt. We've been able to weather really serious times because we're not carrying the debt we did 10 years ago. That meant we restored our bond rating. That meant it cost us less to raise the money to repave the streets. And that meant we could launch a new program to invest in infrastructure.

We also had to shrink the size of the city's work force from 4,100 to 3,600. A lot of really talented people lost their jobs. And we had to dramatically reshape the way work is done around here. But we did so by launching outcome-based management, where we have metrics for every department that are tied to our budget and the performance reviews of our department heads.

What's been your biggest mistake since taking office?

Well, I've made plenty. I think right away, I tried to remove the police chief, Robert Olson, before his contract was up. I felt, and still feel, the city needed a new direction in public safety. But I should have waited until his contract was up.

We didn't make the progress I wanted to see with our ability to increase retail downtown. We still haven't figured out whether [the solution] sits in the private sector or the public sector. But somehow, we've got to do a better job with it.

What specifically do you want to go after next?

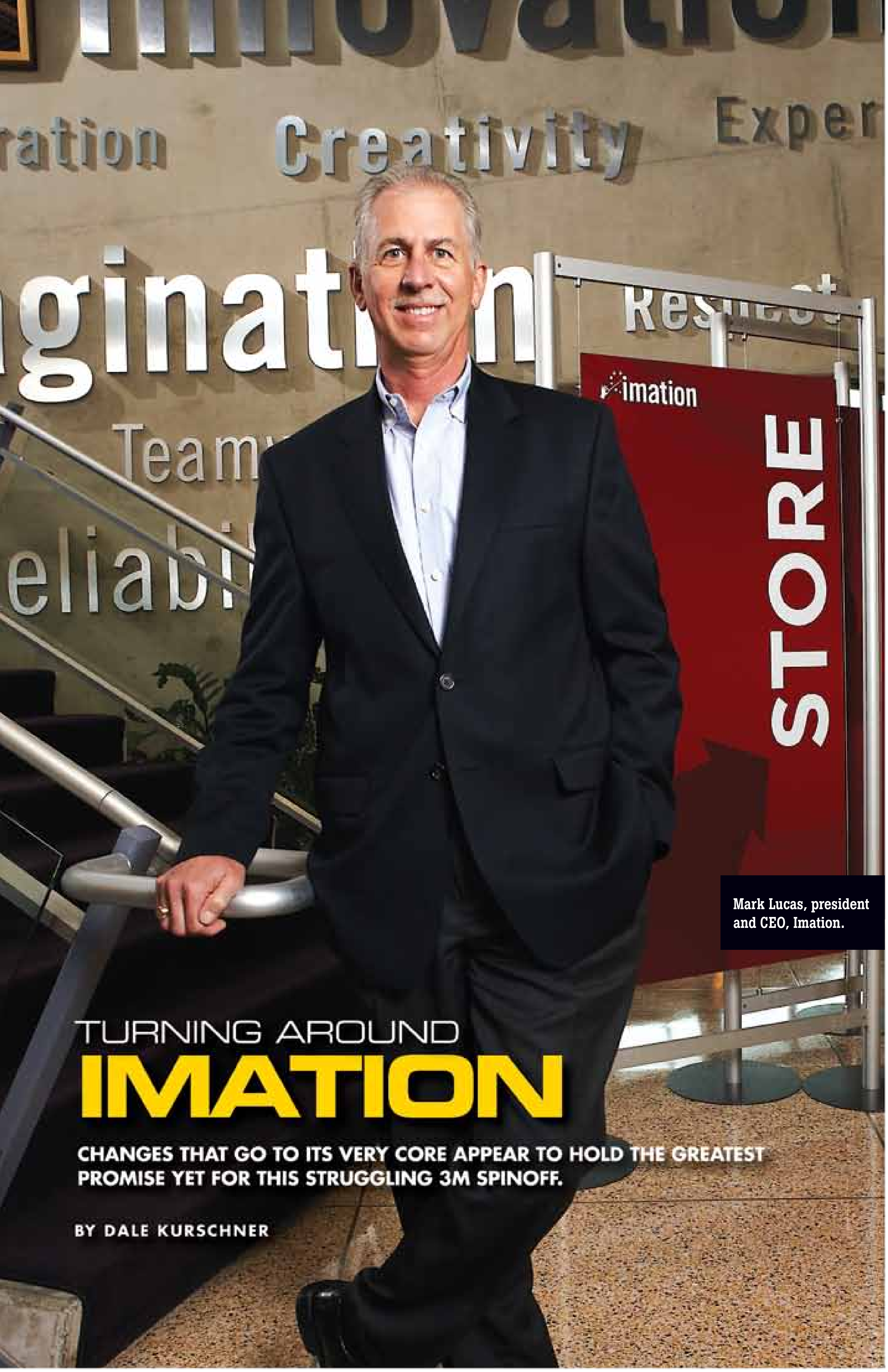
I want to raise the bar. We should be one of the, if not the greatest American city of this time. That seemed delusional a decade ago. It's achievable now, which makes me anxious to get there.

We should be creating more jobs and incubating more small businesses. I don't want one of the largest gaps between haves and have-nots in the country.

We talked about how important that is in general, and we talked about the lack of resources going forward. Are there some specific partnerships that you're looking to do more with, either with companies or individuals?

Well, one partnership is with the president. The federal dollars brought in since he became president have doubled. It's also been great to have a governor who doesn't want to find a way to bash Minneapolis. There are also all the foundations and the businesses and the nonprofits, many of which didn't know me when I came in 10 years ago. We're now deeply engaged on various projects with them.

You know, Minneapolis is like a family—sometimes a slightly dysfunctional one, but one that, if you somehow can pull it together, isn't about one person but about the whole thing. TCB



Mark Lucas, president and CEO, Imation.

TURNING AROUND IMATION

CHANGES THAT GO TO ITS VERY CORE APPEAR TO HOLD THE GREATEST PROMISE YET FOR THIS STRUGGLING 3M SPINOFF.

BY DALE KURSCHNER

Imation has been trying to make a go of it for so long now that investors are beginning to lose hope. The Oakdale-based company's stock price reached a new low of $5.40 per share on November 25. And some wonder whether it's time for the company to be sold, either in pieces or in its entirety.

"Given the number of patents and intellectual property, along with a business that can generally crank out solid cash flow, Imation's main businesses should not have a negative value," Amit Chokshi recently wrote in an article posted on the financial Web site Seeking Alpha. Chokshi is an investor and former Morgan Stanley analyst who now runs his own firm, Connecticut-based Kinnaras Capital Management. Imation's common stock price through mid-December remained near or below the company's cash-per-share value of $6.21, and well below its current assets per-share value of $19.

Acquisitions that Imation has made in the last five years to help increase revenues and profitability didn't turn out as planned. Revenues for 2011 are on track to come in just slightly above 2005's, while losses have piled up in recent years ($34 million in the first nine months of 2011 alone) due to $169 million spent on restructuring charges and $152 million in goodwill impairment costs.

Moreover, investors have given this company plenty of time to discover a viable, long-term identity. Spun off from 3M in 1996, Imation shed most of its original businesses, reduced its 10,700-employee work force by 90 percent, and rolled out various corporate strategies, including a brief stint at trying to become a brand and product management company.

To Chokshi, these facts show the company can't figure out how to grow as a standalone business—and as such, the best return for investors would be to simply sell it.

But it's often darkest before the dawn, and Imation president and CEO Mark Lucas is halfway through a two-year turnaround plan that combines a sharply focused product development and marketing strategy with a well-executed cultural change initiative.

His no-pain, no-gain, hurry-up turnaround offense calls for a drop in revenues and an increase in costs in 2011, followed by a bump in revenues and much stronger profit margins by the end of 2012. Given that, the company's recent financial performance should be about as ugly as it's going to get. In the quarter ended September 30, sales dropped nearly 10 percent to $309 million, while losses increased to $14 million, compared with a loss of $2.3 million in the same period a year earlier. On the bright side, gross profit margin improved 14 percent during the quarter.

Lucas became president and CEO in May 2010, a little more than one year after becoming president and chief operating officer. During his first year as CEO, he continued shoring up Imation's operations by, among other things, improving working capital management, increasing cash balances, and speeding up product time-to-market. Then in February 2011, Lucas rolled out the company's new strategy, which from a product perspective seems to leverage the best of Imation's past.

While the company has tried to change its product offerings over the years, the ones that continue to appeal to customers are centered around tape—magnetic tape. Not only the product itself, but the market needs for data storage and protection addressed by magnetic tape and its modern-day equivalent, removable hard drives. In larger-scale applications such as cloud computing, magnetic tape cartridges are still used to back up data. In small to midsize businesses, the more nimble removable hard drive is growing in popularity—as are ways to protect and better connect what's stored on such drives.

3M invented magnetic computer tape, and Imation remains the global leader in this category. It also is the world's largest producer of recordable optical data-storage media (CDs and DVDs) through its Imation, Memorex, and TDK brands. Worldwide demand for these products—which account for 66 percent of its revenues—is dropping as customers increasingly opt for removable hard drives and USB flash drives. The company plans to expand its capabilities, services, and product offerings in these latter areas.

Imation still sells consumer electronic products under the Memorex and XtremeMac brands. But across the board, Lucas is steering the company back toward its technology roots in digital data storage. And he's sharpened its focus on helping people and corporations—especially small and midsize businesses—store, protect, and connect their data. Imation is investing in these areas, internally or through acquisitions, when such investments lead to higher-margin revenues. It's also continuing to reassess other sales lines.

"One thing Mark said when he came in as CEO is that we're not just going to have revenues, we're going to have good margins. So we've rationalized out of poor margin categories," says Scott Robinson, Imation's corporate controller and chief accounting officer.

"We needed to go from a brand company back to a technology company, and from a restructuring environment to one that was growth oriented," says Patricia Hamm, vice president, global human resources for Imation.

One example is Memorex televisions, which Imation has stopped selling. "If you look at the prices on these products, they drop so fast that if you don't have massive scale, you cannot compete," Robinson says.

Lucas realizes, however, that righting Imation's product and marketing direction is only part of his challenge as CEO. The other part is finding ways to fire up its 1,165 employees so that they can reach the company's aggressive business goals. "Our number-one strategic imperative is cultural change," he says.

Several studies over the last decade have found that organizations with strong corporate cultures, combined with good fiscal management, exhibit above-average levels of productivity, creativity, customer service, profitability, and employee retention. In one study, Towers Watson, the world's largest benefits consulting firm, determined that a healthy corporate culture with high employee satisfaction is directly related to a company's financial gain. Others have found great cultures equal high customer satisfaction.

Imation's emerging culture blends a diverse mix of legacy employees with new hires, and acquisition-related new peers. It respects where employees are working—about 60 percent are outside the United States (as such, the company's culture can't be Oakdale-centric). And a healthy culture is championed at the top, not only through Lucas's management style and beliefs, but by those whom he appointed to his executive team. That team prioritized the company's seven strategic imperatives when he became its CEO. Number one on the list, supported by and enabling the other six, is culture change.

"The company has gone through several iterations of identity. When I joined a year and a half ago, it was just shifting from being brand-oriented, back to more of its roots as a technology company, and a shift to more of the business-to-business environment," says Patricia Hamm, vice president, global human resources. "We needed to go from a brand company back to a technology company, and from a restructuring environment to one that was growth oriented."

Being honest and open with employees was a must, she says. "They know [the company's largest revenue producing product lines—magnetic tape, CDs, and DVDs] are in a declining market; and to be smart, we had to know where we are going and why. Mark did an exceptional job defining our direction, our strategic imperatives, and the steps to getting there, and we then aligned those messages throughout the organization."

There also was the need to create a greater sense of urgency, Hamm says: "In a turnaround, you need to move quickly and make good decisions." Other imperatives addressed the need for more "roll up your sleeves" effort, less aversion to risk, and breaking down silos so that business functions could operate together.

These imperatives are now a part of employee training, communications, and performance management. But their effectiveness relies upon getting every employee to realize that leadership and decision making is his or her responsibility, not just that of managers.

Imation's legacy culture includes a fair amount of "we've always done it this way" and the bureaucratic learned-helplessness that sometimes permeates a work force within a company as large as 3M. Attempts to create an all-new culture since Imation was spun off 15 years ago have been stymied by restructurings, corporate strategy shifts, and new corporate cultures and peers added through acquisitions.

"For new people coming in, it's exciting," says an employee who's been with Imation since the late 1990s. "I've watched us go through massive layoffs, get rid of companies that aren't making money, then focus on brand management, then consumer electronics—which was terribly competitive . . . . So for me, it's 'let's hope this works.' Either way, we're going to rally again."

She adds what she's seen from Lucas thus far impresses and encourages her and her colleagues.

Employee engagement is manifest, she says. "Our town hall meetings are not just once a quarter, but once a month. And Mark encourages and opens up to questions from those in attendance, both physically as well as from around the world [via live video Webcasting]. Music's playing. It's upbeat," and the meetings touch on wins, challenges, and how the company's succeeding. People are still a little reluctant to ask questions, "but it's getting better."

The company's executive team didn't create benchmarks or build in return-on-investment metrics as it developed its culture-change initiative. For now, it's relying upon employee engagement surveys to monitor its progress.

A survey that Imation conducted in 2010 found three areas of concern, Hamm says. A 2011 survey registered significant improvement in each area. For example, employee confidence in the company's future changed from 35 percent favorable in 2010 to 53 percent in 2011. Also improved were employee confidence in developing a career within Imation and having the tools and resources to succeed.

"We have a strategy. We've documented it fairly well and our employees understand it," controller Robinson says. "In the short term, the [stock] market probably doesn't like what we're doing. But we have new investors coming in who are very excited. A lot of people are interested in the story, and they want to know what our future looks like." TCB

Dale Kurschner is editor-in-chief of Twin Cities Business.

INDEX

Compiled by Mary Connor

Extended EDUCATION

Local postgraduate professional and continuing education programs help you extend your learning horizons.

Employee development efforts may not be top priorities for businesses now, but maybe they should be. Companies are asking a lot of their workers and managers, who are often shouldering additional work in the wake of staff cuts. It makes sense to help employees negotiate new responsibilities by giving them opportunities to gain new skills. Local companies and schools offer traditional classes as well as training customized to your needs, on topics ranging from leadership development and customer service to software orientation and equipment training.

COLLEGE CONTINUING- AND CUSTOM-EDUCATION PROGRAMS

ALEXANDRIA TECHNICAL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Customized Training Center
1601 Jefferson St.
Alexandria, MN 56308
320-762-4403
alextech.edu
Contact: Chad Coauette
- Organizational development, farm business management, and computer and technology training; industry-specific training for the manufacturing and health care industries

ANOKA-RAMSEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
11200 Mississippi Blvd. NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55433
763-433-1200
anokaramsey.edu
Contact: Stephen Jones
- Leadership, management, project management, sales and marketing, small business development, computer applications, Lean and Six Sigma, and IT training

ANOKA TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Corporate Center
1355 W Hwy. 10
Anoka, MN 55303
763-576-4800
anokatech.edu
Contact: Jamie Barthel
- Manufacturing and trades, IT and computer applications, safety and OSHA, leadership, health care, and emergency medical services

BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY
Optivation
1500 Birchmont Dr. NE, Ste. 34
Bemidji, MN 56601
218-755-4900
optivation.org
Contact: Kerry Ross
- Project management, technical writing, managing conflict, Lean manufacturing, leadership and management, human resources management, and other types of custom training and continuing education

CENTRAL LAKES COLLEGE
Business and Industry Center
501 W College Dr.
Brainerd, MN 54601
218-855-8000

clcmn.edu
Contact: Rebecca Best
- Leadership and organizational development, OSHA safety classes, and other trade- and industry-specific training

CENTURY COLLEGE
Continuing Education and Customized Training
3300 Century Ave. N
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
651-779-3341
century.edu/continuinged
Contact: Jeralyn Jargo
- Health care, business skills, IT, transportation, trades, language and culture, and public safety programs

DAKOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Continuing Education & Customized Training
1300 145th St. E
Rosemount, MN 55068
651-423-8223
customizedtraining.com
Contact: Rich Hawkins
- Business, management, manufacturing, and public safety training

DUNWOODY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
Custom Training
818 Dunwoody Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612-381-3098
dunwoody.edu/custom
Contact: Mike Anderson
- Topics including hydraulics, energy efficiency, and precision manufacturing; leadership and quality training, including Lean and Six Sigma

FOND DU LAC TRIBAL & COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Continuing Education
2101 14th St.
Cloquet, MN 55720
218-879-0846
fdltcc.edu
Contact: Cassandra Nicholson
- Courses in computer literacy and applications, Web and graphic design, computer programming, writing and publishing, grant writing and nonprofit management, sales and marketing, accounting, starting your own business, and business administration

HENNEPIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Continuing Education & Customized Training Services
9000 Brooklyn Blvd., Ste. G201
Brooklyn Park, MN 55445
952-995-1330
hennepintech.edu/cts
Contact: Joe Mulford, Cherie Rollings
- Manufacturing, industrial safety, health care, computer applications, IT, Web and graphic design, transportation, management, customer service, occupational English

HIBBING COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Continuing Education
1515 E 25th St.
Hibbing, MN 55746
218-262-7270
hibbing.edu
Contact: Denise Vlatkovich
- Certification and recertification in industrial maintenance, heavy equipment operation, commercial driver's licensing, manufacturing, OSHA, MSHA, NEC update, and electrical maintenance; other training developed upon request

INVER HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Center for Professional and Workforce Development
2500 E 80th St.
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076
651-450-3763
inverhillstraining.org
Contact: Peter Hoch
- Individually designed courses, which may include e-learning, on topics such as IT, health care, business, and entrepreneurship

ITASCA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Continued Learning Center
1851 E Hwy. 169
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-322-2300
itascacc.edu
Contact: Mike Knapp
- Professional and personal growth, management and leadership development, quality and continuous improvement, customer service, health and safety, IT, manufacturing, and Lean health care training

LAKE SUPERIOR COLLEGE
Workforce and Community Development
2101 Trinity Road
Duluth, MN 55811
218-733-7601
lsc.edu/continuingeducation
Contact: Bill Gunderson
- Lean and Six Sigma, leadership, information technology, health care/nursing, workplace safety, OSHA and MSHA, emergency response, and welding

MESABI RANGE COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Continuing Education
1001 Chestnut St. W
Virginia, MN 55792
218-741-3095
mr.mnscu.edu
Contact: Colleen Gerzin
- Organizational development, team building, strategic planning, and customer service training

METRO ALLIANCE FOR CUSTOMIZED AND CONTINUING EDUCATION
3300 Century Ave. N
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
651-747-4096
macce.net
Contact: Denise Stephens
- Management, IT, languages and culture, professional development, trades and industry, manufacturing; other types of training spanning numerous industries

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Management, Customized Education
1501 Hennepin Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612-659-7254
metrostate.edu/com
Contact: Paula Ball
- Business valuation, banking, process management, project management, public speaking, writing, and vision strategy planning training

MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Continuing Education and Customized Training
1501 Hennepin Ave., Ste. K2100
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612-659-6200
minneapolis.edu
Contact: Jess Niebuhr, Jan Morrissey
- Customer service, project management, languages, and Microsoft applications training

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGE—SOUTHEAST TECHNICAL
Continuing Education & Workforce Training
1200 Storr's Pond Road
P.O. Box 409
Winona, MN 55987
507-453-2740
southeastmn.edu/training
Contact: Calli Ekblad
- Business and professional development, trade and industry, computer, and health training

MINNESOTA STATE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Custom Training Services
405 Colfax Ave. SW
Wadena, MN 56482
218-849-2655
minnesota.edu
Contact: Mary Ryan
- Sales, marketing, and management, business development, health and safety, manufacturing technology, leadership, and other industry-specific training

MINNESOTA STATE MANKATO AT 7700 FRANCE
7700 France Ave. S, Ste. 360
Edina, MN 55435
952-818-8888
mnsu.edu/7700france
Contact: Ann Goebel
- Certified financial planning, leadership certificates, customized applied Lean workshops, supervisory management, health care workshops, speech forensics (online), social work (online), customized onsite solutions

MINNESOTA WEST COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Customized Training
1001 Erie Road
Marshall, MN 56258
507-537-7051
mnwest.edu/customized-training-services
Contact: Valerie Jordan
- Computer training and Internet, health and human services, management and professional development, manufacturing, dental, and other industry-specific training

NORMANDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Continuing Education & Customized Training
9700 France Ave. S
Bloomington, MN 55431
952-487-8343
normandale.edu/continuingeducation
Contact: Sunny Ainley, Jeff Hudson, Ann Wagner
- Certificate programs in supervision and management, administrative assistant leadership, business acumen and communication, computer applications, health care, medical and health IT, Scrum, and Six Sigma

NORTH HENNEPIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Continuing Education and Customized Training
7411 85th Ave. N
Brooklyn Park, MN 55445
763-424-0880
nhcc.edu/cect
Contact: Nerita Hughes
- Project management, communications, accounting programs and certificates, Microsoft applications, certificate in regulatory affairs, continuing education certificates and courses, leadership programs, customized training for businesses, human resources certification

NORTHLAND COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Center for Outreach and Innovation
1101 Hwy. 1 E
Thief River Falls, MN 56701
218-793-2800
northlandcollege.edu/coi
Contact: Kirsten Michalke
- Computer, industry-specific, manufacturing, employee skill development, diversity, leadership, fire safety, health care, entrepreneurship, and continuous improvement training

PINE TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Continuing Education and Customized Training
900 4th St. SE
Pine City, MN 55063
320-629-5176
pinetech.edu
Contact: Kathy Anderson
- Industrial technology, IT, management education and professional skills, manufacturing, firefighting, allied health care and emergency medical services training

RIDGEWATER COLLEGE
Customized Training and Continuing Education
2101 15th Ave. NW
Willmar, MN 56201
320-222-5200
ridgewater.edu/customized
Contact: Kathy Schwantes
- Business and computer, professional development, and industry-specific training

RIVERLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Training and Development
965 Alexander Dr. NW
Owatonna, MN 55060
507-455-5880
riverland.edu/rtd
Contact: Douglas Parr
- Leadership, communication, supervision and management, allied health, and trade- and industry-specific training

ROCHESTER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Center for Business & Workforce Education
851 30th Ave. SE
Rochester, MN 55904
507-280-3157
rctc.edu/workforce/training
Contact: Abbey Hellickson
- Computer, leadership, supervisory management, and industry-specific training

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY
Center for Continuing Studies
720 4th Ave. S
St. Cloud, MN 56301
320-308-4723
scsutraining.com
Contact: Gail Ruhland
- Business training, career training, certificate programs, conference planning, human resources and management, personal development, and other programs designed to fit specific needs

ST. CLOUD TECHNICAL & COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Customized Training & Education Center
1540 Northway Dr.
St. Cloud, MN 56303
320-308-5000
sctcc.edu/customized-training
Contact: June Hirdler
- Business development, trade- and industry-specific training, health care programs

SAINT PAUL COLLEGE
Customized Training and Continuing Education
60 E Plato Blvd., Ste. 150
St. Paul, MN 55107
651-846-1583
saintpaul.edu
Contact: David Baker
- Lean-flow methodologies, renewable energy technologies, leadership development, team development, succession planning, customer service, ServSafe (for managers and hospitality workers), supervisory and management development

SOUTH CENTRAL COLLEGE
Center for Business & Industry
1225 3rd St. SW
Faribault, MN 55021
507-332-5800
cbi.southcentral.edu
Contact: Brian Knutson
- Business development, e-learning, computers and IT, manufacturing, workplace health and safety, and industry-specific training

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
College of Continuing Education
1994 Buford Ave., Ste. 353
St. Paul, MN 55108
612-624-1228
cce.umn.edu/professionaleducation
Contact: Jean McLeod
- Business writing, supervision, management, leadership, business analysis, project management, business process improvement, training and development, and human resources management; custom development of other programs specific to an organization's needs

UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS
Executive Education & Professional Development
1000 LaSalle Ave., TMH 166
Minneapolis, MN 55403
651-962-4600
stthomas.edu/execed
Contact: Marlin Meendering, Barbara Wonder
- Open enrollment and customized executive education and professional development programs in leadership, business acumen, innovation, strategy, and business ethics

VERMILION COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Continuing Education and Customized Training
1900 E Camp St.
Ely, MN 55731
800-657-3609
vcc.edu/departments/cect
Contact: Gloria Bowen
- Computer, regulations, and other types of customized training

WINONA STATE UNIVERSITY
Continuing Education and Extension
Winona, MN 55987
507-457-5080
winona.edu/oced
Contact: Diane Dingfelder
- Work force and professional develop-

ment, health care training, customized training for specific industries

TRAINING COMPANIES —WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT

ACHIEVEGLOBAL
3800 American Blvd. W, Ste. 1500
Bloomington, MN 55431
952-921-5870
achieveglobal.com
Contact: Steve Pettit
- Classroom, e-learning, and virtual classroom leadership, **sales, and customer service training**

ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE, INC.
3936 133rd Ct. W
Rosemount, MN 55068
651-322-3678
adminexcellence.com
Contact: Erin O'Hara Meyer
- Personal and professional effectiveness **training and consulting for office support staff**

ASCOLTA
7900 International Dr., Ste. 170
Bloomington, MN 55425
651-244-9230
ascolta.com
Contact: Martha Carlson
- Executive coaching and leadership development, talent management, **employee engagement consulting**, team and organizational development

THE BAILEY GROUP
4800 Olson Memorial Hwy., Ste. 225
Minneapolis, MN 55422
763-545-5997
thebaileygroup.com
Contact: Leigh Bailey
- Team and organizational development, talent management, **leadership development, and executive coaching**

CONVENIENCE LEARNING INTERNATIONAL
175 Jackson Ave. N, Ste. 412
Hopkins, MN 55343
952-938-3830
clearning.com
Contact: David Janiszewski
- More than **1,000 video-based online interactive courses** covering topics like OSHA compliance, safety, HR, and technical and trade skills; customers can track course completion, make course assignments, and deliver custom content

DALE CARNEGIE TRAINING
4938 Lincoln Dr.
Edina, MN 55436
952-548-5600
minnesota.dalecarnegie.com
Contact: Matt Norman
- Customized and public training and coaching in **sales strategies, leadership development, presentation skills,** employee engagement, and customer service

INSIGHTS LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT
684 Excelsior Blvd., Ste. 100
Excelsior, MN 55331
952-223-1147
insights.com
Contact: Scott Schwefel
- **Organizational development**, sales and leadership training

LEARNING MASTERS, INC.
6619 Parkwood Lane
Edina, MN 55436
952-938-0239
learningmasters.com
Contact: Al Frank
- Custom training in sales and marketing, **HR, and process improvement**

MATEFFY & COMPANY
2930 Highland Court
Mound, MN 55364
952-472-0820
mateffyco.com
Contact: Jack Mateffy
- Customized leadership development, employee engagement, productivity and communication, and sales and service training; **work force re-engagement programs**

O.I. PARTNERS—ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATIONS, INC.
5821 E Cedar Lake Road
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
952-525-1475
organizational-innovations.com
Contact: Thomas Bodin
- **Talent management and development**, leadership, work force development, HR consulting, HR strategy

PASSIONWERX
7700 Equitable Dr., Ste. 102
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
952-548-1285
passionwerx.com
Contact: Cal Munkvold
- **Employee engagement and leadership assessments**, workshops, and road maps to improvement

RESOURCE TRAINING & SOLUTIONS
4150 2nd St. S, Ste. 550
St. Cloud, MN 56301
320-255-3236
resourcetraining.com
Contact: Robert Cavanna, Tammy Biery
- Sales, customer service, leadership, **team building, time management, diversity**, and Smart Board training; online software training; and online health and safety training

SERVICE QUALITY INSTITUTE
9201 E Bloomington Fwy.
Bloomington, MN 55420
952-884-3311
customer-service.com
Contact: John Tschohl
- Customer service programs for the total work force, training programs on empowerment and service recovery, **customer service certification seminars**

WATERMARK LEARNING
7300 Metro Blvd., Ste. 207
Edina, MN 55439
800-646-9362
watermarklearning.com
Contact: Chris Anderson
- **Business analysis, project management, and business process management** training; certification preparation

WILSON LEARNING WORLDWIDE
8000 W 78th St., Ste. 200
Edina, MN 55439
952-944-2880
wilsonlearning.com
Contact: Michael Leimbach, Tom Roth, Nancy Brenny
- **Sales effectiveness, leadership and team building**, assessment and measurement, customer service, and work force effectiveness training

—TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTION

APPDEV PRODUCTS, LLC/ LEARNNOW, LLC
10250 Valley View Road, Ste. 120
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
952-943-1363
appdev.com, learndevnow.com
Contact: Craig Jensen
- **Microsoft Visual Studio, SQL Server, SharePoint**, Microsoft Office, cloud computing, Java, mobile development computing, and Web development training and certification

BENCHMARK LEARNING
4510 W 77th St., Ste. 210
Edina, MN 55435
952-896-6800
benchmarklearning.com
Contact: Eric Garrison
- Skill assessments, learning consulting, and career guiding; training on **Citrix, Cisco, CompTIA, Security, SharePoint, SQL**, System Center, PowerShell, Developer, graphic design, and Web; ITIL; business analysis, project management, and professional business skills

DASHE & THOMSON
401 N 3rd St., Ste. 500
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612-338-4911
dashe.com
Contact: Jon Matejcek
- Customized training for large-scale business changes, such as **enterprise software and process re-engineering**

EASEL SOLUTIONS, INC.
23 Empire Dr.
St. Paul, MN 55103
651-602-3153
easelsolutions.com
Contact: David Schomaker, Senna Lipp
- **Adobe authorized training**, consulting, and development

EDI PARTNERS
7204 Oaklawn
Edina, MN 55435
612-839-6890
edipartners.com
Contact: Dan Petrosky
- Coursework in **electronic data interchange** and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

ELERT & ASSOCIATES
140 S 3rd St.
Stillwater, MN 55082
651-430-2772
elerttraining.com
Contact: Kit Elert
- **Microsoft Office Suite** training; instructor-led classes delivered on site or in a virtual classroom

EULER TRAINING CENTER
1660 Hwy. 100 S, Ste. 101
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
952-567-4220
euler.com
Contact: Pam Laulainen
- **Unix/Linux, WebSphere, Oracle, Java**, Web development, C++, and Perl training

FIRSTTECH
2640 Hennepin Ave. S
Minneapolis, MN 55408
612-374-8000
firsttech.com
Contact: Chad Carlson
- Training for Apple, **Adobe programs, Filemaker Pro**, and the iPad

FISSURE
12940 Harriet Ave., Ste. 250
Burnsville, MN 55337
952-882-0800
fissure.com
Contact: Jesse Freese
- **Simulation-powered learning** in project management, business analysis, Agile Scrum, leadership, and managing organizational change

INDEX COMPUTERS
7447 Eagan Dr., Ste. 100
Savage, MN 55378
952-447-1040
indexcomputers.com

Contact: Patricia Norris
- Microsoft Office Suite and **QuickBooks** training

INTERLINX ASSOCIATES, LLC
7801 E Bush Lake Road, Ste. 230
Bloomington, MN 55439
952-829-0911
interlinxassociates.com

Contact: Elaine Koyama
- ACT! Contact Manager, SageSalesLogix, **Sage CRM, and Salesforce.com** implementation and training; Web site and e-marketing consulting

INTERTECH
1020 Discovery Road, Ste. 145
Eagan, MN 55121
651-994-8558
intertech.com

Contact: Tom Salonek
- .NET, JEE, SQL Server, **SharePoint, and open source technology** consulting and training

KAPLAN PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS
1295 Bandana Blvd., Ste. 245
St. Paul, MN 55108
651-641-1000
kpsminnesota.com

Contact: Christine Foster
- In-person and online computer and **Microsoft Office** training

KNOWLEDGE DESIGN & DELIVERY, INC.
1313 5th St. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414
612-379-3883
kdsquared.com

Contact: Polly Johanson
- Custom documentation and training in **technical writing**

KNOWLEDGE PEAK
3140 Neil Armstrong Blvd., Ste. 230
Eagan, MN 55121
952-431-2999
kpeak.com

Contact: Neil Peterson
- ITIL, ISO 20000, project management, **.NET, Cisco, Microsoft, Oracle, Unix**, Linux, and Java training and consulting

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER CONSULTING SERVICES
3140 Neil Armstrong Blvd., Ste. 121
Eagan, MN 55121
651-905-3729
ktcs.biz

Contact: Sarah Gwaltney
- Training in Microsoft programming, servers, Microsoft Office, SQL server, Java, Unix, Linux, project management, **Adobe, ITIL, business analysis, Scrum, Agile**, and others

MARKETPLACE INNOVATIONS, INC.
7025 Edenvale Blvd.
Eden Prairie, MN 55346
612-670-4714
mpii.com

Contact: David Sunnarborg
- **ACT!, ACT! for Web**, and ACT! by Sage training and consulting

NEW HORIZONS COMPUTER LEARNING CENTER TWIN CITIES
2915 Commers Dr., Ste. 500
Eagan, MN 55121
651-287-9950
nhtwincities.com

Contact: Brad Simms
- Microsoft Office and technical courses; Cisco, Citrix, CompTIA, **Novell, VMWare, Linux, ITIL**, information security, helpdesk, and Adobe courses

ONYX TRAINING COMPANY
1439 Fairway Court
Chaska, MN 55318
952-443-4694
onyxtraining.com

Contact: Ann Kalin
- Instructor-led, Web-based, and classroom-based training for **developing software, managing relational databases, data warehouses**, and business intelligence reporting, with a focus on Oracle products

SCIENCE MUSEUM OF MINNESOTA
120 W Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55102
651-221-4722
comped.smm.org

Contact: Sara Graffunder
- Microsoft Office, **database management, desktop publishing and digital imaging**, information management, social media, and Web development and design

TECHSKILLS
3601 Minnesota Dr., Ste. 910
Bloomington, MN 55435
952-831-6500
techskills.edu

Contact: Russell Starr
- Computer technology classes including **computer networking, IT engineering, database administration**, software development, IT security; certifications include Cisco, Oracle, CompTIA, Microsoft, ISC2, and health services

—TRAINING DESIGN

ADAYANA, INC.
4444 W 76th St., Ste. 100
Edina, MN 55435
952-830-0614
adayana.com

Contact: Mark Hughes
- Management consulting, customized **e-learning courseware**, instructor-led training materials

ALLEN INTERACTIONS, INC.
1120 Centre Pointe Dr., Ste. 800
Mendota Heights, MN 55120
651-203-3700
alleninteractions.com

Contact: Marty Lipshupz
- Custom **e-learning design, development**, and strategic consulting

BRAINY TRAINING, LLC
5115 41st Ave. S
Minneapolis, MN 55417
612-724-5110
brainytraining.com

Contact: Susan Foster
- Custom **corporate training and development**, writing and editing

COMPUTER TRAINING INTERNATIONAL, INC.
600 Twelve Oaks Center Dr., Ste. 217
Wayzata, MN 55391
612-378-0665
go-cti.com

Contact: Ellen Zissler
- Customized training on client's proprietary software, e-learning development, **instructional design, and national training rollouts**, both local and internationally

SEWARD, INC.
2200 E Franklin Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55404
612-721-4444
sewardinc.com

Contact: Victoria Frank
- Custom **e-learning, e-business, and e-marketing solutions**; international education development

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS AND BUSINESS CERTIFICATIONS

ARGOSY UNIVERSITY
College of Business
1515 Central Pkwy.
Eagan, MN 55121
651-846-2882
argosy.edu/twincities

Contact: Karen Gulliver (program chair)
Programs offered: MBA; MS in health services management, organizational leadership, and HR; master of public administration; specialized programs
MBA Length: 2 years
MBA Tuition: $600 per credit

AUGSBURG COLLEGE
2211 Riverside Ave. S, Campus Box 65
Minneapolis, MN 55454
612-330-1101
augsburg.edu/mba

Contact: Nathan Gorr (director of graduate admissions)
Programs offered: MBA with concentrations and graduate certificates in social entrepreneurship, finance, marketing, and health care management; MA in leadership (hybrid version also available); post-master's certificates in leadership
MBA Length: 23 months
MBA Tuition: $507 per credit

BETHEL UNIVERSITY
3900 Bethel Dr.
St. Paul, MN 55112
651-635-8000
bethel.edu

Contact: NP
Programs offered: MBA; MA in organizational leadership and communications
MBA Length: 2 to 3 years
MBA Tuition: $595 per credit

CAPELLA UNIVERSITY
School of Business & Technology
225 S 6th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55402
888-227-2736
capella.edu

Contact: Cheryl Bann (MBA faculty chair)
Programs offered: MBA with concentrations in accounting, business intelligence, entrepreneurship, finance, global operations and supply chain, marketing, health care management, HR management, IT management, and project management; several MS business degrees, doctoral business degrees, and business certificates
MBA Length: 2 years
MBA Tuition: $658 per credit

CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY
College of Business and Management
11010 Prairie Lakes Dr., Ste. 300
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
800-347-8822, ext 8830
stritch.edu

Contact: Amie Engels (enrollment manager)
Programs offered: Online and classroom MBA with concentrations in management, health care management, and global business management; MS in management; certificates in HR management, project management, sales and management, and contemporary team management
MBA Length: 2 years to 30 months
MBA Tuition: $525 per credit

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
College of Business and Organizational Leadership
275 Syndicate St. N
St. Paul, MN 55104
651-641-8278
csp.edu

Contact: Louise Ehrhart (graduate admission counselor)
Programs offered: MBA; MBA with emphasis in health care management; MA in leadership and management, and HR management
MBA Length: 18 to 22 months
MBA Tuition: $595 per credit

CROWN COLLEGE
Adult & Graduate Studies
8700 College View Dr.
St. Bonifacius, MN 55375
952-446-4100
crown.edu/ags

Contact: Maggie Unger (recruitment manager)

Programs offered: Master's degrees in organizational and international leadership; online MBA
MBA Length: 42 credits; can be completed in just over two years
MBA Tuition: NP

DEVRY UNIVERSITY
Keller Graduate School of Management
7700 France Ave. S, Ste. 575
Edina, MN 55435
952-838-1860
keller.edu

Contact: Gina Quinn (campus director)
Programs offered: MBA; master of accounting and financial management, HR management, information systems management, network and communications management, project management, and public administration
MBA Length: 16 to 28 months
MBA Tuition: $700 per credit hour

HAMLINE UNIVERSITY
School of Business
1536 Hewitt Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104
651-523-2284
hamline.edu/business

Contact: Jamie McClary
Programs offered: MBA; MA in nonprofit management; MA and doctorate in public administration; dual programs, including some with JD degrees
MBA Length: 21 months
MBA Tuition: $586 per credit

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Management
1501 Hennepin Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612-659-7290
metrostate.edu/mba

Contact: Aud Wengronowitz (director of recruitment, graduate programs)
Programs offered: MBA; MA in public and nonprofit administration; MS in management information systems; certificates in management information systems and project management
MBA Length: 2 to 3 years
MBA Tuition: $291.35 (classroom) or $393.62 (online) per credit

GLOBE UNIVERSITY/ MINNESOTA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
8089 Globe Dr.
Woodbury, MN 55125
877-303-6060
globeuniversity.edu/degree-program/business.aspx

Contact: Jeanne St. Claire (network dean of business programs)
Programs offered: MBA with concentrations in accounting and HR; MS in management with emphasis in health care management, information technology, and managerial leadership
MBA Length: 18 months
MBA Tuition: $535 per credit

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO
College of Business
122 Taylor Center
Mankato, MN 56001
507-389-2967
cob.mnsu.edu/mba/

Contact: Kevin Ellliott (MBA director)
Programs offered: MBA
MBA Length: 2 years
MBA Tuition: 645 per credit

NATIONAL AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
Harold D. Buckingham Graduate School
7801 Metro Pkwy., Ste. 200
Bloomington, MN 55425
952-356-3600
national.edu

Contact: NP
Programs offered: MBA with emphasis in health care administration, HR management, accounting, and international business; master of management with emphasis in health care administration, criminal justice, proprietary higher education management, and HR management
MBA Length: 18 months, full time
MBA Tuition: NP

ST. CATHERINE UNIVERSITY
School of Business and Leadership
2004 Randolph Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105
651-690-6000
stkate.edu

Contact: Sylvia Alexander-Sedey (assistant director of admissions)
Programs offered: Master's program in organizational leadership
MBA Length: 12 to 36 months
MBA Tuition: $395–$763 per credit

SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Graduate School of Business and Technology
2500 Park Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55404
612-728-5198
smumn.edu

Contact: Anna Shields (assistant director of admissions); Mike Dahl (admissions recruiter)
Programs offered: MBA; MA in organizational leadership, arts and cultural management, international business, HR management, human development, and public safety administration; MS in project management and information technology management; certificates in accounting, project management, and geographic information science
MBA Length: 2 years
MBA Tuition: $440 per credit

SPECIAL FOCUS

EDUCATION & TRAINING GUIDE

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY
G.R. Herberger College of Business
720 4th Ave. S
St. Cloud, MN 56301
320-308-3212
stcloudstate.edu/mba
Contact: Michele Mumm (MBA program director)
Programs offered: MBA; MBA with emphasis in HR, information systems, and economics; master of information assurance
MBA Length: 15 to 26 months
MBA Tuition: $485 (St. Cloud) or $695 (Maple Grove) per credit

THE COLLEGE OF ST. SCHOLASTICA
School of Business & Technology
340 Cedar St., Ste. 50
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-298-1015
css.edu
Contact: Patricia Angulo (management programs coordinator); Randal Zimmermann (graduate programs department chair)
Programs offered: MBA; MA in management; dual MBA-MA in management; management certificates in change leadership, finance, health care leadership, IT leadership, marketing, and public administration
MBA Length: 16 months to 2 years
MBA Tuition: $445 per credit

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, DULUTH
Labovitz School of Business and Economics
1318 Kirby Dr.
Duluth, MN 55812
218-726-8986
d.umn.edu/goto/mba
Contact: Candace Furo
Programs offered: MBA; also offered through University of Minnesota, Rochester
MBA Length: 2 to 7 years
MBA Tuition: $960 per credit

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, TWIN CITIES
Carlson School of Management
321 19th Ave. S, Ste. 1-110
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-625-5555
carlsonschool.umn.edu/mba
Contact: Kathryn Carlson (assistant dean, MBA programs); Mark Kizilos (assistant dean, executive education)
Programs offered: Full-time MBA, part-time MBA, executive MBA; MA in human resources and industrial relations; master of business taxation and accountancy; doctorate in business administration, and human resources and industrial relations
MBA Length: 1 year to 42 months
MBA Tuition: $1,090 per credit

UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX
School of Business
435 Ford Road, Ste. 1000
St. Louis Park, MN 55426
952-487-7226
phoenix.edu
Contact: Doris Savron (vice president, Minnesota campuses)
Programs offered: MBA; online MBA with specializations such as accounting, marketing, global management, human resources, and technology
MBA Length: 14 months to 2 years
MBA Tuition: NP

UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS
Opus College of Business
1000 LaSalle Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55403
651-962-4200
stthomas.edu/business
Contact: William Woodson (assistant dean for MBA programs)
Programs offered: Full-time MBA, evening MBA, executive MBA, health care MBA; master of business communication; master of science in accountancy; master of science in real estate
MBA Length: 21 months to 6 years
MBA Tuition: $840 per credit

WALDEN UNIVERSITY
College of Management and Technology
155 5th Ave. S, Ste. 100
Minneapolis, MN 55401
866-492-5336
waldenu.edu
Contact: William Schulz (associate dean)
Programs offered: MBA; MS in accounting, accounting and management, HR management, information systems management, management, and project management; graduate certificates in project management
MBA Length: 22 months
MBA Tuition: $775 per credit

If your company provides work force or executive training and is not listing in this guide, contact **Mary Connor** at **612-336-9293** or **mconnor@tcbmag.com**.

2011 TECHNOLOGY INNOVATORS

The Minnesota High Tech Association's 2011 Tekne Awards honor the companies, products, and individuals that are driving the state's technology industries. **By Mary Connor**

The Minnesota High Tech Association, in partnership with Enterprise Minnesota, LifeScience Alley, and the BioBusiness Alliance of Minnesota, celebrates Minnesota's status as a hub for technology innovation with the 2011 Tekne Awards. The Tekne Awards acknowledge companies and individuals who have demonstrated superior technology advancement and leadership in Minnesota.

Judges selected a winner from the three finalists in each of 14 categories, recognizing the best in development, education, commercialization, and management of technology. Some award categories are separated between small and growing businesses (with annual revenues less than $50 million) and established companies (with annual revenues of $50 million or more).

Read on to see which Minnesota companies and individuals were judged our technology innovators.

2011 TECHNOLOGY INNOVATORS

1

Painless Patient Billing

Apex Print Technologies, St. Paul

AWARD CATEGORY: Technology Services and Consulting—Small and Growing Company

To serve the patient billing needs of health care organizations, Apex Print Technologies has created the myEasyView and mySecureBill Web-based services. With myEasyView, health care customer-service staff can view customer documents, payment history, and account information while on the phone with customers. In addition, mySecureBill allows patients to view and pay their bills electronically. The system helps health care companies decrease call times, resolve billing issues faster, and improve cash flow. Apex clients can also customize the portal with their specific branding. Two hundred organizations are now using the Apex online system.

2

Serving Customer Service

Calabrio, Inc., Plymouth

AWARD CATEGORY: Software—Small and Growing Company

Calabrio's One suite of workforce optimization software is designed to help call center supervisors manage employee scheduling and performance. The system offers call recording and retrieval, speech and call-content analytics, staff scheduling tools for multiple sites, and reporting options. In addition, a widget-based dashboard that displays critical metrics can be configured to each user's preference. Calabrio is marketing to small and midsized call centers that have not adopted workforce optimization software—an estimated 50 percent of all such organizations, according to the National Association of Contact Centers—due to the complexity and cost of implementation. Calabio has established partnerships with the two main suppliers of contact-center infrastructure products, Cisco and Avaya, and is positioned for increased sales.

Emergency Effectiveness

City of Minneapolis

AWARD CATEGORY: Technology Excellence in the Nonprofit Organization

The City of Minneapolis' new Emergency Operations Training Facility/Strategic Information Center (EOTF/SIC) brings together a number of information and technology resources to create an efficient communications center for the city. Prior to the opening the facility, the city's emergency operations—the fire, police, and emergency preparedness departments—functioned as independent units. But the lessons learned from the 9/11 attacks, the 35W bridge collapse, and the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul demonstrated the need for more coordinated efforts. The EOTF facility serves emergency responders with technologies such as:

- Shot Spotter, which uses sensors in crime-prone areas to detect gunfire activity and alert police
- Streaming video from more than 1,000 cameras around the city
- Five videoconference rooms for inter-agency communication
- Eight DVRs for news and event monitoring

In addition, the SIC collects, analyzes, and distributes crime data and intelligence, supporting patrol officers with real-time information and enhancing the overall effectiveness of the facility's emergency operations center.

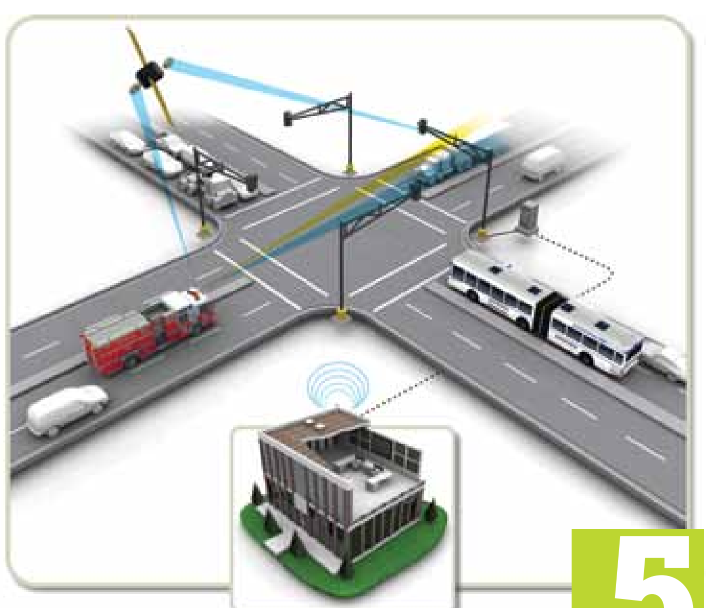
4

Bridging Language Barriers

Geacom, Inc., Duluth

AWARD CATEGORY: Mobile and Communication Technologies

To overcome communication barriers such as differences in languages, culture, and literacy, Geacom has created the Phrazer, a handheld tool with a touchscreen interface. In a health care setting, the Phrazer helps patients and doctors who speak different languages to communicate. After a patient indicates which language he or she speaks, the Phrazer collects information on the patient's medical history, symptoms, and complaints. The patient's information is summarized for the care giver in his or her language and can be uploaded into the facility's electronic health records system. The Phrazer is a less expensive way to provide interpreting services, compared to live interpreters or telephonic systems. The device also delivers detailed explanations of common medical procedures and offers patient-education videos.



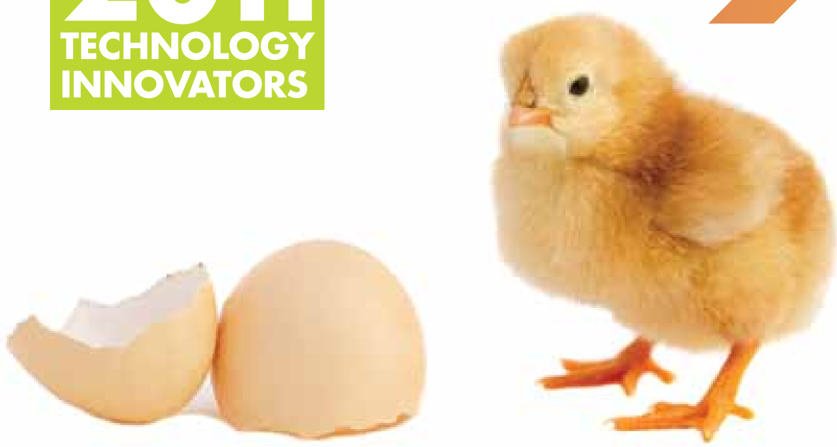
5

Emergency Exits

Global Traffic Technologies, St. Paul

AWARD CATEGORY: Computer Hardware and Electronic Devices

Global Traffic Technologies created the Opticom priority control systems, which are used to grant emergency vehicles green light passage through signal-controlled intersections. By prioritizing emergency vehicles and letting them pass through intersections on green lights, the system improves emergency response times, promotes traffic safety, and reduces crashes between emergency responders and other drivers. The system is also used to prioritize public transit vehicles at intersections, helping buses to keep reliable schedules. The Opticom products are installed in more than 100,000 intersections in more than 2,500 municipalities.



6

Advanced Poultry Processing
Nova-Tech Engineering, LLC, Willmar

AWARD CATEGORY: Advanced Manufacturing

Nova-Tech Engineering, a robotics company, develops poultry-industry machinery that automates what have traditionally been manual processes. Its Microwave Claw Processor applies microwaves to a hatchling chick's claw development tissue to prevent the claw from growing. De-clawing is necessary to keep the hatchlings from injuring each other. Nova-Tech's Poultry Services Processor vaccinates birds and treats the tips of their beaks with high-intensity infrared light, causing the beaks to be rounded and preventing damaging pecking behavior. The system includes the data-collecting Poultry Processor Analyzer and the Hatchery Data Analyzer, which monitors the machines' performance and alerts users if there is a problem. Nova-Tech has customers around the world; the company's machines are used in the production of almost all the turkeys in the U.S. and Canada and close to 80 percent of turkeys in the European Union.

7

Increased Technology Talent
Maverick Software Consulting Partnership, Lakeville

AWARD CATEGORY: Innovative Collaboration of the Year

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, Maverick Software Consulting, Advance IT Minnesota, Thomson Reuters, and Digital River have come together in a partnership to serve both computer science students and technology companies. Starting while they're still in school, students in the program work for corporate partners doing software development and testing, gaining real-world experience and, often, a job offer prior to graduation. Participating companies get cost-effective services, and the program helps increase the pool of local, experienced IT staff. Over the past five years, 147 students have worked in the program and every one has gone on to secure a full-time IT job. Maverick Software's organic growth has been reinvested and will fund new offices in Minnesota and other states.

8

Speedy, Room-Temperature Sterilization
Minntech Corporation, Plymouth

AWARD CATEGORY: Life Sciences—Established Company

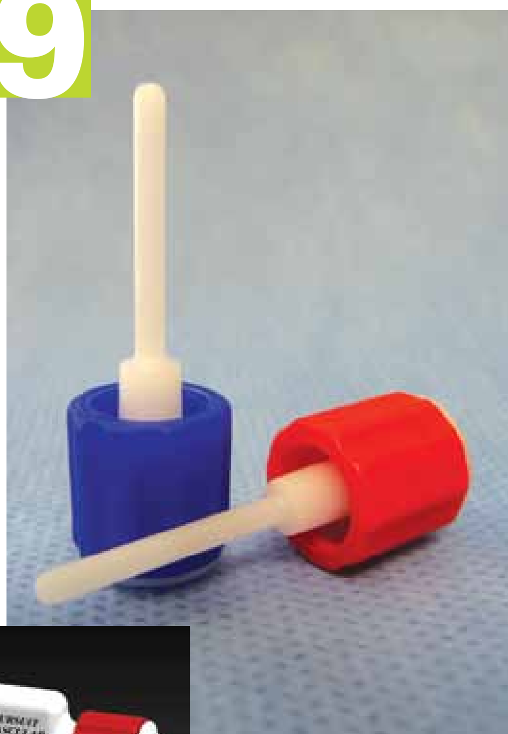
Revox Contract Sterilization Services from Minntech offer room-temperature sterilization for medical, pharmaceutical, and consumer product companies. Heat-sensitive products are not damaged by the Revox process, and the sterilants used in sterilization do not leave harmful residues behind. The process is faster than other sterilization methods; Minntech offers same-day service. Revox can also be used with a variety of materials, including plastics, elastomers, adhesives, electronics, composites, metals, and highly absorbent substances; product developers can design sterile products with fewer limitations on material selection.

9

Infection Fighter
Pursuit Vascular, Inc., Minnetonka

AWARD CATEGORY: Life Sciences—Small and Growing Company

In an effort to prevent catheter-related bloodstream infections, Pursuit Vascular developed the ClearGuard HD for use with hemodialysis catheters. Dialysis patients typically have a permanent catheter that is used several times a week, but the longer a catheter remains in the body, the greater the chance of infection. Dialysis patients contract an average of 1.5 bloodstream infections per year. The ClearGuardHD is made with a polymer rod impregnated with antimicrobial agents. When inserted into the catheter after a dialysis session, the rod swells and releases the agents to kill microorganisms. The swelling action also prevents the agents from reaching the patient's bloodstream. The product will serve the more than 200,000 hemodialysis patients with catheters worldwide.



10

Device Defense

Imation Corporation, Oakdale

AWARD CATEGORY: Software—Established Company

Imation's Defender Collection Control Software Suite, part of its Defender Collection of removable storage devices—including flash drives, hard disk drives, and optical media—allows organizations to enforce device authentication and security policies without purchasing new hardware. The software can be used with any manufacturer's removable storage products. The Defender Control Server is Web-based software that manages device types, security policy controls for users, passwords, encryption, and more. Administrators can block risky files from getting into their system through removable devices. The Defender Control Client component regulates information and provides protection on individual computers. Defender Device Control software can be loaded directly onto a storage device to provide encryption and management controls.

Green Accounting

KPMG, LLP, Minneapolis

AWARD CATEGORY: Technology Use in Sustainability

Netherlands-based KPMG launched its "Living Green" program to reduce waste and energy consumption in its operations. The Living Green team collaborates with the firm's climate change and sustainability practice, which advises clients on business and regulatory risk related to environmental issues. Green efforts began in 2007, and by the end of 2010, the Minneapolis office had cut its energy use by 33 percent, solid waste by 48 percent, water consumption by 42 percent, air travel by 17 percent, and shipping by 12 percent. If stacked, the amount of paper saved in KPMG's Minneapolis office between 2007 and 2010 would reach the height of 1.3 Wells Fargo Centers. Leaders in the Minneapolis office have coordinated the Living Green program for all of KPMG's U.S. offices.

11

Employees use KPMG's high-definition videoconferencing rooms instead of flying to meetings, which has helped reduce the firm's carbon footprint.

12

Usability Update

Thomson Reuters, Eagan

AWARD CATEGORY: Technology Services and Consulting—Established Company

Checkpoint is Thomson Reuters's online resource for tax and accounting professionals. With its most recent release, the program allows users to permanently attach notes to documents. Users can also create a list of favorite documents by flagging them. Usability testing on the previous version of the system revealed that the screen layout was overcrowded and caused users to overlook certain features. The new version of Checkpoint has an updated screen layout, which makes many features more visible.

13

Laundry That Lightens the Load

Ecolab, Inc., St. Paul

AWARD CATEGORY: Cleantech and Energy

Ecolab has developed a system to help hotels and long-term care facilities use less water and energy in laundering linens. Laundry operations account for 20 percent of the water used in hotels. Ecolab's Global Aquanomic Laundry products, including detergents, softeners, pre-soaks, and more, are formulated to effectively clean linens with less water than traditional laundry systems The products also work in lower-temperature water, which saves energy. A pilot program in 31 hotels, using the Aquanomic products in 97,000 loads of laundry, resulted in a 38 percent reduction in water usage and lowered energy use by 53 percent.

14

Homework Help

Sophia, Minneapolis

AWARD CATEGORY: Edutech

Sophia.org, an online social teaching and learning platform, was designed as a support to traditional classrooms, offering students and parents access to academic information at no cost. The crowd-sourced platform is organized into "learning packets"—tutorials created by anyone using text, images, audio, video, and more. Packets are rated for quality and evaluated for academic soundness by users and experts in the community. Sophia.org now offers thousands of learning packets including 3,000 tutorials on math topics, ranging from basic arithmetic to college algebra. TCB

2012 Twin Cities Five Star Wealth Managers

In a consumer study about dynamics between wealth managers and their clients, Five Star Professional recently polled wealth managers and consumers about communications. Both groups said that connecting three to four times a year is the right communications strategy, but expectations are not aligned in all areas:

- 29 percent of consumers want to be contacted by their wealth manager whenever events require an update; only 7 percent of wealth managers say they contact clients based on the impact of events.
- 63 percent of consumers say they receive the right amount of communication from their wealth manager.

From research conducted by Five Star Professional, April 2011.

Wealth managers, broadly defined, are those individuals who help you manage your financial world and/or implement aspects of your financial strategies. Common examples of wealth managers are financial advisors, financial planners, investment advisors, tax advisors and estate planning attorneys.

How do you find a wealth manager with experience, who has a good base of clients with high retention rates, and who has undergone a regulatory and complaint review? And when you find them, are they accepting new clients?

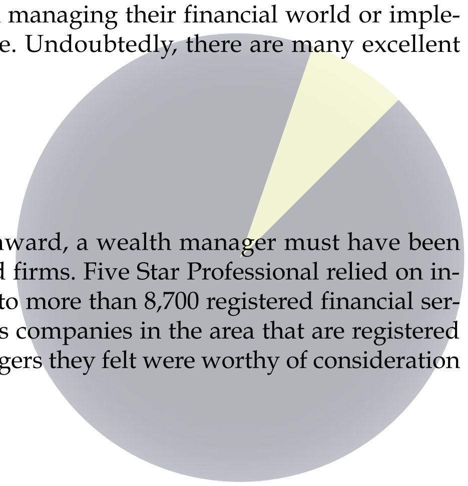
Twin Cities Business, Mpls. St.Paul Magazine, and Five Star Professional partnered to find wealth managers who satisfy 10 objective eligibility and evaluation criteria that are associated with wealth managers who provide quality services to their clients. Among many distinguishing attributes, the average one-year client retention rate for this year's award winners is more than 93 percent.

> "Don't listen to other people. Investigate for yourself. Be wary of advisers who say they never had a down year."
>
> — *Five Star Wealth Manager*

A Select AWARD

The resulting list of 2012 Five Star Wealth Managers is a select group, representing less than 4 percent of the wealth managers in the Twin Cities area.(1)

Although this list is a useful tool for anyone looking for help in managing their financial world or implementing aspects of their financial strategies, it should not be considered exhaustive. Undoubtedly, there are many excellent wealth managers who, for one reason or another, are not on this year's list.



Nomination PROCESS

To be considered for the Five Star Wealth Manager award, a wealth manager must have been identified through research conducted with peers and firms. Five Star Professional relied on internal and external research data, including a survey to more than 8,700 registered financial services professionals and all identified financial services companies in the area that are registered with FINRA or the SEC. Recipients of the survey were asked to nominate wealth managers they felt were worthy of consideration for the Five Star Wealth Manager award (self-nominations are not accepted).

Determination OF AWARD WINNERS

Nominated wealth managers who satisfied 10 objective eligibility and evaluation criteria that are associated with wealth managers who provide quality services were named 2012 Five Star Wealth Managers.(2)

Eligibility Criteria – Required(3)

1. Credentialed as an investment advisory representative (IAR), a FINRA-registered representative, a CPA or a licensed attorney.
2. Actively employed as a credentialed professional in the financial services industry for a minimum of five years.
3. Favorable regulatory and complaint history review.(4)
4. Fulfilled their firm review based on internal firm standards.
5. Accepting new clients.

Evaluation Criteria – Considered(3)

6. One-year client retention rate (the average one-year client retention rate of this year's award winners is more than 93 percent).
7. Five-year client retention rate.
8. Non-institutional discretionary and/or non-discretionary client assets administered (this year's award winners administer an average of $92 million in client assets).
9. Number of client households served (on average, this year's award winners serve 217 households).
10. Education and professional designations.

The Five Star award goes to less than 7 percent of wealth managers in the area.

Research DISCLOSURES

- Wealth managers do not pay a fee to be considered or placed on the final list of Five Star Wealth Managers.
- The Five Star award is not indicative of the wealth manager's future performance.
- Wealth managers may or may not use discretion in their practice and therefore may not manage their clients' assets.
- The inclusion of a wealth manager on the Five Star Wealth Manager list should not be construed as an endorsement of the wealth manager by Five Star Professional, *Twin Cities Business or Mpls. St.Paul Magazine*.
- Working with a Five Star Wealth Manager or any wealth manager is no guarantee as to future investment success, nor is there any guarantee that the selected wealth managers will be awarded this accomplishment by Five Star Professional in the future.
- Five Star Professional is not an advisory firm, and the content of this article should not be considered financial advice. For more information on the Five Star award and the research/selection methodology, go to www.fivestarprofessional.com.
- (1) 1,256 wealth managers in the Twin Cities area were nominated for the Five Star Wealth Manager award. 631 (approximately 50 percent of those nominated) were named 2012 Five Star Wealth Managers. The 631 award winners represent less than 4 percent of the total wealth managers in the area.

(2) Wealth managers were required to certify that any information they provided was accurate.
(3) Criteria 4, 8 and 9 do not apply to attorneys or CPAs.
(4) As defined by Five Star Professional, the wealth manager has not:
- Been subject to a regulatory action that resulted in a license being suspended or revoked, or payment of a fine.
- Had more than a total of three customer complaints filed against them (settled or pending) with any regulatory authority or Five Star Professional's consumer complaint process.
- Individually contributed to a financial settlement of a customer complaint filed with a regulatory authority.
- Filed for personal bankruptcy.
- Been convicted of a felony.

Five Star Professional conducts a regulatory review of each nominated wealth manager using the Investment Adviser Public Disclosure (IAPD) website. Five Star Professional also uses multiple supporting processes to help ensure that a favorable regulatory and complaint history exists. Data submitted through these processes was applied per the above criteria:

- Each wealth manager who passes the Five Star Professional regulatory review must attest that they meet the definition of favorable regulatory history, based upon the criteria listed above.
- Five Star Professional promotes via local advertising the opportunity for consumers to confidentially submit complaints regarding a wealth manager.
- Five Star Professional contacted approximately 1 in 12 households identified as having a high propensity to use the services of wealth managers in order to provide consumers the opportunity to submit complaints regarding a wealth manager. 28,000 households in the Twin Cities area were contacted.

The Five Star Wealth Manager selection criteria was updated for the 2012 award year. 2005 – 2011 Five Star Wealth Managers scored highest in overall satisfaction based on feedback from clients, peers and industry experts. No more than 7 percent of wealth managers receive the award each year. The selection process for the 2005 – 2011 award winners can be found at www.fivestarprofessional.com/2011/wealth_managers_research_overview.php.

Insights from Five Star Wealth Managers

“Wishful thinking is not planning. If you plan for the worst, you will never be unpleasantly surprised.”

“Clients don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

“Only invest in something that you understand.”

“What matters most is how you recover from setbacks.”

List compiled by Five Star Professional. Award winners listed by primary services.

Business Planning

Jami Kalseim · Foley Kalseim & Company

Whitley Mott · National Pension Services

Brice Oldham · The Karbon Group/ Morgan Stanley Smith Barney *Page 11*

Kyle Schiffler · Canopy Financial Group *Page 17*

Roger Schiffler · Canopy Financial Group

John Sitarz · Principal Financial Group

Estate Planning

Jennifer Anderson · Thiel Campbell Gunderson Anderson and Levine

Jennifer Athanases · MacMillan Wallace Athanases & Patera

Bruce Bouta · Great Lakes Pension Consultants

Paul Brown · Chandler and Brown

Richard Bunin · Richard D. Bunin Law Offices

Earl Cohen · Mansfield Tanick & Cohen

David Compas · New York Life Insurance Company

Joseph Earley · Earley Law Offices

Sally Grossman · Gray Plant Mooty

Scott Husaby · Monroe Moxness Berg

John Kuhrmeyer · Canopy Financial Group *Page 17*

Kevin Lanigan · Carlson Estate Planning

Jan Larson · Johnson Larson Peterson & Halvorson

Tara Mattessich · Moore Costello & Hart *Page 53*

Gary McDowell · Lindquist & Vennum

Paul Reuvers · Iverson Reuvers Law Firm

Randall Sayers · Hansen, Dordell, Bradt, Odlaug & Bradt

Michael Swenson · Swenson Gilliand & Associates of the Private Banking and Investment Group/Merrill Lynch

Financial Planning

Amy Aadalen · Morgan Stanley Smith Barney *Page 31*

Thomas Aamot · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Suzanne Lundeen Abrams · Lundeen Abrams Advisors

Bill Adams · Morgan Stanley Smith Barney *Page 44*

Mary Adamski · RBC Wealth Management

Eugene Altstatt · Altstatt Financial Strategies

Kristi Andersen · Kristi L. Andersen Financial Partners

Eric Anderson · RBC Wealth Management

Richard Anderson · Linsco Private Ledger

Roger Anderson · The Capital Advisory Group *Page 18*

Martin Andreasen · John Hancock Financial Network

Jeffrey Angel · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

William Ankeny, Jr. · Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

David Arndt · U.S. Bancorp Investments *Page 30*

Ryan Ash · Thrivent Financial

David Auerbach · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. *Page 41*

Craig Bane · Bane O'Leary Financial Group

Troy Barta · Endura Financial Investment Services

Daniel Bartel · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Margaret Beggs-Towle · Wealth Enhancement Group *Page 12*

Nicholas Beissel · Wealth Enhancement Group *Page 12*

Jeffrey Bemel · AXA Advisors/Meridian Financial Group

John Angus Bennett · Bennett, Mastin & Kosmak

Mary Beseke · Lincoln Investment Planning

Frederick Bester · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Grant Beyl · Thrivent Financial *Page 50*

James Biermaier · Biermaier Financial Management *Page 44*

Craig Bingen · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Michael Bishop · Wealth Enhancement Group *Page 12*

Richard Bjorklund · Principal Financial Group

Ryan Bodin · Raymond James Financial Services

Daniel Boeckermann · Boeckermann, Grafstrom & Mayer Wealth Management *Page 35*

Brett Boos · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Paul Borchert · AXA Advisors *Page 17*

Jason Bowles · RBC Wealth Management

Thomas Brandt · RBC Wealth Management

Diana Brass · Merrill Lynch

Jonathan Brass · Merrill Lynch

Timothy Braun · RBC Wealth Management

David Bremer · Boulay Financial Advisors

Dana Brewer · KLB Financial

Jesse Bull · Merrill Lynch

Robert Burley · Wealth Enhancement Group *Page 12*

Marie Burnett · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. *Page 50*

Eugene Gene Burns · Burns Brothers Financial Group

Natalie Burns · Burns Brothers Financial Group

Lance Butner · Butner, Kurth, Mohl & Associates/Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Nancy Buttweiler · Merrill Lynch

Leslie Cadle · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Robert Callahan · Callahan Financial Planning Corporation

Jim Carlson · Carlson Financial Strategies

Matthew Carrier · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Curtis Carstens · RBC Wealth Management

Michael Cassidy · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Dennis Chan · Everest Financial Group *Page 35*

James Chapple · Investors Financial Group *Page 50*

David Chisholm · Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

Dustin Christopherson · Eide Bailly Financial Services

Roberta Cole · Raymond James Financial Services

Cinda Collins · RBC Wealth Management

Ted Contag · Thrivent Financial

List compiled by Five Star Professional. Award winners listed by primary services.

Jeffrey Coplan · Integrity Wealth/Raymond James Financial Services

John Coyle · Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

Douglas Cozad · Accord Financial Strategies

John Crosland · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Gregg Cummings · Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

David Daline · RBC Wealth Management *Page 50*

Kathryn Dangers · Wealth Enhancement Group *Page 12*

Timothy Davisson · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. *Page 36*

Dean Dawson · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. *Page 19*

Jonathan Dayton · Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

Leonard Dayton · Dayton Financial

Fay DeBellis · Morgan Stanley Smith Barney *Page 37*

Joshua Decker · Educators Financial Services

Bernie DeLaRosa · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

RJ Devick · Bond & Devick Financial Network

John Donnelly · John Donnelly & Associates

Randy Doroff · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Stephen Doyle · Doyle & Associates

Tom Drees · Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

Jason Dreger · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. *Page 51*

Charles Duddingston · Duddingston Sylvester Group/Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

Daniel Dugan · Financial Perspectives

David Dugan · Financial Perspectives

Daniel Dulyx · Charles Schwab & Company

Richard Dworsky · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Ron Eckstam · Eckstam Financial Strategies

Kenneth Eide · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Scott Ekholm · Hiway Federal Credit Union *Page 45*

Aaron Elkins · Thrivent Financial

James Elvestrom · Thrivent Financial

Joshua Ely · White Ely and Associates/ Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Caroline Emswiler · WEALTH Financial Consultants

Bruce Ensrud · Thrivent Financial

Kimberly Erickson · AdvisorNet Financial

Michael Esch · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Ginger Ewing · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Philip Face · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Andrew Ferguson · Ferguson and Associates/ Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Mark Fischer · Plan for Life

Andrew Fishman · Affiance Financial

Grant Fjosne · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. *Page 51*

Rick Fossey · Merrill Lynch

William Franke · Raymond James Financial Services *Page 51*

Denise Froehlich · Merrill Lynch

Johannes Fure · Fure Financial Corporation *Page 21*

Timothy Gaarder · Investors Financial Group

Mark Gabriel · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. *Page 51*

Lane Gans · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. *Page 37*

William Gaspar · Allied Beacon Partners *Page 51*

Roxane Gehle · Integrated Capital Group *Page 38*

Richard Gerczak · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Dan Getsch · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Joseph Gibbons · Merrill Lynch

Wendy Gillespie · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. *Page 52*

Todd Gillingham · Landmark Group/Thrivent Financial

Christopher Glasoe · Doxa Advisors

Anthony Gleason · Gleason Financial

David Goldenberg · Baird Investments

Cara Gould · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Kevin Graf · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Joe Gribben · RBC Wealth Management

John Guerrero · Feltl and Company

Howard Guthmann · Wilkerson Guthmann and Johnson

David Haas · Haas Financial

Jon Hachfeld · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Scott Hallett · Klein Investment Services

Theodore Hamlin · RBC Wealth Management

John Hance · Hance Financial *Page 52*

Barbara Hansen · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Gregory Hanson · APD Financial Services

Aimee Hatlestad · JRA Financial Advisors

Michael Haverkamp · American Investment Services *Page 52*

John Heath · JVH Wealth Management *Page 38*

Rick Hegge · RBC Wealth Management

Bruce Helmer · Wealth Enhancement Group *Page 12*

Eric Hemingway · Hemingway Wealth Management *Page 22*

Richard Hemingway · Boulay Financial Advisors

Bruce Hennen · Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Doyle Herman · RBC Wealth Management

Michael Hess · Wealth Enhancement Group *Page 12*

Steven Hess · Wealth Enhancement Group *Page 12*

Robert Hoagland · Investors Financial Group

Jeff Hockert · Wealth Enhancement Group *Page 12*

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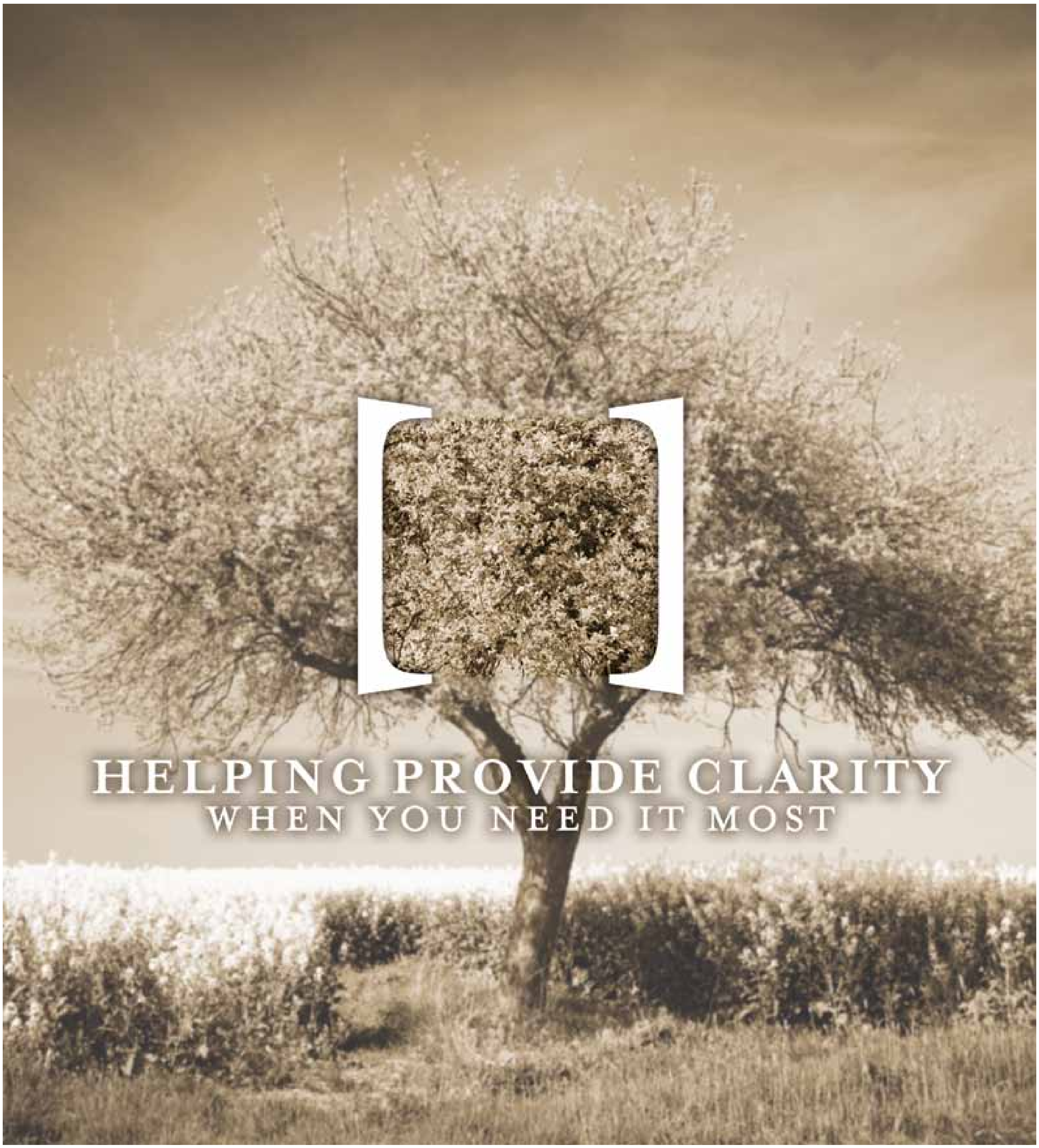

Left to right: Nick Karbon, Brad Koch, Steve Karbon, Melissa Korman, Brice Oldham, Five Star award winner

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- Business owners planning to exit should explore pros and cons of different cash-out options
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Designations: Nick Karbon, Financial Advisor; Brad Koch, Senior Registered Associate; Steve Karbon, Financial Advisor; Melissa Korman, Senior Registered Associate; Brice Oldham, Consulting Group Analyst

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Left to right: Front row: Four-year winners Rob Burley, Ben Schaefer and Nick Beissel; Second row: three-year winner Pat Wolfe, four-year winner Mike Hess, two-year winner Kathryn Dangers, five-year winner Bruce Santjer; Third row: four-year winner Justin Whiley, 2012 winner Margaret Beggs, two-year winner Brandon Navara, four-year winner Bruce Helmer; Back row: two-year winner Michael Bishop, five-year winner Steve Hess, four-year winner Jeff Hockert and three-year winner Bill Sukup

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- Long-term partnerships and comprehensive financial planning based on your values and goals

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Wealth Enhancement Group is fundamentally different from other financial services firms. We are dedicated to providing the best possible advice and individualized, long-term investment plans structured around our clients' long-term prosperity. Our clients stay with us year after year because of our unique approach, and we are honored to have so many of our advisors recognized with the Five Star Wealth Manager award. Call us at (888) 486-9803 to experience the Wealth Enhancement Group difference.

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Left to right: Cyndy Ranzau, five-year winner Marcus Waterbury and Sandy Hunczak

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- Your values will form the basis for your individualized plan
- Our expertise helps build wealth and manage risk
- We have proudly earned the gratitude of multiple generations

Titles: Marcus Waterbury, Senior Vice President, Wealth Advisor, Senior Investment Management Consultant; Cyndy Ranzau, Relationship Manager; Sandy Hunczak, Senior Registered Associate

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Amidst the recent market upheaval and uncertainty, our clients have begun confiding in us in a more personal way. They want us to know they do not see money only in terms of financial spreadsheets. Rather, they connect finances to something much deeper: how they create meaning in their lives.

So in the last few years, we have retooled the way we do business, making values-based conversations the foundation for all our financial planning. Now what we are hearing from our clients is a sense of relief. Because we understand what's truly important to them, they can leave their worries about money with us and focus on what really matters to them.

A family business started 40 years ago, The Waterbury Group has the in-depth market knowledge and investment know-how to offer skilled strategies to today's money challenges. We are proud that Marcus Waterbury has earned the Five Star Wealth Manager designation in 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Approaching one's financial future from a values perspective is not for everyone. Our clients are typically busy, successful, family-oriented people with at least $2 million invested with The Waterbury Group. If you would like to focus your time and attention on what really matters to you, we invite you to give us a call.

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Left to right: Back row: Dale Schumacher, Five Star award winner Robert Cron;
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- Integrated investment management, tax planning and retirement plan consulting
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Left to right: Tiffany Rovaina and Five Star award winner Robert Cron

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Left to right: 2012 winner Paul Borchert, three-year winner Kyle Kirsch, two-year winner John Kuhrmeyer* and three-year winner Kyle Schiffler*

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- Supporting personal and business clients over a lifetime of evolving needs

Title: Financial Professional

*Designations: *Certified Financial Planner™ professional, Chartered Financial Consultant®, Chartered Life Underwriter®*

Canopy Financial Group is an elite group of financial professionals distinguished for achieving the highest standard of professionalism and service. Canopy Financial Group's professional team has an average of 23 years of experience in providing a wide variety of financial services.

Canopy Financial Group strives to provide the highest level of financial services available by helping you identify and prioritize your goals, offering strategic advice specific to your needs and implementing the strategies that work best for you.

CANOPY
FINANCIAL GROUP

Two Meridian Crossings, Suite 450 • Minneapolis, MN 55423
Office: (612) 243-3201 • Fax: (612) 243-3280
contactus@canopyfg.com • www.CanopyFinancialGroup.com

Left to right: Front row: 2012 winner Brett Machtig, Tom Hokr; Back row: Dave Hoffman, Chris Sherwin, Dave Denniston, two-year winner Roger Anderson, Zach Engelking

The Capital Advisory Group

Trusted • Accessible • Genuine • Caring

- We serve business owners, retirees and corporate executives, helping them grow, keep and protect their investments
- We serve corporate and municipal retirement plans — 401(k)s, 403(b)s and pensions
- Offering our clients expert guidance, asset management, estate planning and risk management

The qualifications of our advisors include: Certified Financial Analyst (CFA®), CPAs, JDs, an Accredited Investment Fiduciary (AIF®), Certified Financial Planner™ professionals, a Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC®) and a Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU®). Founding Partners are Brett Machtig and Tom Hokr.

If you desire first-rate managers who can guide your wealth for years to come, look to us. We can manage your retirement transitions, build your retirement nest-egg and help you live off the fruits of your hard-earned savings. We take a thorough approach to financial planning which suits investors who want to preserve and enhance wealth through careful investment selection, portfolio management, and estate, tax and insurance planning.

We are retirement plan specialists, capable of benchmarking and managing retirement plans. Having an Accredited Investment Fiduciary (AIF) on staff and being members of RPAG, one of the nation's largest retirement plan consulting firms, we believe we have the tools necessary to optimize your retirement plans.

Our Five Star award winners Roger Anderson and Brett Machtig are well qualified for this honor. Roger Anderson is a Certified Financial Planner™ professional who has been guiding his clients for more than 25 years through some very difficult markets. Brett Machtig is an Accredited Investment Fiduciary® who is a noted author and has appeared on CNN, CNBC and PBS. He has recently served as a member of the National Security Forum, sponsored by the Department of Defense.

The Capital Advisory Group, LLC

5270 West 84th Street, Suite 310 • Bloomington, MN 55437
Bloomington Office: (952) 831-8243 • Maple Grove Office: (952) 541-9201
bmachtig@machtig.net • www.cagcos.com

Dean C. Dawson

Personalized Comprehensive Financial Planning

Left to right: Five-year winner Dean Dawson, Michelle Bonin and Jane Rodgers

Areas of Focus: Financial Planning, Estate Planning and Investment Planning Strategies

- Dedicated to service
- Dedicated to finding creative solutions
- Dedicated to helping clients plan for their dreams

Title: Private Wealth Advisor

Designation: Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner

Dean started his financial planning career in 1992. For 19 years he has prided himself on getting to know his clients, delivering excellent service and providing advice in all areas of financial planning. Dean loves working as a financial advisor and truly feels blessed to be in a career that is new and exciting every day. Dean is able to take complex strategies and break them down into simple concepts that clients understand.

After graduating from college, Dean fulfilled one of his dreams by spending two years in Vail, Colorado working and skiing. Now when Dean is away from the office, you can usually find him outdoors fishing with his son, hunting with his dog or traveling with his daughter.

Dean has assembled a practice that includes two registered associates who are committed to delivering outstanding service while continuing to look for new and exciting solutions to help clients plan for their dreams.

Ameriprise Financial

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dean.c.dawson@ampf.com • www.deancdawson.com

East Metro Financial Team

Putting Your Interests First

Left to right: Roland Skillings, three-year winner Chad Broberg, Dan Myers, Arlene Myers and Tony Barilla

Areas of Focus: Retirement Distribution Planning, Investments and Estate Strategies

- Exceptional client experience
- Tailored wealth management strategies
- Values- and goals-oriented financial planning

Title: Financial Consultant

Designations: CFP®, ChFC®, CLU®, CASL®, LUTCF, FIC

Good advice and proper planning can make all the difference when helping people reach their financial goals. It is also true that different people have different goals and require varying levels of guidance. That is why we offer a range of services to meet your needs and preferences, from focusing on a specific need to a comprehensive analysis of your situation. We are committed to reflecting your goals and values in the financial strategies that we develop.

With more than 100 years of combined experience in the financial services industry, we leverage our individual talents, expertise, knowledge and staff by using a customized advisory process and client service model. Our clients know we care about them, because we put their interests first.

Thrivent Financial • East Metro Financial Team

553 Hayward Avenue North • Oakdale, MN 55128 | 8750 90th Street South • Cottage Grove, MN 55016
Office: (651) 738-1767 | Office: (651) 458-5392
chad.broberg@thrivent.com • www.thrivent.com

Fure Financial Team

Timeless Wisdom — Fresh Perspectives

Left to right: Seated: Dale Acton, four-year winner Johannes Fure, Karin Fure; Standing: Rachel Infante, Victoria Williamson, Greta Fure, Katherine Robbins, Rebecca Heistad; Not pictured: Grant Meyer, Beatrice Fure

Areas of Focus: Fee-Only Financial Planning and Consulting, Portfolio Management

- More than 27 years providing client-centered, holistic financial planning
- Custom-tailored portfolio management to preserve and help grow wealth
- Committed to exceptional service, responsiveness and confidentiality

Certification: Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner

Are you completely satisfied with the performance of your investments, or have you struggled to meet your investment goals over time? If you're like most investors, chances are you would like to see some level of improvement. But how can you invest prudently in an unpredictable market?

Fure Financial is different. Instead of remaining static, their tactical asset allocation strategy seeks opportunities to exploit inefficiencies among asset classes and is also intended to provide risk management on the down side, reducing portfolio exposure when market risk is high.

Fure Financial

8500 Normandale Lake Boulevard, Suite 950 • Bloomington, MN 55437
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jcfure@furefinancial.com • www.furefinancial.com

Hemingway Wealth Management Group

Independent Solutions. Goal-Based Strategies. Client Advocate.

Left to right: Michelle Maloney, Jenny Knudson and Five Star award winner Eric Hemingway

Areas of Focus: Financial Planning, Investment Advisory, Wealth Transfer

- Fourth generation in the financial services business
- Our core investment value is to manage for risk ahead of gains
- Nonbiased solutions based upon our independent business model

Titles: Analyst, Client Account Management, Wealth Management Advisor

Designation: CLTC

Hemingway Wealth Management is a wealth management firm specializing in tax-efficient wealth transfer, retirement income, charitable gifting strategies, and employee and executive benefits for high-net-worth families and business owners. Eric, his staff, associates and strategic partners provide independent, client-centric financial solutions carefully tailored to clients' financial goals. Because Eric's team has demonstrated an ability to listen well and create strategic solutions, clients call upon them when they have needs that are multidimensional, multilayered and multifaceted.

HEMINGWAY
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

14550 Excelsior Boulevard, Suite 200 • Minnetonka, MN 55345
Office: (952) 232-0230 • Cell: (651) 231-3464
eric@hemingwaywealth.com • hemingwaywealth.com

Royal Jaros

Jaros & Associates — Advising Clients One Dream at a Time

Left to right: Morgan Jaros, Lance Strom, Patty Jaros, five-year winner Royal Jaros, Corina McCurdy, Joe St. Thomas and Tom Manderfeld

- More than 20 years of experience* in helping clients plan for their dreams
- 98% client satisfaction rating**; 98% client retention***
- Team practice dedicated to the satisfaction of every client

Areas of Focus: Retirement planning, wealth management, tax and estate planning strategies, small business consulting

*Designations: Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner and Master of Business Administration**

Jaros & Associates', a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., passion is to assist their clients in planning for their dreams, so they can have the peace of mind that comes with having a financial plan in place. They employ a true team approach in this pursuit — when any client has a need, all advisors are on call to help. It's this dedication to service, focus on high-quality advice and experience in helping clients build effective portfolios that's led to a practice-level client satisfaction survey score of 98 percent!

Royal Jaros, Private Wealth Advisor, is the franchise owner of Jaros & Associates. He's consistently ranked among the top advisors at Ameriprise Financial in client satisfaction and retention. His focus in the practice is on retirement planning, tax and estate planning strategies, and investment research, and Royal acts as servicing-advisor for a number of business, retirement plan, and individual wealth management clients. Financial Advisors Lance Strom, CFP®, Joe St. Thomas, CFP®, and Tom Manderfeld also advise clients directly.

Ameriprise Financial

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Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Brokerage, investment and financial advisory services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC. Some products and services may not be available in all jurisdictions or to all clients. *Education and experience figures pertain to five-year winner Royal Jaros. **Based on 2010 Ameriprise Financial Client Satisfaction Survey. The survey score is based on responses gathered within the preceding two years. The survey rates Ameriprise advisors on overall satisfaction, financial knowledge and other criteria. A score averages all responses and may not represent a particular client experience. A minimum number of responses are not required for a score. Working with this advisor is not a guarantee of future financial results. Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial advisor. ***Source: Ameriprise FInancial internal reporting, October 2011.

JNBA Financial Advisors

An Independent Registered Investment Advisor (RIA)

Left to right: Three-year winner Michael N. Bilotta, four-year winner Thomas W. Evans, Kim Brown, two-year winner John W. Foster, Cärin Viertel, Richard S. Brown and three-year winner Patrick D. Moyneur

Areas of Focus: Asset Management and Financial Planning

- 98% client retention rate*
- Working with individuals, families and businesses for more than 30 years
- Recognized on *Barron's* list of Top 1,000 Advisors for two consecutive years**

Designations: CFP®, ChFC®, CASL™, MS-PFP, PPC™

We are an independent, fee-based financial advisory firm that specializes in asset management and financial planning for discriminating investors. As an RIA with an objective perspective, we bring a team dedicated to client service and a disciplined investment process — developing customized strategies and portfolios that will help you get where you need to go. For 30-plus years, we have upheld our fiduciary duty of always acting in our clients' best interests and are proud to be recognized as one of the region's premier wealth management firms.

JNBA
FINANCIAL ADVISORS

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*Retention rate measured over 12-month period 9/30/10 - 9/30/11. **As rated by *Barron's* in the 2/22/10 & 2/21/11 issues of *Barron's* magazine. Retention rate/rankings and/or recognition by publications should not be construed by a client or prospective client as a guarantee that he/she will experience a certain level of results if JNBA is engaged, or continues to be engaged, to provide investment advisory services, nor should it be construed as a current or past endorsement of JNBA by any of its clients. Rankings published by magazines, and others, generally base their selections exclusively on information prepared and/or submitted by the recognized advisor. A copy of JNBA's current written disclosure statement discussing advisory services and fees is available upon request.

Reese Lang

Team Perspective — Personalized Service

Left to right: Five-year winner Reese Lang, Kalie Melquist, two-year winner John Hinz, Sarah Houser, Paul Hinz and Jasmine Hayden

- Comprehensive financial planning approach
- Wealth management strategies
- Retirement planning and estate planning strategies

Designations: CFS®, MBA, ChFC®

Titles: Private Wealth Advisor, Chartered Financial Consultant®

As an advisor with Lang, Hinz & Associates, Reese strives to be our clients' "go-to" resource for financial planning and investment advisory services. Our experience providing customized and knowledgeable financial advice helps us simplify the financial lives of our clients and provide clarity in our increasingly complex world. Together, we systematically review progress toward client goals and adjust the strategy to reflect personal, economic and tax law changes. Our experience with a wide variety of financial products and services is combined with a sincere interest in each of our client's financial success.

Ameriprise Financial

Lang, Hinz & Associates • A private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.
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Timothy Luther and Kyle Kuehner

Our Goal Is to Help Clients Stay Retired

Areas of Focus: Wealth Preservation, Retirement Income, Charitable Giving

Left to right: Two-year winner Kyle Kuehner, Karen Parisian, Gretchen Dahle, John McFarland, two-year winner Timothy Luther, Jon Parisian, Julie Meyer

- We help you actively manage your resources
- We invest in continued professional education to benefit clients
- We aim to steward business with Christian values and beliefs

Timothy Luther, Financial Advisor, CRPC®; Kyle Kuehner, Financial Advisor, CFP®, ChFC®

With a combined 60 years of industry experience, it has been a pleasure to listen, educate and assist in creating detailed strategies for clients. The economy continues to change and our response to it is key. We work to gain an understanding of each client's vision for the future, in order to work towards providing clear guidance. Through these changes, we aim to steward our business with Christian values and beliefs.

Ameriprise Financial

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Mid American Financial Group

Mid American Financial Group Has 100 Years of Combined Financial Planning Experience

Areas of Focus: Comprehensive Wealth Accumulation and Preservation Strategies

Left to right: Richard J. Marooney, 2010 winner Michelle C. Moser, Amanda J. Johnson, five-year winner John R. Sundell, Mitchell D. Stolba, Eric J. Sundell, Maxwell A. Stowe, Matthew A. Peterson

- John's focus: comprehensive financial and estate planning strategies
- Retirement income planning
- Legacy preservation strategies

Title: John Sundell, Financial Planner

Designations: CLU®, ChFC®/Financial Services Representative

John R. Sundell works with a team of professionals at Mid American Financial Group whose mission is to assist clients in achieving their financial goals by utilizing a three-prong approach: wealth accumulation strategies during their working years, protection strategies for their retirement and estate planning strategies for those leaving behind a legacy.

With more than 100 years of combined experience, they are backed by specialists locally and throughout the country in the areas of investments, fee-based financial planning, and retirement and business planning.

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Lisa K. Mulcare

Solid, Constructive Financial Advisor

- Exceptional service
- Comprehensive approach
- Align your investments to meet goals

Designations: CFP®, ChFC®, CASL®

My clients are hard-working individuals who want to achieve a difference in their lives. We are real people with real lives; I want to help you secure and protect the things most important to you.

My team focuses on relieving stresses and complications that arise when matching family goals with financial strategies. We help you prepare for planned life goals, as well as unexpected occurrences.

Client approach:
I'll take the time to listen to you and understand.

Philosophy:
Prepare for the "whens" and "ifs" in life.

What can you find on my desk …
Pictures of family, friends and clients' families.

Best advice I ever got …
Work hard, stay educated and know the rules.

Ameriprise Financial

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2012 Five Star Wealth Managers

The Partners Group

Three-year winner Peter Nelson

Pensions and Investments

- Business owner and executive planning
- Employee benefits and pension planning
- Individual insurance and investment planning

Imagine a firm comprised of individuals with specific talents — each talent a single component that, when combined, creates a fully integrated methodology. This methodology enables you to more effectively achieve your goals through truly optimized decision making.

Welcome to The Partners Group. A select group of insurance and investment professionals dedicated to helping business owners optimize their wealth and protect their life's work.

The Partners Group
Foster Klima & Company, LLC.

920 Second Avenue South, Suite 1100 • Minneapolis, MN 55402
Office: (612) 746-2200 • Fax: (612) 746-2399
www.fosterklima.com

Registerd representative and Financial Advisor of Park Avenue Securities LLC (PAS). Securities products /services and advisory services offered through PAS, a registered broker-dealer and investment advisor ((612) 746-2200). Field Representative, The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America (Guardian), New York, NY. PAS is an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of Guardian. The Partners Group, LLC and Foster Klima & Company, LLC are not affiliated or subsidiariesof PAS or Guardian. PAS is a memeber of FINRA, SIPC.

The Private Client Group

Left to right: Front row: Three-year winner Jake Trimble, two-year winner Tim Haas, three-year winner Brad Longueville, two-year winner Jeremy Mandler
Back row: two-year winner Phil Curoe, four-year winner David Arndt, 2012 winner Chad Holtz, three-year winner Darin Dunham

- Comprehensive wealth management solutions
- Highly personalized service and expert advice
- Long history of company financial strength and stability since 1863

We are proud of our Five Star Wealth Managers. They represent a larger team of wealth management professionals who help individuals and families build, manage, preserve and transfer their wealth. Whether you are in the early stages of a successful career or reaping the rewards of hard work, our financial experts work closely with you to address your complex financial needs. The Private Client Group and U.S. Bancorp Investments, Inc./U.S. Bancorp Insurance Services, LLC provides you with sophisticated wealth management strategies, exceptional advice and personalized service.

usbancorp
Investments, Inc.

7001 France Avenue South • Edina, MN 55435
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christopheroconnell@usbank.com

Investment products are not a deposit, are not FDIC insured, are not guaranteed by the bank, may lose value and are not insured by any federal government agency. Investment products and services are offered through U.S. Bancorp Investments, Inc. member FINRA and SIPC, an investment adviser and brokerage subsidiary of U.S. Bancorp and an affiliate of U.S. Bank. To receive the 2012 Five Star Wealth Manager award, researched and managed by Five Star Professional, a wealth manager must meet 10 objective eligibility and evaluation criteria associated with providing quality services to clients. The 2012 Five Star Wealth Managers do not pay a fee to be included in the research or the final list of Five Star Wealth Managers. Working with a Five Star Wealth Manager or any wealth manager is no guarantee as to future investment success nor is there any guarantee that the selected wealth managers will be awarded this accomplishment by Five Star Professional in the future. The Five Star Award is not indicative of the wealth managers' future performance. The inclusion of a wealth manager on the Five Star Wealth Manager list should not be construed as an endorsement of the wealth manager by Five Star Professional, *Minneapolis-St. Paul Magazine* or *Twin Cities Business*.

The StoneArch Group at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

One of Your Most Important Investment Decisions Is Who You Trust.

Front left to right: Two-year winner Sharon Winsness*, three-year winners Noah Eisenberg* and Amy Aadalen*; Back left to right: Jaime Hansen, Darcy Dahl, Tyler Merten

Goal-based planning solutions, innovative risk management strategies

- Experience, integrity, accountability, service, communication
- Portfolio design customized to meet varying needs
- Comprehensive income and multigenerational planning services

Titles: Financial Advisor, Senior Vice President – Wealth Management

Designations: CFP®, Senior Investment Management Consultant, Financial Planning Specialist

For more than 30 years, our clients have trusted us to advise them about comprehensive solutions to optimize, preserve and pass on family wealth. Many strategies we suggest do not rely solely on favorable market conditions to succeed. Instead, we look for investments intended to preserve purchasing power and capture tactical opportunities in a variety of market conditions. Award-winning service and educated advice does not happen by accident. It requires the skill of an experienced team supported by the robust capabilities of a dedicated research staff.

Sharon: Senior Vice President, Senior Investment Management Consultant, Financial Advisor; Noah: Senior Vice President, Senior Investment Management Consultant, Financial Advisor; Amy: CFP®, Senior Vice President, Financial Advisor; Jaime: Financial Advisor; Darcy: Client Service Associate; Tyler: Client Service Associate.

MorganStanley
SmithBarney

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fa.smithbarney.com/stonearchgroup

Left to right: Five-year winner Greg Thurin and four-year winner Chris Thurin

Greg Thurin and Chris Thurin

Personal, Customized,
High-Value Service

- Comprehensive financial planning approach
- Investment planning and management
- Retirement/taxes/college planning strategies

Titles/Designations:
Greg Thurin, Private Wealth Advisor, CRPC®, RFC®;
Chris Thurin, Financial Advisor, CRPC®

With more than 34 years of combined experience, Greg and Chris Thurin of Thurin, Thurin and Associates, a financial advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., pride themselves on helping their clients prepare for the future and for the certainty of uncertainty that has become the new normal in today's economy and investment markets. By guiding clients to align their goals, values and actions, they help improve decision making and behaviors about their clients' financial planning. Clients expect good, sound, individualized advice together with strategies to save money on taxes now and in the future. We strive to deliver the highest level of service to help our clients plan to achieve their dreams.

Ameriprise Financial

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Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Brokerage, investment and financial advisory services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC. Some products and services may not be available in all jurisdictions or to all clients.

Kathy Schneider Vinge

Helping You Plan, Manage and Preserve Your Wealth

Areas of Focus: Asset Management, Retirement Income, Divorce

- Dedicated to helping clients realize their dreams
- Dedicated to providing excellent service and advice
- Dedicated to maximizing client satisfaction

Title: Financial Advisor

Designations: CFP®, CDFA™

As a financial advisor, I continue to grow my reputation for smart, ethical advice with exceptional client service. Increasing market volatility may raise many questions and uncertainties. How long will the recession last? How will my investment plans and goals be impacted? As an *Ameriprise Platinum Financial Services®* practice, I am able to provide you with strategies to help you plan for your financial goals and weather market volatility. I will help you understand your financial picture, design a financial plan and help you stay on track toward your financial dreams.

Ameriprise Financial

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kathy.s.vinge@ampf.com • ameripriseadvisors.com/kathy.s.vinge

The Work Optional Coaches

Start Achieving Real Results!

Left to right: Jason P. Clark, Jaime Lyn Langva, five-year winner Marc D. Langva and 2009 winner Travis G. Bezella

- Step 1: Imagine Work Optional®
- Step 2: Find your Work Optional Date®
- Step 3: Enjoy your Work Optional Lifestyle®

Specialization: Work Optional Coaching and Work Optional Private Portfolios

Designations: CFP®, MBA

How much money do you need to feel rich? Wealth and success have always been subjective concepts, but we have found one thing is universal in most definitions: "Being able to live a comfortable life without having to work." That's Work Optional®.

By finding your Work Optional Date®, you can easily ditch the ambiguous terms: wealthy, rich and successful. More importantly, you can dump the cookie cutter advice, side step "the herd" and start achieving real results.

Imagine the peace of mind you will experience knowing you are making the right moves to take control of your future. You can enjoy more time, energy and freedom; that is living the Work Optional Lifestyle®!

Why wait to start living your dreams? Your journey to Work Optional® starts here and now. Visit our website, then call us to learn the No. 1 way to start living your Work Optional Lifestyle®!

WORK OPTIONAL® INC.

3360B Annapolis Lane North • Plymouth, MN 55447
Phone: (952) 475-7000
WorkOptional.com

Left to right: Three-year winner Daniel A. Boeckermann, three-year winner Jon T. Meyer, James A. Grafstrom, two-year winner Bradley E. Mayer

Boeckermann, Grafstrom & Mayer Wealth Management has been helping professionals manage their finances for more than a decade. We craft financial solutions, so you can live the life you want; and we handle the financial details, so you have the freedom to focus on the things that are truly important to you. By understanding your lifestyle and goals, addressing concerns and developing a comprehensive financial plan, we help you maintain and increase your wealth.

Boeckermann, Grafstrom & Mayer Wealth Management Group

Wealth Management for Life

- Improving clients' lives
- Fee-based planning and asset management
- Creative problem solving

Designations: CFP®, CPA, PFS

Boeckermann, Grafstrom & Mayer
Wealth Management, LLC

2001 Killebrew Drive, Suite 400
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Left to right: 2012 winner Jim Matejcek and five-year winner Dennis Chan

Firm believers in comprehensive planning, Dennis Chan and Jim Matejcek work with a team of CPAs, estate planning attorneys and business consultants to provide holistic, down-to-earth wealth management solutions. Dennis and Jim utilize an asset and tax management process that helps clients preserve wealth and income throughout retirement. They treat their clients with respect and care deeply about their futures.

Dennis Chan • Jim Matejcek

Helping You Achieve Financial Independence Is Our Passion

- Independent, fee-based, objective
- Experienced, knowledgeable, ethical
- Tax, legal and financial solutions

Titles: Investment Advisor Representatives, Partners

Jim Matejcek, CFP®, CFEd®, MBA, Five Star winner (2012)
Dennis Chan, CFP®, Five Star winner (2008-2012)

Everest Financial Group, LLC
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Securities offered through Securities America, Inc (SAI). Member FINRA/SIPC. Advisory services offered through Everest Financial Group, LLC. Everest Financial Group, LLC is independent of Securities America.

Left to right: Katie Pennington, five-year winner Mark Cheeley and Paul Rampetsreiter

Mark Cheeley

Personal Guidance in Critical Times

- An *Ameriprise Platinum Financial Services*® practice
- Exceptional client service
- Genuine advice

Titles: Financial Advisor, President
Designations: MBA, CRPC®, CFS®, RFC®

We believe in building relationships with clients. Your goals are unique, and that is why you need a plan that is tailored just for you. Our success is measured by your confidence and satisfaction.

To provide solid advice, we stay up to date with different strategies and alternative investments. The old buy/hold strategy is not for everyone.

Find out your strategy; call us to schedule your no-obligation consultation.

Ameriprise Financial

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Timothy A. Davisson

Personal • Insightful • Resourceful

- Experienced and knowledgeable
- Individual strategic portfolio design
- Comprehensive financial planning

Title: Financial Advisor
Designations: CFP®, ChFC®, CLU®

Tim has been providing financial advisory services for clients for more than 20 years. He offers customized financial solutions in portfolio management and design. His personal approach puts emphasis on each client's individual situation and concerns.

Ameriprise Financial

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Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Brokerage, investment and financial advisory services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC. Some products and services may not be available in all jurisdictions or to all clients.

Fay DeBellis

Focused on Your Needs

- Client-centric customized solutions
- Individuals and nonprofit management
- Committed to clients and our community

Titles: Senior Vice President, Wealth Advisor
Designation: CFP®

For more than 25 years, Fay has been a respected and loyal financial advisor in the Twin Cities. Fay prides herself on making her clients' goals her top priority. Fay and her team design comprehensive financial strategies for pre- and post-retirees as well as deliver investment counsel to nonprofit organizations. Outside of business life, Fay is an avid volunteer. In 2009 she was recognized with an Outstanding Advisor Award from *Registered Rep.* magazine* acknowledging her dedication to charitable causes.

MorganStanley SmithBarney

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fa.morganstanley.com/fa/fay.debellis

*Registered Rep. selected the 10 Outstanding Advisors based on their demonstration of superior performance in money management, client service and business building as well as their involvement in philanthropic activities, acknowledged peer recognition and respect. Portfolio performance is not a criterion.

Left to right: Four-year winner Lane Gans, two-year winner Chris Hultstrand, Amy Guetter

Gans & Hultstrand

Integrity • Experience • Dedication

- Personalized, comprehensive advice
- More than 35 years of combined experience
- Exceptional client service ratings

Lane Gans, Financial Advisor, CFP®, CRPC®;
Chris Hultstrand, Financial Advisor

With more than 11 years as associates and more than 35 years of combined industry experience, Lane and Chris have developed a financial planning practice devoted to putting clients' interests first. This commitment is exemplified by a 98 percent client satisfaction rating* and a 99 percent client retention rating.**

Simply put, at Gans & Hultstrand, a financial advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., clients are seen as family and are treated as such in terms of the dedication and integrity shown in advice given.

Ameriprise Financial

2805 Dodd Road, Suite 195
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Phone: (651) 256-6044
lane.c.gans@ampf.com
christopher.s.hultstrand@ampf.com

Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Brokerage, investment and financial advisory services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC. Some products and services may not be available in all jurisdictions or to all clients. *The survey score is based on responses gathered within the preceding two years. The survey rates Ameriprise advisors on overall satisfaction, financial knowledge and other criteria. A score averages all responses and may not represent a particular client experience. A minimum number of responses are not required for a score. ** Source: Ameriprise internal reporting, September 30, 2010 to September 30, 2011.

John V. Heath

Independent • Personal • Trusted

- 20-plus years of experience
- Wealth and retirement income management
- Accomplished — dedicated — integrity

Areas of Focus: Executive, Employee Benefits, Alternative Investments

Listening is the most overlooked aspect of client service in the investment community. We listen first and then find solutions — not the other way around. “Investing should not be like making Christmas cookies,” says John. “Most firms stamp out the same thing for each client. I believe in individual, personalized portfolios and service.” Specializing in the management of corporate retirement plans, he works with employees as they leave employers and helps grow assets that need to last the rest of his clients’ lives. John and his team offer a unique, diversified approach, knowing that listening is key.

JVH Wealth Management
3600 American Boulevard West, Suite 140
Bloomington, MN 55431
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John@JVHWealth.com
JVHWealth.com

Registered representative offering securities and advisory services through Independent Financial Group LLC (IFG), a registered broker-dealer and investment advisor. Member FINRA and SIPC. JVH Wealth Management and IFG are not affiliated entities.

Left to right: Ellen A. Schmitt, four-year winner Roxane T. Gehle, Lori R. Fick

Integrated Capital Group

Live for Today. Plan for Tomorrow.

- Wealth enhancement and preservation
- Integrated planning and monitoring
- Select, manageable clientele

Titles: President, Branch Manager
Designations: Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner since 1987

A large part of enjoying life is having an optimistic outlook for the future — living well today because you have a solid plan for tomorrow. Our team is dedicated to meeting the needs and exceeding the expectations of a distinctive clientele. This selectivity allows us to give you our time, our skills and ourselves freely. Our fee-based approach and transparent investment platform ensures objectivity, integrity and sophistication. Roxane has provided quality, high-touch advice to individuals and families for more than 25 years. We are proud to play a significant role in helping clients lead rich and fulfilling lives.

206 Minnetonka Avenue South
Wayzata, MN 55391
Phone: (952) 471-8809
roxane.gehle@raymondjames.com
www.roxanegehle.com

Integrated Capital Group, Inc. is an independent firm. Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/SIPC.

Left to right: Two-year winner Bill Knapp, Carol Lee and Bill Gabrys

Bill Knapp

Your Success Is My Goal

- Retirement planning strategies
- Estate planning strategies
- Wealth preservation

Titles: Financial Advisor, Managing Director
Designations: CFP®, ChFC®

My approach is simple — understand clients. By understanding your values, needs, goals, dreams and behaviors, I provide a comprehensive approach to financial planning and behavioral advice to support and encourage your financial security. Integrity, concern for order and quality, and teamwork are key competencies I would be honored to share with you.

Ameriprise Financial

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Left to right: Two-year winner Nicholas Houle, 2012 winner Tony Hallada, two-year winner Michael McConnell and 2012 winner John Gustavson

LarsonAllen Financial's Wealth Managers

Noticeably Different

- Personal attention
- Objective financial advice
- Long-lasting relationships

John Gustavson, CPA, CFP®, CFA; Tony Hallada, AIF®; Nicholas Houle, CPA/PFS, CFP®; Michael McConnell, CPA, CFP®

LarsonAllen Financial's 2011 Five Star Wealth Managers offer exceptional service to their clients, and their personal approach provides a unique client experience. Their reputation for integrity has been built on years of experience in finance, investment management, business succession planning, estate planning, financial planning and retirement planning.

LarsonAllen Financial, LLC
Member FINRA & SIPC

220 South 6th Street, Suite 300
Minneapolis, MN 55402
Toll-free: (888) 925-2926
www.larsonallen.com/financial

Wealth Management offered through LarsonAllen Financial, LLC. Fee-based planning and investment advisory services offered through LarsonAllen Financial, LLC, an SEC-registered adviser.

Left to right: Five-year winner Jason Plank and 2012 winner David Auerbach

Plank and Auerbach

Customized Financial Advice

- Comprehensive planning relationship
- Experience with team approach
- Personalized client service

Title: Financial Advisors
Designations: Jason, CRPC®, AAMS® and David, CRPC®

As *Ameriprise Platinum Financial Services®* advisors, we believe in putting the needs of clients first and measure our success based on their satisfaction. We thank the clients we serve for their commitment to their financial goals and being a valued resource in helping them plan for the future. Ongoing financial advice is needed now more than ever; call us today for a confidential conversation.

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ameriprisedvisors.com/jason.t.plank
ameripriseadvisors.com/david.a.auerbach

John D. Robinson

Helping You Plan for Your Financial Dreams

- Commitment to personal service
- Client focused with experience
- Customized strategies and advice

Financial Advisor, Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner,
An Ameriprise Platinum Financial Services® practice

John Robinson has more than two decades of experience and has developed a successful practice emphasizing long-term client relationships built on a foundation of ethics and personal service. Creating a financial plan that is specific for each client requires personal attention. John will work closely with you to define your dreams, develop your plan and track your progress. He has a commitment to personalized service so that financial decisions are informed and effective.

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john.d.robinson@ampf.com

Left to right: 2011 winner Jonathan Scharlau,
four-year winners Kim Schwichtenberg and Shannon King

SilverOak Wealth Management Team

Financial Advice for Life

- Independent, fee-only registered investment advisory services
- Comprehensive financial planning based on our clients' core values
- Exceptional service provided by an experienced, accredited team

Retirement planning, executive counseling, tax and estate planning strategies

As a premier financial planning and wealth management company, our goal is to build a solid foundation with our clients — a partnership based on understanding their life's goals and expectations. We are committed to keeping our clients first.

It is our responsibility to be perfectly aligned with our clients' needs — to explore options, develop customized strategies, and to provide education and guidance that will enable them to make informed decisions. We work with our clients on a fee-only basis to provide objective, unbiased advice and financial expertise.

SilverOak

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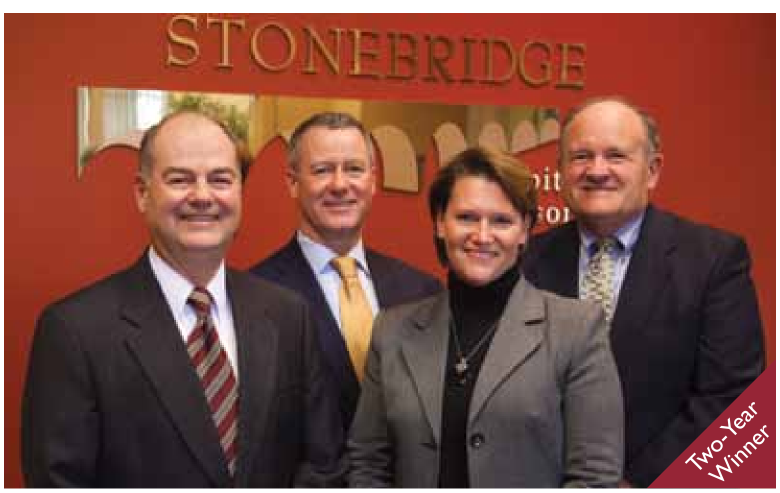

Left to right: Two-year winner Ronald Hume, Robert Kincade, Heidi Hukriede
and two-year winner Dennis Hippen

Stonebridge Capital Advisors

Customized Money Management

- Separately managed accounts
- Individual stocks and bonds
- Direct contact with portfolio managers

Ranked third in the country by Lipper for Large Capitalization Growth Equity

Stonebridge specializes in providing customized investment portfolios designed to meet client objectives with individual common stocks, tax-exempt bonds and/or taxable bonds. Stonebridge portfolio managers work closely with clients and their advisors to meet clearly defined investment objectives. It is our commitment to perform our services with the highest integrity, to manage portfolios through comprehensive analysis and to deliver truly customized services.

STONEBRIDGE Capital Advisors

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St. Paul, MN 55114
Toll-free: (800) 317-1127
info@stonebridgecap.com
www.stonebridgecap.com

Stonebridge Capital Advisors, LLC is an SEC Registered Investment Advisor.

Scott G. Walsh

24 Years of Experience

- Uses the *Dream > Plan > Track >*® approach
- Dedicated to providing high-quality service
- Working with families and businesses

Specializations: Retirement Income, Tax Management Strategies and Estate Planning Strategies
Designation: Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner

Scott is a financial advisor with Walsh, Dornik & Associates, a financial advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., where we understand the many factors that can influence your financial success. We are especially experienced at helping you define your dreams for financial independence and the lifestyle that will give your life meaning. As we help you plan for your financial future, we help you find the answers to a number of questions: Are your dreams a possibility? Are your dreams big enough for personal fulfillment? Can you remain independent and maintain your lifestyle throughout your lifetime?

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Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Brokerage, investment and financial advisory services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC. Some products and services may not be available in all jurisdictions or to all clients.

Left to right: Robyn Jensen, Jodi Flavin, four-year winners Beth Wills and Todd Johnson

Beth Wills • Todd Johnson

Thank You for the Recognition

- Long-term relationships based on reliability, integrity and advice
- Proactive and personalized client service

Beth H. Wills, CFP®, CFS, Financial Advisor
Todd J. Johnson, CFP®, Financial Advisor

As *Ameriprise Platinum Financial Services*® advisors, Beth and Todd are driven to help clients plan for their financial dreams. Their passion centers on providing comprehensive financial planning and, along with their dedicated staff, administering excellent service to clients. Beth and Todd specialize in ongoing financial planning that includes prudent investment strategies along with tax considerations, risk management and estate planning strategies to help clients plan for their goals.

Ameriprise Financial

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Left to right: Chris Root, five-year winner Michelle Young and Eric Simonson

Michelle Young

Our Passion Is Helping You Live Yours

- Proactive and personalized client service
- A comprehensive approach to financial planning
- Team approach with tailored solutions

Areas of Focus: Wealth Management Services and Comprehensive Financial Planning
Michelle Young: Financial Advisor, CFP®, ChFC®, CRPC®, CDFA™

At Young & Associates, a financial advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., we know that everyone's financial picture is unique, and we go the extra mile to create personalized solutions as you plan for your financial goals.

With more than 25 years of combined experience, we strive to build long-term relationships with clients, and we pride ourselves on exceptional client service. We advise clients on the financial issues that matter most: a solid education for your children, a retirement and distribution strategy that supports your dreams and aspirations, estate planning and gifting strategies, and insurance protection for your families.

Ameriprise Financial

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Bill Adams

MorganStanley SmithBarney

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Preserve and Grow Your Wealth

- Estate planning and retirement planning
- Asset management and financial planning
- Long-term care insurance and 401(k) rollover

Title: Senior Investment Management Consultant

Designations: CFP®, CIMA®

As your financial advisor, I can help you define and strive to meet your goals by delivering a vast array of resources to you in the way that is most appropriate for how you invest and what you want to achieve. Working together to preserve and grow wealth, you will have access to some of the world's most seasoned and respected investment professionals, a premier trading and execution platform, and a full spectrum of investment choices.

James Biermaier

Biermaier Financial Management

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www.biermaier-financial.com

Sound, Straightforward Advice

- Independent; freedom to put clients first
- Partner with clients to create their plan
- Lasting solutions are the priority

Financial Consultant

Series 7, 63 and 65

Our company is built on a solid foundation of excellent client service and in-depth market knowledge. We pride ourselves on our unique approach to financial planning which focuses on active management and educating clients, so they can make wise financial decisions. Our clients have the assurance of knowing their financial future is being managed to suit their specific needs. We strive to deliver sound financial advice to help our clients and their families.

Robert A. Bjork

Birch Cove Group, Ltd.

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robert.bjork@raymondjames.com
www.birchcovegroup.com

Experienced and Independent Advice

- Bring clarity to wealth transition
- Caring commitment to your legacy
- Proven wealth management approach

Titles: Managing Partner, Financial Advisor

Designation: CFP®

Birch Cove Group helps you achieve everything that is important in your financial life. When you work with us, you will find we take a distinctly different approach. Together, we determine your goals, get insight from a team of experts and reach decisions you can make with absolute confidence, so you can live the life you want, free from complexity.

Mike Bongaarts

NorthStar Asset Management

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Toll-free: (877) 387-1287
mike.bongaarts@wfafinet.com

More Than 25 Years of Experience

- Financial advice aligned with client values
- I design the clients' portfolio to their needs
- I offer solutions for estate* and retirement planning

Michael Bongaarts, CFP®, Branch Manager, PIM Portfolio Manager

Area of Focus: Comprehensive Investment Planning

Mike endeavors to gain his clients' trust by helping to minimize the common mistakes that may befall investors. His objective is to establish a long-term, disciplined investment policy for his clients.

Advisor selection is not reflective of individual client satisfaction or future performance. Please see the introduction section for important information on the scope of the award and the Five Star selection process. Investment Products and services offered through Wells Fargo Advisors Financial Network, LLC (WFAFN), Member SIPC, a registered broker-dealer and separate non-bank affiliate of Wells Fargo & Company. NorthStar Asset Management is a separate entity from WFAFN. *Wells Fargo Advisors Financial Network and NorthStar Asset Management are not legal or Tax advisors [CAR 1011-5042 10/11].

Scott Ekholm

Investment Services at HIWAY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

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Phone: (651) 265-6100
Toll Free: (800) 899-5626
investmentservices@hiway.org
hiway.org

Helping You Invest in Your Future

- Personalized, goal-oriented planning approach
- Award-winning, unparalleled service
- Exclusive retirement-ready group

Five Star Wealth Manager Scott Ekholm and the Investment Services team at Hiway Federal Credit Union focus on developing long-term member relationships and financial strategies that build confidence in a world of uncertainty. Whatever you are striving to achieve financially, our advisors will work with you to design a plan based on your goals, needs and personal values.

Securities and financial planning offered through LPL Financial, a Registered Investment Advisor, member FINRA/SIPC. Insurance products offered through LPL Financial or its licensed affiliates. Not NCUA Insured | Not Credit Union Guaranteed | May Lose Value.

Jim Goodland

Securus Wealth Management, LLC

3340-B Annapolis Ln.
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Office: (763) 231-7880
Toll-free: (800) 667-3732
jim@securuswealth.com
www.securuswealth.com

Securus' Mission: Our Clients' Results

- Investment results through all market cycles
- Tax-efficiency results for uncertain times
- Opportunities and results in down markets

Areas of Focus: Wealth coaching, investment, estate and business planning

Securus firmly believes today's investors are typically over-informed and sensationalized through various media outlets. Making prudent decisions is often overwhelming and uninspiring for many. Today more than ever, investors need guidance through the myriad of information and hypocrisy. To learn how Securus clients can trust their future and feel their results, call (800) 667-3732.

Investment Advisory Services offered through Securus Wealth Management LLC, a Registered Investment Advisor. Securities offered through Cambridge Investment Research, Inc., a Broker/Dealer, Member FINRA & SIPC. Securus and Cambridge are separate companies.

Laurie I. Laner

FINANCIAL DESIGNS INC

5354 Parkdale Dr., Ste. 106
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Toll-free: (866) 813-9915
Laurie@FDI-online.com
www.FDI-online.com

Success by Design, Not by Chance

- Help manage through life's changing picture
- Bring more focus; make better financial decisions
- Expand the good fortune in your life

Titles: President, Owner, Member of NAPFA, FPA

Designation: CFP®

The Financial Designs, Inc. team has been working with clients for 24 years to help each individual articulate what living well looks like and means financially over time. We help you navigate to your important goals and/or through significant life events. We believe that harmonizing life goals with personal financial planning is best created by design, not by chance.

FDI is a fee-only comprehensive financial planning and portfolio management firm.

Jennifer A. Larsen

WELLS FARGO ADVISORS

4400 Hwy. 61 N
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
Direct: (651) 205-7494
Toll-free: (800) 888-5354
jennifer.a.larsen@wellsfargo.com

Financial Advisor in White Bear Lake

- Investment estate planning
- Goal planning

Title: Financial Advisor, Vice President – Investments

A trusted advisor's best asset is excellent listening. With more than 12 years in the industry, I firmly believe I offer a personalized consultative approach.

Advisor selection is not reflective of individual client satisfaction or future performance. Please see the introduction section for important information on the scope of the award and the Five Star selection process. Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC, Member SIPC. [CAR 1111-4365A 11/29]

Tyler J. Mattson

Ameriprise Financial

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ameripriseadvisors.com/tyler.2.mattson

Financial Advice to Meet Your Needs

- Educational approach to financial planning
- Helping clients navigate uncertain times
- 23 years of industry experience

Title: Financial Advisor

Designation: Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner

Tyler cares about clients. He takes the time to develop and implement financial planning strategies in helping clients plan for their goals and dreams. His accessibility and knowledge provides clients a sense of comfort in a fluctuating economy. Tyler is an *Ameriprise Platinum Financial Services®* advisor.

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Kevin Miller

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Cell: (612) 791-3809
Kevin.Miller@fbdmn.com
www.fbdmn.com

TEAM Approach to Customized Solutions

- Design, implement and maintain retirement plans
- Convert complex alternatives to simple solutions
- Innovative and independent

Titles: President, CEO

Designations: CMFC®, ChFC®, CFS® and CLU®

At Fringe Benefits Design, we use the TEAM approach to maintain our client relationships. To us, TEAM is an acronym for Together Everyone Achieves More. This philosophy has allowed us to develop long-term relationships that enable us to fulfill the ongoing goals and objectives of our clientele. As an independent firm, we are able to utilize the most suitable investment options thereby providing a highly customized, client-based solution in preparation for a dignified retirement.

Jason Moehring

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

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Phone: (763) 862-2885
jason.moehring@thrivent.com

Values-Based Financial Strategies

- Personalized financial strategies around your values and goals
- Customized retirement income planning
- Committed to helping you realize your dreams

Areas of Focus: Pre-retirement and retirement distribution strategies

Designations: CFP®, LUTCF, FIC

Jason Moehring, Financial Consultant, has been with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for more than 17 years. He is a CFP® professional working with clients in the north metro area.

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201105034

Peter Rekstad

TRUNORTH
a journey of purpose

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www.tnjourney.com

Where Life and Wealth Intersect

- Fiduciary commitment
- Holistic wealth advice
- Coordinated investment management

Title: Principal

Designatons: ChFC®, CLU®

At TruNorth, we believe life is not only about what you have and what you do, but who you are and why you are here. At TruNorth we help you on your unique journey of purpose, freeing you to pour your energies into your interests and passions, not just your obligations. We take an active approach with your tax and legal advisors to coordinate your investment management with your tax, estate and charitable plans.

Thomas A. Rishovd

MorganStanley SmithBarney

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Integrity • Trust • Value • Education

- Comprehensive wealth management
- Personalized planning and advice
- Investment solutions and goal-setting

Titles: Financial Advisor, First Vice President – Investments

Designation: Certified Financial Planner™

I would like to thank all of my clients and business partners for helping me attain this award. Helping families manage their wealth is a big responsibility which I take very seriously. For more than 15 years, I have built a business based on integrity and keeping my clients' best interests at heart. I am committed to making a positive impact on all of my clients' financial lives through education, goal-setting and planning.

Glenn A. Rusler

Ameriprise Financial

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ameripriseadvisors.com/glenn.a.rusler

Seasoned, Timely Investment Advice

- More than 21 years of financial advisor experience
- Educational, simplifying the complex
- Customized retirement investment advice

Title: Financial Advisor

Designations: CFP®, ChFC®

As an *Ameriprise Platinum Financial Services®* practice, I have more than 21 years of experience helping clients plan for their financial futures and managing their income distribution needs. I have the well-rounded knowledge and experience that allows me to provide clients with clear, knowledgeable and personalized advice.

Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Brokerage, investment and financial advisory services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC. Some products and services may not be available in all jurisdictions or to all clients.

Fred Sowatzka

MRK FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS, INC.

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freds@mrkfs.com
www.mrkfinancial.com

Relationships Are Our Foundation

- A personalized approach to pursuing your goals
- Professional service with integrity and precision
- Comprehensive financial advice for the real world

Title: Financial Advisor

The greatest strength that I possess in my career is personalizing the financial advising process and building it around my clients' lives. A "one size fits all" approach is never accepted. I will not make any type of recommendation to any client until I have a full picture of where they are now and where they would like to be in the coming years. Since everyone's lives are constantly changing, I keep in close contact to ensure that the plans made five years ago are still relevant to today's goals.

Fred Sowatzka - Advisory Representative. Securities offered through HD Vest Investment Services SM, member SIPC. Advisory services offered through HD Vest Advisory Services SM. MRK Financial Solutions is not a registered broker/dealer or independent advisory firm.

Susan M. Stiles

STILES FINANCIAL SERVICES INCORPORATED

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Informed Choices • Suitable Outcomes

- Corporate retirement plan consulting
- Comprehensive wealth management
- Integrated portfolio management

Designations: CFP®, AIF®, ChFC®, MBA

The success of your financial future is directly linked to the competence of your advisor team. We believe in servicing our clients based on their unique situation, needs and goals. We have earned a reputation for being great listeners, gifted financial strategists and detail-oriented consultants. Our driving principle has always been: "Why be average?" We focus on the process to achieve desired outcomes.

Stiles Financial Services, Inc. is a Registered Investment Adviser. Advisory services offered through Cambridge Investment Research Advisors, a Registered Investment Adviser. Securities offered through Cambridge Investment Research, Inc., Member FINRA & SIPC. Stiles Financial Services, Inc. and Cambridge are not affiliated.

Jason Tamminen

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Providing Personal Wealth Management

- Customized investment management process
- Committed to exceptional client service
- Financial planning solutions

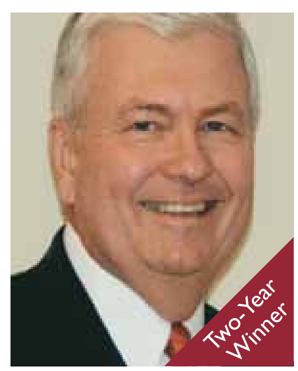
Titles: Financial Advisor, Assistant Vice President – Investments

Areas of Focus: Investment Management and Retirement Planning

My mission is to help individuals, families and businesses develop and implement comprehensive wealth management strategies for their specific and unique objectives. My approachable style paired with the capabilities of Wells Fargo Advisors results in a successful client experience. I'm honored to be selected again for the Five Star award.

Advisor selection is not reflective of individual client satisfaction or future performance. Please see the introduction section for important information on the scope of the award and the Five Star selection process. Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC, Member SIPC, is a registered broker-dealer and a separate non-bank affiliate of Wells Fargo & Company. [CAR 1111-3231].

Ryan J. Terry



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Phone: (651) 636-3806
ryan@ryanterry.com
www.ryanterry.com

Independent and Objective Advice

- Trusted financial advisor
- Financial, tax and retirement planning
- Fee-only investment management — no commissions

Areas of Focus: Identify financial goals and risk tolerance for high-quality, low-cost, tax-efficient portfolios

Ryan thanks his clients for this award. As a CPA with Ryan J. Terry, Ltd. and registered investment advisor for 37 years, Ryan serves his clients with the warmth, the integrity and the professionalism they seek in an investment advisor. Using a process focusing on client interests as his primary concern, he helps establish client investment goals and facilitates implementation of the goals they choose. He provides regular, ongoing guidance and education, so they can comfortably oversee the execution of their investment plan.

Stefen W. Thielke

RBC Wealth Management

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Stillwater, MN 55082
Office: (651) 430-5513
Toll-free: (866) 548-7770
stefen.thielke@rbc.com
www.stefenthielke.com

Respect • Responsibility • Desire • Purity

- Wealth and retirement income strategies
- Estate planning and business succession
- Managing the seven common financial risks

Titles: First Vice President, Financial Advisor

Designations: AWM® (Accredited Wealth Manager℠),CMFC®

Stefen manages wealth for a diverse group of clients by thoughtfully understanding, then designing and implementing, strategies for building, protecting and transferring wealth. He enlists various processes using discretionary fee-based portfolio design and execution, relying on well-defined, written advisor and client action steps.

RBC Wealth Management, a division of RBC Capital Markets, LLC, Member NYSE/FINRA/SIPC. RBC Wealth Management does not provide tax or legal advice. We will work with your independent tax/legal advisor to help create a plan.

Robert Ward

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

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Eagan, MN 55122
Phone: (651) 493-8605
robert.ward@thrivent.com

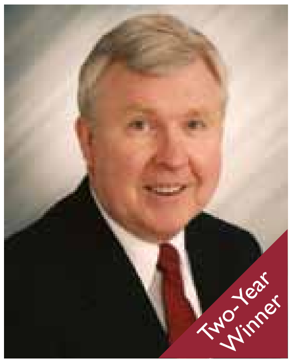
Wealth Accumulation and Risk Management Solutions

- Professional investment management
- Tax-advantaged financial strategies
- Wealth preservation and distribution strategies

Titles: ChFC®, FIC, Million Dollar Round Table Qualifier

Building on a commitment to unparalleled customer service, Bob Ward works with clients to create a detailed analysis and customized financial strategy. Bob's goal is to assist you in making competent and informed financial decisions. "Retirement accumulation, wealth preservation and wealth distribution strategies are my areas of focus."

Securities and investment advisory services are offered through Thrivent Investment Management Inc., 625 Fourth Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55415, a FINRA and SIPC member and a wholly owned subsidiary of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Thrivent Financial representatives are registered representatives of Thrivent Investment Management Inc. They are also licensed insurance agents of Thrivent Financial. For additional important disclosure information, please visit thrivent.com/disclosures.



Karl Wilson

Strategic Financial, Inc.

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Cell: (952) 913-6145
karl.wilson@lpl.com
www.HelpingYouInvest.com

Securing Your Financial Future

- Your successful retirement is my main goal
- Custom retirement and income planning
- Exceptional portfolio management

Graduate, U.S. Military Academy, West Point

Designations: MBA, Carlson School of Management

Karl is a West Point graduate and has been a financial advisor for 20 years. He helps his clients build, manage and preserve their wealth through the implementation of a customized investment program consistent with their objectives and risk tolerance. Karl strives to educate his clients and maintain a client-for-life relationship.

This award is based upon criteria such as professional credentials, experience, favorable complaint history and client retention. Securities offered through LPL Financial. Member FINRA/SIPC.

Linda J. Zimmerman

Ameriprise Financial

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linda.j.zimmerman@ampf.com
www.lindajzimmerman.com

Experience, Advice, Service

- Comprehensive financial planning approach
- Personalized, client-focused service
- 99% client satisfaction; 98% retention

CFP®; Private Wealth Advisor, Zimmerman and Associates: A private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Linda is a Private Wealth Advisor with more than 24 years of experience helping people build and maintain wealth. She listens and takes the time to get to know the clients and their life goals, dreams and values. Through this process, Linda has developed a successful practice emphasizing long-term client relationships based on a foundation of ethics, trust and service.

Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Brokerage, investment and financial advisory services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC. Some products and services may not be available in all jurisdictions or to all clients.

Gary R. Aiken

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President CEO, Financial Advisor

Tonka Financial help build portfolios emphasizing analysis of creditworthiness, cash flow and income. We believe portfolios are less vulnerable to negative economic outcomes, consequently reducing bad investment decisions. Call us; we will treat you like you are already a client. Five Star award winner in 2008 and 2012.

Securities offered through Investors Capital Corporation (800.949.1422), member FINRA/SIPC. Advisory Services offered through Investors Capital Advisory, 230 Broadway, Lynnfield, MA 01940.

Robert Bayer

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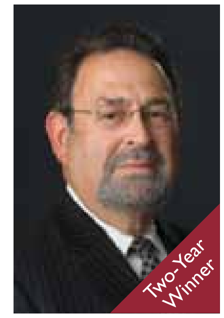
Cell: (612) 483-6677
robert.bayer@lpl.com
Designations: ChFC®, CLU®

These days, clients deserve more from an advisor. It's about a relationship built on deep, ongoing mutual trust. Affluent clients 55-plus come to me for what I deliver: transparent integrity, intelligence, independence and innovation.

Securities offered through LPL Financial Member FINRA/SIPC.



Saul Bernick
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sbernick@bernicklifson.com
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Titles: CPA, Attorney

Saul Bernick has provided sophisticated business and tax planning advice to clients, including referrals from other CPAs and attorneys, for assistance on unique tax situations for more than 30 years. Saul specializes in representing clients in all civil and criminal tax litigation before the IRS and the Minnesota Revenue including audits, administrative appeals, tax court and refund litigation.

Grant I. Beyl
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grant.beyl@thrivent.com
Title: Wealth Advisor

We are committed to helping our members achieve their goals and dreams through sound financial planning.

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"Financial planning is a holistic approach to financial well-being."

— Five Star award winner

Amie Burnett

Ameriprise Financial

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Financial Advisor, JD, CFP®

I believe success should not be measured by just your financial well-being, but by how confident you feel about your future. My mission is to help you reach your financial goals through knowledgeable advice.

Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC.

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Designation: CFP®

Jim has more than 17 years of experience in the financial services industry and works with his clients on an ongoing basis to make sure they stay on track towards achieving their financial goals.

Securities offered through LPL Financial. Member FINRA/SIPC.

Ryan Coogan

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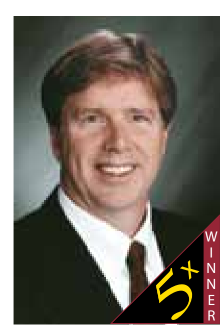
Advisor selection is not reflective of individual client satisfaction or future performance. Please see the introduction section for important information on the scope of the award and the Five Star selection process. Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC, Member SIPC. [CAR1111-3394 11/21].
Investment and Insurance Products:

Not FDIC-Insured	NO Bank Guarantee	MAY Lose Value



David Daline

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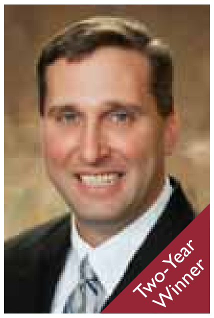
Designation: CFP®

Celebrating 32 years of helping clients achieve their financial goals.



Michael Drazan

Drazan, Hennke and Associates
Certified Public Accountants

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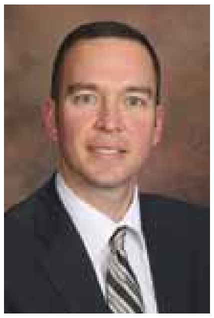
Title/Designations: Partner, CPA, CFP®

DHA is a CPA firm which recognizes that clients are looking for proactive advisors who can customize services to fit their needs. DHA is committed to providing their clients with the highest level of professional services in the areas of taxation, accounting and business advisory.



Jason W. Dreger

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jason.2.dreger@ampf.com
Title: Financial Advisor
Designation: CRPC®

My mission is to help you plan for your goals through a long-term relationship based on personalized, knowledgeable advice.

Learn more at: ameripriseadvisors.com/jason.2.dreger.

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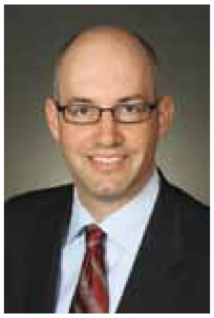

Jeff Erpelding

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www.trustonefinancial.org
Titles: CPA, PFS, CFA

Jeff provides comprehensive financial planning and investment advice.

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Not NCUA Insured | No Credit Union Guaranteed | May Lose Value

Grant R. Fjosne

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Titles/Designations: Financial Advisor, Franchise Owner, ChFC®, CRPC®, CFS®

Learn more at: ameripriseadvisors.com/grant.r.fjosne.

An *Ameriprise Platinum Financial Services®* practice.

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“Find a financial planner who will take the time to educate you, eliminate the mystery and put you on the correct path.”

— Five Star award winner

William Franke

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an independent firm
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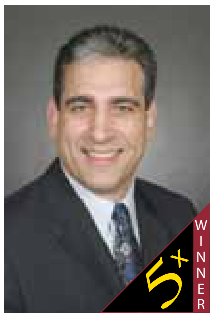
Title: CFP®

Bill has been providing fee-based investing and financial planning services for individuals and families for more than 25 years. Your financial future is important. Don't trust it to just anyone!

Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/SIPC.



Rich Fromstein

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Richard.Fromstein@mssb.com
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Understands needs of business owners; works with your CPA and attorneys; 15 years of wealth management experience; highly responsive communications; former business owner.

Mark A. Gabriel

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Financial Advisor, CFP®, ChFC®

More than 23 years of experience helping clients plan for the future and manage their income distribution options with clear, knowledgeable and personalized advice. An *Ameriprise Platinum Financial Services®* practice.

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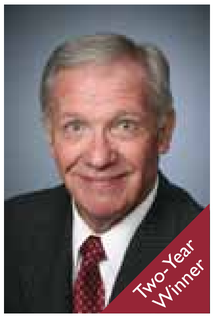

William J. Gaspar

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bgaspar@alliedbeacon.net
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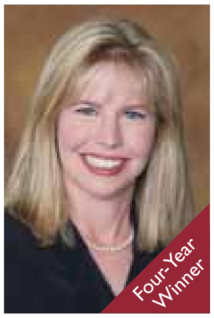
As an independent financial services professional, clients (small businesses and individuals) are assisted in analyzing current situations and aided in setting financial goals. Solutions are then presented and implemented from an array of financial products and ongoing services.



Wendy L. Gillespie

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wendy.l.gillespie@ampf.com
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Designations: MBA, CFP®

Putting the needs of clients first is the approach I believe in. As a financial advisor, I work with you to find the right financial solutions to help you plan for your unique goals.

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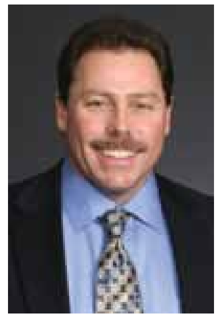

John Hance

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john@hancefinancial.net
www.hancefinancial.net
Titles: President Hance Financial, Financial Advisor, CLU®

I want to thank my clients for the Five Star Wealth Manager award. I am focused on meeting each client's specific financial goals and providing proven investment strategies.

Michael Haverkamp

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1578 University Ave. W
St. Paul, MN 55104
Phone: (651) 643-8402
mike.haverkamp@lpl.com
www.lpl.com/mike.haverkamp
Designation: CFP®

More than 20 years of experience dedicated to providing comprehensive wealth management strategies.

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Paul Hoghaug

ANCHOR INVESTMENTS

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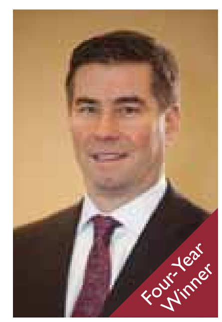
Title: Financial Consultant

Paul has more than 20 years of experience and manages more than $100 million of client assets. Four-year award winner.

Securities offered through LPL Financial. Member FINRA/SIPC.

"Have a process for managing money that is not based on opinions, attitudes or emotions."

— Five Star award winner



Mark W. Joern

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www.markjoern.com
Private Wealth Advisor, CRPC®

At Joern, Samaha & Associates, a financial advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., we have a team of professionals who are focused on all areas of financial planning. We deliver quality advice, proactive service and a positive client experience.

Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC.

Brad Johnson

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brad.johnson@traditionllc.com
traditionwealthmanagement.com
Investment Advisor, Partner

Think of Tradition Wealth Management as your personal CFO. We offer a team of experienced partners to help individuals with personal wealth management and business owners with business planning.

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Christine A. Kaehler

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Titles: Senior Financial Advisor, Senior Vice President

My clients receive exceptional service and thoughtful wealth management advice which is client centered, results-oriented and value-driven. Working together with your CPA and attorney, we will ensure the coordination of all parts of your financial life.

Advisor selection is not reflective of individual client satisfaction or future performance. Please see the introduction section for important information on the scope of the award and the Five Star selection process. Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC, Member SIPC. [CAR 1111-3863 11/11].

Peter Klatt

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peter.klatt@wfadvisors.com
Title/Designation: Financial Advisor, AAMS®

Peter has 23 years of experience helping clients achieve their financial goals.

Advisor selection is not reflective of individual client satisfaction or future performance. Please see the introduction section for important information on the scope of the award and the Five Star selection process. Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC, Member SIPC. [CAR 1111-2742].

Frank P. Leslie

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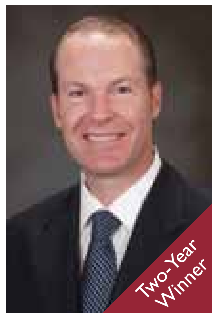
Title: Financial Advisor

My mission is to help you plan for your financial goals through a personal relationship based on personalized, knowledgeable advice.

Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC.



David R. Lindblad

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david.r.lindblad@wellsfargo.com
Title: Financial Advisor

David and Wells Fargo would like to thank our clients for their business and the opportunity to work with them on their financial goals.

Advisor selection is not reflective of individual client satisfaction or future performance. Please see the introduction section for important information on the scope of the award and the Five Star selection process. Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC, Member SIPC. [CAR 1011-3687]. Investment and Insurance Products:

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Robert E. Long, Jr.

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robert.long@opco.com
Title: Sr. Director – Investments

Robert E. Long, Jr. has worked as a financial advisor since 1988. Robert oversees money for private individuals who are business owners and entrepreneurs. Robert enjoys running marathons with cancer charity organizations and is an avid sports fan.

Robert G. Mairs

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robert.mairs@lpl.com
Title: Financial Consultant

Bob has more than 30 years of experience providing comprehensive wealth management services, including individualized portfolio management, estate and trust planning to individuals, small businesses and family partnerships.

LPL Financial, A Registered Investment Advisor Member FINRA/SIPC.

> "Wishful thinking is not planning. If you plan for the worst, you will never be unpleasantly surprised."
>
> *— Five Star award winner*

Tara Mattessich

MCH Est. 1895

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Phone: (651) 227-7683
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www.mchlaw.com
Titles: Attorney/Partner

Tara focuses on her clients' individual needs. "I ask them to tell me their story. What are their values? What is their vision? Then I formulate a solution and strategy that conforms to their values and achieves their vision. The last thing clients need is to be confused and overwhelmed."

Peter A. McClellan

THE 401K LATTE COMPANY

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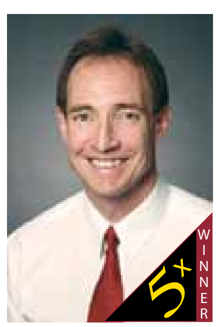
www.401klatte.com
Title: ChFC®

Peter is the president of The 401k Latte Company, business talk radio host on KYCR and internet radio site: www.thinkon.biz. Conversations with his clients go beyond the money and incorporate life goals and purpose.

Securities and investment advisory services offered through GENEOS WEALTH MANAGEMENT, INC. Member FINRA/SIPC.



Jim Mertz

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Bloomington, MN 55431
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jim.mertz@siionline.com
www.mertzfinancial.com
Designation: CFP®

It's not what you make; it's what you keep. We find ways to help create wealth efficiently. Specializing in retirement planning and income tax preparation.

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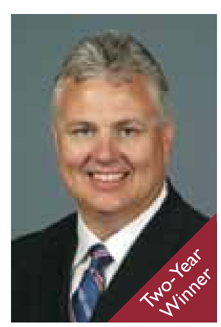

Mark N. Miller

North Oaks FINANCIAL SERVICES

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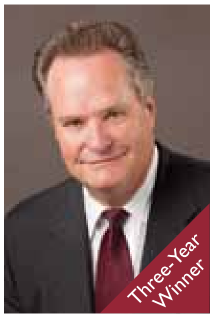
Mark@NorthOaksFS.com
www.NorthOaksFS.com
Title: CEO/Founder

For nearly three decades, Mark has focused on assessing client needs through comprehensive financial consulting with wisdom, integrity and unbiased advice. He also pursues strategies to achieve clients' goals and dreams.

Securities offered through LPL Financial. Member FINRA/SIPC.



Steven C. Pace

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steven.c.pace@ampf.com
Steven C. Pace, CFP®, CLTC, Financial Advisor

I work for clients requiring more complex financial planning for tax, retirement income, long-term care and estate needs. I take the time to listen and empower clients to build their assets and retirement income.

Pace & Associates, an Ameriprise Financial Platinum Services Practice. Investors should conduct their own evaluation of a financial professional as working with a financial advisor is not a guarantee of future financial success. Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA and SIPC.

Timothy M. Pitera

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Timothy.M.Pitera@wellsfargo.com
www.wellsfargoadvisors.com
Title: Senior Vice President

Coordination with other professionals for a thorough and comprehensive approach regarding retirement income and estate planning.

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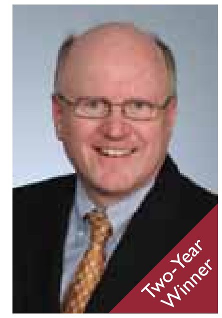

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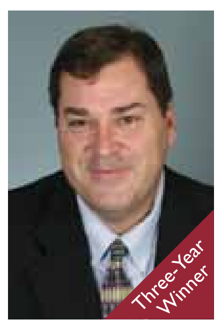

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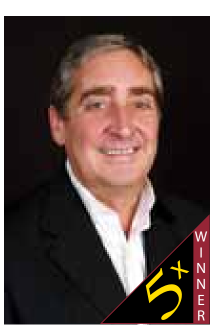

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playbook

BY LEE SCHAFER | INSIDER PERSPECTIVE ON MAJOR DEALS

Behind the Scenes of the Faegre Merger

"We can't stand still."

I was surprised to read news last year of plans to merge the Minneapolis law firm of Faegre & Benson with Indianapolis firm Baker & Daniels. The legal industry has been under pressure, but if anyone can withstand a downturn it was 125-year-old Faegre & Benson, with more than 450 lawyers and a golden brand.

In exploring the background of the merger with the firm's managing partner, Andrew Humphrey, the takeaway is that the recession was nothing more than coincident. Big corporate clients do not simply hire lawyers anymore. They hire a firm. And to stay in the game a firm like Faegre needs to be everywhere a client does business, with deep skill in pretty much everything. "It's not really about geography, it's about expertise," Humphrey says. "Clients need to have such confidence in the broad capabilities of the entire firm."

Faegre reached the conclusion that greater depth of expertise in more places was the best way to ensure it could grow with its clients.

While a little smaller, Baker & Daniels had a stature in its hometown similar to Faegre here. While Baker had reached the same set of conclusions as Faegre, both firms came to them through separate planning processes. For Baker, the path leads back to the formation of a strategy working group among its partners in 2007 (in other words, pre–Great Recession), according to Chief Executive Partner Tom Froehle. His group pursued two objectives: forming a strategy to enter the Chicago market, and developing a broader plan to expand the firm's depth and reach.

Two years later in Minneapolis, Faegre launched an intensive strategic planning process.

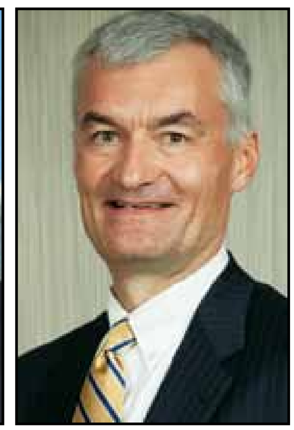
There is a debate going on within the profession, and some of that discussion happened within Faegre, on whether slow growth trends in law are due to a simple business cycle, or if there are external trends that will shape the profession's development after the economy recovers. Thumbing through data reported by the Citi Private Bank Law Group, which has some 600 U.S. and U.K. law firms as customers and routinely surveys about 180 large law firms, I found plenty for law partners to fret about. It's just flat-out harder to make money running a big law firm.

The bank says that big firms "continue to shrink their way to profitability." The latest data show some revenue growth in 2011 after two tough years, but "catch-up" spending on associate compensation and infrastructure has caused profit per equity partner to once again decline. Faegre, meanwhile, was shrinking along with the industry, dropping from more than 500 lawyers at the start of the recession in 2008 to about 450 on the date of the merger announcement with Baker. (Total headcount at the combined firm will be roughly 1,500—770 being lawyers.)

Some non-law trends are also covered in Citi's surveys and other reporting on the legal industry. For example, even before the Great Recession, general counsels had begun to employ a few tricks learned from supply chain managers. Among them: dramatically shrink your vendor list to a handful of providers, and put your thumb on the survivors to lower their prices. For lawyers, this can mean fixed-fee billing and other alternative fee arrangements.

Faegre reached the conclusion that greater depth of expertise in more places was the best way to ensure it could grow with its clients. Some of the additional geographies Humphrey names are Chicago, Beijing, and Washington, D.C. Even Faegre's middle-market clients work in China or aspire to, Humphrey says, and they need a much stronger presence. And the firm's medical device clients, among others, demanded regulatory expertise in Washington. Baker is in Beijing and very big in Washington, while Faegre was not.

Faegre's Humphrey



Baker's Froehle

As Faegre was planning in 2009, Baker was ready to move. Froehle describes himself as a former skeptic of a merger strategy who had come to see the benefits of choosing that path. So in his shop, there was consensus in favor of action; and at the top of what Froehle describes as a "very short list" of merger candidates was Faegre. And so, late in 2009, Baker called.

ON THE WEB

More details on the Citi Private Bank Law Group's analysis of the financial state of U.S. and U.K. law firms can be found at **bit.ly/tDe729.**

Froehle adds that while strategic plans aligned, "what we needed was a lot more due diligence." History, culture, governance models, practice areas, recruiting and compensation practices, and clients—all needed in-depth looks. The latter was a big one, as both firms have life science clients; in fact a client conflict stalled the process for some time.

In late summer 2011, the firms took the step of making the discussions known publicly, creating a two-month window prior to partner votes to open communication between the firms. Froehle and Humphrey jointly visited each of the two firms' 13 offices. They were not pitching, but rather answering questions. "I'm an M&A lawyer," Humphrey says, "and I know that the key to being successful is integration. We needed . . . true buy-in." Both firms required 75 percent partner approval and exceeded that.

The combined firm will begin operations as Faegre Baker Daniels on January 1, with 13 offices in the U.S., U.K., and China. Humphrey is the firm's managing partner, Froehle its chief operating partner. Joint headquarters are in Indy and Minneapolis.

"You know, we see our clients challenge themselves all the time," Humphrey says, looking back at the process that led to the deal. "For some reason, there is reluctance at law firms to do that kind of thing." And while there is big effort required near term to integrate the firms, Humphrey agrees that other strategic moves will be considered. "We know this. We can't stand still." **TCB**

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Under Attack: Responsibility

Is it acceptable to put your business at risk in the name of ethics?

Once there was a young executive hired by one of the nation's largest trust companies to fix horrendous operating issues that resulted in corporate and high-income customers receiving erroneous statements stating the values of their 401(k) accounts were "zero."

This young man pressed into service an army of independent outside accountants to delve into the complex mess of missing information, computing errors, and mass confusion. He realized the effort was the largest responsibility he had ever faced. The board of directors had fired the previous CEO and brought him in specifically to find out what had happened and to end the crisis. A normal CEO's job, except here the future of a company with about $25 billion in assets under management was at stake. It was the *Titanic* about to hit the iceberg unless he found another route within a very short period of time.

> They had summarily fired 15 of the trust's most experienced officers on the grounds that new software could do what they had been doing.

The executive learned that the previous CEO had hired old college buddies to form his executive team. Although they had credentials, this group (who called themselves the Magnificent Seven) was inexperienced and arrogant. They had summarily terminated 15 of the company's most experienced officers, who each averaged more than 20 years' experience, on the grounds that new computer programs could do what these people had been doing. Unfortunately, the Magnificent Seven didn't check to make sure their newly installed software actually worked before the 15 officers were let go. As a result, the trust company's asset records fell $8 billion out of balance, client taxes were not paid, and government regulators became concerned. So concerned, in fact, that the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) set up an outpost at the company to keep a closer eye on operations.

The first major decision the new executive made was to fire five of the Magnificent Seven. Then he invited the 15 officers who had been terminated to join him for a lunch meeting. To his surprise, all 15 showed up. It didn't take long before they began to vent about how unfairly and disrespectfully they had been treated and the deep pain and disappointment that their being terminated had caused them.

The executive apologized, saying there was no excuse for how they had been treated. Then he told them that the only thing he knew about trusts was that he had one for his kids. He told them that the company was in deep trouble and detailed the magnitude of the problems. He asked for their help, telling them nobody else could fix these monumental problems, and that the future of the company they had worked so hard to build was in their hands. If they agreed to come back and help with the turnaround, he said that when the company was fixed, he would make sure that they had the retirement party and recognition they deserved. By the time dessert was served, everyone agreed to come back, several even canceling planned vacations to do so.

Unfortunately, that was not the hardest decision or the most difficult conversation he had to have. The customers affected were mostly high-income business executives including the CEOs of Fortune 500 companies in town. Not the type of people who settle for answers from their local trust officer; rather, they were calling the young CEO demanding answers and threatening to move accounts.

So far, the new CEO had been able to placate clients by apologizing and telling them that he was looking into it. The young executive's instincts said the responsible thing to do was to part the curtains on what was going on.

At the same time, insiders believed the less the customers knew the better off the firm would be. Their systems would be repaired soon and life would return to "business as usual." The risk was that customers would move their 401(k) accounts to the competition. Because these were very large customers, it was possible that the loss of only one of them could deplete the company's revenues to the point of insolvency. It was a perilous balance and a decision that would make or break the company and this young man's career.

If you haven't figured it out by now, the young man in this story was me. I was faced with this ethical challenge about 25 years ago, and I remember it as vividly as if it happened yesterday.

My gut was wrenching because of the struggle between what my instincts were telling me to do and what my business training had taught me to believe. Was it really responsible to tell our customers the truth of what was going on if it put the company at great

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the first of a three-part series of Corner Office columns telling real stories of business leaders facing ethical dilemmas. This month's topic is responsibility. Next: trust, followed by honesty.

risk? Was being transparent to customers being responsible to employees and shareholders?

As tough as it was, it took about a nanosecond for me to make my decision. Convincing others to follow me was more difficult. I told the board of directors and executive management at the holding company that I couldn't do it any other way, and if they didn't accept my decision they'd have to find someone else to do the job. So they went along with me, some begrudgingly.

Then I had a series of very difficult calls to make. I had meetings with the CEOs of each client firm and told them everything. I confessed that our books were billions of dollars out of balance. I explained that the problems were caused by our own management issues and misbehavior. But, I then described our solution: the 15 critical, experienced officers who had been fired had been rehired, and 60 outside accountants in addition to 30 in-house accountants were all manually balancing accounts to provide accurate input to the system that was running their 401(k) statements. And we removed Magnificent Seven–installed software and reinstalled the system which had worked for many years.

Then I made a promise: if they stuck by us for the next 90 days to give us the necessary time to repair our operations, I would guarantee they wouldn't lose a cent, and we would make them fully whole if we didn't get it fixed and they switched to one of our competitors. Plus, they would be customers of a very strong and stable trust company that would never forget their loyalty.

> I confessed that our books were billions out of balance, caused by our own management's misbehavior.

We lost only one small customer to our competition. From that point forward, the company grew to be significantly bigger than it was before the crisis, and within a short period of time it became very profitable. In the end, being responsible to customers was the right thing to do for everyone.

The real heroes of this story were the 15 critical officers who unselfishly came back to the company and, along with almost 1,000 other employees, helped the company repair and recover. When the turnaround was complete, we had a huge party for all employees including the families of the 15 officers. We presented each with a bonus of one year's salary and a trip to Hawaii with their spouses. There wasn't a dry eye in the place, including mine, when the 15 officers were given a standing ovation that lasted for over five minutes.

I can't pretend to have all the answers to being a responsible business leader, but I can share the valuable lessons that I've learned. One: Doing the right thing is not always the easy thing. Two: The things we fail to do can be just as regrettable as the things we do that we shouldn't. Three: Don't underestimate the value of experience and corporate intelligence that walks out the door when a key employee or officer is fired. Four: Integrity comes first . . . but your customers are always close behind. TCB

Mark W. Sheffert (mark@manchester-companies.com) is chairman and CEO of Minneapolis-based Manchester Companies, Inc., a provider of financial-advisory, corporate-renewal, and performance-improvement services.

BY VANCE K. OPPERMAN

Occupy This!

A Manifesto for Real Change

To: The Consensus
(Occupy Wall Street),
Zuccotti Park
New York City

Dear Consensus:

The last 10 years have seemed like an era when protestors should have been in the street. The Middle East wars, now entering their second decade, have failed to produce the protests we saw during Vietnam. That isn't because these wars are more just or have more domestic support, but because we have a volunteer military. Without the draft, young people have no self-interest to protect in the obscurities of foreign policy.

Unemployment continues at the highest levels in 40 years; while officially reported at 8.6 percent at press time, the actual number, including those who have given up looking for work, approaches 17 percent, and the under 25 percentage is greater still. Even U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, in a recent speech, pointed out that the most affluent 400 individuals earned an average of $340 million and paid only 17 percent income tax. Their tax rate is famously said to be below that paid by Warren Buffett's secretary. Outrage is justified. And so, because a democracy functions best when it exercises the First Amendment and because I grew up in the protest-filled '60s, I offer a few modest suggestions to Occupy Wall Street.

• **Find A Message** John Candy in his holiday movie *Planes, Trains, and Automobiles,* played a lonely shower curtain hook salesman always telling endless stories. Steve Martin reminded him that the next time he told a story, he needed to have a point. That movie should be shown at the OWS encampments; these folks don't seem to have a coherent point.

Michael Gerson, writing in *The Washington Post*, reports that some of the New York OWS protests were targeting the Church of Scientology. There have been protesters in Philadelphia denouncing Comcast, while in Boston OWS was targeting the Israeli Consulate (the Harvard Club as well). The media has attempted to find a touchstone in the various Occupy encampments, and consequently the slogan "we are the 99 percent" gets a lot of play.

This isn't a message with which to rally a great number of people, particularly when the 99 percent looks more like 99 people—and those 99 don't look like most Americans. But more importantly, as one coalesces around the slogan ("we are the 99 percent"), what is its message? It sounds ominously like a lynch mob searching for the 1 percent.

• **Size Matters** If an organization does not attract many members, media attention will wane and it will be assumed that the matter is of no importance. OWS attempts to mitigate this problem by claiming that tent-city occupations of public spaces represents a new approach to protest. Those who recall Hoovervilles would beg to differ.

But there is an additional problem with creating the illusion of mass by spreading multi-colored tents out like tail feathers on a peacock. Tent encampments are easily removed by police for reasons of public heath and safety. Once these encampments are cleaned out, as we have seen in Zuccotti Park—and to a lesser extent the OWS encampment in Lafayette Park in D.C.—they do not generally return. And more to the point, the difficulty with tent encampments in northern cities isn't so much the police as it is winter.

ON THE WEB

For a brief YouTube taste of the incendiary nature of the Vietnam-era *Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* on CBS, follow the link: **bit.ly/uhfW8d**

• **Define A Structure** OWS claims to operate entirely by "consensus." Many of its meetings are run by the use of a "human microphone," a practice whereby a person's words are repeated back in unison by the assemblage. To use a *Star Trek* metaphor, it's Borg-like. Without a defined leadership structure, there is no continuity of message and in a large democracy such as ours, that dooms an organization to failure. You must be able to answer the request, "take us to your leader."

• **Employ the Relevance of Popular Culture** The anti-war movement permeated our culture: one could see it on TV (*The Man from U.N.C.L.E., The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*), in countless movies (*Coming Home*), hear its music (Dylan, Ochs), and march in almost every city. What has OWS given this culture—perhaps a new reality television program?

• **Know What to Occupy** To occupy something—especially Wall Street, which has been occupied for 300 years—isn't much of an accomplishment. You should consider occupying Congress by electing better representation. Peter Schweizer, in his new book, *Throw Them All Out,* documents the "honest graft" of those who currently occupy Congress. Renewing our government is a worthy goal and if you have the stamina and strength to pull it off, you will have a truly historic outcome, like ending the Vietnam War or enacting Civil Rights legislation.

So get out of your tents, take to the streets, go door to door, and occupy Congress via the ballot box. Call us up—there are a lot of experienced marchers who would support that occupation.

Vance K. Opperman,
Experienced Protester

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