Making a Difference

In this issue, the San Diego Business Journal presents its inaugural SD 50. Here you will find 50 of San Diego’s most influential leaders who have made a significant difference during these unprecedented times, in a year that has turned out to be far from ordinary.

The SD 50 showcases those executives from businesses and organizations who have made a positive impact during the COVID-19 crisis by leading their companies to adapt quickly to the changing environment as well as those who rose to the occasion to help the community. Many are philanthropy leaders, in charge of nonprofits who took immediate action to serve those most in need.

There are plenty of recognizable names who have made the list and several that you may not recognize who you will now get to know. It was definitely a challenging task in selecting these recipients because so many leaders in our community are making positive contributions.

We are a community of action where we understand what leadership really means and we want to take this opportunity to applaud everyone's efforts. We also want to thank you, the readers, who continue to support the San Diego Business Journal, because of your support we are able to work diligently to provide coverage that gives us hope and optimism as our community continues to rebuild.

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Leadership From A to Z

Here are the people that readers will find while paging through the inaugural SD 50.

John Alessio, managing partner at Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Saitta LLP, approached the COVID-19 pandemic as head of veteran and military spouse pro bono programs at the firm and worked to meet their needs. He recognized the economic threat faced by clients and worked to meet their needs.

Steve Bernstein, San Diego market executive at Wells Fargo Commercial Banking, led an effort to reach out to 100% of Wells Fargo customers to check on their safety. Bernstein also serves as chairman of the board for the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank and helped raise money to serve more than 700,000 meals per week.

Gerry Borja, diversity and inclusion head for civil and military spouse programs at Oracle, started thinking differently about his work. He was able to open a military internship program to civilian military spouses and immediately had to switch to a 100% virtual program.

Rob Henderson, senior VP of operations, Westmont Living, used his leadership skills to adopt all measures by the staff so that the company has had extraordinary results including the fact that both San Diego County and Westmont communities of La Mesa and Escondido experienced no COVID-19 infections from residents or staff. Overall, companies like theirs experienced the same most of the company's two communities but were immediately identified and isolated so to not create any further harm.

Larry Nishnick, corporate and securities partner at DLA Piper LLP, was part of the initial DLA task force assigned with assisting clients with the CARES Act programs including advising and counseling on available government programs such as the Main Street lending program and the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).

Eric Northbrook, managing director at Vort Real Estate Services, helped the local Voit office raise more than $3,000 to provide more than 250 lunches from Freshii to workers at Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla, Sharp Grossmont Hospital and Sharp Memorial Hospital.

Keith Olmo, CEO, Jan-Pro of San Diego began supplying the office and commercial cleaning franchise network with Electrostatic sprayers and hospital grade disinfectants. He kept all full time employees employed in mid-19 with a 30% decrease in revenue due to shutdowns.

Liva Ordóñez, dean, Rady School of Management UCSD, spearheaded the Rady School’s COVID-19 Response Team, which provides consultation, education, and insights to local entrepreneurs and small businesses throughout the San Diego region navigate the unprecedented challenges faced by COVID-19.

Mark Peters, VP, operations manager, Swinerton hired a full-time employee to clean/sanitize high traffic areas, common spaces, conference rooms, touch points, and other cleaning efforts, every day for several days a week. There have also been office protocols in place to keep all employees safe.

Cheri Pierre, CEO, Computers 2 Kids, San Diego engaged the help of and forged relationships with community leaders and businesses to ensure C2K had the resources to meet the 12,000+ applications from families who need a computer to continue the educational disruption and facilitate the continuity of learning.

Victor Ramsauer, CEO, president, shareholder, LevitZacks, Certified Public Accountants has been transparent by starting virtual employee meetings with 50% of the team overall and email communication. Ramsauer has given his staff the strong feelings that the firm is doing right in dealing with the pandemic.

Robert Robinson, managing partner, Hickman Robinson Yaeger LLP recognized there was a dire need for his firm’s assistance among small business owners. He opened up his schedule, largely on a pro bono basis, for small business owners, spending hours each day on the phone counseling small business owners on how to survive, adapt to or thrive through the COVID-19 crisis.

Nathan Rogge, president and CEO, Bank of Southern California saw an opportunity to support local businesses and help get the economy back on track. The bank opened its doors to both customers and non-customers and provided PPP loans for 2.200 businesses.

Nancy Sasaki, president & CEO, United Way of San Diego County created the Workers’ Assistance Initiative for low-wage workers who experienced job loss or wage reduction due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Jine Northbrook, CEO, Chelsea Feeding San Diego worked to provide nutritious meals to underserved populations in the San Diego region.

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**QUOTABLE:** “Everyone wants to be a person of value in a world of meaning. We need to remember this and try to make it a reality for others and ourselves.”

**NOTABLE:** John is both Procopio’s CEO and a practicing attorney. He’s a veteran of the company, Steve previously served as division manager for Southern California Banking and middle market banking customers in San Diego County. A 17-year veteran of the company, Steve previously served as division manager for Southern California Business Banking, and business deposit consultant area manager.

**DAY JOB:** Steve’s job is to serve his team, customers and community. In his role as Wells Fargo Market Executive for San Diego, Steve takes this mission to heart, helping his team provide financial services for commercial banking customers.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** To keep employees safe, Steve mobilized >30 team members to work from home within seven days. He made sure his team reached out to 100% of their customers to check on their safety. For the community, as Chairman of the Board for Jacobs & Cushman SD Food Bank, Steve helped raise money to serve >700k meals per/week, up from 450k per/week pre-COVID. At home, Steve’s partnered with his wife to homeschool their three children.

**NOTABLE:** Steve serves on 5 boards: SD Chamber of Commerce, San Diego State, National University, Jacobs & Cushman SD Food Bank, and Ronald McDonald House.

**QUOTABLE:** “The best investment you can make in life, is the investment in becoming your best self.”

**DAY JOB:** As part of BNBuilders senior management team, Jamie helps to lead the strategic growth in Southern California, manages select projects, and helps oversee the operations and financial success of the company. He is deeply involved with business development and fostering the inclusive, open, and entrepreneurial culture that characterizes BNBuilders.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** During this COVID-19 pandemic, Jamie has overseen the senior management team responsible for maintaining operations on nearly all San Diego construction projects and keeping staff employed with minimal disruption. He was also instrumental in the development of comprehensive company-wide and regional pandemic protocols. His efforts have helped the company maintain operational and financial stability, implement updated safety protocols, and ensure employee retention.

**NOTABLE:** Jamie helped grow BNBuilders’ Southern California revenue ten-fold from $30M in 2014 to $300M in 2020, with plans for an additional Los Angeles office.

**QUOTABLE:** “As we navigate this current pandemic, it is time to remain calm, not let fear guide our actions, and innovate and connect in new ways.”

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**QUOTABLE:** “I cannot stress enough the value and quality these veteran and military spouse internships provide organizations who are fortunate to have such talent in critical roles (At Oracle, investing in veterans and military spouses is a win for our company.)”

**NOTABLE:** Oracle is proud that over 65 percent of its veteran and military spouse interns come from diverse backgrounds and almost 60 percent (of its participants) receiving offers (to remain at Oracle.)

**QUOTABLE:** “I love to make Florida famous by providing the best, most affordable, highest-quality food to as many people as possible.”

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** During the Spring 2020 Oracle Veteran Internship Program, Gerry was able to open the military internship program to civilian military and civilian schools, he has completed numerous HR, Diversity and Recruiting related professional assessments and trainings. Gerry served in the U.S. Army.

**DAY JOB:** Gerry leads Veteran and Military Spouse initiatives for Oracle HR Diversity. He is also responsible for Diversity’s community engagement events nationwide through Oracle volunteers. His programs impact underrepresented students, the disabled and the company’s employee resource groups. He recently was invited to the White House for Oracle’s Military Spouse initiatives.

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Make a Difference with C2K

“In these challenging times, when addressing the digital divide is more urgent than ever, your leadership of Computers 2 Kids is truly making a difference in so many kids’ lives.”

- Tammy and Larry Hershfield, C2K Co-Founders

CONGRATULATIONS CHÉRI PIERRE
For your leadership & impact on San Diego during COVID-19

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We couldn’t do what we do without our corporate partners, who helped us successfully begin receiving and refurbishing their computers. 100% of your donation will be tax deductible!

www.c2sdk.org  |  p. (858) 200-9787  |  e. info@c2sdk.org
Computers 2 Kids, San Diego  |  8324 Miramar Mall, San Diego, CA 92121
**JUNE 29, 2020**

**QUOTABLE:**

different economic, racial, ethnic and gender affiliations.

rate performance acknowledges the university’s success in serving students of many

State University students are graduating at record high rates across all seven colleges,

placed No. 45 nationally on the U.S. News list of “most innovative schools.” San Diego

**NOTABLE:**

every space on campus in preparation for reopening. Her leadership was critical in

and related equipment available to students, faculty, and staff. At her core, Rosie represents

money and remains a top financial performer in the industry while balancing service and convenience and driving efficiency in operations.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** Recognizing that the pandemic had adversely impacted

SDCCU continues to provide breakthrough banking products and deliver banking services that save customers

**QUOTABLE:** “We Can Do It!” Rosie the Riveter. These simple yet powerful words

**QUOTABLE:** “I will never, ever, stand down in my assertion that we must each con-

demn the systemic racism that both enables and protects these vile acts of violence

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** Launched COVID-19 online Small Business

**DAY JOB:** Brown’s day is a mix of

**DAY JOB:** Leadership of a major university in San Diego. She is responsible for thou-

**DAY JOB:** Paul is responsible for

**QUOTABLE:** “Seniors need us now more than ever before. We’re dedicated to meet-

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** Paul has been working nonstop with the leadership team to implement appropriate procedures to ensure the health and safety of staff and volunteers on the frontlines.

**QUOTABLE:** “The Rosie Network transcends time, ethnicity, social status, and gender. At her core, Rosie represents what our country is truly capable of, especially during times of crisis. She represents the strength of individuals rising together for the betterment of our nation.”

**DAY JOB:** Brown is a nationally recognized subject matter and advocate expert on military

**DAY JOB:** Dr. Adela de la Torre was appointed as the new president of San Diego State University in June 2018. She is the ninth permanent president of SDSU and the first woman to serve in that role.

**NOTABLE:** Stephanie grew up in the military, married into the military, raised two

**NOTABLE:** Stephanie Brown, CEO & Founder

**DAY JOB:** Teresa Campbell, President & CEO

**DAY JOB:** Paul Downey, President & CEO

**PRE-PACKAGED TO-GO MEALS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC.**
Thank you Betzy for your visionary leadership in our community during these unprecedented times.

AMPLIFY BETZY’S VISION

Here’s your opportunity to make an impact in the lives of children, families, and seniors in need. Thanks to the generosity of the Potiker Family Foundation’s 1-to-1 matching gift up to $50,000, your donation counts twice! We’re counting on you.

MAKE YOUR GIFT NOW!

LEARN MORE AND DONATE AT LFJCC.ORG/APPEAL
SD50 50 MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Michael “Mick” Farrell, CEO
ResMed

DAY JOB: As CEO, Mick Farrell leads over 7,500 ResMedians in pioneering innovative solutions that treat and keep people out of the hospital, empowering them to live healthier, higher-quality lives. He and President/COO Rob Douglas co-lead a 14-person “CEO Operations” management team that establishes and executes company-wide strategies in service of its 30-year mission to improve quality of life, reduce the impact of chronic disease, and lower costs for consumers and the healthcare system in more than 140 countries.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: As a global leader in the development and production of a range of respiratory care devices, under Mick’s leadership, ResMed quickly responded to the unprecedented global demand for critical life-saving ventilators and bilevel devices. In January, the company shifted manufacturing resources to triple its output of ventilators, and scale up ventilation mask production more than tenfold. ResMed produced over 52,000 ventilators from January through March, and is building many thousands more of these life-saving devices while demand remains high around the world.

NOTABLE: ResMed has changed over 110 million lives in the past year, providing a ResMed medical device, full mask system, or digital health solutions for out-of-hospital care.

QUOTABLE: “We helped save lives with tens of thousands of ventilators during this crisis, while also helping millions of people with sleep apnea, COPD, asthma, and out-of-hospital care.”

Mike Fasulo, President & COO
Sony Electronics
Mike Fasulo values building and supporting diverse work environments where qualities are recognized and celebrated. He and his management team hire individuals across generations, socioeconomic/educational backgrounds and sexual orientations. His leadership style creates safe spaces for employees’ honest conversations, resulting in cohesion, innovation and successes.

DAY JOB: Mike’s leadership across management teams drives company-wide initiatives through consumer electronics and professional markets (R&D, engineering, sales, marketing, distribution, CSR). Sony is the leading manufacturer of end-to-end solutions from 4K professional broadcast equipment to 4K and 8K HD TVs. Mike’s expertise is instrumental in Sony’s continued innovation and success.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Mike’s frequent and honest company-wide communications have been a tremendous support for Sony employees across the nation, offering consistency and a sense of calm during a time of uncertainty. In addition, Mike was the champion sponsor of an initiative whereby Sony was able to distribute 21,000+ N95 masks to first responders at hospitals in California, New York, New Jersey and Baja California.

NOTABLE: Sony Corporation established “Sony Global Relief $100 million Fund for COVID-19” to provide support to those impacted by the pandemic around the world.

QUOTABLE: “We are in difficult times. I’ve seen our employees offer their best. 74 years of Sony’s global leadership isn’t easily shaken, neither are our employees.”

Bradley Feldmann, Chairman, President & CEO, Cubic Corporation
Bradley Feldmann has served as president and CEO of Cubic Corporation since July 2014. He was appointed to the board of directors in May 2014 and was elected as chairman of the board in February 2018. Prior to becoming CEO, Feldmann was president and COO.

DAY JOB: Feldmann leads the operations of Cubic Corporation, including its global transportation and defense businesses. He dedicates himself to serving customers while driving corporate strategy and execution, ensuring financial performance, growth and shareholder value. He champions Cubic’s culture, encourages growth through innovation while always prioritizing employees’ health and well-being.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Feldmann’s proactive, empathetic and transparent leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic has allowed Cubic to anticipate and quickly implement measures to care for employees, meet customer commitments and support the community. Cubic repurposed its manufacturing capabilities to produce face coverings for customers and also donated them to hospitals, employees and their families. In response to a shortage of ventilators, Cubic developed a prototype ventilator and a game-based training program for ventilator operators.

NOTABLE: Feldmann strives to empower employees with a clear vision and purpose. He is incredibly compassionate and will always take a stand for what is right.

QUOTABLE: “Care for your people and customers; stay true to your purpose. Deliver on what is needed, the rest can wait until we recover from COVID-19.”

Jim Floros, President & CEO, Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank
Jim Floros joined the San Diego Food Bank from the Burn Institute where he served as executive director and CEO from 1992 to 2012. He has presided over a major expansion of Food Bank programs, facility improvements & an increase in the number of people helped by the Food Bank every month to 350,000.

DAY JOB: During these challenging times, a typical day for Jim includes collaborating with key officials on how to support our community, working with partnerships to meet the increasing needs of the unemployed/furloughed and children no longer receiving subsidized meals, and working with our Programs staff on food distribution opportunities and challenges.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Jim has led the San Diego Food Bank and its North County chapter to meet the huge demand from families impacted by the pandemic. The Food Bank is distributing 67% more food and feeding nearly 600,000 people monthly. Under Jim’s leadership, the Food Bank will continue to provide a vital safety net for San Diegans in need.

NOTABLE: Since COVID-19, the Food Bank has distributed 10 million pounds of food and purchased $3 million of food to meet the demand for help.

QUOTABLE: “We are the right organization at the right place and the right time. The San Diego Food Bank will support our community throughout this crisis.”
THANK YOU, PRESIDENT JAMES T. HARRIS III

for being an inspirational leader during difficult times — and for showing Toreros around the world how the University of San Diego’s Changemakers confront humanity’s urgent challenges! #TorerosTogether
JUNE 29, 2020

**SD 50**

50 MAKING A DIFFERENCE

**QUOTABLE:** “This too shall pass, and rebuilding is always faster/easier if we never stopped building at all, or did whatever we could to stop a complete collapse.”

**NOTABLE:** In disseminating innovative disruptive solutions rapidly to users within the UCSD campus, the local SD biotech and pharma, and by training the next generation on how to use them, the Center seeks to be the kind of tide that lifts all boats.

**DAY JOB:** Guy Halgren has been Chairman of the firm since 2001. He joined the firm in 1986 and for 15 years had an active labor and employment practice. Under Guy’s leadership, Sheppard Mullin has experienced 19 consecutive years of revenue increases, attorney headcount growth and office expansions. Guy is a hands-on leader. Whether it be taking the lead on establishing a race, inclusion and equality task force, meeting with potential lateral partner candidates, or making the hard choices to cut expenses, Guy is focused on ensuring the health and well-being—both financial and spiritual—of the firm.

**DAY JOB:** Dr. Ghosh oversees the research and staff of the Center’s three pillars. In addition, she is a practicing Gastroenterologist at the VA San Diego. She leads and teaches with compassion and vigor, bringing a new level to transdisciplinary research.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** Along with leading her research and administrative staff with compassion and strong course during these trying times, her agility has brought together a multidisciplinary team for a new mission of combating COVID-19. Dr. Ghosh immediately deployed two of the Center’s assets to conduct research that provides computational framework to identify targets and human-like lung models to potentially reduce the loss of lives.

**QUOTABLE:** “Now is the time to demonstrate we are one, united community and that we will overcome this pandemic by helping each other out in any way we can,” said Hall. “We feel very fortunate to have met some amazing people, albeit under these circumstances, and are confident that our community will continue coming together to serve one another.”

**NOTABLE:** As California has continued to develop cannabis regulations, Tony has focused primarily on long-term business strategy, business growth and team expansion.

**DAY JOB:** Tony is involved in the day-to-day business and practices of Torrey Holistics. He focuses primarily on long-term business strategy, business growth and team expansion.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** Tony Hall has donated over 10,000 N95 face masks and over 20,000 hand sanitizers to various health centers, local organizations, customers and staff since mid-March. With shortages of medical supplies around the country caused by the COVID-19 international health crisis, Hall saw an opportunity to directly help his community, the medical workers on the frontlines, and those most vulnerable. Hall decided to expand his efforts by supporting senior populations and their caregivers during the COVID-19 crisis. Hall donated a portion of April sales from Torrey Holistics to St. Paul’s Senior Services and the Senior Adult Department at the Lawrence Family JCC.

**DAY JOB:** Vince has implemented changes to food distribution to protected staff against transmission, and has taken steps to acquire significantly more food than normal, to meet the demand caused by widespread unemployment. He has turned to the community for additional financial assistance, helping raise $11M just during the last two and half months. Vince anticipates Feeding San Diego’s total revenue for fiscal year ending June 30, will be over $185M, doubling from $91M generated last fiscal year. Feeding San Diego has provided 6.5 million prepared meals since start of pandemic in March 2020. Feeding San Diego’s Emergency Food Assistance Program distributes emergency food packages at 90 different locations across San Diego County every month.

**QUOTABLE:** “Prior to the pandemic, Feeding San Diego produced 3 thousand prepared meals for kids. Now, that number is over 25,000. Children are the most innocent among us and we cannot fail to protect their health and invest in their future.”

**NOTABLE:** The San Diego Food Bank’s Emergency Food Assistance Program distributes emergency food packages at 90 different locations across San Diego County every month.
San Diego Business Journal

50 MAKING A DIFFERENCE

James T. Harris, President
University of San Diego

Originally from Ohio, James T. Harris III, Ed.D., is the fourth president of the University of San Diego. He recently served as chair of the board of trustees of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), and was previously the president of Widener University and Defiance College.

DAY JOB: As president, Dr. Harris organizes his day to be accessible to members of the campus community and has a reputation for being visible across campus. He leads the university’s Envisioning 2024 strategic plan, which boldly positions USD at the forefront of Catholic higher education by our 75th anniversary in 2024.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Throughout the crisis, Dr. Harris has exemplified calm resilience and compassion, especially for students. Together with tireless faculty and staff, he has worked to ensure academic continuity and communicate the challenges ahead with transparency. Dr. Harris also seeks out ways the university can serve the greater community. Under his leadership, USD collaborated with county leaders to establish the USD campus as a free COVID-19 testing site, an action centered around supporting underserved and underrepresented populations in our local community.

NOTABLE: For the past 24 years, Dr. Harris has annually traveled with students internationally, most recently visiting Uganda for a project focused on improving water quality.

QUOTABLE: “Times like these can produce feelings of hopelessness, but they can also give us hope for humanity as we see people take extraordinary measures to be of service to others.”

Rob Henderson, SVP of Operations
Westmont Living

Rob Henderson has spent his entire 22+ year career serving seniors. In 2019 Rob joined Westmont Living as the SVP of Operations. Rob holds a Skilled Nursing Administrator license along with a RCFE Certification and is also a Certified Director of Assisted Living. He is a graduate of SDSU and is a proud father of three wonderful children.

DAY JOB: Rob leads the overall operations of the organization by directly supporting the regional teams who support our Senior Living communities directly. Rob focuses on growing the business from both a profitability and a cultural perspective. Rob leads many of the growth initiatives that allow us to constantly improve our care and services to the seniors we serve.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: The COVID-19 crisis did not affect all industries equally, in fact, the senior services industry was hit harder than most. It took great skill and leadership by Rob Henderson to navigate the instituting of life-saving preventions and new operational norms to protect the residents of Westmont Living Communities but to also protect the staff and essential medical workers that go into the communities on a daily basis. Rob’s leadership skills were seen by an enthusiastic adoption of all measures by the staff so that the company has had extraordinary results including the fact that both San Diego County Westmont communities of Chula Vista, La Mesa and Escondido experienced no Covid-19 infections from residents or staff. Overall, company-wide they experienced cases at two communities but were immediately isolated and identified so as not to create any further harm.

NOTABLE: Westmont Living is a company with a strong work ethic and entrepreneurial approach to senior living. Even though Rob is a Senior Vice President, he is a true servant leader by being humble, friendly and approachable to all staff. His management style is participative and team focused. And, he has a great sense of humor.

QUOTABLE: “I don’t believe in top-down management. I believe in more of a ‘knights of the round-table’ approach. I think it is important that everyone on the team has a say, regardless if it is outside of their department.” Rob Henderson, Senior Vice President, Operations, Westmont Living.

To support underserved populations in the local community, the University of San Diego worked with county leaders to establish the USD campus as a free drive-up testing site for COVID-19.

Nathan Rogge, President and CEO of Bank of Southern California, leads with passion and purpose and is committed to supporting our local communities.

On behalf of Bank of Southern California, we congratulate you on this honor and are proud to celebrate one of the most influential leaders in San Diego.

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Bank of Southern California
DAY JOB: Ingo oversees every service truck in California, and strives to provide high-quality cable and internet installations for customers. He ensures Cox Communications not only provides excellent service but service built on the trust of human connection. Ingo sets the tone for his staff by finding the best solution for each customer, every time.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Ingo and Cox Communications adapted an 8-year-old program for the emerging needs of a community facing COVID-19, and worked hard to deliver it. Cox launched Connect2Compete in 2012 in San Diego to bring low-cost high-speed internet service to K-12 students. For $9.95 per month, customers receive in-home Wi-Fi and free professional installation from Cox techs. When COVID forced schools to close in March and students had to learn from home, it showed how much there is still a digital divide because not all students had a computer or internet access at home. During the pandemic, there was an increased need from schools to ensure their low-income students had internet access at home for distance learning. Cox created a fast-track sign-up process for Connect2Compete. Cox had a huge volume of families wanting to enroll in Connect2Compete, so Ingo and his team of techs worked hard to get families installed as soon as possible as they switched to distance learning. In addition, to help students without home internet, Cox offered up to four months of free internet through Connect2Compete through July 15 so they could finish the school year from home.

NOTABLE: Cox Communications is a fourth-generation family owned company, a feat only about 3% of family owned businesses achieve.

QUOTABLE: “Always challenge yourself to find new ways to serve others. You will never be disappointed with the outcome.”

Kathryn Lembo, President & CEO
South Bay Community Services

Ingo Hentschel, VP of Field Operations
Cox Communications

Baron Herdelin-Doherty, President & CEO, YMCA of San Diego County
With more than 35 years of YMCA executive experience, Baron Herdelin-Doherty currently serves as President & CEO of the YMCA of San Diego County. Since 2010, Baron has led the largest Y in the nation, where nearly 500,000 San Diego County residents are receiving the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve greater health and well-being.

DAY JOB: Herdelin-Doherty is a passionate, mission-driven leader who is dedicated to the needs of San Diego families - and lives this every day in his work. He recognizes that for our communities to succeed, everyone must be given the opportunity to be healthy, confident, connected and secure. His focus is on serving more people, in more locations, in an equal and fair way. Baron is constantly connecting with colleagues, volunteers, donors and the community - all things that make the YMCA what it is.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: In light of losing most of the Y’s earned revenue, Baron never lost focus on the vision of ensuring the Y’s viability 100 years from now. He led the team to create a “Virtual YMCA” almost overnight which has been serving thousands of San Diegans – not just Y members – with free enriching programs for children, social activities and physical and mental health programs for all ages, and a special focus on engaging our vulnerable senior population.

NOTABLE: While Baron leads the largest YMCA in the nation, it’s his personable, approachable persona that really shines. Monday happens to be his favorite day of the week - a testament to his positive outlook in all situations.

QUOTABLE: “The YMCA has been serving our community for 138 years, and will continue for another 100 by focusing on addressing our society’s most pressing needs.”

Alessandra Lezama, Founder & CEO, TOOTRIS
Alessandra Lezama is an entrepreneur and PE backed CEO, advocate for women pursuing careers in tech and other STEM fields, angel investor to San Diego-based early-stage companies, and Founder and CEO of TOOTRIS, an on-demand technology platform that is reinventing how parents access and pay for affordable, high-quality Child Care.

DAY JOB: With 20 years of experience building companies from the ground up, Alessandra is hands-on when it comes to developing relationships with investors and strategically directing TOOTRIS, from technology design to marketing. Every day, she is heavily engaged in Policy Change Advocacy through the various committees and councils she sits on.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Alessandra founded TOOTRIS, the first and only technology service provider that enables parents to re-integrate into the workforce, particularly after COVID-19, knowing that their child is safe and enjoying high-quality, curriculum-based Child Care in small group settings. TOOTRIS provides virtual tours, contactless enrollments and scholarship grants for parents, as well as free access to ECE materials, Safety-First cleaning kits and financial assistance for verified TOOTRIS providers – all at no cost to the parent or provider.

NOTABLE: As a minority immigrant and single mom striving for a better future, Alessandra shattered glass ceilings and made her way through a male-dominated industry (Technology).

QUOTABLE: “We believe in the strength that comes from unity, and the extraordinary that comes from diversity.”
Kevin Mattson, President & CEO
San Ysidro Health
Kevin Mattson has more than 35 years of leadership experience in the healthcare field. He is proud to serve in his capacity as CEO, and is committed to the mission of San Ysidro Health. Ensuring quality healthcare for those that need it has always been part of his career.

DAY JOB: Kevin oversees a staff of over 1,600 team members located at 41 sites throughout San Diego County that are dedicated to the 107,000 lives in their care. Under his tenure, SYHealth has exponentially grown in volume and expansion of innovative healthcare services (medical, dental and behavioral health) for the entire family.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Through Kevin’s leadership, San Ysidro Health transformed its system of care to telehealth visits for all, especially our most vulnerable neighbors. Essential health services including behavioral health remain accessible in the safest manner during this pandemic through telehealth. SYHealth is also offering COVID-19 testing, food distribution and enhanced in-home services for seniors and their families through its Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (San Diego PACE).

NOTABLE: San Ysidro Health was founded by 7 mothers looking for medical care for their children over 50 years ago in a little white house.

QUOTABLE: “Improving the well-being of our struggling neighbors is more than our mission statement, it’s what guides us in everything we do now more than ever.”

Betzy Lynch, CEO, Lawrence Family JCC | Jacobs Family Campus

Betzy Lynch has held leadership roles at JCC’s around the country and is currently LFJCC/CEO. She served on many boards including Planned Parenthood and JCC Association. Some of her accolades include: SD Magazine Celebrating Women Awards nominee, SDBJ’s Business Women of the Year Award and SD500 Most Influential People.

DAY JOB: I have had the gift of working for 20 years in the Jewish Community Center movement in five amazing communities across the country. I am so grateful to have the opportunity to impact the Jewish community of the present and carry out its mission to provide social, cultural, educational, and recreational programs to individuals and families of all ages, religions, races, financial abilities, and physical and mental abilities.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Betzy has lead a strategic fundraising effort, and implemented a crisis response task force to re imagine the center’s business model. With vision and proactive management, she has expedited a Small Business PPP loan and convened essential conversations with other community leaders. Betzy also ensured outreach to isolated seniors and lead a book drive for the Boys and Girls Club. Throughout these tumultuous last few months, Betzy has maintained engagement with the community through free virtual programming, and helped address mental health preparedness in the community.

NOTABLE: Betzy went out of her way to direct traffic herself and personally welcome families back when the preschool reopened on May 26.

QUOTABLE: “The world has become a different place. What remains constant is the LFJCC’s dedication to helping you live your best life, welcome new guests, and connect to the community at-large.”

James Awford, Principal, Collaborative People, Progressive Builders.

BNBuilders congratulates our Principal, James Awford on making SDBJ’s 50 Leaders Making a Difference list for 2020!

James has been at the forefront of our growth in the Southern California region and truly personifies our motto – Collaborative People, Progressive Builders.

Company of San Diego, Borrego Springs Library
County of San Diego, Borrego Springs Library
UC San Diego, Design Institute on Science and Technology
Vertex Pharmaceuticals, San Diego Research Center
Scripps MD Anderson Cancer Center
Borrego Springs Library
San Diego Research Center, UC San Diego, Design Institute, Science and Technology
Vertex Pharmaceuticals, San Diego Research Center
San Diego Research Center, UC San Diego, Design Institute, Science and Technology

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SD 50 50 MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Neal McFarlane, President & CEO
McFarlane Architects, Inc.

Neal McFarlane is responsible for the success, design, and management of each project at McFarlane Architects. He personally supervises each project manager to ensure the client’s goals are achieved. He has designed more than 8,000,000 square feet of life science and advanced technology facilities.

DAY JOB: McFarlane is a daily resource to all clients by answering their emails and returning their phone calls concerning facility design, planning, and operations. Other daily tasks include meeting with clients, reviewing project status with project managers, conceptualizing new designs, executing contracts, and mentoring the firm’s young professionals.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: In a short period of time under a new operating norm, McFarlane had to expand design and production capabilities to assist several of its clients grow their manufacturing and research and development facilities because they are at the forefront of the scientific fight against the Covid-19 virus. Multiple clients have received FDA approval of their products and McFarlane Architects has had to lead the design efforts at record speed to get these new facilities built.

NOTABLE: McFarlane earned his California Architect’s license in record time, 27 months after earning his architectural degree due to having earned 9 months experience during college.

QUOTABLE: “Now is not a time for panic, it’s a time to utilize our resources to find solutions so we can improve our lives and communities.”

Miles McPherson, Pastor
Rock Church

Miles McPherson began his trek out to Southern California as a defensive back from 1982-1985. After giving his life to Christ, in 2000, he started the Rock Church in San Diego, with the purpose to serve the city of San Diego as a “Do Something Church.”

DAY JOB: Miles seeks to bring pervasive hope to the city of San Diego by mobilizing Rock Church attendees to use their gifts and talents to help others. A cornerstone of the San Diego community and reaching over 18,000 people every week, the Rock seeks to reach, equip, and send people to impact their community and beyond. Recently, in his latest book, The Third Option, Miles has become a national leader in spurring on racial reconciliation in our communities.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Miles and the Rock Church mobilized thousands of volunteers to refurbish 300,000 N95 masks, which needed the elastic replaced, for frontline workers. Multiple clients have received FDA approval of their products and McFarlane Architects has had to lead the design efforts at record speed to get these new facilities built.

NOTABLE: Since its’ start, the Rock Church has provided over 5 million hours of community service, valued at nearly $40 million to the city of San Diego.

QUOTABLE: “God can heal all of the unrest, he can bring good out of evil and good out of pain. We’re going to see, I believe, a transformation of San Diego and our country as we go through this. As long as it’s us versus them we’re going to have conflict and division. We need to learn how to serve and love each other instead of everyone fighting for their way.”

Congratulations to
Ingo Hentschel
Vice President of Field Operations

Your leadership, caring and innovative approach to serving our customers and your team during the challenges of 2020 are an inspiration to us all.

COX
Bringing us closer
DAY JOB: Brian led efforts of putting client and colleague safety and well-being first in adapting bank branch operations through the pandemic, including adjusting hours, providing PPE, and stepping up cleaning protocols and communication. He also implemented providing $2,000 in crisis relief pay to assist all branch employees through this challenging time.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Brian and the Union Bank leadership team drove the following; fee waivers, mortgage loan forbearance and other assistance for clients in need: 2,500 PPP loans made to San Diego businesses, totaling $350 million, with a local focus and average loan size of $143K; $3 million commitment to respond to the crisis in our communities; issuing 12 grants, with $300,000 in small business grants and $90,000 for social safety net organizations in San Diego thus far.

NOTABLE: Union Bank has been engrained in the San Diego community since 1883. Today, we have 55 branches in San Diego with more than 1,400 employees.

QUOTABLE: “Banking is a purpose-filled profession and our mission and duty is clear: to help our communities survive in order to thrive again in the future.”

DAY JOB: A.J.’s day job as CEO of C3bank really depends on the day. He wears several hats, from meeting with current and prospective customers to help them create efficiencies and achieve their business goals to making sure his employees have everything they need to succeed. A.J. is a true leader.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: A.J. created and led C3bank’s CARES team, which was formed to help our local businesses secure pivotal SBA PPP loans. Under A.J.’s leadership, C3bank funded PPP loans for around 500 local businesses. A.J. even walked down the streets of Encinitas on the weekends going door to door introducing himself and making sure these businesses were able to get funding. A.J. worked around the clock to ensure C3bank helped every business that needed assistance.

NOTABLE: A.J. was the Captain of the Surf Team at the University of San Diego.

QUOTABLE: “We will have more challenging weeks ahead, but with strong resiliency and by working together as a team, we will prevail.”

Congratulations!

As a proud supporter of Computers 2 Kids, San Diego, Cox congratulates C2K CEO Cheri Pierre for this well-deserved award. Her work to provide families with affordable devices is making a difference in our region. We applaud her efforts to bridge the digital divide.
**50 MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

**Larry Nishnick**, Corporate & Securities Partner, DLA Piper LLP

**DAY JOB:** During COVID-19, Larry has been advising his clients from his home office and participating in virtual board and client meetings. Mr. Nishnick primarily assists with corporate transactions that range from capital markets transactions, mergers and acquisitions, fund-raising transactions and general corporate representation that involves attending Board meetings and client meetings on behalf of his various companies. Mr. Nishnick also represents underwriters and placement agents in corporate transactions.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** Mr. Nishnick was part of the national DLA task force assigned with assisting clients with the CARES Act programs including advising and counseling on available government programs such as the Main Street lending program and the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) which provided access to a forgivable loan under the SBA 7(A) loan program. Mr. Nishnick counseled over 100 companies as part of their decision making to apply for PPP and other relief programs. Mr. Nishnick also advised numerous companies on the California and San Diego stay-at-home orders and assisted with company determinations on whether they could remain open based on being an essential business. Moreover, now that San Diego is moving towards less restrictive measures, Mr. Nishnick is advising companies on steps to re-open their doors and support to San Diegans with catastrophic spinal cord injuries.

**NOTABLE:** DLA Piper (formerly Gray Cary) was established locally in 1927 and is the largest law firm in greater San Diego. Larry Nishnick is an expert in representing institutional owners and investors and investment banks. Recently, Nishnick acted as lead corporate counsel for Maxwell Technologies’s sale to Tesla, Coca-Cola’s investment into Suja Life and helped NuVasive access over $1.4 billion in debt transactions.

**Eric Northbrook**, Managing Director & Partner, Voit Real Estate Services

**DAY JOB:** Northbrook handles business development at Voit Real Estate Services and oversees a workforce of about 50. He also mentors and coaches the brokers in his office. He collaborates with the capital markets team and provides market information and assumptions essential to achieving a maximum sale price at execution. In addition, he specializes in tenant and corporate representation in San Diego and throughout the United States.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** Northbrook rallies the troops in the office to help others. The local Voit office raised more than $3,000 to provide more than 250 lunches from Freshii to workers at Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla, Sharp Grossmont Hospital and Sharp Memorial Hospital. Other efforts brought treats from the Donut Bar as well as water to medical personnel. The office avoided layoffs, and Northbrook stays connected with employees through videoconferencing. It’s not all work. The team gets together for virtual happy hours.

**NOTABLE:** Northbrook is no stranger to personal loss. He tells a harrowing tale of a motorcycle accident in 2006 in Baja California, which left him paralyzed. In an effort to make lemonade out of lemons, he founded the HeadNorth Foundation to offer hope and support to San Diegans with catastrophic spinal cord injuries.

**QUOTABLE:** “In challenging times, there is lots of opportunity. Make the mental shift to opportunity and do it immediately. Those who do will prosper and win the day. Life is about relationships. Even more so today, relationships are very, very important. You may need to get creative to form new relationships.”

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**HR Hickman Robinson Yaege**

**Business Law. Real Estate Law. Litigation.**

**Congratulations to our own Robert P. Robinson for being named to the San Diego 50!**

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“In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity.” — Art of War

Top 5 in Real Estate Law by San Diego Union Tribune • Best of the Bar in San Diego Business Journal

AV Preeminent Rating by Martindale-Hubbel • Top Lawyers in San Diego Magazine • Rising Stars in Super Lawyers Magazine

701 B Street, Suite 1840 • San Diego, California 92101 • 619.819.8383 • HickmanRobinsonLaw.com
CONGRATULATIONS TO PROMISES2KIDS CEO TONYA TOROSIAN!

Tonya has been selected as one of San Diego’s 50 Leaders Making A Difference! As an advocate for foster youth throughout her entire career, Tonya is committed to creating a brighter future for foster children®. She is an exceptional visionary leader who inspires community members to join Promises2Kids’ efforts in providing hope, support and opportunities to San Diego foster children, especially during this unprecedented time.

www.promises2kids.org
(858) 278-4400 | info@promises2kids.org

DAY JOB: Lisa is dedicated to enacting the school’s strategic planning effort that focuses on preparing the next generation of scientists, doctors and entrepreneurs who will make a social impact. The Rady School of Management is a premiere business school and Lisa guides the institution in supporting San Diego businesses.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Lisa spearheaded The Rady School Business Recovery Coalition, which provides consultation, education, and insights to local entrepreneurs and helps businesses in the San Diego region navigate the unprecedented challenges faced by COVID-19. This new initiative draws on expertise from the UC San Diego community to provide immediate pro bono assistance to businesses, like navigating PPP loan assistance programs, during these extraordinary times. Lisa plans to continue developing the coalition and maintain its support for local businesses well after COVID-19 subsides.

NOTABLE: The 17-year-old school has produced 2,500 master’s graduates, helped launch 2,000 start-ups, included 6 IPO’s, and raised $2B in funding for San Diego-based entrepreneurs. 42% of all University of San Diego students will take a class in the Rady School of Management.

QUOTABLE: “The Rady School of Management itself was founded as a response to a need expressed by the San Diego business community. I am so proud that our staff, faculty, students and alumni have focused their creativity and assertion in developing the Rady School Business Recovery Coalition to assist local business during this time of need. It is during times of adversity that we often perform at our best, and I am thankful to all for embracing our core values of innovation and impact.”

DAY JOB: Keith is overseeing and supporting the San Diego office in all aspects from marketing, sales, franchise development, franchise support, customer service, accounting and HR, while building a strong culture and leading the company to new standards of excellence.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: After taking ownership of the office Q4 2019, Olmo began supplying his office and independently owned franchisees with electrostatic sprayers and hospital grade disinfectants. He kept all full-time employees on payroll even with a 30% decrease in revenue due to shutdowns. To help local companies combat the COVID-19 virus, he immediately began building stronger digital presence and advertising to help educate the community on how to combat the virus and maintain clean and healthy work environments.

NOTABLE: Jan-Pro has been voted #1 by Entrepreneur Magazine 12 years in a row, has an A+ accredited BBB rating and 4.9 stars on Google. The San Diego office has one of the highest customer retention rates out of the 100+ national Jan-Pro offices.

QUOTABLE: “We will not turn panic into profit. We will offer assistance wherever and however we can to help protect San Diego businesses and our residents.”

“I am a Promise Maker because every child deserves to be safe, feel wanted and loved.”

Tonya Torosian
Chief Executive Officer

Promises2Kids

#PromiseMaker

Award winning independently owned and operated Jan-Pro of San Diego franchisees Ricardo and Nayade Canales.

Keith Olmo, CEO
Jan-Pro of San Diego

Keith Olmo is the CEO at Jan-Pro of San Diego, a commercial janitorial franchising company serving 1,000 accounts and 120 franchisees in San Diego County. He is a leader nurturing organizations, developing solutions by visualizing possibilities that are both innovative and ethical, and taking advantage of market trends to better serve San Diego County businesses.

Lisa Ordóñez, Dean, Rady School of Management - UC San Diego

Lisa Ordóñez became Dean of the Rady School of Management at UC San Diego beginning September 2019. As dean of the Rady School, Ordóñez applies her operational skills to lead the school’s growth and further cement the school’s global business research prominence as an innovation-focused, economic engine within the San Diego business community and beyond.

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DAY JOB: Mark has extensive experience in commercial building, with proven expertise in all phases of project management, from inception and pre-construction to construction and completion. As Division Manager, he is responsible for the overall management and success of the division. He is responsible for the establishment of policies, procedures, and performance standards required of each project team. The Division Manager provides an important check and balance with the project team by reviewing the project cost analysis, schedule, and quality of the work performed.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Mark has hired a full-time employee to clean/sanitize high traffic areas, common spaces, conference rooms, touch points, restrooms, etc. during business hours, 5 days a week. There have also been office protocols in place to keep all employees safe; i.e. face coverings required when moving about the office, 6 ft of social distance at all times, occupancy maximums for conference rooms, sanitizing stations throughout the office, etc.

NOTABLE: Mark is serving the American Heart Association as a first-time Chairperson this year. From his outreach thus far, there has been over $200,000 in pledges to the AHA. This year’s Heart Walk will undoubtedly be a “virtual walk”— but Mark is working vigorously to stand behind the cause and the dollars that keep the research going.

QUOTABLE: “Our employees’ health and safety is the highest priority and concern during these trying times. Together, we will navigate through these unique situations to provide a safe workplace for all of you.”

DAY JOB: As CEO, Ms. Pierre oversees the overall operations and resources of the organization, managing finances, fundraising, and marketing. Throughout COVID-19, Ms. Pierre actively identifies the communities most vulnerable to ensure C2K’s resources are available to them, while working alongside her staff in the refurbishing warehouse to help meet the needs.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: With school closures due to COVID-19, Ms. Pierre engaged the help of and forged relationships with community leaders and businesses to ensure C2K had the resources to meet the 12,000+ applications from families who need a computer to minimize the educational disruption and facilitate the continuity of learning. She secured additional funding, hired additional IT staff, and implemented a PPE program to ensure C2K remained open during the Shelter-in-Place Order to meet the communities need.

NOTABLE: Under Ms. Pierre’s leadership, C2K operates efficiently with a combined 6% fundraising/management cost, earning C2K the 2014 San Diego County Taxpayer Association’s Golden Watchdog Award.

QUOTABLE: “COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of donating electronics, allowing us to bridge the digital disparity gap at a quicker rate. This will ensure educational equity.”
JUNE 29, 2020

50 MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Victor Ramsauer, CEO, President & Shareholder, LevitZacks, CPAs
As Shareholder, President and now CEO, Victor Ramsauer advises LevitZacks’ clients on the sale, acquisition and divestiture of businesses with values exceeding $175M. He enjoys solving clients’ problems and sees a similar drive in his colleagues across the firm. Ramsauer holds an accounting degree from California State Polytechnic University.

DAY JOB: Ramsauer provides senior leadership regarding business development and strategy planning, advising clients on deal structuring and negotiation, financial reporting research, and designing due diligence procedures. With skills in auditing, mergers and acquisitions and business consulting, Ramsauer has a comprehensive understanding of the government contracting market and Federal Acquisition Regulations.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Ramsauer has been transparent by starting virtual employee meetings with a “state of the firm” discussion. When he asked, “What’s the firm doing right?” the response was unequivocally the way the firm handled the pandemic, by instituting manager check ins with the staff. Everyone loves the culture; that’s why they work at LevitZacks and why they stay. By continuing that culture in a WFH setting, Ramsauer’s leadership is successful in keeping spirits and productivity high.

NOTABLE: LevitZacks holds the honor of being named the 2019 #1 Best Small Accounting Firm to Work For in the United States by Accounting Today.

QUOTABLE: “As we lock arms virtually and try to help one another in the ways we can, our vast world now feels a lot more connected.”

Robert Robinson, Managing Partner
Hickman Robinson Yaeger LLP
Robert Robinson is the Managing Partner at Hickman Robinson Yaeger LLP. He received his BS in accounting from SDSU, JD, Law Review, California Western School of Law. Before opening his own firm, he worked at a large downtown firm, then a boutique La Jolla firm. Robinson is devoted to his firm and his family and has dedicated himself to ensuring success at both.

DAY JOB: Robert is a professional problem solver. As an attorney representing small businesses, business owners, real estate professionals, and property owners, he serves as an important part of his client’s management team, to help them problem solve, adapt and thrive.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Although litigation work dried up due to the Court closures, and transactional work withered due to financing holds and market instability, Robert recognized there was still a dire need for his firm’s assistance among small business owners. He opened up his schedule, largely on a pro bono basis, for small business owners, spending hours each day on the phone counseling small business owners on how to survive, adapt to and/or thrive through the Covid-19 crisis.

NOTABLE: Hickman Robinson Yaeger LLP’s team members are 60% minority, 30% women, and 100% driven.

QUOTABLE: “In chaos, in change, there exists opportunity. It’s those that best adapt that most thrive. So let’s be best at adapting.”
Nathan Rogge, President & CEO
Bank of Southern California

Nathan Rogge, President and CEO of Bank of Southern California, has 30 years industry experience. He has successfully grown the Bank organically as well as through several mergers and acquisitions, including the 2020 acquisition of CalWest Bank. The Bank now operates in five major Counties and has assets over $1B.

DAY JOB: Rogge is responsible for the overall direction and administration of programs, products, and services provided by Bank of Southern California. This includes the company’s financial performance, credit quality, business development, operations, regulatory compliance, and risk management. He also leads the Bank’s strategic growth by engaging in mergers and acquisitions.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: With the passing of the CARES Act, Rogge saw an opportunity to support local businesses and help get the economy back on track. The Bank opened its doors to both customers and non-customers and provided PPP loans for 2,200 businesses, totaling $471.6M. This was just the start. He made significant donations to two Southern California organizations, providing meals for families during COVID-19. These funds were then matched by the FHL Bank, totaling $7,000 in contributions.

NOTABLE: Committed to supporting the business community, employees worked around the clock providing 2,200 businesses with PPP loans to retain/restore jobs for over 53,000 individuals.

QUOTABLE: “We will get through this, together! We must support our employees, customers and communities and do our part to help those in need.”

Nancy Sasaki, President & CEO
United Way of San Diego County

Nancy Sasaki, President and CEO of United Way of San Diego County, has a strong track record of working with diverse communities and building sustainable solutions through collaboration and strategic partnerships. She demonstrates this passion through her work at UWSD so that every child is prepared to succeed in school and in life.

DAY JOB: Sasaki currently serves as the CEO of United Way of San Diego County, a nonprofit organization which works to spark breakthrough community action that elevates every child and family toward a brighter future.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: UWSD created the Worker Assistance Initiative for low-wage workers who experienced job loss or wage reduction due to the COVID-19 crisis. Funds provide financial relief through assistance with rent/mortgage and utility payments. Their Unions United team has continued to provide families in need with access to food. UWSD also offers opportunities for community members to give back to frontline nonprofits by volunteering through the San Diego COVID-19 Volunteer Hub, a partnership with HandsOn San Diego.

NOTABLE: United Way of San Diego County is celebrating 100 years of partnership and impact in the community.

QUOTABLE: “UWSD’s 100 year history inspires our adaptability and perseverance as we face this challenge, in partnership with our community, for a brighter future for all.”

“Making a difference is what we do. We were able to save a business impacted by COVID-19 by providing a PPP loan.”

Congratulations!

Serving Seniors congratulates Paul Downey, President & CEO of Serving Seniors on being recognized for his leadership and impact during the COVID-19 crisis. Since 1995, Paul Downey has guided Serving Seniors’ innovative efforts to provide supportive services focused on keeping low-income seniors healthy and independent. Paul has continued these efforts throughout the COVID-19 pandemic ensuring continued support for older adults during this global crisis.

“Congratulations! The way you lead your team, especially through this crisis, is inspirational to all of us! Serving Seniors and our clients are very fortunate to have you at the helm.”

- Mary Gendron, Sr. Vice President & CIO of Qualcomm and Serving Seniors Board Member

www.servingseniors.org
DAY JOB: On a day to day basis, Jim oversees the strategic direction of Chelsea and its affiliates. He meets with the executive team to manage resources, evaluate business development opportunities, and implement long- and short-term objectives.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: People experiencing homelessness have a disproportionately high mortality rate from COVID-19, which emphasizes the urgent need for Permanent Supportive Housing in San Diego. As a result of Jim’s relentless commitment to PSH, Chelsea is on track to deliver nearly 800 apartments for San Diegans experiencing homelessness in the next 2 years. Jim has reduced his salary by 50% to help the Company weather the downturn and he continues to work closely with the Building Industry Association, which met with Governor Newsom’s team to immediately revise the March stay-at-home order to include homebuilding on the list of critical, exempt industries, thereby allowing thousands of construction workers in San Diego County to continue at their jobs while so many in other industries were being laid off.

NOTABLE: Under his leadership, Chelsea is the only company to have been recognized as the Building Industry Association’s Builder of the Year twice (2015/2018).

QUOTABLE: “Many people are suffering and recovery will be a difficult process; in the long run, the consequences of this period, like other major downturns in the economy, will lead to opportunities for innovation in how we work, interact, and address the housing crisis.”

DAY JOB: Ronson is not only a competent and skillful attorney, but a smart businessman also! He manages his law firm with over 20 members, teaches at USD School of Law and School of Business and oversees the management of his several commercial properties throughout San Diego.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: During the COVID-19 crisis, Ronson was able to acquire a large amount of hand sanitizer when it was a scarce. He donated several boxes to nonprofits throughout the community. One of them being the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO), a local nonprofit organization that gives jobs to hundreds of people who were formerly incarcerated. Ronson owns several commercial properties and in an effort to help his tenants that were directly affected, he waived rent payments for many of them in order for them to be able to stay in business and survive.

NOTABLE: Ronnie is a mentor to many of all age groups and is always willing to give free advice and help anyone who needs it in any way he can! Solicited or unsolicited! Besides donating his time and advice, he donates essential necessities such as sleeping bags, blankets, lights and food to the homeless with his three daughters in the mornings before school on their homeless crusader missions!

QUOTABLE: “You gotta believe!”
DAY JOB: Sirull oversees all areas of the operation including managing approximately $500 million in philanthropic assets, providing top-notch consulting services and education to donors, new business development and processing 7,000 unique grants to 2,000 organizations annually.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Working with many of the foundation’s over 850 donors, Beth has helped to increase grants into the community by over 25%, to address the needs resulting from the pandemic. Along with her team, she has provided technical assistance to myriad nonprofits, helping them acquire PPP loans and manage the challenges brought on by the pandemic. Beth also spearheaded the effort that raised nearly $2.5 million in emergency response funds.

NOTABLE: JCF is San Diego’s largest philanthropic grantor, having distributed over $1.2 billion into the county, the vast majority in the last decade.

QUOTABLE: “Every individual has the power to make a difference; together we can change the world.”

DAY JOB: As President, Mark Stuart collaborates with the Board of Governors and is responsible for developing and managing relationships with a wide range of stakeholders to support the health of The Foundation and serve the San Diego County community.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: In mid-March, as the needs stemming from the pandemic were becoming clearer, Mark joined with partners including Supervisor Nathan Fletcher, SDG&E and others to establish the COVID-19 Community Response Fund at The San Diego Foundation. The fund receives donations and rapidly grants 100% of contributions to organizations on the frontlines of COVID-19. To date, Mark has helped raise more than $16 million and granted over $11 million to support San Diegans in need.

NOTABLE: For more than 45 years, The Foundation and its donors have granted more than $1.2 billion to support nonprofit organizations and strengthen our San Diego community.

QUOTABLE: “Every one of us can be a hero for others and tangibilize hope for our fellow County residents who are hurting.”

Congratulations to TOOTRiS CEO & Founder ALESSANDRA LEZAMA for being selected as San Diego’s 50 Leaders Making a Difference in 2020

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JUNE 29, 2020

Tony Teravainen, CEO & Co-Founder, Support the Enlisted Project (STEP)

After nine years in the U.S. Navy, Tony Teravainen was suddenly medically discharged. While traumatic at the time, the experience eventually led him to starting STEP. He has a Bachelor of Science in Nuclear Engineering, a Master’s in Non-Profit Executive Leadership (USD) and is currently working on a PhD in Public Policy. He considers himself a “life-long learner.”

STEP volunteers loading a brand-new mattress for local military families.

DAY JOB: Teravainen’s day can consist of driving a box truck to a food bank for clients in crisis and then jumping into his role as Commissioner on the County’s Citizen Equal Opportunity Commission. He is the Chairman of Coast Guard City Executive Group and also a member of SD Regional Chamber Veteran and Military committee. Tony provides the strategic vision for serving 800+ families a year in crisis toward financial self-sufficiency.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Teravainen immediately shifted gears to serve families unable to leave their homes for groceries and spouses losing their jobs, critical second income to survive in San Diego. Within the first few days of shelter-in-place we received dozens of requests for food, diapers, baby items and more from local military leadership. And we jumped into action. Since March 19 STEP has served 5,419 San Diego military family members through urgent food distributions. And will continue to if needed.

NOTABLE: Since 2012 STEP has granted $2 million to stop the loss of a basic need, serving over 5,500 families.

QUOTABLE: “I know what it’s like to struggle and it’s always been my vision to find a way to help young military families navigate tough financial times. The uncertainty right now has highlighted the need for our program and we are committed to serving even more families in crisis. We will never give up on them, just as they are committed to serving our country.”

Paul Thiel, President Northern Trust - San Diego Region

Paul Thiel leads and manages Northern Trust’s San Diego region, with a team of 32 highly skilled professionals. Paul’s team includes bankers, lenders, financial planners, portfolio managers, trust officers, business development officers and marketing professionals and oversees $4B in assets and nearly $1B in loans for about 225 families, individuals and organizations.

DAY JOB: Paul leads and manages Northern Trust’s San Diego region, with 32 thoughtful and highly skilled professionals in banking, investment management, financial planning, trust/fiduciary services and international wealth management. Paul’s team includes bankers, lenders, financial planners, portfolio managers, trust officers, business development officers and marketing professionals. The team oversees more than $4 billion in assets and nearly $1 billion in loans for about 225 families, individuals and organizations. Deeply involved in the community, Paul is Chairman/CEO of Chairmen’s Roundtable and is active with the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corp., and is a member of the board and chair of the Audit Committee of the La Jolla Institute for Immunology.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Working with a new and energized Board of Directors, Paul pivoted CRT to meet rapidly developing community needs in helping businesses survive the pandemic in a radically restrained economy by expanding services to include non-profit as well as smaller businesses that would not normally qualify for CRT mentoring, assisting them in securing financing through the Payroll Protection Act and by advising with employment, staffing, manufacturing and service challenges unique to the lockdown environment. Additionally, Paul also is serving as a board member and audit committee chair of the La Jolla Institute for Immunology, which was selected in March by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to be the global clearinghouse for assessing antibodies to the novel coronavirus, and has worked though his position at Northern Trust to bring resources to those in the San Diego community adversely affected by the pandemic.

NOTABLE: Paul is an accomplished racquetball and paddleball player, and is a member of the renowned Pacific Paddleball Association.

QUOTABLE: “It is imperative that we don’t dwell on the disaster that is 2020, but be thankful we find ourselves in a position to support our community.”

Congratulations to Torrey Holistics CEO and Founder, Tony Hall, for Making a Difference in the San Diego community.

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**DAY JOB:** Tonya serves as Promises2Kids’ visionary leader. Her responsibility includes operations, developing and implementing programs and services needed to support the unique needs of current and former foster youth. She’s charged with raising awareness of foster care and engaging the community in supporting these efforts with time, talent and treasure.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** Promises2Kids focused on creating stability for current and former foster youth during the crisis. Promises shifted to tele-visit and virtual meetings for youth to support them. To prevent homelessness and meet other critical needs, we implemented immediate gap funding for youth in college who were displaced or lost their jobs. Promises also hosts visits for siblings living apart in care to ensure they can safely visit one another and receive family support to get through this stressful time.

**NOTABLE:** More than 80% of youth in Promises2Kids’ Guardian Scholars program have completed their higher education, compared to national averages as low as 10-30%.

**QUOTABLE:** “We have faith that our community will rise together to help our most vulnerable, as we always have, even as all of us struggle to thrive in these extraordinary times.”

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**DAY JOB:** Elizabeth is a hands-on chief executive, who is always the first to come into the office in the morning and the last to leave. She dedicates time to managing all areas of the business, from contracting and sales to marketing and business development. Elizabeth has an open door policy, so any of Shore Solution’s 16 local employees within the company can approach her for guidance. As CEO, Elizabeth is instrumental in providing logistical and procurement services at the federal, state and local levels.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:** Under Elizabeth’s leadership during this pandemic, Shore Solutions has made 10,000 reusable masks available for community members, and has donated 250 masks to the Chula Vista Police Department. Shore Solutions has also worked to provide reusable masks to people affected by homelessness in San Diego. In addition to the outstanding work Elizabeth has spearheaded for the community, she also has made sure her employees are properly protected by offering remote working schedules, providing masks and installing air purification filters at the office.

**NOTABLE:** Shore Solutions is a leader in hiring women; 70% of its employees are female. The company is also on track to double its revenue from fiscal year 2019 to fiscal year 2020, with 50% of revenue deriving from new market channels.

**QUOTABLE:** “During times of adversity, always choose the path of compassion, courage, understanding and love.”
Deacon Jim Vargas, President & CEO, Father Joe’s Villages

Deacon Jim Vargas is the President and CEO of Father Joe’s Villages. He has over 30 years of management experience. Today, he oversees all facets of Father Joe’s Villages, including their array of housing programs serving over 2,000 people each night, the Village Health Center, Therapeutic Childcare Center, and more.

DAY JOB: Vargas provides critical leadership to a staff of over 425 working to meet the basic needs of those living on the streets, as well as provide long-term solutions that help neighbors leave homelessness behind for good. He oversees the organization’s programs, operations, finances, and community outreach and leadership.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Vargas led the frontline efforts of Father Joe’s Villages’ staff to provide life-saving care during the pandemic. Father Joe’s Villages has provided over 5,000 screenings and tests to people in need, offered a safe place to sleep in its shelter and housing programs, including up to 486 beds in the Convention Center shelter, and helped over 100 neighbors in need move into permanent housing since the COVID-19 crisis began.

NOTABLE: Deacon Jim Vargas is a Deacon of the Catholic Church and sees his position at Father Joe’s Villages as his ministry.

QUOTABLE: “I’ve seen the community come together in ways that I never expected. The efforts of our staff, community leaders, and supporters have truly saved lives.”

Caitlin Wege, President
Tech Coast Angels - San Diego

Caitlin Wege is an experienced angel investor and advisor to several early-stage companies. She is President of Tech Coast Angels. Caitlin is passionate about the planet, social causes and fostering entrepreneurial education and learning. She is a board member at Startup San Diego, among other San Diego county boards.

DAY JOB: Caitlin is responsible for shaping the mission, vision, operations and governance of Tech Coast Angels - San Diego, in addition to actively managing her investment portfolio.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Caitlin has been a steady and inspiring leader through the COVID crisis. She crafted and implemented TCAs 5-point plan: continuing investing activity, supporting portfolio companies, donating to vendors, advocates for the CARES act nationally, and spreading TCAs message of HOPE - Hold On, Pain Ends. Additionally, she published the highly lauded video to the community: https://vimeo.com/417426671

NOTABLE: Caitlin is the first woman President of Tech Coast Angels in the organization’s 20+ year history!

QUOTABLE: From a recent SDBJ article by Fred Grier: “Startups were key to the economic recovery after the great recession of 2008. It is entrepreneurs and nimble thought leaders who don’t give up hope that will drive innovation and growth in the coming months and years, effectively replacing lost jobs and birth new critical technologies.”
SPECIAL REPORT: SAN DIEGO 50

50 MAKING A DIFFERENCE

David Wellis, CEO
San Diego Blood Bank

David Wellis is a cell biologist with over 25 years experience in the life science industry and currently serves as the CEO of the San Diego Blood Bank (SDBB). He joined SDBB following his tenure at a variety of biomedical companies including Illumina, GenVault and Axon Instruments.

DAY JOB: David’s primary daily duties ensure that Southern California patients have the blood they need, including red blood cells for accident victims and platelets for cancer patients. David’s vision is to have even greater impact in our community’s health through offering of additional health and wellness services, as well as engaging donors in research and clinical trials.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: David made it possible for SDBB to collect convalescent plasma from recovered COVID-19 patients (CCP), currently the only FDA-approved therapy for COVID-19. CCP may help patients fighting the virus because it contains antibodies against the virus. SDBB has delivered 500+ units of CCP to local hospitals. David also partnered with a local antibody testing company and the County of San Diego to help identify potential donors of CCP.

NOTABLE: Thanks to the U.S. Navy, the San Diego Blood Bank was the first blood bank to fly 380 pints of blood to New York City on September 11, 2001. As time went on, SDBB was designated by the California Emergency Medical Services Authority as the Southern California Regional Operations Center for the distribution of blood to Southern California in the event of a major disaster or act of terrorism in the State of California.

QUOTABLE: “Over the last few weeks, our community and communities across the country have felt deep pain and conviction over the death of George Floyd. As we all grieve and take action in our individual ways, I am reminded of a comment a donor once made as to why they donate: “Blood is the great equalizer.” The need for blood knows no race and connects us all. The work we do reminds us of our humanity every day”

Steven Yeng, Co-founder
Skrewball Spirits

A Cambodian-born immigrant and polio survivor, Steven Yeng is the co-founder of Skrewball Spirits, which he launched alongside wife Brittany in July 2018. As co-founder, he is responsible for the business development of the brand.

DAY JOB: Steven maintains business development and manages the sales force. He makes sure that the company stays true to its roots of fun, hard work, and good people.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Steven helped spearhead the SKREW COVID-19 campaign, which used social media to generate awareness of the impact of COVID-19 on the hospitality industry workers affected by layoffs. Through this campaign, Skrewball received over 215K shares across social platforms and donated $500K to multiple organizations, including the United States Bartenders Guild and Children of Restaurant Employees. Steven diverted efforts to make hand sanitizers to donate to frontline workers. He also participated in compiling food and essential care packages to distribute to San Diego families in need.

NOTABLE: Steven has played an integral role in Skrewball’s impressive success, being categorized as one of the country’s fastest-growing spirits brands in 2020.

QUOTABLE: “I believe that if you help people when they need you, in time, you will receive it back ten-fold. Also, always be kind and humble.”

The attorneys in Sheppard Mullin’s San Diego and Del Mar offices

Congratulations to firm Chairman Guy N. Halgren on being selected by the San Diego Business Journal as one of San Diego’s Top Leaders

Guy exemplifies Sheppard Mullin’s commitment to put clients first and provide superior legal representation to our valued clients around the world.

Thank you Mark Stuart for bringing joy to San Diegans and inspiring us each day.

SDFoundation.org

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Tony Teravenin, CEO & Co-Founder, Support the Enlisted Project (STEP) had his organization immediately shift gears to serve families unable to leave their homes for groceries and spouses losing their jobs, critical second income to survive in San Diego.

Paul Thiel, president, Northern Trust - San Diego Region pivoted Chairman’s Roundtable to meet rapidly developing community needs in helping businesses survive the pandemic in a radically re-strained economy by expanding services to include non-profit as well as smaller businesses that would not normally qualify for CRT mentoring.

Tonya Torosian, CEO, Promises2Kids -focused on creating stability for current and former foster youth during the crisis.

Elizabeth Valenzuela-Banker, CEO, Shore Solutions Inc. has led Shore Solutions in making 10,000 reusable masks available for community members, and has donated 250 masks to the Chula Vista Police Department. Shore Solutions has also worked to provide reusable masks to people affected by homelessness in San Diego.

Deacon Jim Vargas, president and CEO, Father Joe’s Villages led the frontline efforts of Father Joe’s Villages’ staff to provide life-saving care during the pandemic.

Caitlin Wege, president, Tech Coast Angels – San Diego, has crafted and implemented TCAs 5-point plan: continue investing activity, supporting portfolio companies, donating to vendors, advocating for the CARES act nationally, and spreading TCAs message of HOPE - Hold On, Pain Ends.

David Wells, CEO, San Diego Blood Bank made it possible for SDBB to collect convalescent plasma from recovered COVID-19 patients ( CCP), currently the only FDA-approved therapy for COVID-19.

Steven Yeng, co-founder, Skrewball Spirits helped spearhead a campaign, which used social media to generate awareness of the impact of COVID-19 on hospitality industry workers affected by layoffs. Through this campaign, Skrewball received over 215K shares across social platforms and donated $500K to multiple organizations.

Finding Incentives to Keep Moving Many of these leaders lifted their communities’ spirits, particularly when it seemed that progress was ephemeral.

“The rebuilding is always faster/easier if we never stopped building at all, or did whatever we could to stop a complete collapse,” said honoree Dr. Pradipta Ghosh, director and professor with the Center for Network Medicine at UC San Diego.

There is still plenty left to do. Every new day has a way of challenging assumptions. “We will have more challenging weeks ahead, but with strong resiliency and by working together as a team, we will prevail,” said honoree A.J. Moyer, CEO of C3 Bank.

Members of the SD 50 are helping their communities see the silver lining in the clouds.

Honoree Victor Ramsauer, president of the LevitZacks CPA firm, said it well; “As we lock arms virtually and try to help one another in the ways we can, our vast world now feels a lot more connected.”

The work of these 50 leaders has been invaluable. Their dedication is obvious, and their extra effort benefits all of San Diego. As we continue to move through this crisis and reopen our cities, we have confidence in a bright future for our region.

SD 50

Investment Corp., has led the Chelsea team to be able to continue financing and completing affordable housing on sched-

ule, despite the market uncertainty and delays associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Romon Shamoun, CEO and principal attorney, RJS LAW owns several commercial properties throughout San Di-

dgo. Many of his tenants were immensely affected by COVID. In an effort to assist his tenants, he waived rent payments for many months in an effort to help them stay in business and keep their heads above water.

Beth Sirull, president and CEO, Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego has helped to increase grants into the com-

munity. The Community Foundation of San Diego has resulted from the pandemic.

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South Bay Community Services applauds
President and CEO Kathie Lembo
for her leadership in supporting San Diegans hardest hit by COVID-19.

Together with community partners, SBCS has distributed healthy food to more than 50,000 in need and provided housing assistance, distance learning support, mental health and violence prevention services to thousands more since the start of the pandemic.

Learn how you can partner with us to feed, protect and support the most vulnerable by visiting SouthBayCommunityServices.org.