



Photo courtesy of Ron Miriello

Art work in an East Village plaza that won an award for urban design is meant to draw a connection between art and science.

Downtown Plaza Blends Art and Science

ARCHITECTURE: Development Wins Orchid Award for Urban Design

■ By RAY HUARD

An East Village outdoor plaza in the middle of a development that includes a 34-story residential tower, the new downtown headquarters of UC San Diego, and a restored historic home melds science and art in a way to show how the two disciplines intertwine and encourage curiosity.

Designer **Ron Miriello** and the architectural firm of **Carrier Johnson + Culture** won a top prize – an orchid – for urban design from the **San Diego Architectural Foundation** in the foundation's annual Orchid & Onion competition.

As the name suggests, orchids go to projects of exceptional merit and onions go to those deemed to be a detriment to the region's built environment.

"The combination of the brand new building and this open space and then this historical building that they literally picked up and place on that corner, it's just an interesting circulation," the judge for the Architectural Foundation completion wrote. "I'm really excited to see how that's going to activate that intersection."

➔ Plaza page 42

Veterans Draw Business Lessons From Service

SPECIAL REPORT: Military Careers Shape Knowledge, Attitudes, Soft Skills

■ By BRAD GRAVES

Military experience offers a valuable skill set for people in business. Veterans working in the business world continually draw on their personal experience in the service to manage the workings of private

companies or run businesses of their own.

A military background can offer very specific advantages, such as the ability to get and hold a security clearance. In a host of other situations, veterans bring subject matter expertise gained while in the military to their work in the civilian world, often as defense contractors.

Then there are skills and aptitudes that are more general. Several people contacted for this story referred to a sense of responsibility, or discipline, or a work ethic developed in the military — positive attributes which help them to this day.

➔ Veterans page 7

ClickUp Raises \$400M Series C

TECH: SaaS Startup Sees Explosive Growth

■ By GEORGE LURIE

San Diego-based **ClickUp** has raised \$400 million in Series C funding — the single-largest funding round to date in the "workplace productivity" niche of the software-as-a-service (SaaS) market.

The round gives ClickUp a \$4 billion valuation — and an increasingly higher profile among San Diego's tech unicorns.

The Series C funding was co-led by **Andreessen Horowitz** and **Tiger Global**, with ➔ ClickUp page 42



Zeb Evans
CEO and Founder
ClickUp

Strong Recovery For Travel Sector

TOURISM: Big Gains Expected by Spring 2022

■ By MARIEL CONCEPCION

The travel sector is in the midst of a strong recovery following the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the **San Diego Tourism Authority's** recently-released San Diego Hotel Forecast Update report. The San Diego Tourism Authority is a non-profit corporation with a mission to drive visitor demand to economically benefit San Diego.

➔ SDTA page 39

P.8

TECH: Qualcomm Vows to Achieve Net-Zero GHG Emissions by 2040

P.14

HONORED: 2021 Business Women of the Year Finalists Announced

THE LISTS

VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES

Page 13

Rank	Business Name	Industry	Location	Year Founded	Owner(s)
1	San Diego Architectural Foundation	Architecture	San Diego	1981	Ron Miriello
2	San Diego Tourism Authority	Tourism	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
3	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
4	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
5	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
6	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
7	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
8	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
9	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
10	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
11	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown
12	San Diego County Office of Veterans Affairs	Government	San Diego	1997	David L. Brown



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Veterans

➔ from page 1

Facing Difficulties With Poise

Bob Grande, like many others interviewed, said the military teaches a person how to tackle difficult situations. Grande was among the last people drafted into the U.S. Army, in 1972. He spent two years in the service, including time in Germany.

Being a veteran made it easier to go to school and let him buy a house, Grande recalled. In his garage he founded **Quality Controlled Manufacturing Inc.** of Santee, where he remains president and CEO.

The U.S. Marine Corps took **Clement Johnson** from the streets of Los Angeles and set him on the road to becoming a master sergeant. It gave him a familiarity with electronics and put him on course to receive a master's degree from **Columbia University**. Today Johnson is CEO of **ClemTech LLC** in Carlsbad, which offers networking and cybersecurity services.

Johnson said the Marines taught him to communicate effectively in front of a crowd. What's more, a military background "taught me failure and adversity is the space where great things happen."

A Work Ethic and People Skills

Service in the U.S. Air Force prepared **Eric MacGregor** for life in the private sector

by instilling a work ethic. When a person owns a business, he or she never really stops working. "That is kind of how it was in the military," said MacGregor, who is president, CEO and majority owner of **Indus Technology Inc.**, a defense contractor.

MacGregor also said military service offers an introduction to how to deal with people from different cultures and geographic areas — an essential skill for business people.

Paul Kitchin, a former U.S. Marine Corps drill sergeant, said military service teaches a person to find common ground with everyone despite differences in race, religion or politics. "It is tight quarters on a ship," he said.

Kitchin is president and CEO of **Atlas Executive Consulting**, which provides services to the **Naval Information Warfare Systems Command**, or NAVWAR. An injury forced him to leave the service early. "No one would have pictured me in a suit and tie," he said.

Service in the Marines, he said, gave him an ability to identify and nurture talent.

"The most valuable skill I learned and stress to my managers is to take care of your people," he added, noting that the mission of Marine Corps leadership is first, mission accomplishment and second, troop welfare.

"We had a saying among the non-commissioned officer ranks that if you take care of your people, the mission will take care of itself," he said. "I truly believe this and hold all of my managers to this standard. Because our people are our products. This is a cornerstone of our success."



Eric MacGregor
President, CEO and
Majority Owner
Indus Technology Inc.



Paul Kitchin
President and CEO
Atlas Executive
Consulting



Bob Grande
CEO and President
Quality Controlled
Manufacturing Inc.



Clement Johnson
CEO
ClemTech LLC

Subject Matter Expertise

The military prepared **David Strobel** to eventually go into business for himself. He graduated with a degree in astronautical engineering from the U.S. Air Force Academy. Following that, he spent two years learning about nuclear engineering at **Cornell University** before continuing with his Air Force career. It was an ideal preparation for a business building satellite electronics that would be exposed to the radiation of space. Strobel is executive chairman and co-founder of **Space Micro Inc.** in Carmel Mountain Ranch.

The military experience also prepared him for business in another way. The stresses of business, Strobel said, are mild compared to the stress of being a first-year student at the Air Force Academy.

Allen Maxwell put dozens of lessons from his U.S. Navy days into his 2019 memoir, "The System Is Unforgiving: Play by the Rules and Win." He recalled that the military shaped his sense of accountability and responsibility. It also gave Maxwell, who grew up in Philadelphia and rural Georgia, mentors who paid attention to him and guided him.

Other lessons derived from military experience include paying attention to detail, listening (particularly to what is not being said) and not taking situations personally.

Today Maxwell is president and CEO of his own defense contracting business, **Omni2Max Inc.**, based in La Mesa. Defense contracting was a natural next step after careers in the military and civil service, Maxwell said. He recalled being offered a job in the auto industry and finding the culture and the business lingo very different from what he was used to. Defense contracting, by contrast, had a language and a process he was familiar with.

Leadership 101

Elizabeth Valenzuela Banker, CEO and president of **Shore Solutions Inc.** in San Diego's Grant Hill neighborhood, said her time in the U.S. Navy provided valuable lessons for running her own business.

"Though I was young when I purchased my company in 2011, I was fortunate enough to have incredibly impactful leadership during my enlistment that gave me the tools necessary to be a successful leader," she said.

"I learned that leading is about putting the needs of your team above your own and leading from the front. You can also ensure your team's success by providing clarity and the resources they need to be successful. Your objective is to motivate and encourage your employees and then stay out of the way to allow them to grow and show you what they are made of. This also guarantees that they will take more ownership and pride in their tasks; your company can and will meet that goal."

As the son of a career Air Force father and a U.S. Navy veteran, **Tony Teravainen**

knows the hardships young military families can face. Today he draws on his military and management background to run a nonprofit organization serving military families: **Support the Enlisted Project**, also known as STEP. The organization builds financial self-sufficiency among junior active duty enlisted members and recently discharged enlisted veterans and their families facing financial crisis through counseling, education and grants. In the last year and a half, STEP has helped individuals face challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

'Secret Sauce'

Many businesses prefer to hire veterans.

"Half of our staff are military veterans," said **Chance Mims**, a U.S. Navy veteran and founder and CEO of **Academy Securities**. "I see these individuals as the secret sauce of the company." Mims, whose business has offices in Carmel Valley and New York City, said veterans bring several positive attributes to a business, including their mission-driven attitude and their ability to work well in teams.

While studying for an economics degree at the U.S. Naval Academy, Mims accompanied his class on a trip to Wall Street. He recalled it as a memorable experience, even career-defining.

Being Comfortable in Charge

"Recruiting and hiring veterans is a big part of what we do," said **Isaac Lee**, senior vice president of operations with the **Soapy Joe's** car wash chain, based in San Diego County. Lee, a former U.S. Marine Corps pilot who went on to command a squadron, said that hiring veterans is something "we're very deliberate about."

Lee said his business' average hire is an E5: a sergeant in the Marine Corps or a petty officer second class in the Navy. The person is comfortable being in charge of 15 to 20 people. Such a person is "a pretty natural fit for us" and ready to take over a site in a few months, he said. Soapy Joe's steers such veterans into its management training program.

Military service gave these executives one more thing that business people find useful: stories to tell.

Those stories include veterans' efforts navigating the transition between military life and the civilian world. The transition can be tough. Some, such as Johnson of ClemTech, consult with members of the military who are making that transition.

Other stories are reflective of the times. Many veterans have tales of service in Afghanistan or Iraq.

Strobel recalled going from the Air Force Academy to an Ivy League school during the tumultuous 1960s, then to an Air Force career.

Talk about different attitudes about the military.

"It was a stark contrast," he said. ■



Chance Mims
Founder and CEO
Academy Securities



Isaac Lee
Senior Vice President
of Operations
Soapy Joe's



Tony Teravainen
CEO and Co-founder
STEP



David Strobel
Executive Chair
Space Micro Inc.



Allen Maxwell
President and CEO
Omni2Max Inc.



Elizabeth Valenzuela Banker
CEO and President
Shore Solutions Inc.

Resources Available for Veteran-Owned Businesses

San Diego offers many resources for veterans in business, or wanting to go into business.

The U.S. Small Business Administration offers a wealth of information, including information on special set-aside contracts offered by the government.

General information about the SBA is available at <https://www.sba.gov>

SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development works through SBA's extensive resource partner network, which includes Small Business Development Centers, SCORE, Women's Business Centers and its regional Veterans Business Outreach Centers (VBOC) located throughout the nation. VBOCs are also the leading partner in hosting the "Boots to Business" and "Boots to Business Reboot" programs, which offer courses on entrepreneurship on military installations and in local communities. Since the program's inception in 2013, Boots to Business has trained and graduated more than 143,955 service members, veterans, National Guard and Reserve members, and military spouses. For more information on the resources available for veteran entrepreneurs, visit www.sba.gov/veterans.

The SBA's San Diego district office is at 550 W. C Street, Suite 550. Its phone numbers are (619) 557-7250 or (619) 727-4883. Its website is <https://www.sba.gov/offices/district/ca/san-diego>

SCORE offers free counseling, advice and information on starting, operating or expanding a small business. Visit <https://sandiego.score.org/>

The So Cal Veterans Business Outreach Center at MiraCosta College in Carlsbad is another source of information. Visit <https://socalvboc.org/> or email SoCalVBoc@miracosta.edu

Veterans wanting to get into government contracting will find value in associations of local defense contractors. These associations can provide contacts, and in the best of cases, leads or mentoring.

These associations include the local chapter of the **National Defense Industrial Association**, or NDIA. Visit <https://www.ndia-sd.org/>

AFCEA International is another organization with a San Diego chapter (the organization takes its name from Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association). Visit <https://sandiego.afceachapters.org/>

THE LIST

VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES

► Ranked by number of local full-time employees as of October 1, 2021

Rank	Company Address Website Phone		# of employees: Full-time Part-time Companywide	Gross revenue (millions): 2020 2019 % + (-)	% veteran-owned Certified? Service-disabled veteran-owned?	Company description	Majority owner(s)	Top local executive(s) Year founded	
1	Space Micro Inc. 15378 Avenue of Science, San Diego 92128 www.spacemicro.com 858-332-0700		95 8 103	\$21 \$14.2 48	45 N N	Performs research and development in space and military technologies	None	David Strobel 2002	
2	Quality Controlled Manufacturing Inc. 9429 Abraham Way, Santee 92071 www.qcmfginc.com 619-443-3997		92 2 94	\$14.13 \$14.8 (5)	100 N N	Specializes in the precision machining of all metals including exotic alloys	Bob Grande	Bob Grande 1978	
3	Academy Securities 12625 High Bluff Drive, Suite 204, San Diego 92130 www.academysecurities.com 858-876-9398		65 5 70	\$57.02 \$30.41 87	64 Y Y	The first/only post 9/11 military veteran & disabled veteran owned & operated investment bank	Ownership: R. Chance Mims 52.56% JG Van Schaack 13.48% J Hal McMath 6.96% All Others Under 5% 27.000%	Chance Mims 2009	
4	Atlas Executive Consulting 1545 Hotel Circle S., Suite 120, San Diego 92108 www.atlasexecutive.com 619-684-3896		56 3 196	\$22.31 \$19.04 17	93 Y Y	Superior provider of Analytics, Financial/Audit, and Program Support to the Federal Government.	Paul Kitchin	Paul Kitchin 2006	
5	Omni2Max, Inc. 7777 Alvarado Rd, Ste 615, La Mesa 91942 www.omni2max.com 619-269-1663		45 4 110	\$8.1 \$5.17 57	100 Y Y	Innovative solutions provider, committed to exceeding customer expectations	Allen F. Maxwell	Allen F. Maxwell 2007	
6	VET Tv 6070 Corte del Cedro, Carlsbad 92011 www.veterantv.com 619-627-1432		20 120 200	\$5.7 \$2.3 148	95 N N	VET Tv is an SVOD that recreates, parodies & celebrates the military experience for those who served	Danny Maher	Waco Hoover Donny O'Malley 2016	
7	Davy Architecture Inc. 1053 10th Ave., San Diego 92101 www.davyarchitecture.com 619-238-3811		20 1 20	\$4.46 \$3.48 28	51 Y Y	Davy Architecture, Inc. provides design and planning services to public-sector clients.	Eric Davy	Eric (Ric) Davy 1984	
8	BPI Plumbing 1021 Bay Blvd., Suite S, Chula Vista 91911 www.bpiplumbing.com 619-429-9066		20 0 20	\$2.7 \$3.2 (16)	51 Y Y	Plumbing contractor, service & repair, new construction	Alex Galicia	Alex Galicia 1976	
9	Shore Solutions, Inc. 2506 Market Street, San Diego 92102 www.shoresolutions.com 619-434-2775		20 0 20	\$12.83 \$7.78 65	100 Y Y	Distribution	Elizabeth Valenzuela Banker	Elizabeth Banker 2011	
10	Boarhog LLC 2341 Jefferson St., Suite 104, San Diego 92110 www.BoarhogLLC.com 760-845-0665		14 2 26	\$1.59 \$1.64 (3)	100 Y Y	Systems Engineering and Installation, Cybersecurity, Labs-as-a-Service+, IT Networks, HM&E services	Joseph Bulger III Dan Phelan	Joseph Bulger III 2012	
11	Innovatus Technology Consulting 9655 Granite Ridge Drive, Suite 200, San Diego 92123-2674 www.innovatus-tech.com 619-994-4239		10 20 30	\$3.2 \$4.3 (26)	100 Y Y	We provide clients with technology products, services, and frameworks to ensure mission success.	John T. Nguyen (100%)	John Nguyen 2012	
12	Phazer Energy Inc. 1340 Presioca St., Spring Valley 91977 www.phazerelectric.com 619-270-2282		10 ⁽¹⁾ 0 0	na na na	100 Y Y	Electric and Gas Utility Consulting and Approved to design the SDGE utility as applicant designers.	George Bonner	George Bonner 1998	
13	Consolidated Building Systems Inc. (CBSI) 1870 Cordell Court, Suite 104, El Cajon 92020 www.cbsisandiego.com 619-741-4566		7 2 9	\$1.7 \$2.3 (26)	51 Y Y	Provides construction & relocation management to clients throughout San Diego County.	Lou Suter David Suter	Lou Suter 1987	
14	James Crone & Associates Inc. 555 Enterprise St., Escondido 92029 www.jamescrone.com 760-480-8888		7 0 7	\$0.75 \$1.17 (36)	100 N N	Full-service commercial real estate; sales, leasing, management, development	James A Crone III	James A. Crone III 1986	
15	Lorimar Group 1488 Pioneer Way, Suite 14, El Cajon 92020 www.lorimargroup.com 619-749-9399		7 0 7	\$4.6 \$2.3 100	100 Y Y	Full-service communications-technologies company that offers mission critical comms.	Mike Johnson	Mike Johnson 2004	
16	Diego & Son Printing, inc. 2104 National Ave., San Diego 92113 www.diegoandson.com 619-233-5373		5 1 6	\$0.8 \$1.2 (33)	60 Y Y	Commercial printing company	Nicholas Aguilera	Nicholas Aguilera 1972	
17	Engineered Mechanical Services Inc. 2180 Chablis Court, Suite 111, Escondido 92029 www.emsi-socal.com 760-233-5055		5 0 5	\$0.75 \$1 (25)	100 Y Y	Specialized HVAC contractor for commercial and industrial bldgs, also design install of CHP systems.	Tom Reichert	Tom Reichert 2002	
18	H3 Heroes Helping Heroes 4Life wmd, San Diego, CA 92111 heroeshelpingheroes4life.org 858 245-1596		3 20 23	\$0.04 \$0.02 78	100 Y Y	We help Homeless Veterans & Families with Behavioral Health, Suicide Prevention & Homelessness.	Mark George	Mark George 2019	
19	ClemNet 2173 Salk Avenue Suite 250 #001, Carlsbad 92008 https://clemtechllc.com 855-816-5558		2 5 10	\$2.36 \$0.14 1,647	100 Y Y	Information Technology, Operational Technology Networks, Services, and Consulting.	Clement E. Johnson Jr.	Clement Johnson 2013	
20	Cairn Leadership Strategies 4226 Via Mar De Delfinas, San Diego 92130 cairnleadership.com 410-980-6458		2 3 17	\$0.1 \$0.05 100	65 N N	Professional and leadership development through outdoor adventures and MBA level curriculum.	Knight Campbell Abigail Jones Leonie Campbell	Knight Campbell 2018	
21	Schweitzer Law Group 2722 Loker Avenue West Suite D, Carlsbad 92010 https://slgfirm.com/ 6196886505		2 1 3	\$0.21 \$0.27 (20)	100 N N	A boutique Family Law Firm.	Kenneth A. Lee	Kenneth Lee 2015	
22	The Maxham Firm 225 E. Third Avenue, Escondido 92025 www.maxhamfirm.com 760-975-3843		2 1 3	\$0.27 \$0.28 (6)	100 N N	A North County based legal firm providing services in the field of intellectual property.	Lawrence A. Maxham	Lawrence Maxham 1984	
23	Pacific Pizza 3085 Reynard Way, San Diego 92103 www.pacificpizzasd.com 619-365-5449		1 7 8	\$0.01 \$0.06 (84)	100 N N	We offer wood-fired pizza catering at events including weddings, birthday parties and more!	Sean Durkin	Sean Durkin 2014	

(NR) Not ranked

na Not applicable

Source: The companies.

In case of a tie, companies are ranked by number of part-time employees, and then alphabetically.

To the best of our knowledge, this information is accurate as of press time. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of

the list, omissions and typographical errors sometimes occur. Please send corrections or additions to the Research Department at the San Diego Business Journal, Eric Alderete, calderete@sdbj.com. This list may not be reprinted in whole or in part without prior written permission from the editor. Some companies have declined to participate or did not return a survey by press time. It is not the intent of this list to endorse the participants nor to imply a company's size or numerical rank indicate its quality.

(1) Employee estimate