San Diego Business Journal

Vol. 42, No. 49 — THE COMMUNITY OF BUSINESS™ — December 6 - 12, 2021 • \$5.00





On behalf of the Palomar Health Team we congratulate our President and CEO Diane Hansen on her accomplishment as 2021's Business Woman of the Year in the large company category by the San Diego Business Journal.

- Your team



PalomarHealth.org



SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL BUSINESS WOMEN of the year awards 2021 WALL BUSINESS WOMEN AND THE REST.





JENNIFER BARNES

CEO

Optima Office



CARRIE BOBB

CEO

Carrie Bobb & Co.,
hellojenny & Carrie Bobb
Foundation



TERESA CAMPBELL
President & CEO
San Diego County Credit Union



MARY CHEEKS
President & General
Manager

Jamul Casino



ANNA CROWE
CEO and Founder
Crowe PR



PAMELA GARDNER

President and CEO

Biotech Vendor Services, Inc.



DIANE HANSEN
President and CEO
Palomar Health



TINA HOWE
VICE PRESIDENT
BILL HOWE FAMILY
OF COMPANIES



TRACY A. MURPHY

President

IQHQ



CHELSEA WILSON Founder & CEO 3CS

PRESENTING SPONSORS

JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

PLATINUM SPONSORS









GOLD SPONSORS



SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL

BUSINESS WOMEN

of the year awards 2021

THANK YOU TO OUR JUDGES



KIMBERLY BECKER President & CEO San Diego County **Regional Airport Authority**



BETSY BRENNAN President & CEO **Downtown San Diego** Partnership



CHRIS BRYANT Former President & CEO San Diego Employers Association (Retired)



THERESA CLEMENTS Treasury Solutions Sales Group **Executive - Executive Director** JPMorgan Chase & Co.



DONNA DEBERRY CEO Central San Diego Black Chamber of Commerce



LISA EASTERLY President & CEO **Cyber Center of Excellence**



LIDIA S. MARTINEZ Partner ¡Adelante! Strategies



NANCY ROHLAND-HEINRICH Vice Chancellor, Communications and Community Engagement **National University System**

THANK YOU TO OUR PANELIST



THERESA CLEMENTS Treasury Solutions Sales Group **Executive - Executive Director** JPMorgan Chase & Co.



NIKKI ATKINS HARTUNG Managing Director - Divisional Director for Wealth Management, West Division JPMorgan Chase & Co.



LYDIA HUARD Market Manager **Wells Fargo Home Mortgage**



ALESSANDRA LEZAMA CEO **TOOTRIS**



CHRISTIANE TSUDA Vice President, Senior Portfolio Manager **Investment Management & Trust** The Private Bank, Union Bank



























Invested in Women's Success

Women on the Move is JPMorgan Chase's commitment to fuel female ambition and advance financial equality.

Today, with women making up half of our global workforce and represented at every level of our organization, we are building on our success and reaching externally to expand our commitment to empower all women.

JPMorgan Chase proudly stands with the San Diego Business Journal as we celebrate a group of extraordinary businesswomen and leaders.

Learn more: jpmorganchase.com/WOTM





Alison Alpert

Best Best & Krieger LLP

Stacey Anfuso

La Jolla Logic

Jennifer Arnold

Wilson Turner Kosmo

Ashlynn Ball RBTK, LLP

Elizabeth Banker Shore Solutions Inc.

Jennifer Barnes

Optima Office

Tamela Barnhart-Reese

Barnhart-Reese Construction

Devon Barrack

Union Bank

Annalisa Barrett

KPMG Board Leadership Center

Valery Belloso Accessity

Ginny Beneke

Chairmen's Roundtable

Vanessa Benitez

Word & Brown

Carrie Bobb

Carrie Bobb & Co., helloienny & Carrie Bobb Foundation

Brooke Boone Kelly

Weatherly Asset Management, LP

Kailynn Bowling

ChicExecs PR & Retail Strategy Firm

Karie Boyd

Boyd Law APC

Janice Brown

Meyers Nave

Julie Brown

SDI Staffing

Kristie Bruce-Lane

The Thumbprint Project Foundation

Amy Bulgatz

Sammy's Woodfired Pizza

Karen Burges

NAIOP San Diego

Innesa Burrola **Boutique Recruiting**

Barbra Calantas Environmental Science Associates

Teresa Campbell

San Diego County Credit Union

Kelly Capen Douglas

Voices for Children

Nikki Carlson

ChicExecs PR & Retail Strategy Firm

Mary Cheeks

Jamul Casino

Jennifer Crawford

Syska Hennessy Group

Anna Crowe

Crowe PR

Lisa Daigle Neighborhood Healthcare

Sarah Davis

FASHIONPHILE

Chandara Diep

RJS LAW

Erin Dimry

DLA Piper

Shawnda Dorantes Beauty Lounge Medical Spa

Deborah Elliott ID Studios, Inc.

Durana Elmi

Cymbiotika, LLC

Debbie Escobedo

Balboa Thrift and Loan

Laurie Fisher

LMA Marketing and Advertising

Myra Chack Fleischer

Fleischer & Ravreby

Michelle Flores-Gonza-

les **Flores**

Pamela Gardner

Biotech Vendor Services, Inc.

Steffi Hafen

Snell & Wilmer

Michelle Gonzalez

TrueCare

Jodie Grenier

Foundation for Women Warriors

Diane Hansen

Palomar Health

Elizabeth Hawkins

Swinerton

Molly He

Element Biosciences

Lisa Hellmann

Hologic

Heather Hernandez

CBIZ & MHM

Kimberly Herrell

Schubach Aviation

Tina Howe Bill Howe Family of Companies

Sara Howland

BJA Partners

Sharon Huerta

Sullivan Hill Rez & Engel

Angela Huskey

Millennium Health

Zeynep Ilgaz Confirm Biosciences

Michelle L. Jacko Jacko Law Group, PC

Laura Josh

Gallagher Benefits Services

Haneen Khater

Courtney King

Orchyd

Barbara A. Krol, PHR California Coast Credit Union

Linda Kurokawa

MiraCosta College

Victoria Lakers

Calibre One

Monique Lashbrook

Snell & Wilmer

Angela Leavitt Mojenta

Brooke LeVasseur

AristaMD

Kristen Linehan Seismic

Jenna Lynch

Artemis Institute for Clinical Research

Felicia Lyon

KPMG LLP

Melissa Malone-Montgomery

Options For All

Kristin Martin Poseida Therapeutics

Kara Mathis Longfellow Real Estate Partners

Tricia Mercer

Sentek Global

Michelle Metter

Fast Forward Events & PR

Shari Miller

Symbio Financial Partners/LPL Financial

Amy Morway

ID Studios, Inc.

Tracy Murphy **IQHQ**

Danielle Myers

Robbins Geller Rudman

Vatsala Naageshwaran, M.A., M.S.

Sara Neva

& Dowd LLP

Procopio

Margie Newman

Absorption Systems

Intesa Communications Group

Kristin Norby

Morgan Stanley Wealth Management

Harriet Oberman Artemis Institute for

Clinical Research

Kalina O'Connor Campbell Neurosciences

Marie Olesen La Jolla Cosmetic

Raven O'Neal Stella Labs

M. Viviana Oropeza

Oropeza Law, PC d/b/ Attorney in Heels™

Chéri Pierre

Computers2Kids

Wendy Purvey Pacific Sotheby's International Realty

Mia Roseberry

Wounded Warrior Homes

Melissa Rosenthal ClickUp

Jill Russell-Layman ID Studios, Inc.

Cindy Salas Murphy

WithHealth Justina Sanchez

TÜV SÜD America

Selina Scott

Cox Communications Dina Segal

Intuit Inc.

Jessica Shrader Tri-City Medical Center

Kristen Sieffert Finance of America Reverse (FAR)

Jean Stadwiser

KPMG LLP

Monica Szakos Asset Preservation Strategies

Carolyn Taylor Weatherly Asset Management, LP

Ruth-Ann Thorn REDCO

Elizabeth Tresp

Tresp Law, APC

Jennifer Trowbridge

Jacko Law Group, PC Rita Vandergaw Comic-Con Museum

Carmen Vann

BNBuilders

Dr. Ina von Ber Ambassadorial Roundtable

Tara Weisinger

Rowling & Associates LLC **Kelly DuFord Williams**

Slate Law Group Chelsea Wilson

3CS

Jenn Zeis Toolbox Medical Innovations



Lead the way to a healthier workplace culture.

As a leader, you're uniquely positioned to influence the health of your employees. Making sure employees get the support they need to develop healthier lifestyles can positively impact your bottom line. Learn more at kp.org/choosebetter.

Choose Better. Choose Kaiser Permanente.

Jennifer Barnes Grows Superstar Employees at Optima Office

FINANCE: Business Offers Outsourced CFO Services

■ By GEORGE LURIE

PBO Advisory Group, a Fortune 1000 company, Jennifer Barnes has used proceeds from that sale to grow her new business, Optima Office.

Launched in 2018, Optima is off to a strong start. Just three years old, the firm already has 60 employees and an impressive and growing client list.

"Jennifer is a tenacious, intelligent and genuine business executive," said **Reb Risty**, marketing director, **REBL Marketing**. "Work life balance is very important to her so she is adamant about her team having a flexible, friendly and awesome place to work. Providing opportunities to superstar employees and helping small businesses grow is what keeps her motivated."

Getting Past the Glass Ceiling

"Jenn has a reputation for holding herself to the highest standards," Risty added. "Being in a male dominated industry, she pushed herself to be the best at her craft and, when faced with a glass ceiling, forged her own path by starting her own business. Jenn sets high standards for herself on everything from creating clear and concise financial reports to maintaining client satisfaction.

During the pandemic, Barnes, one of SDBJ's Business Women of the Year in the Medium-Sized Company category, ensured her employees' financial stability by not laying off a single one — and giving the team flexibility in their schedules to best address their needs during this difficult time. Many of her

Medium Company



Jennifer Barnes

employees with school-aged children loved being able to work around their kids' at-home school schedule and have had the support of Barnes in managing the COVID-19 crisis.

In 2021, Barnes expanded Optima Office services

to further grow the business. The company now offers Strategic Advisory Services, helping clients identify revenue potential, increase cash flow and profitability, prioritize cost-effective improvements, and operational efficiency.

The outsourced CFOs also manage mergers, acquisitions, turnaround support and restructuring advice.

Community Involvement

Barnes has sat on many boards during her career and currently sits on the board of the Better Business Bureau, the Business Executives Council and Junior Achievement. She also volunteers time at San Diego State University by participating in the mentor program and also as a judge in various student competitions. She is currently a member of Rotary, Vistage International, Young Entrepreneurs Council and Entrepreneurs Organization (EO).

Barnes holds an MBA from San Diego State University and completed the **Becker CPA** courses and received the advanced communicator certificate for **Toastmasters**.

Between 2016 and 2018, Barnes' fist company was the fifth-fastest growing firm in San Diego County, earning a spot in the Inc 5000 three years in a row.

Since its founding, Optima also has been recognized multiple times as a Best Place to Work in San Diego.

"Being honored amongst some of the most accomplished women in San Diego feels amazing," said Barnes. "The journey I've been on these last few years has made me even stronger and more grateful than ever before. I am so thankful for the team we have at Optima Office, and I feel so fortunate to have such exceptional people on my side. Thank you to the judges and to the SDBJ for this tremendous recognition."





Carrie Bobb Challenges Convention, Advocates for Women's Rights

REAL ESTATE: hellojenny Applies Power of Social Media to a Very Traditional Market

■ By RAY HUARD

ising Star is a term that could be applied to Carrie Bobb throughout her career.

This year, Bobb is SDBJ's Business Woman of the Year in the Rising Star category. Well before that, however, she stood out in San Diego's commercial real estate field.

Bobb was a rarity in 2003 when she became a commercial real estate broker at a time when there were few other women in the business.

The Rising Star Award honors women who have been in a key executive role for up to three years.

Bobb established herself as an expert in representing retail clients and in 2019, she started her own commercial real estate brokerage, Carrie Bobb & Co.

"Carrie has drawn national attention from the industry for her use of digital media," **mcKensey McGill**, chief of staff of Carrie Bobb & Company, wrote in nominating Bobb as a Rising Star.

"She studied how retailers drive revenue through social media and recognized how commercial real estate, a very traditional industry, could benefit exponentially by implementing a customized digital media marketing program," McGill wrote.

Carrie Bobb & Company "specializes in ground up mixeduse developments where they are place makers who use retail leasing to evoke emotion, create a sense of place, an increase value," McGill wrote.

Transactions

In January 2021, Bobb and her partners, **Emily Jones** and **Jay Siano**, started **hellojenny**, a marketing and social media company that helps landlords who own brick and mortar retail property to use the same digital strategies that retailers use.

Rising Star



Carrie Bobb

"Landlords can use their platforms as an income-generating platform – a strategy that some of the largest REITs (Real Estate Investment Trusts) in the country are implementing through hellojenny," McGill wrote.

Over the course of her career, Bobb has completed

transactions totaling more than \$2 billion.

She has represented some of the most prominent landlords in San Diego County, including IQHQ, Asana Partners, Kilroy Realty, Bosa Development, Protea Properties, TRC, Heitman and Regency Centers.

Humbling Support

Bobb and her sister, **Christina Bobb**, in 2019 created **The Carrie Bobb Foundation** which lobbies for legislation and encourages companies to act on their own to prevent sexual assault in the workplace by excluding sexual assault and rape from arbitration clauses in employment contracts.

"Sexual assault and rape in arbitration clauses silences victims and shields predators," Bobb wrote in describing her foundation's work. "We shouldn't need legislation for this, but we do."

Among big-name companies that have endorsed the legislation she promotes are **Intel**, **Microsoft**, **Uber** and **Allstate**.

"It is both humbling and empowering to see how businesses are responding," Bobb wrote

Taking Risks

Carrie Bobb & Co. is itself a rarity as a firm created by a woman, run by a woman and with women as its staff.

At the time she started the firm, Bobb said that she and the women who joined her were "leaving our comfort zone" and taking calculated risks in going off on their own.

"I want to look back and know that I went for it and didn't play it safe," Bobb said in founding Carrie Bobb & Co.

It was a well-calculated risk.

Bobb has designed and executed leasing plans for some of San Diego County's most prominent retail projects, including One Paseo, Flower Hill Promenade, The Village at Pacific Highlands Ranch, and Encinitas Village.

Cal Coast congratulates our very own Chief Human Resources Officer, Barbara A. Krol, PHR, for being selected as a finalist for the 2021 Business Women of the Year Awards!



My wealth. My priorities. My partner.

You've spent your life accumulating wealth. And, no doubt, that wealth now takes many forms, sits in many places, and is managed by many advisors. Unfortunately, that kind of fragmentation creates gaps that can hold your wealth back from its full potential. The Private Bank can help.

To learn more, please visit unionbank.com/theprivatebank or contact:

Kathleen Medina, CFTA

Vice President, Sr. Trust Officer kathleen.medina@unionbank.com

Christiane Tsuda

Vice President, Sr. Portfolio Manager christiane.tsuda@unionbank.com

Negin Banaei

Vice President, Private Wealth Advisor negain.banaei@unionbank.com NMLS ID #755484



Wills, trusts, foundations, and wealth planning strategies have legal, tax, accounting, and other implications. Clients should consult a legal or tax advisor.

Union Bank does not create estate plans. Estate plans should be reviewed by an attorney who specializes in estate planning and is licensed to practice law in a client's state.



Teresa Campbell Steers Credit Union Through Challenging Times

FINANCE: CEO of SDCCU Defers Loans, Promotes Financial Literacy, Gives Back

■ By MARIEL CONCEPCION

Teresa Campbell became the CEO and president of the San Diego County Credit Union (SDCCU) in 2010. Under her leadership, through a continued focus on delivering exceptional customer service combined with the hard work and dedication of her team, SDCCU has maintained its stance as an industry leader and achieved continued growth. SDCCU is one of California's top credit unions and San Diego's largest locally owned financial institution.

In the 10 years that Campbell has served as CEO and president, SDCCU has doubled its membership from 204,000 in August 2010 to over 425,000. Additionally, SDCCU's assets have grown from \$5 billion to \$10.7 billion in the same time period.

For these accomplishments and more, Campbell has been named one of SDBJ's Business Women of the Year in the Large Company Category.

People Come First

"The most important lesson I have learned is to treat everyone with respect," Campbell humbly stated about her leadership style. "I don't ask people to do something I wouldn't do. And, of course, I always do what's right for the organization."

SDCCU's guiding principle is that "people come first and profits second." This remained at the forefront of the operation while the company navigated through the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, loan payment relief included a 90-day deferral option on consumer loans, including auto, credit card and real estate. Business and commercial real estate loan deferment was also offered to those members in need. During the pandemic, SDCCU deferred thousands of loans totaling more than \$1.3 billion in balances.

Large Company



Teresa Campbell

And still, SDCCU's assets grew over 25% from \$8.5 billion at the end of 2019 and its net worth ratio remained at 14.44%. The latter figure is well above the 7% minimum capital level for well capitalized credit unions established by the **National Credit Union Administration**, according to the organization.

This is indicative of the company's fiscal strength and ability to weather difficult times, but, most importantly, Campbell's commitment to engage in prudent practices to ensure SDCCU remains a healthy and well-capitalized credit union.

Financial Wellness Presentations

Campbell's influence doesn't stop there.

In 2020, with her at the helm, SDCCU launched its improved online banking platform, which proved a valuable resource during the pandemic for customers to perform nearly all their banking transactions online, from the comfort of their homes.

Also last year, with the financial health of individuals in mind, SDCCU hosted 269 free financial wellness presentations to more than 4,200 attendees. So far in 2021, the company has hosted more than 160 community presentations to over 3,200 participants.

Additionally, SDCCU's Stuff the Bus initiative, a campaign that collects monetary donations online and in person for back-to-school supplies, raised over \$100,000 in San Diego. This was used to fill 7,977 backpacks and purchase 120 extra supply kits. It provided 3,046 Passion Planners, 27,825 face masks, and nearly 340,000 school supplies that were distributed to more than 20,000 homeless students in the county.

Empowering Her Employees

Campbell's leadership qualities and her focus on creating a positive work environment, empowering her employees and giving back to the communities the company serves have directly led to SDCCU's success over the past 10 years.







Celebrating leaders in the community

In every community, there are leaders who set the course for positive change through their vision and guidance. Their work not only supports local needs, but inspires others to do the same.

SDBJ Business Women of the Year nominees, we celebrate your achievements.

wellsfargo.com

Mary Cheeks is a Trailblazer, Industry Role Model

GAMING: Jamul Casino's General Manager Refinances Enterprise, Adapts Venue to the Times

■ By GEORGE LURIE

n an industry where women make up just 15 percent of the executive team, **Mary Cheeks** is a female trailblazer—and role model for young women in both gaming and finance professions.

One of SDBJ's Business Women of the Year in the Large Company category, Cheeks is an industry veteran with 30 years of experience in casino management and finance.

As general manager, Cheeks has established **Jamul Casino** as one of East San Diego County's top destinations for entertainment, food and fun — and she's done it all in less than three years at the helm.

Poise and Clarity

Cheeks faced the COVID-19 pandemic with poise and clarity, becoming both a local leader and an industry-wide influencer for COVID safety.

Early in the pandemic, Cheeks partnered with Tribal leaders and the **Southern Indian Health Council** to offer guidance and information on how to best keep casino guests and staff safe. Cheeks and her team also spent countless hours developing protocol that met or exceeded all guidance from state and local health officials.

In response to receiving the award from the **San Diego Business Journal**, Cheeks said, "I am honored – and grateful to those that made this achievement a reality, the **Jamul Indian Village Tribal Council** and Chairwoman **Erica M. Pinto** and our employees on Team Jamul. This recognition would not have been possible without their support and hard work side-by-side with me."

Under her management, Jamul Casino became one of the first casinos in the nation (and one of the first two in California) to re-open after its initial closure due to COVID.

Large Company



Mary Cheeks

Attracting Lenders

Earlier this year, the Tribe also was successful in completing a refinance for Jamul Casino with Cheeks spearheading the effort. The deal was initiated in 2019 but was sidetracked due to the pandemic.

However, due to its ability to operate safely and successfully, Jamul Casino was able to attract lenders to this transaction after reopening. The lending team specifically cited the best-in-class management team led by Cheeks as a contributing factor to closing.

"Mary Cheeks has a proven track record of developing sound business strategies and comprehensive goals for performance and growth," said **Beth Binger**, president at **BCIpr**. "In addition to building strong daily operational performance, she has recognized opportunities for expansion with new business ventures, including Jamul Casino's Poker Room and its newest outdoor venue, The Rooftop."

Shortly after joining the casino, Cheeks saw an opportunity to expand Jamul Casino's offerings. In early 2019, Cheeks opened the Casino's highly popular Poker Room. The Grand Opening poker tournament united poker superstars, local celebrities and amateur players in a high-action tournament.

Jamul's live games and weekly poker tournaments have become a top draw for poker players from across the region.

An Outdoor Event Venue

Recognizing another opportunity for growth, Cheeks oversaw the opening of a 10,000-square-foot outdoor event space on the casino's roof, dubbed "The Rooftop" last August.

This highly flexible, one-of-a-kind venue allowed the casino to continue with limited events in a safe outdoor environment. The all-purpose, all-event, all-season venue offered a dramatic expansion of the casino's programming capabilities.

Cheeks also recently oversaw a renovation to the facility, including new carpet throughout and a redesigned casual cuisine venue, The Marketplace.



The C2K Board of Directors and staff congratulates

Chéri Pierre

COMPUTERS 2 KIDS CEO

For being selected as a finalist for the

San Diego Business Journal

Business Women of the Year Award 2021

Congratulations to all the finalists and a big thank you to Chéri for the amazing work she has done, leading Computers 2 Kids towards its pledge:

Ending the disparity of access to technology.

CONGRATULATIONS TO FINALIST

Selina Scott

Director of Outside Plant Construction

You have long been a powerful role model for women interested in pursuing a career in STEM. You are the epitome of a strong, dynamic woman in business. We are inspired by your leadership, commitment to connecting our communities, and paving the way for others.

Congratulations to you and all of the 2021 finalists for Business Women of the Year!





Dynamic Business Woman

Giving birth to new San Diego birthing center

It might seem counterintuitive to open a customer-facing business during a pandemic, but for midwife Nikki Helms, January 2021 was as good a time as any. After all, no catastrophe can stop the miracle of babies being born. And with Cox Business's phone and internet solutions in place, Helms was able to realize her dream of opening the San Diego Community Birth Center.

In the late 2000s, Helms began researching the disparities and outcomes for women of color, particularly those for Black women, in hospitals and birthing centers. Helms, a Black woman herself, had firsthand experience.

"I wanted to change those statistics. I wanted to have a greater impact," Helms said.

She spent seven years as a practicing doula an emotional and physical support person for pregnant women—before deciding she wanted to be a clinical practitioner. In 2010, she enrolled in the Nizhoni Institute of Midwifery. She completed the rigorous three-year program and concurrent five-year apprenticeship while raising her girls and working full time.

Today, Helms is one of only a handful of Black midwives in San Diego County.

It wasn't an easy journey to get the keys to

her new Bankers Hill clinic—and the pandemic changed her timeline—but Helms was determined to create an option for any woman seeking an alternative to the hospital birthing experience.

Thanks to a GoFundMe campaign, Helms raised nearly \$150,000, which she used to lease and revamp her space. She hired a Black woman contractor to install flooring, and with the help of friends, Helms painted the walls and made upgrades, creating a modern Zen environment for expectant women and their partners. On Jan. 5, 2021, she opened the doors to the only Blackowned birth center in San Diego.

Of course, part of getting her business up and running meant utilizing the right technology to best meet the needs of her customers and community, so she had Cox install internet and phone services.

Thanks to her Cox Business internet connection and a few tutorials from Cox technicians, Helms has been able to meet with patients via videoconferencing when needed, which has been critical to her business during the pandemic. She also regularly lectures and teaches monthly classes via live video to the community.

With the technology support from Cox Business,



the San Diego Community Birth Center is serving a broad community of new and soon-to-be parents—and all the babies now being born at the facility. Along with her former mentor, certified midwife Darynée Blount—as well as an acupuncturist, several employees and three students—Helms is gearing up for a baby boom.

While the entire team is comprised of women of color, Helms stresses that the San Diego Community Birth Center is open to all.

"We serve anyone who walks through the door, and we make our services accessible to everyone who needs them," Helms said.



Anna Crowe Specializes in Ideas that 'Move the Needle'

PUBLIC RELATIONS: CEO of Crowe PR Draws on Financial, Analytical Background to Help Clients

■ By GEORGE LURIE

nna Crowe, founder and CEO at San Diego-based Crowe PR, is an inspiring and empathetic leader who has positively impacted numerous companies and individuals throughout her life.

Crowe, one of SDBJ's Business Women of the Year in the Small Company category, has created a supportive work environment at her firm by building positivity, authenticity, transparency and innovation into the fabric of the company.

A Positive Culture

Insiders say Crowe PR is driven by specific core values, including a culture of excellence, transparency, radical ideas, relationships, results — and positivity. She has successfully scaled her firm to over \$1.5 million in revenue in under four years (which only 2% of female-owned businesses achieve) while executing high-quality work and maintaining a strong corporate culture built on entrepreneurial spirit, teamwork and exceptional performance standards.

"Thanks to her financial and analytical background, she's laser-focused on the company's and clients' bottom line and she's impeccable at uncovering ideas that will truly move the needle," said **Kathy Casciani**, senior brand strategist at Crowe PR.

In 2019, Crowe released her debut book, titled "Get Real: The Power of Genuine Leadership, a Transparent Culture and Authentic You." The book went on to become an **Amazon** best-seller and was followed by an audiobook in early 2020, then a companion podcast in which Crowe interviews leaders and changemakers on topics like authenticity, leadership and actionable advice.

Small Company



Anna Crowe

Crowe has built a stellar reputation for helping San Diego businesses succeed through public relations campaigns, influencer marketing and social media strategy. Local companies like **DermTech**, **Skrewball Peanut Butter Whiskey**, **Everyday California**, **Slate** Law Group, Saffron & Sage and Liberty Station have achieved strong brand awareness at both the local and national levels because of Crowe's ability to create meaningful connections between these brands and their target audiences.

In just over five years, Crowe has built an award-winning communications agency that continues to grow and thrive despite the challenges of the past few years. In 2021, Crowe PR is on track to hit \$2.5 million in revenues.

When COVID-19 hit the U.S. and small businesses started to crumble, Crowe sprang into action, mobilizing her team to provide impacted businesses with pro-bono PR services and social media support. As the head of an organization founded on authenticity and purpose-driven values, she understood the severity of the COVID crisis and wanted to lessen its negative impact on the community by providing free services to those in need.

During her career, Crowe, who holds an undergraduate degree in accounting from **Rutgers University** and an International MBA from the **University of San Diego**, has spent nearly 20 years working for iconic brands in New York, Los Angeles and San Diego, pivoting from a Big Four CPA track, to scaling and leading a national public relations and marketing agency.

"I am humbled to have been selected and truly appreciate this honor, especially given the amount and caliber of remarkable business leaders in our community," Crowe said. "I'm grateful for all those who have said yes to me throughout the years, challenged me and supported my journey. And I wouldn't be here without the San Diego community, the talented team at Crowe PR, the Entrepreneurs Organization, and, of course, my supportive family and friends."





Campbell Neurosciences, Inc.

Discover the future...

Campbell Neurosciences Inc,
Dedicated to Leveraging Neuroimmunology
for Early Diagnosis and Prevention of Suicide
CONGRATULATES

Kalina O'Connor for Business Woman of the Year Finalist





Phone: 858-353-4303

Email: Thomas@suicideisadisease.com

Pamela Gardner Champions Female Empowerment in STEM

SERVICES: Biotech Vendor Services' CEO Brings Community Together With Events

■ By GEORGE LURIE

Pamela Gardner is a trailblazer who promotes thought leadership and empowerment, especially among women, in the science industry.

This self-described "bad-ass butterfly" is on a mission to help others tackle the tough equity issues of female empowerment — and to break through the barriers that exist within the system.

Gardner, president and CEO at **Biotech Vendor Services** (BVS), is one of SDBJ's 2021 Business Women of the Year in the Small Company category.

Those who work with her say Garner leads with empathy and kindness — and mentors others to do the same. Professionally, she is at the hub of an international network where she is recognized as an expert in supplier management and orchestrating customized supplier events within the science industry, a role she has played for nearly two decades.

Her company, BVS, has held over 2,500 events related to bio-pharma, investor, supply chain and diversity and inclusion events.

Addressing Community Concerns

During the pandemic, Gardner increased her level of community service by offering complimentary programs to help address the unprecedented stress and anxiety being experienced in the science industry and beyond. She also held complimentary Diversity and Inclusion events to focus on the issues that got escalated with Black Lives Matter.

In 2019, Gardner created a nationwide initiative called "Women Breaking the Barriers of Science and Their Male Champions" to address the external issues women are facing in STEM related to sexual harassment and pay inequalities.

Small Company



Pamela Gardner

Gardner founded BVS in 2003 to assist bio-pharma companies and research institutes to streamline their vendor management and supply chain through customized scientific, clinical and manufacturing, and supplier diversity events.

BVS has held over 2,500 events and gained an impressive

of the top bio-pharma companies and suppliers. She has created a business model which allows her to further integrate her "why" to empower women in science into her existing business.

roster of over 1,000+ nationwide clients that include many

Thought Leadership

Having worked in the science industry for 18 years, Gardner understands the issues that women continue to face. Through her extensive network and loyal followers, she has been able to catapult thought leadership on a nationwide scale to people within the science industry.

In 2021, Gardner created another nationwide initiative called "The Art of Women Thriving in STEM." Both of her initiatives have been very successful in helping women have more confidence, visibility and recognition.

In 2019, Gardner was the recipient of the esteemed Athena Pinnacle Award in the Services Category, a recognition from **Athena** and her peers for her achievements in making a significant difference in the lives of women in STEM.

Even as the COVID-19 pandemic caused her revenue to drop by 75%, she was able to pivot her business successfully into a virtual model to offer more women empowerment programs. During the pandemic, she has increased her level of community service by offering complimentary programs to help address the unprecedented stress and anxiety being experienced in the science industry and beyond.

In 2021, Garnder says BVS is more profitable than it was pre-pandemic.

As an officer of **Bio Supply Management Alliance**, Gardner also has played a critical role in helping to address the supply chain issues the bio-pharma community has been experiencing during the pandemic.





Options For All (OFA) proudly celebrates Melissa Malone-Montgomery's selection as a finalist for Business Woman of the Year.



This dynamic member of OFA's executive leadership team is also a successful entrepreneur, a working mother, and a generous community volunteer. Melissa's driving philosophy as a business leader places people at the center of operations – and empowers them to do their best. Under her steady guidance, every OFA employee knows their role is critical to our mission of better serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout California.



DURANA ELMI

Business Women of the Year Finalist 2021



Our Mission: To steward life-long learning, advanced knowledge, and optimum health. We want to change the world by empowering people to reclaim their health and unlock their fullest potential. We want to help people live longer, happier, and healthier lives.



Diane Hansen Powers Palomar Health to New Heights

HEALTHCARE: CEO Successfully Repositioned Organization, Cut Costs, Improved Ratings

■ By GEORGE LURIE

Being a hospital CEO is one of the most complex and demanding jobs there is — not only are you responsible for running a large, integrated business, you're also responsible for the lives of a community.

"It takes a person with the right level of knowledge, strength, determination and compassion to run a hospital system and **Palomar Health** is lucky to have a woman like **Diane Hansen** who embodies the mission, vision and values of healthcare," said **Kristin Gaspar**, president and CEO, Palomar Health Foundation.

Positive Changes

When Diane Hansen stepped into the president and CEO role at Palomar Health in late 2017, the healthcare district was financially unstable and in "immediate jeopardy" of losing Medicare certification. Hansen knew it would take being bold, brave and swift to get Palomar Health back on the road to success.

"In just three and a half years, she accomplished more than would seem possible," Gaspar said. "Under her leadership, Palomar Health has repositioned itself as the preeminent integrated healthcare delivery system in North San Diego County."

Hansen, one of the 2021 SDBJ Business Women of the Year in the Large Company category, also was recently honored for her leadership by **The Association of California Healthcare Districts**, which named her president and CEO of the Year

Among her growing list of accomplishments at Palomar Health, Hansen has improved operating income by \$20.5 million (197%) by increasing revenue and reducing expenses.

Large Company



Diane Hansen

She's saved the district \$9 million in executive salaries too, improved **Leapfrog** ratings from "C" rankings at both hospitals to "A" at Poway and "B" at Escondido, reduced contract labor expenses by approximately \$8 million annually and reduced average patient length of stay by 7 hours.

Putting Finances on Track

Hansen also increased Palomar's cash collections by \$21 million in one year, and approximately \$40 million over three years – and secured \$125 million in new capital with bond refinancing that improved bond ratings and saved taxpayer dollars.

She's also saved Palomar Health over \$20 million by renegotiating key contracts.

Previously, Hansen served as the executive vice president of finance for Palomar Health, after having twice served as the director of financial planning and decision support, as well as the director of Clinical Business Operations.

Hansen has more than 15 years of experience in the health-care industry, to include for-profit, not-for-profit and governmental acute care hospitals in both academic medical centers and community hospitals. She also has extensive experience in physician networks, insurance providers and consulting, as well as expertise in the areas of Strategic and Financial Planning, Decision Support, and Clinical Business Operations.

Hansen serves on the board for Palomar Health affiliate **Palomar Health Development**, a 501(c)(3) Grants Entity, as well as various joint ventures.

As a member of the **Healthcare Financial Management Association** (HFMA), Hansen served on the HFMA San Diego - Imperial Chapter Board. Between her two tenures at Palomar Health, she worked for **Indiana University Health** as the director of Financial Operations for the IU Health Physicians (IUHP) network and Ambulatory Services. In the two-and-ahalf years she spent there, IUHP fully integrated more than 600 physicians. Prior to IUHP, Hansen worked for **WellPoint**, the parent company of **Anthem/Blue Cross**. As director of cost and budget, she was responsible for consolidation of the budget for 12 divisions, quarterly projections and reporting.



Tina Howe Leads Family Business Into Its Fifth Decade

SERVICES: Vice President Has Been Integral to Growth at The Bill Howe Family of Companies

■ By BRAD GRAVES

ina Howe can take a lot of credit for what The Bill Howe Family of Companies has become over the last four decades.

Her leadership helped expand a one-person shop into a business that now employs a small army of technically minded people. Those technicians use fleet of trucks to reach customers spread over a wide swath of Southern California, from the U.S.-Mexico border northward.

"She helped take Bill Howe Plumbing, a small plumbing business, to what it is today: the Bill Howe Family of Companies, a family owned and operated home service empire," said **Jenai Frison** of San Diego-based **Mediascape Advertising**, who nominated Tina Howe for a Business Women of the Year honor.

That spirit of growth and diversification impressed the panel of judges convened by the San Diego Business Journal, and helped Howe win one of the SDBJ's Business Women of the Year Awards in the Medium Company category.

Roots in Pacific Beach

The Bill Howe Family of Companies was originally called AM/PM Sewer & Drain Cleaning when it started in Bill Howe's studio apartment in Pacific Beach. The year was 1980.

Tina Howe became part of the business shortly thereafter. As the years passed, the Howes built their business, keeping a focus on professionalism, ethics and fair pricing.

Eventually the enterprise moved to locations in Kearny Mesa and Poway. Much about San Diego has changed in the intervening years, and the business has changed too. As the years passed, the company's focus widened, expanding into heating and air conditioning, as well as restoration and flood, remodel and repair services.

Medium Company



Tina Howe

The heating and cooling business includes installation, service and repair. Restoration services include water damage restoration, applied structural drying as well as mold remediation. The business serves residential as well as commercial clients.

The Bill Howe Family of Companies has received statewide

recognition for its work. The enterprise was selected as the 2020 Contractor of the Year by the **Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors Association** (PHCC) of California.

The Howes have also become television personalities on local channels.

Not Resting on Their Laurels

Tina Howe is dedicated and determined to keep the plumbing, heating, air conditioning and restoration industries evolving. Television is fine, but when digital marketing emerged, she was quick to see its potential and was first in the industry to embrace it. She also took a keen interest in online reputation management. In addition, she puts a priority on technician appearance. Those three public-facing initiatives have helped the businesses advance to what they are today.

In addition, Tina Howe has shown an unwavering dedication to the advancement of women in business. The plumbing, heating, air conditioning and restoration industry is an industry heavily dominated by men. Tina Howe encourages more women to become part of it.

Tina Howe spearheads philanthropy at Bill Howe with her continued support and volunteer work with the San Diego Food Bank, San Diego Humane Society, Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater San Diego and The Warrior Foundation Freedom Station, among others. She has served as a board member for the Boys and Girls Clubs.

One of her passions is rescuing animals. She has a rescue farm in Poway.

Tina Howe is past president of the San Diego chapter of the Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors Association.

Those who know her say Tina Howe is a pillar of the community — a person who embraces the values of integrity and philanthropy.

CONGRATULATIONS

ELIZABETH HAWKINS

on being named a finalist for the San Diego Business Journal 2021 Business Women of the Year award!







OPERATIONS MANAGER, SWINERTON

Tracy Murphy Is a Mentor and Model for Other Women

REAL ESTATE: IQHQ's President and Co-Founder 'Sets a Powerful Example'

■ By RAY HUARD

racy Murphy has been hailed as a trailblazer in her role as president and co-founder of IQHQ — the company behind development of a \$1.6 billion life science campus on the Bayfront in downtown San Diego.

"Women in the C-suite are scarce in the commercial real estate industry, and even more so in the burgeoning life science sector," Nara Lee, manager of corporate marketing for IQHQ, wrote in nominating Murphy for her award. Murphy is one of SDBJ's Business Women of the Year in the Medium Company category.

"Murphy is a trailblazer, one who has helped add more seats to the table and encourage more women to follow in her footsteps," Lee wrote.

"Tracy and the IQHQ team have raised over \$2.6 billion through two major equity transactions in 2020. With two successful rounds of financing completed, IQHQ is well funded and well positioned to pursue the company's dynamic development pipeline."

Since IQHQ was founded in 2019, Murphy has led a team in acquisitions and transactions that created 6 million square feet of life science districts in San Diego, San Francisco and Boston.

Fostering Diversity

"Tracy's focus for IQHQ goes beyond the development of Class A lab and office space, but to create vibrant districts where the convergence of lifestyle and premier life science environments are brimming with amenities, retail, open space and access to public transportation in desirable urban locations," according to Lee.

The firm recently made a commitment to build a \$7 million public park on a 1.5-acre site at the corner of Broadway and

Medium Company



Tracy A. Murphy

North Harbor Drive as part of its life science campus.

At a time when other companies were shedding workers because of the COVID-19 pandemic, IQHQ nearly tripled its workforce.

As IQHQ expanded, Murphy created a culture of diversity

and inclusion. As a result, women account for more than 40% of the company's workforce.

Joining Murphy in heading IQHQ are CEO Stephen Rosetta, Executive Chairman Alan Gold, Chief Investment Officer John Bonanno, and CFO Fran Federman.

"In an industry dominated by men, she sets a powerful example within IQHQ, but across the industry as she speaks to groups of women and mentors young women professionals, inspiring them to bring their skills to the growing commercial real estate and life science industries throughout the country," Lee wrote.

Within IQHQ, Murphy fosters an environment that stresses the importance of recruiting women and giving them challenging assignments early in their career to expose them to senior leadership.

She often speaks to groups of women and actively mentors young women.

As the mother of two sons, Murphy recognizes the need for a life/work balance and is committed to finding ways to spend quality time with her family.

Before cofounding IQHQ, Murphy was executive vice president for life sciences of **Kilroy Realty Corp.**, and senior vice president of Western U.S. leasing for **BioMed Realty**.

She started her career as a broker with Grubb & Ellis/BRE, now **DTZ/CW**.

"I'm honored to be recognized with this award amongst such an esteemed group of women," Murphy said. "My hope is that this will encourage more women to have careers in commercial real estate. I consider myself fortunate to have colleagues and mentors that have provided guidance and support throughout my career. I'm committed to providing encouragement, mentoring and creating more opportunity for women in this dynamic and growing industry, and a path forward."



Poseida congratulates Kristin Martin and all of this year's honorees. Thank you, Kristin, for your leadership and guidance.



It is exciting to work alongside and an honor to provide leadership to our talented and growing team who are dedicated to developing life-saving cell and gene therapeutics for patients in need."

Kristin Martin

Chief People & Administration Officer





Chelsea Wilson Shares Passion for Event Production at 3CS

SERVICES: While Running an Agency of Her Own, She Makes Time to Mentor Others

■ By GEORGE LURIE

helsea Wilson sets a standard for business women everywhere - she's a strong leader, an inspiring mentor.

Wilson, founder and CEO at 3CS, knows how to face a challenge and turn it into success.

One of SDBJ's Business Women of the Year in the Small Company category, Wilson leads Encinitas-based event production and experiential agency 3CS, which offers communication, collaboration and customized client experiences.

Cultivating Passion and Optimism

Wilson has a reputation for thinking outside the box, seeing new ways to create and deliver value for her company's clients. Those who work with her say Wilson cultivates passion and optimism in those around her, helping them be better better producers, better client managers, better team members.

"She's the one everybody wants to work for, and work with," said Naomi Oshry, director of new business and communications at 3CS. "Chelsea takes others under her wing and teaches them — something not many busy senior level women make time for."

'Chelsea cares about the events industry and wants to share that passion with others, explaining things, answering questions," Oshry added. "She says yes to industry newbies looking for advice through a Zoom chat — always in her calm, kind manner."

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an especially difficult time for the experiential and events industry, with brands afraid to allocate funds to in-person events, and consumers afraid to

Instead of waiting it out, Wilson decided she was ready to start her own agency. She founded 3CS in November 2020,

Small Company



Chelsea Wilson

and hit \$1.52M in revenue in her first year of business.

She's brought her experiential marketing expertise to the San Diego community, producing immersive experiences for multiple San Diego based companies, including HUMBL, C3 Bank, Wonderbus Entertainment, Monarch and others.

Starting in June 2021, she became chief experience officer at Dream Hahn, working alongside co-founders Ernie Hahn and Bob Ridgeway.

Global Brands, Local Support

Since starting 3CS, Wilson has led projects for global brands, including Google, Netflix and Lincoln.

In addition to creating engaging consumer experiences, her events often have a philanthropic focus. Wilson partnered with **Del Mar Plaza** & **Del Mar Village** to execute a socially distanced Santa experience for families during the 2020 holiday season. All proceeds from the event were donated to Fuel the Front Lines San Diego, an organization supporting local restaurants and medical frontline workers.

During the holidays last year, she collaborated with Lincoln and the American Forest Foundation, in a project that raised \$25,000, resulting in 25,000 trees planted across the U.S.

Prior to founding 3CS, Wilson served as managing director at Relevent Partners, a global experiential marketing and creative services agency under the MDC Partners umbrella.

She began her experiential career in 2006 after graduating from Bucknell University, working with clients in the automotive, beauty, entertainment, hospitality, lifestyle and retail industries, producing events around the world, from Vancouver and Cancun to London and Paris.

"I'm so honored to be featured among some incredible women as a San Diego Business Woman of the Year," Wilson said. "I hope to continue to set a standard among women in this community, and want to remind women everywhere to always be brave enough to face any challenge, and to remember the importance of a work / life balance — taking a moment to step away only makes the work better.'

true**care**.org





WITHHEALTH

Info@withhealth.com • 858-230-6863 • www.withhealth.com

66

"I founded WithHealth, Inc. in 2017 to make healthcare affordable, proactive, and accessible. We deliver on the promise of precision care and are focused on improving employee health and employer outcomes. Congratulations to all the finalists, it is an honor to be recognized alongside these amazing women. I want to thank all of the WithHealth employees and the WithHealth Medical Group for making this vision a reality, and San Diego Business Journal for this recognition."

- Cindy Salas Murphy
Founder & CEO, WithHealth





CREATING EXCEPTIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO



Jennifer Crawford

and all the Business Women of the Year

401 West A Street, Suite #1850 San Diego, CA 92101 www.syska.com





Toolbox Medical Innovations and the greater TE Connectivity family congratulate Jenn Zeis for being selected as 2021 Business Woman of the Year Finalist. Your servant leadership, perseverance and tenacity has not only propelled our company as a leader on the forefront of the COVID pandemic, but helped the global health community as well. We could not be more proud.



MEDICAL INNOVATIONS

The Shortest Path to Market

1965 Kellogg Ave. Carlsbad, CA 92008

toolboxmed.com

1-888-445-2333

DECEMBER 6, 2021 San Diego Business Journal 37

SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL

of the year awards 2021



2021 Winners (Left to Right): Tina Howe (Bill Howe Family of Companies), Diane Hansen (Palomar Health), Chelsea Wilson (3CS), Pamela Gardner (Biotech Vendor Services, Inc.), Mary Cheeks (Jamul Casino), Carrie Bobb & Co., hellojenny, The Carrie Bobb Foundation), Anna Crowe (Crowe PR), Jennifer Barnes (Optima Office).



The San Diego Business Journal thanks all of our sponsors who made the 2021 Business Women of the Year Awards possible.



Carrie Bobb (Carrie Bobb & Co., hellojenny, The Carrie Bobb Foundation).



Anna Crowe (Crowe PR).



Pamela Gardner (Biotech Vendor Services, Inc.).



Chelsea Wilson (3CS).



Jennifer Barnes (Optima Office).



Tina Howe (Bill Howe Family of Companies).



Diane Hansen (Palomar Health).



Mary Cheeks (Jamul Casino).



[Left to Right]: Nick Sahmel [Cox Communications], Dennis Morgan (Cox Communications), finalist Selina Scott (Cox Communications) and Steve Byrne (Cox Communications). [Left to Right]: Adriana Andres-Paulson (TrueCare), Sylvia Braul (TrueCare), finalist Michelle Gonzalez (TrueCare) and Frankie Gonzalez (TrueCare).







Barb Chodos (San Diego Business Journal) and judge Nancy Rohland-Heinrich (National University System). [Left to Right]: mcKensey McGill (Carrie Bobb & Co.), winner Carrie Bobb & Co., hellojenny, The Carrie Bobb Foundation) and her daughter Charley.



Winner Mary Cheeks (Jamul Casino) and judge Donna DeBerry (CSDBCC, Seismic).

SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL

BUSINESS WOMEN

of the year awards 2021



"Women Empowering Women" panel (Left to Right): Panelist Theresa Clements (JPMorgan Chase & Co.), panelist Lydia Huard (Wells Fargo), moderator Nikki Atkins Hartung (JPMorgan Chase & Co.), panelist Alessandra Lezama (TOOTRiS), and panelist Christiane Tsuda (Union Bank).



Award Presenters (Left to Right): Large Company Award presenter Anna Araya (JPMorgan Chase & Co.), Medium Company Award presenter Lydia Huard (Wells Fargo), Small Company Award presenter Kathleen Medina (Union Bank), Rising Star Award presenter Alessandra Lezama (TOOTRiS).



Barb Chodos (San Diego Business Journal) and Peter Kelley (JPMorgan Chase & Co.)



(Left to Right): Sheila Brown (Palomar Health), winner Diane Hansen (Palomar



(Left to Right): Chancellor Tzomes (California Coast Credit Union), Mirelle Paterson (California Coast Credit Union), finalist Barbara A. Krol (California Coast Credit Union), Jan Jitze Krol (IBM).



(Left to Right): Todd Russo (JPMorgan Chase & Co.), Steve Baker (JPMorgan Chase & Co.) and Aaron Ryan (JPMorgan Chase & Co.).



(Left to Right): Jilian Dimitt (Optima Office), winner Jennifer Barnes (Optima Office) and Taylor Gibson (Optima Office).



Jennifer Givens (Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial) and finalist Finalist Shawnda Dorantes (Beauty Lounge Medical Spa) and Daniel Alvarez. Jodie Grenier (Foundation for Women Warriors).





(Artemis Institute for Clinical Research), and Vishaal Mehra (Artemis Institute for Clinical Research). (Intesa Communications Group) and Nancy Schroeder (Intesa Communications Group)



(Left to Right): Purvi Mehra (Artemis Institute for Clinical Research), finalist Harriet Oberman (Left to Right): Kai Tsay (Sound Solutions International), finalist Margie Newman



Finalist Shari Miller (Symbio Financial Partners / LPL Financial) and Lynn Lee (Laudi Vidni).



Metra Griffin (Union Bank) and finalist Kristin Martin (Poseida Theraputics, Inc.)



Angela Leavitt (Mojenta) and Kim Custodio (Mojenta).



Finalist Mia Roseberry (Wounded Warrior Homes) and finalist Dr. Ina von Ber (Ambassadorial Roundtable).