Shaibra Marei jumped from managing projects at Boeing to serving cookie-enzymed milk shots. The career switch was rather drastic, but it was her ties to the aerospace giant that made her Dirty Cookie business a possibility.

Dominique Ansel, the star chef behind the Cronut pastry sensation, is credited with developing the cookie shot—a chocolate-lined cookie cup filled with cold milk that his Los Angeles and New York bakeries serve in the evenings. Marei adopted his concept but also figured out how to simplify the labor-intensive process.

“What everybody was doing, even Dominique, it’s not scalable,” she said, adding that the way of the baking molds available at the time was limited, so “there’s no way you could really grow it into a main business and take it nationwide and worldwide like what I want to do.”

An aerospace engineer friend of Marei’s—“outside of work hours”—created baking molds that can produce hundreds of cookie cups at a time.

“I told him, ‘When I make it big, I’ll write you a check for a million dollars,’” she said. “‘He’s holding me to that.’”

Marei found a commercial kitchen in Huntington Beach, and in January 2015 leased a space at Union Market at The District in Tustin Legacy. Cookie cup options include chocolate chip, cookies n’ cream, red velvet, matcha green tea, peanut butter and chocolate mint. They can be filled with organic milk, vanilla almond milk, chocolate and vanilla creams, coconut cold-brew, soft-serve ice cream and toasted marshmallow. Shot prices range from $5 to $7 each, in line with that of a large Starbucks’ Frappuccino.

Ex-Boeing Staffer Engineers Sweet Enterprise

Dirty Cookie Scales Milk Shots Famed Chef Created

By MEDHA DWAMARTINO

Dirty Cookie is a business that was born in its punch—is officially still a startup, with 15 full- and part-time employees, and breaking even. Anything that’s left over after covering expenses, Marei is putting back into the business. Catering orders bring in more than half of sales, which inspired her to rethink the brick-and-mortar concept and focus on bigger clients.

“Opening other locations is going to be the last thing I do, because right now we’ve already started wholesaling to hotels, like the Four Seasons, the Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles, and Balboa Bay Resort in Newport Beach. Plans also call for serving the veggie community by year-end.

“We’re really growing our vegan and gluten-free assortment,” she said. “We’re actually going to probably turn it into more like a sister company, a sister line or something.”

Innovation Legacy

Marei said she dreamed of running her own business since she was a child. She was inspired by her father, also an entrepreneur, whose company in Egypt specialized in aluminum manufacturing and ultrasonic inspections.

Dirty Cookie 26

Dirty Cookie Snaps Milk Shots Famed Chef Created

By MEDHA DWAMARTINO

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Cryptocurrency (and What it Means for Your Taxes)

Bitcoin had a banner year in 2017. Though it’s been around for almost a decade, the explosive growth experienced in 2017 has piqued the interest of investors and the IRS alike. As Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies become more mainstream, savvy investors are advised to take a proactive approach to their tax planning and compliance surrounding these issues.

While IRS guidance on the subject is limited, they did provide some clarification regarding the taxation of cryptocurrencies in Notice 2014-21. According to the Notice, cryptocurrencies are treated as property for federal tax purposes. This important distinction means that the rules applicable to property transactions must also be applied to cryptocurrencies. Depending on the type of transactions a taxpayer is involved with, this can have a variety of implications.

**Sale or exchange** - The conversion of a digital currency into another form of property creates a taxable event. This includes converting cryptocurrency to cash, and even the exchange of one digital coin for another, such as exchanging Bitcoin for Ethereum. Also, where there was ambiguity in the past, the new Tax Reform and Jobs Act is clear – cryptocurrency does not qualify for a tax-free exchange under §1031.

**Spending** - Even the purchase of goods or services with cryptocurrency can create a taxable event. The transaction is treated as if the coin was first liquidated for cash, and then the cash was used to make the purchase. For example, if you bought a coin for $100 and later used that coin to purchase $500 worth of goods, you would have a taxable gain of $400.

**Receiving** - The receipt of cryptocurrency in exchange for goods and services is taxed as ordinary income.

**Mining** - Successful mining of digital currency is considered ordinary income (equal to the fair market value of the coin on the date it’s mined).

**Initial Coin Offering (ICO)** - Unlike traditional stock offerings, an ICO can be used to raise capital without giving away equity. However, the capital raised then becomes taxable income. Companies seeking a way to mitigate these taxes are looking to foreign markets with favorable regulatory environments.

**Other considerations** - Like other property transactions, the holding period matters. If you have held the coin for longer than a year before exchanging it, you will be eligible for the favorable long-term capital gain rates.

Record keeping, an often-underappreciated aspect of taxation, is especially important when dealing in cryptocurrency. Digital exchanges like Coinbase are not subject to the same reporting regulations as traditional stock brokers, so don’t expect to receive a Form 1099 detailing your annual trading activity. In crypto, the onus of recordkeeping falls to the taxpayer. Taxpayers would be well served by keeping detailed records about the initial purchase price, holding period, and exchange of any digital currencies. This information will be required for both self-reporting, and as support if the IRS ever comes knocking.

Our digital currency team at RJ International CPAs is available to help you navigate the evolving tax law surrounding cryptocurrencies and its impact on your activity.

**Jeff Ekiss** is a licensed CPA in California and Tax Manager at RJ International CPAs. He has an extensive background in income tax planning and compliance for corporations, partnerships and high net worth individuals. Specializing in closely held businesses, Jeff’s focus is on helping his clients minimize their tax liabilities and create multi-generational wealth as they grow their business. Jeff can be reached at 949.652.1600 or jeffeek@rjicpas.com.

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RJ International CPAs (RJI) Established in 1980, RJ International CPAs specializes in audit, accounting, corporate and international tax issues for publicly traded and privately held companies. RJ International CPAs is PCAOB registered and the Southern California member firm of DFK International, one of the largest global accounting networks.

RJI paid for this space and is solely responsible for its content.
Ice-cold snack: shots $5 to $7 apiece retail; over half of sales in catering, wholesale

Dirty Cookie
from page 24

“He always told me, ‘If you really want to change the world and change lives, you need to become an entrepreneur, because that’s what you do as a business. You can help societies and communities, give people jobs,’” she said. “I was really motivated to being my own boss.”

Quitting her job made no sense to anyone she talked to about the possibility. She had a 5-month-old daughter to support at the time, and though Boeing was frequently laying off workers, she said her job security wasn’t in question.

“People were freaking out, saying, ‘No-body’s leaving Boeing—what are you doing?’” she said. “I was the youngest one of the people there, and I wasn’t overly paid like other people that have been there for a long time that they had to lay off.”

But she quit anyway, bringing along her best friend and a fellow project manager at Boeing, Sally Elgamil.

“I told her, ‘I really wanted to do this,’ and I knew she’d support me through anything,” Marei said.

About a year into their adventure, Elgamil returned to corporate life.

“She couldn’t really handle the life of entrepreneurship—it’s very stressful, and the sacrifice is big,” Marei said. “So we kind of just went our own ways, and she’s still my best friend.”

Riding solo has so far been working out for Marei, but to grow the business, she said she’ll need more support on the financial side.

“I’m looking for investors right now.”

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Elder Care is Moving from Hospital to Home
Northeast providers upping investment in home health to catch up to West

The West’s tech-centric economy is another likely reason providers there have been ahead of the game in adopting home health models. They have more direct access to the innovative technologies that make them successful.

Changes in health models have a ripple effect. Implications abound for investors and the real estate industry. Read on for more Candid Conversations on Elder Care highlights that can be found on www.BDO.com.

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Northeast providers upping investment in home health to catch up to West

Elder Care is Moving from Hospital to Home
Northeast providers upping investment in home health to catch up to West

Seniors and their families are getting more comfortable with having productively uncomfortable conversations about their care options.

Historically, healthcare providers have fallen into a trap of medicalizing old age so much that they recommend continued treatments even if the ultimate outcome remains the same. Physicians have been hesitant to have difficult conversations with their patients about realistic end-of-life care options. Important questions—like what metrics the patient uses to measure quality of life—have gone unasked.

The tide is changing slowly, helped in part by Medicare’s recent move to reimburse providers for having these conversations.

A bigger driver is seniors themselves. Their expectations are different. They’re tired of receiving care that focuses just on increasing the number of days left without maximizing the quality of that time. And their advocates have more information and access. If their near-term investment plans are any indication, healthcare organizations are listening. Their future, and our seniors, depend on it.

We worked with NEJM Catalyst to survey healthcare executives, clinical leaders and clinicians about the outlook for elder care investment and innovation as providers work to meet the changing needs of the fastest-growing U.S. age demographic.

We found that the future of elder care is one rooted in empathy and focused on improving quality of life. We’ll see greater investment in home health, palliative care and geriatrics and a move away from facility-focused models. Part of that includes improved training for physicians to have those important conversations about end-of life care. Another piece of that means hiring or training more on-staff geriatric caretakers to identify health risk factors for seniors before they evolve into greater health problems.

As Karen Stone, Atlantic Tax regional managing partner and member of the Long-Term Care Team for The BDO Center for Healthcare Excellence & Innovation, puts it:

“'The traditional' nursing home is undergoing rapid change while the overall healthcare industry consolidates at a record pace. Under consumer-centric value-based care, elder care providers that evolve business models to improve care quality and satisfaction, boost population health and reduce healthcare costs—whether inside brick-and-mortar facilities or not—will thrive.”

We also saw varying provider investment plans by region, notably in home health. While 52 percent of healthcare organizations in the Northeast said home health was one of the top two segments of care they’d invest in by 2020 to prepare for the growth of the aging population, just 35 percent of providers in the West said the same.

But we don’t think providers in the West are less interested in home health models. It’s just that their counterparts in the Northeast are playing catchup.

In the Northeast, you have states that tend to spend more on healthcare and hospital care because of the region’s larger portion of elderly residents and high-profile hospitals. And then in the West, you have health systems like Kaiser and others which have for years provided a strong model of how a holistic, well-coordinated health system can keep patients healthy and out of the hospital.
CANDID CONVERSATIONS ON ELDER CARE

Home Health, Palliative Care & Tech Will Drive Empathetic Elder Care

Five percent of Americans generate almost half of U.S. healthcare costs—most of them chronically ill seniors. Pressure on providers to curb healthcare spending will grow as seniors are poised to make up more than 20% of the entire population by 2029. Seniors are pressuring caregivers to focus more on quality of life over the number of days left. Providers are responding with plans to focus their investments on home health and palliative care—and they’ll look to technology to help improve both.

BDO’s Candid Conversations on Elder Care predicts what elder care will look like by 2020 and beyond.

Elder Care’s Race Against Time

- **2010**: In 2010, seniors made up 13% of the U.S. population and 34% of healthcare spending through Medicare & Medicaid.
- **2016**: In 2016, healthcare spending made up 17.9% of GDP and by 2026, it’s expected to be 19.7%.
- **2029**: By 2029, seniors are forecast to make up more than 20% of the U.S. population.
- **2050**: By 2050, the 85 and above demographic will start growing at a faster rate than the entire working population.

The Change Agent Formula

- Increasing pressure to cut public health spending amid growing senior population
- Increasing emphasis on quality of life over # of days

Empathetic, quality-based elder care

The Provider Response?

- By 2020, they will invest most in...
  - **44%** Home health
  - **44%** Palliative care
  - **39%** Genentech care takers
  - **12%** Outpatient rehab
  - **12%** Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly
  - **12%** Skilled Nursing Facilities

They see the greatest opportunities for technology disruptors to improve elder care in...

- **63%** Home-based care
- **58%** Care coordination
- **24%** Drug pricing

They predict that the impact of technology on improving quality and safety of elder care will be greatest in...

- **97%** Transportation coordination
- **93%** Electronic or telemedicine consultations/capabilities
- **89%** Wearables, sensors or connected devices

Join the conversation. Contact:

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Source: U.S. Census, CMS, Health Affairs, BDO 40th Anniversary National Survey

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The “UP-C” is one of the many reasons tax lawyers should not be allowed to name things, but, despite its strange name, the UP-C can be a useful structure for taking your tax partnership (likely your limited liability company, or LLC) public, while still maintaining some of the LLC’s tax benefits – for both you and the public shareholders.

“Up-what?”

Even though the name is easy to mock, the UP-C has become a viable path for LLCs to access the public markets. For numerous reasons, LLCs have not traditionally been good candidates for initial public offerings (IPOs) of most operating businesses. The UP-C, which is shorthand for “Umbrella Partnership-Corporation”, allows the historic owners of an LLC to participate in an IPO while preserving many of the tax benefits that an LLC affords. In an UP-C, a newly formed corporation (“PubCo”) undertakes an IPO and uses the proceeds to buy interests in the LLC. After the IPO, the public shareholders own Class A stock of PubCo, the historic owners of the LLC own voting-only Class B stock of PubCo, and PubCo owns an economic interest in the LLC equal to the public’s economic interest in PubCo. PubCo also has all of the voting power in the LLC, which continues to operate the pre-IPO business. The historic owners of the LLC have voting-only interests in PubCo and solely economic interests in the LLC. This concentrates control of the LLC in PubCo while allowing the historic owners to maintain their traditional LLC pass through tax treatment until they are ready to exchange their divided PubCo and LLC interests for Class A stock of PubCo. An Exchange Agreement with PubCo allows for this exchange. The public disclosures required by the Securities and Exchange Commission in the registration statement for the UP-C IPO, and the ongoing accounting and compliance work, are more complicated (and, therefore, somewhat more expensive) than a standard IPO, but this is often outweighed by the benefits.

That sounds complicated. Why would anyone do it?

Because LLCs have useful tax benefits – namely the potential for “basis step up.” You have tax basis in your LLC’s assets. This tax basis (i) allows for depreciation or amortization of those assets and (ii) reduces gain (or increases loss) on the sale of those assets. When you (or a corporation) acquire additional interests in the LLC (assuming it makes an election under Internal Revenue Code Section 754), your basis in those assets increases by what you paid (or exchanged) for the interests – the “basis step up.” This means your depreciation or amortization increases, and your gain on a sale of those assets decreases (or your loss increases). The same is true for PubCo. Every time PubCo exchanges its Class A stock for a historic owner’s divided PubCo and LLC interests, PubCo gets a basis step up in the LLC assets and the resulting tax benefits. This basis step up could significantly increase PubCo’s valuation in any proposed sale of the company.

The UP-C structure also supports the growth of the business because the company will be able to compensate its employees with publicly tradeable Class A stock of PubCo and will have the option to issue either equity in PubCo or economic interests in the LLC when entering into strategic partnerships or acquiring other businesses.

Additionally, if you are a private equity group that owns portfolio companies structured as LLCs, the UP-C structure may be the most efficient way to attain liquidity (if an IPO is more preferable to you than a company sale) without having to reorganize the portfolio company and while still maintaining many of the tax benefits of an LLC and the ability to exercise some control over the LLC’s business through the Class B voting stock of PubCo.

But I’m a founder. What’s in it for me?

PubCo – and thus the public shareholders – get the benefits of increased tax basis in the business you built. In exchange, PubCo shares these tax benefits with you – typically 85 percent to 90 percent, in your favor – under a “Tax Receivables Agreement.” As a historic owner of the LLC, you also continue to enjoy being subject to only one layer of tax for as long as you maintain ownership of your economic interests in the LLC. Whenever you desire liquidity for your ownership interests in the LLC, you can exchange those LLC interests for Class A stock of PubCo and resell the Class A stock in the public markets. Thanks to favorable UP-C interpretive guidance in 2016 from the Securities and Exchange Commission which (subject to certain conditions) allows the historic owners of the LLC to tack their holding period requirement for reselling stock under Rule 144 back to the date they originally acquired their LLC interests (rather than the date they exchanged those interests for Class A stock), this process of achieving liquidity has become easier. With the UP-C structure, you can reap the capital benefits of an IPO and the tax benefits of an LLC.

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As a global wireless solutions provider, Mobilitie deploys infrastructure that keeps people connected in the most densely populated and demanding environments. From high-rises to hotels to university campuses, we fund, design, build, and operate next-generation networks that enable rich mobile experiences and robust wireless connectivity. These solutions not only deliver the coverage needed for today’s fast-paced world, but also anticipate the needs of tomorrow’s increasingly connected communities.

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Today’s treasury professionals face a common set of challenges when it comes to payments processing. The North American market for B2B payments is $25 trillion and yet, in the U.S., more than 50 percent of these payments are still being made by paper checks. Add to this, many organizations are burdened with handling paper invoices and matching remittance data. These manual, inefficient processes can be a tremendous burden on an organization’s accounts payable (AP) staff. On top of that, inefficient and expensive paper payment processes make it difficult for accounts payable to know its cash position in a timely manner, making decision-making on how best to disburse funds less productive.

Businesses pay $132,000 annually to manually process 500 invoices a month at a standard $22 per invoice. Factors that can add to the price tag are high processing costs, account approval times, frequent missed payments, weakened supplier relationships, and inefficient use of company resources.

Industry stats show that 80 percent of invoices have at least one exception. Relying on manual entry alone can mean exceptions aren’t caught, requiring someone to research the error before resuming their assigned tasks.

Fortunately, advanced electronic solutions are addressing AP concerns and making it possible to drive tremendous efficiency in payments processes. AP departments are now able to automate around payments and invoices, helping to eliminate cumbersome paper processes and reduce the risk of fraud. In addition, organizations can use these solutions to improve supplier relationships by simplifying the supplier payment process, while reducing cost and improving the bottom line.

Today’s automated AP workflows make the entire process easier, more accurate and efficient. Through shorter payment cycles and improved processes, automated AP solutions help reduce clutter and paper.

Major benefits of automating the AP workflow:

- **Integration with your bank** – At the end of the month, the accounting teams review every transaction to ensure they match with what’s in the bank, manually and/or with spreadsheet programs. With the efficiencies of bank account integration, modern AP systems can download bank balances, pull cleared transactions and make the reconciliation process simple from end-to-end.

- **Fraud protection and information security** – Moving from paper to a digital system improves information security to your organization. This includes new visibility into all electronic payments and vendors, scans for duplicates and errors, and full control for approvers and exceptions.

- **Greater insight** – Business leaders should have instant access to reports telling them everything they need to know about the current state of the company’s finances. This includes AP reports with information about outstanding payments by vendor and recent expenses by product, expense type, or category.

- **Unlimited users** – Many AP systems charge a fee per user. Between the AP team, accounting, and various department leaders and managers around the company involved with the AP approval process, you may have a lot of users that need access. If your AP is fully automated, however, you shouldn’t need many accounts.

- **Paperless document storage** – Everything lives in bits and bytes on your network rather than filing cabinets. An AP automation system can effectively remove the need for paper storage and extensive holding periods.

Laying the groundwork for automation success

Take time to map out the steps in your current AP process. Ask detailed questions such as those below because understanding the nuances of your process will be key to adopting a system that not only meets your needs today, but allows for scale and growth tomorrow:

- **How do you receive invoices? Where do they come from?**
- **Where do the invoices go? Who is responsible for processing them? How?**
- **What kind of manual data entry or data manipulation is involved?**
- **How are invoices approved? How are the payments applied to pay those invoices?**

How are invoices paid? By card, ACH, or check?

How are the payments captured in your accounting system? Who is in charge of ensuring the payments are accurate and posted correctly?

Your answers to these questions and finding the right partner will help you effectively automate AP.

With its game-changing electronic payments solution called Expert AP, Fifth Third can help you create efficiencies. This innovative, full-service, B2B AP solution manages everything from invoice receipt to actual payment and allows AP departments to run more efficiently, while positively impacting the bottom line. With the same level of support services and additional payment and enhanced remittance options.

“We are the first bank to partner with the Mastercard B2B Hub powered by AvidXchange,” says Expert AP product manager Adam Keck. “This enables Fifth Third to offer an end-to-end automated platform that converts payable processes typically done by paper into an electronic transaction. This technology maximizes electronic payments using virtual cards and enhanced Automated Clearing House (ACH).”

Contact our Orange County-based team members, Joy.Gilmer@53.com or Sandra.Collasol@53.com to see how Expert AP can transform and optimize your payments function into an efficient machine.


Joe Yurosek
Fifth Third Bank hired Joe in December 2017 as California Market President to lead the Golden State’s commercial vertical and market expansion strategy. An Orange County native and long-time resident, Joe has more than 25 years of banking experience; he joined Fifth Third from Comerica, where he served as market president for the Orange County region. He also was responsible for corporate middle market strategy in Orange County, Long Beach and San Diego and co-led sponsor coverage strategy for Southern California. Joe holds a bachelor’s degree from California Polytechnic State University – San Luis Obispo and earned his MBA from University of Southern California’s Marshall School of Business. For more information, please contact Joe Yurosek at (949) 576-3850 or joseph.yurosek@53.com.

About Fifth Third
While you might not know our name, you’ll recognize our face! Fifth Third is making a significant investment in the California market by hiring local, tenured talent and delivering value-add advice, products and services to help clients with their most pressing financial, growth, and risk management challenges.

Fifth Third Bancorp is a diversified financial services company headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio. As of June 30, 2018, the Company had $141 billion in assets and operated 1,158 full-service Banking Centers and 2,458 ATMs with Fifth Third branding in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Florida, Tennessee, West Virginia, Georgia and North Carolina. In total, Fifth Third provides its customers with access to more than 54,000 fee-free ATMs across the United States. Fifth Third operates four main businesses: Commercial Banking, Branch Banking, Consumer Lending and Wealth & Asset Management. Member FDIC
Medical Device Leader Edwards Drives Meaningful Innovation for Patients

Edwards Lifesciences is a global leader in the science of heart valves and hemodynamic monitoring.

More than 300,000 valve replacements are performed worldwide each year through open-heart surgery, utilizing either bioprosthetic tissue valves, like those made by Edwards, or mechanical valves.

Since introducing the first commercially available heart valve in 1960, Edwards has continued to meaningfully advance heart valve therapy and, more than 50 years later, remains a global leader in this field. Edwards also leads the development of technologies designed for the non-surgical replacement of heart valves, called transcatheter aortic valve replacement, or TAVR.

Additionally, for more than 40 years, Edwards has advanced the care for the acutely ill.

The company invests 15 percent to 16 percent of sales in R&D, and recent years’ product growth is directly related to the outputs of Edwards’ R&D. Last year, Edwards was proud to introduce several innovative products that helped maintain strong global leadership positions and enabled more patients to benefit from the company’s life-saving technologies than ever before.

For more information about Edwards Lifesciences, visit Edwards.com.
A Spotlight on Young Innovators

This summer, Maschoff Brennan launched an Orange County student innovator scholarship as part of the OCBJ’s Innovator of the Year Award. We will award up to three $2,500 scholarships to undergraduate or graduate students who demonstrate outstanding innovation in any field. We invite nominations through August 20, through our website, www.mab.com/student-innovator.

As we approach our selection of our first young innovators, we reflect on the relationship between youth and innovation. Curiosity and rebelliousness are signature characteristics of youth. With open eyes, the made world becomes malleable. What is fixed, becomes challenged.

We are no stranger to the creative power of youth. At the age of 26, Albert Einstein published four papers, on the photoelectric effect, Brownian motion, special relativity, and the equivalence of mass and energy. Louis Braille, at the age of 15, invented handwriting for the blind. In the 1920s, Philo Farnsworth, as a high school student in rural Idaho, conceived the idea of projecting recorded images by scanning electrons on a glass screen. At the age of 21, he made the world’s first working television. Innovation is the will to turn conception into a new reality.

Today’s youth are no less impressive. You just have to look to submissions by high school students in national science competitions. Maria Elena Grimmett, at the age of 14, discovered a test for early detection of pancreatic cancer, winning him the grand prize of the Intel International Science Fair in 2011. Param Jaggi, a 17-year-old senior at Plano East High School, developed a mechanism inserted into the exhaust pipe of a car that uses photosynthesis to convert carbon dioxide into oxygen. Raymond Wang, at the age of 16, created a device that changes how air is circulated in an airplane to reduce germ transmission by 55 times, winning him the top prize at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in 2016. Gitanjali Rao, age 11, won the Discovery Education 3M Young Scientist Challenge for inventing a sensor that can detect lead in water more efficiently than traditional methods.

Orange County has been a hub of innovation beginning in its early days. Clarence Leonidas Fender, the inventor of the Stratocaster, was born in Orange County to parents who owned an Orange Grove near Anaheim. In a single year, 1995, UCI became the first university to have two of its professors win the Nobel Prize in separate fields. Frederick Reines and F. Sherwood Rowland were awarded Nobel Prizes in physics and chemistry, respectively. Professor Reines discovered the neutrino; Professor Rowland discovered that chlorofluorocarbons contribute to ozone depletion.

In the business arena, Orange County has been blessed with many visionary innovators. Jim Jannard, founder of Oakley sunglasses and Red Digital Cinema, revolutionized eyewear and digitized film production, transforming two industries. Reza and Maryam Rafouparan, a brother and sister dynamo, hold over 1,000 patents, making them among the top 20 inventors in the world. They have been pioneers in the development of Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and other communication technologies. Through Movian, an Orange County-based venture, they are developing revolutionary applications in 5G and other next-generation communications technology.

Recent winners of the OCBJ’s Innovator of the Year Award confirm that the well of innovation has not run dry in Orange County. Past winners include Stan Rowe, the Chief Scientific Officer of Edwards Life Sciences, whose work helped revolutionize the heart valve to substantially reduce mortality rates among patients with heart problems. Dr. Benjamin Park, UCI Professor and founder of Enevate, has developed a fast charging lithium-ion battery for electric vehicles recognized as a leader in its field. Stuart McClure, the CEO of Cylance, Inc., developed a cybersecurity solution using algorithmic science and machine learning to detect and prevent attacks with greater proficiency. The list of innovators is long; it is regrettable there is so little space here in which to showcase them. Which brings us to the future. We honor the notable achievements of individuals. But we ignore at our peril the deeper truth that innovation is a collective endeavor. The passion to inquire and to buck tradition is a force that must be nurtured and re-inscribed in each generation. That effort begins with the smallest of gestures, words of encouragement to the young misfits, heretics, and freethinkers among us who have the audacity and courage to challenge convention, and in doing so, to change our world.
Recognizing extraordinary efforts

Achieving great things in any community takes courage, vision, and tremendous effort. What each of us does can make life better for everyone.

We proudly celebrate the great achievements of the 2018 Innovators of the Year.

wellsfargo.com

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How to Leverage the Gig Economy in Your Own Company

The Gig Economy continues to grow, with major implications for all employers going forward. Depending on how you count freelancers, the gig economy accounts for anywhere from 16 percent to 34 percent of the U.S. workforce currently, and it’s anticipated to hit the 40 percent mark by 2020.

How does this trend affect you as an employer? Is the gig economy a valid answer to help you complete projects and fill spots that require hard-to-find skills? How do the finances look on your end? And who should you try to hire on a freelance basis? Take a look at these tips on how to make the gig economy work for you.

Treat Freelancers as Insiders

When you hire a full-time employee, you may spend a lot of effort finding someone who fits in with your corporate culture. Many people think the issue of fit isn’t important when bringing in freelancers — so they often ignore it. In actuality, if your in-house teams can convince that they’re happier than their 9-to-5 counterparts. More than half, in fact, have no interest in returning to traditional employment.

What does this mean as you consider hiring freelancers? If you’re looking at creatives, technical experts, or professionals, treat them with the respect you’d use with your own employees.

Approach Freelancers as Professionals

Think of the relationship between your in-house staff and the freelancers you contract as a collaborative atmosphere that nurtures freelancers, you’ll be in far better shape. When you look at their reasons, you can understand why these trained professionals might make that choice. Freelancers report a greater work-life balance, and many are firmly convinced that they’re happier than their 9-to-5 counterparts. More than half, in fact, have no interest in returning to traditional employment.

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What is your impression of a freelancer who’s euphemistically “between jobs,” just working as a “consultant” until they can finally land their next position? Maybe that was true in the past, but no longer. Fully 70 percent of freelancers are in the gig economy by choice.

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With the recent arrival of Andrei Iancu as the new United States Patent and Trademark (USPTO) Director, careful optimism has slowly begun to replace a gloomy outlook on what have been challenging years in the wake of a number of Supreme Court decisions. Director Iancu already has issued two noteworthy “pro patent” memos described below to the examiners especially in the area of patentable subject matter.

While many patent examiners rejected claims as unpatentable by applying the Supreme Court decisions in a rather general manner as being solely directed to an “abstract idea” or “natural phenomenon,” the memos provide a welcome sharpening of focus to the two-step analysis required to determine patentable subject matter.

Pursuant to the Vanda memo, dealing with the first step of the analysis (“Is the claim directed to a law of nature, a natural phenomenon, or an abstract idea?”), the examiners should now evaluate claim as a whole in the determination whether or not the claim is “directed to” a judicial exception. The Federal Circuit held that the claims at issue in Vanda were indeed patent eligible because they were not simply directed to a judicial exception (the correlation between a specific drug dosage and an adverse effect of the drug was held to be a natural phenomenon), but to an application of a natural phenomenon. Now, the memo makes clear that method of treatment claims can be patent eligible, which is of particular importance in the field of personalized medicine.

Pursuant to the Berkheimer memo, dealing with the second step of the analysis (“Is any element, or combination of elements, in the claim sufficient to ensure that the claim as a whole amounts to significantly more than the judicial exception?”), when determining whether something is well-understood, routine, and conventional, the examiners must make a factual determination, and must use an express framework to make such determination.

These memos should greatly improve predictability and confidence in the patenting process in the tech and medical sector. Indeed, this year the USPTO granted its 10,000,000th patent, and under new guidance and leadership, we will reach 11,000,000 patents in the not too distant future.
If you don’t already have a website or haven’t updated it in a few months, consider communicating with you directly and nudge them into choosing your business instead of providing both new and returning clients with added value, give them a way to.

No matter what kind of business you own, a well-designed and functional website can make that a top priority. “Small businesses need to realize that having a website, updated computer equipment and modern software is really not just a luxury,” Skwarek said. “It is a necessity.”

Identify Technology Priorities

Beyond company websites, businesses can invest in any number of administrative and operational technology tools, including marketing solutions, customer retention software and data collection platforms.

Yet all these options can be overwhelming. Companies happy with their technology investments tend to do their legwork first – clearly identifying the problem they’re trying to solve, researching their options and exploring the likely effects on employees and customers. It’s also crucial to implement the product correctly, said Cathy McKnight, co-founder of New York-based technology consultancy Digital Clarity Group.

For example Kelly McBride, founder and president of Cerritos, CA-based Century Building Solutions Inc., a firm that waterproofs and repairs buildings, recently adopted cloud-based technology to improve efficiency around job costing. Century Building paid less than $10,000 for material- and equipment-handling software from construction power tool supplier Hill to electronically tag and track all the jackhammers, grinders, concrete saws, scaffolding and other gear the company uses on jobs.

Separately, Century adopted a cloud-based time-tracking platform, paid via monthly subscription, to handle time sheets and other administrative functions. Crew members use the app to clock in and log their hours, transmitting the data from their personal smartphones into the company’s payroll service.

The programs helped Century Building Solutions become better at job costing, which “makes or breaks you in construction,” he said. “The more effort you put into the job costing, the smarter you can be going into bidding.”

Because he and his team were able to solve a large problem, he said his investment in the programs were worth the expense. “Initially you blanch at the cost of technology and then once you get over the initial adoption investment … you can’t understand how you did without it,” McBride said.

Establish the Right Team to Implement and Manage

Digital Clarity Group’s McKnight stressed the importance of having a cohesive and well-communicated initiative around new tech implementation and maintenance.

“There is technology project is more of a change-management project than it is anything else,” she said. Rather than simply adapting the technology to accommodate existing processes, companies should take the opportunity to reexamine roles and responsibilities to maximize potential and efficiency.

For businesses that don’t have an in-house IT team or don’t want to add headcount, utilizing remote workers is a viable option. Thanks to technology, business owners are able to hire and collaborate with remote workers to fulfill their needs without the burden of staffing full-time employees.

“Technology allows us to offer more value than the established franchises,” said Shepard, whose company employs contract workers for such tasks as phone answering, initial recruiting, video production and website development. The tech services his company has adopted are affordable and easy to use, he said.

The companies that have seen technology positively impact their business clearly identify and prioritize solutions based on the greatest potential for positive impact and ensure they have the right team in place to support the proper management of the technology. These businesses also understand how their bank can support their goals throughout the change.

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Tech Meetups | Workshops | Pitch Events
Corona Innovation Center - Coming Soon!

CITY OF CORONA:
BUILDING A TECH COMMUNITY
TOGETHER

Kimberly Davidson, Economic Development Manager, City of Corona
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Using Innovative Banking Tools to Prepare your Graduate for Financial Independence

As millions of Americans gear up for the back-to-school season, many parents are busy preparing their high school graduate for college life. Helping your teen navigate life outside of the home is no easy feat, and beyond picking out dorm room essentials and making sure they know how to work a washing machine, it’s important that they learn to manage finances.

Whether teens like to admit it or not, parents often serve as a guide and the biggest source of support during this time of change. While the conversation around tuition, financial aid and campus meal plans has likely taken place, the basics of budgeting should also be a point of discussion. Consider these six tips to help prepare your graduate to manage their money and gain financial independence:

Start with a budget. – The first step to financial accountability is setting a realistic budget. Whether your teen plans to have a part-time job, is tapping into financial aid or you’ll be supporting them during their college years, a budget will help them decide in advance how their money should be spent, and help discourage negative financial behaviors. Know that a budget is fluid and can be adjusted over time as income and expenses change.

Commit to a monthly savings goal – You’re likely familiar with the old adage “pay yourself first,” and it’s a habit that’s never too early to start. Saving during the college years — when student income isn’t exactly consistent and tuition costs loom overhead — might seem like a foreign concept to you and your teen, yet establishing a monthly savings goal is a crucial best practice. Help your teen schedule an automatic checking to savings transfer so it becomes more of a fixed expense, and when the time is right, discuss longer-term savings and investment strategies. Encourage them to save early and often.

Monitor spending – You may think you know where your money goes each month, but the truth is, many people grossly underestimate their spending, and busy students aren’t immune from that. It’s important to get your teen in the habit of monitoring their bank accounts and credit cards for fraud, general balance awareness and spending. Are they paying for unused subscriptions and services? Spending too much going out to eat? These are helpful trends to keep an eye on to ensure money isn’t being wasted.

Get financially engaged – There are more options than ever to engage with personal finances today, and it’s increasingly easy for mobile-savvy students who have the power to bank whenever, wherever at their fingertips. Encourage your teen to make the most of their mobile banking app by tapping into the interactive tools and resources available to them. Wells Fargo’s predictive banking feature is a great place to start. The in-app feature provides insight into spending patterns — such as how much they’re spending at certain stores — and delivers prompts to save. By analyzing transactions, payments and other data, this feature offers intelligent guidance to help make banking simple.

Know your credit score – There will likely come a time when your teen needs to access credit or a loan. If it hasn’t happened already, and one of the first things a lender will look at is their credit score. It’s important to keep regular tabs on where you stand, yet according to an Equifax study, only 45 percent of college students know their credit score. Wells Fargo offers eligible customers an easy way with its FICO® Score tool, accessible via Wells Fargo Mobile® or Wells Fargo Online®. Make sure your teen understands the importance of knowing their score and taking steps to improve it, before a lending need arises.

Commit to regular financial check-ins – Once your teen has their budget, savings goals and general financial plan in order, encourage them to set aside time for regular financial check-ins. Getting in the habit of doing this early and often will help promote responsible spending and saving practices, and ultimately set the groundwork for financial independence.

A simple bonus tip for parents is to always model good spending and savings behavior. It goes without saying that leadership is best taught by example, so show your college student that you take these tips seriously. Taking time now to teach your teen how to manage their money will pay off in the long run.

Keith Kobata
Keith Kobata is the Orange County Region President, managing 79 Wells Fargo branches with over 1,200 team members and $14B in deposits. His team is responsible for building relationships with existing and perspective customers by leveraging and optimizing Wells Fargo’s products and services to help our customers succeed financially.

A 23-year banking veteran, Kobata was most recently the Area President for the Greater Orange County division where he was responsible for overseeing Wells Fargo’s Community Banking throughout North Orange County and Long Beach. Prior to his role as Area President, Kobata held various roles such as banker, branch manager and district manager.

Kobata is actively involved in community events and nonprofits and serves on the board of directors for the United Way Orange County and the Orange County Business Council.

He currently resides in Irvine, Calif.

1https://www.creditcards.com/credit-card-news/credit-score-statistics.php
California’s Failed Experiment: The Private Attorneys’ General Act (PAGA)

California’s Private Attorneys’ General Act (PAGA) is a bounty hunter law gone wrong. It authorizes “aggrieved employees” to sue employers on behalf of themselves and others for a host of exponentially increasing penalties. California keeps 75 percent of the penalties and employees keep 25 percent.

Yet, PAGA has proven ineffective for workers and for California. It is being used to avoid mandatory arbitration and to create class liability without the due process of class certification. But come settlement time, litigants reframe their cases as non-PAGA class actions, eliminating California’s cut. Meanwhile, businesses are held hostage by PAGA’s massive penalties for often unintentional, technical code violations, hitting employers with large workforces and more frequent pay schedules the hardest, and resulting in the elimination of worker-friendly policies.

In 2016, Governor Brown acknowledged PAGA’s perverse results of “unnecessary litigation” and increased cost of doing business, and signed amendments that gave employers more cure time and increased California’s budget to pursue PAGA penalties itself. But these amendments have failed to curtail the abuse. More must be done by the business community:

Be compliant. Conduct regular, privileged audits of company employment practices and fix technical violations with proper guidance. Even a clerical error on paystubs can cost employers millions.

Be vigilant. Businesses that receive presuit PAGA notices should take advantage of cure periods and consider using creative legal strategies to attack.

Be vocal. Support ballot initiatives and bills that will repeal PAGA or curb further PAGA abuse mandating caps on attorneys’ fees, limited discovery, greater pleading specificity, and class certification. It is time to start lighting such candles; cursing the darkness helps no one and living in it is worse.

Michelle S. Strowhiro is a partner in the Orange County and Los Angeles offices of McDermott Will & Emery. She is an employment litigator and provides strategic guidance to businesses in all aspects of employment law compliance. For more information, email Michelle at mstrowhiro@mwe.com.

Innovations in Management Consulting

At PARRISH PARTNERS, we accelerate growth by tapping into unrealized individual and organizational potential. We are a leadership and management consulting firm that places emphasis on the role of leadership in creating real, sustainable change within organizations. Good management is necessary yet insufficient to compete in today’s dynamic business world. Great leadership, on the other hand, enables companies to stay ahead of the curve by implementing the right changes at the right time.

Management consulting companies often focus on strategy, structure, and systems to create competitive advantage. Parrish goes beyond the typical and addresses the interpersonal and systemic issues that are at the root of performance challenges. We leverage not only IQ (intelligence quotient) but also EQ (emotional quotient) and CQ (cultural quotient) to drive improvements that are sustainable. We offer a unique array of services including executive coaching, executive search, leadership services, technology and transaction services for clients of every size, from start-ups to Fortune 50.

The multidisciplinary PARRISH PARTNERS team brings a holistic, customized approach to each and every client engagement. Our team works with your team, providing the objectivity of an outsider and the commitment of your most loyal employee. We make it our mission to be not only thought leaders but also change leaders, working closely to implement and sustain powerful improvements in performance.
Social Innovation – Driving Social Change
Where innovation and the social sector converge

By Dawn S. Reese, Chief Executive Officer, The Wooden Floor

Today’s social sector challenges in Orange County such as poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, and education opportunity gaps are very complex issues, and require nonprofit executive leaders and board of directors to bring innovative solutions and a discipline to implementing best practices around design-thinking, collaboration, exceptional execution, and continual impact evaluation. Where do innovation and the social sector converge? This is what leaders in the field call social innovation. It is the ability to create market-based approaches to benefit society by either creating new solutions to social welfare issues, or to re-engineer a program or organization to remain relevant and meet the needs of the community.

The Wooden Floor has evolved over the last 35 years into one of the nation’s leading social innovators, and is one of the foremost creative youth development nonprofit organizations in the country. Serving over 90,000 young people through year-round and community engagement programs since 1983, we believe our strategic solution for today’s greatest social challenges is to transform the lives of young people in low-income communities through the power of dance and access to higher education. In Orange County and through national licensed partners, we do this by using a long-term approach grounded in exploratory dance education strategically integrated with academic tutoring, college and career readiness, and family support services to foster the confidence and gifts within each child to innovate, communicate, and collaborate – 21st Century skills necessary for success in school and in life. 100 percent of students who graduate from The Wooden Floor immediately enroll in higher education. Our students become change agents and beacons of hope within their own families, their neighborhoods, our community and our world.

For our efforts, The Wooden Floor was honored with the 2015 Leadership Circle Award by the PIMCO Foundation, which “seeks to honor and support organizations poised to drive social change and progress. Recipients of this award are organizations adept at growing their impact and demonstrating ingenuity, while maintaining their quality and increasing their results.”

Due to the holistic and integrated approach of The Wooden Floor’s creative youth development model, we are provided with a unique lens to be a part of county-wide forums and idea exchanges on K-12 education tied to social-emotional-learning, college and career readiness to close the achievement gap, and workforce development trends in the time of burgeoning artificial intelligence. We find the one through-line in all of these forums: to prepare under-served children to achieve social and economic equity in an evolving, automated and creative economy.

It is evident that The Wooden Floor’s specific student development outcomes will align with the Orange County Department of Education’s goal to foster the 5 Cs of: Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity and Character in order to prepare students for their futures. At The Wooden Floor, we believe we foster a sixth C: Courage. This will be further validated by our own 10-year Longitudinal Study 2014-2024 titled: From here you can step anywhere - Dance as a Developmental Catalyst. Being focused and intentional about how programming advances these traits and skill sets prepares our students for the “Fourth Industrial Revolution” workforce wherein humanity interacts with artificial intelligence.

When dance is used as the means of social change, innovation flourishes into courageous life-changing outcomes for the children we serve, and moves The Wooden Floor’s exciting mission forward, which helps move our community forward.

To learn about the ways you can make a difference in The Wooden Floor’s plans to grow and impact even more young people in Orange County, please contact Dawn S. Reese, Chief Executive Officer at (714) 541-8314 ext. 110 or Info@TheWoodenFloor.org.
MEET THE NEXT-GENERATION AGENTS OF CHANGE

OUR STUDENTS BECOME BEACONS OF HOPE WITHIN THEIR OWN FAMILIES, THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS, OUR COMMUNITY – AND OUR WORLD.

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IT’S YOUR MOVE
WILL YOU HELP US LIFT CHILDREN OUT OF POVERTY TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL?

Lift: The Campaign for The Wooden Floor is a special four-year comprehensive campaign to raise $27.2 million by 2020. Through Lift, we will be able to grow to serve more and deepen our impact. Learn more at LiftCampaign.org.
His intuition as it turns out was supported by the laws of optical physics, which teach that the closer you get light emission to the body, the more light energy there is for absorption. Johnson then realized that if a LLLT device could be designed that contoured to the shape of the area of treatment, the cost of the device could be dramatically reduced, making the therapeutic benefits of light therapy more accessible to the mass market. So was born the concept of BioPhotas’ current flagship product, the Celluma PRO Light Therapy Device.

With an innovative and patentable product design in hand, Johnson set out to fund the company and gain regulatory clearance in an equally innovative manner. Unlike typical medical device start-ups, Johnson did not go to the capital markets with a single product concept to address a single disease state, looking for a lump sum of funding to get from concept to market, or maybe only regulatory approval. Instead, Johnson conceived of a step-function plan to build the company around a versatile product platform that could yield multiple individual products with a minimum of time and regulatory filings. This approach also minimized the required capital, moved the company toward profitability as quickly as possible, and demonstrated to investors the viability of the go-to-market strategy. Once the company reached operational profitability, it could then fund its own development efforts for advanced medical indications.

By early 2013, with only $1.5 million in funding, BioPhotas perfected the design of the Celluma, received its first set of FDA clearances for pain management and wound healing, and launched its first product concept to address a single disease state, looking for a lump sum of funding to get from concept to market, or maybe only regulatory approval.

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and beauty of the world’s population by giving them affordable access to the non-

From the beginning, BioPhotas’ mission has been to improve the health, wellness

how they act, how we treat them and how they treat the world is our greatest

same technology or the same markets as us, we believe that our people and how

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Eastern businesses, creating an opportunity for several other OC companies to grow and

flings would consume an inordinate amount of investment capital and slow down

commercialization. Instead, BioPhotas focused on “cash-pay” practices and cash-
pay customers who would purchase the Celluma typically using a credit card. As a

result, despite early operational losses, the company, given its rapid growth, began
to generate cash to fund its own growth, collecting cash from customers days

before receiving invoices from suppliers that would not need to be paid for 30 – 45
days. This cash generation scheme required a very innovative approach to vendor
relations, where BioPhotas treated their suppliers more as business partners than

meres vendors, creating an opportunity for several other OC companies to grow and

Since the launch of the Celluma PRO in 2013, which retails for $1,600, BioPhotas

has introduced several additional versions of the product, using the same product
platform and therefore the same regulatory clearances. This has resulted in a

nearly doubling of sales revenue every year and the introduction of the Celluma

HOME ($700) and the Celluma POD ($300) in 2018. The Company has plans to

launch up to three new versions of the Celluma in 2019.

The Company is also conducting a clinical trial to prove the effectiveness of the

Celluma in treating diabetic peripheral neuropathy, with plans for further trials for

the treatment of diabetic foot lesions and decubitus ulcers. From the very

beginning, Johnson saw the Celluma as a consumer device, particularly in the area

of wound healing, where currently there are no real effective and affordable at-

home therapies for these conditions that are growing at an epidemic pace. All these

activities are being funded by the company’s discretionary cash flow, rather than

multiple rounds of equity financing as is typical with med device companies.

Equally important as an innovative operating platform, Johnson believes that the

company’s cultural foundation and team members will ultimately determine the

success of the company. “At the end of the day, it’s the fit of our team members to

the company and the company fit to them that will differentiate us from our

competition and ultimately determine our success”, commented Johnson.

Accordingly, we require everyone joining the company to take a work style

assessment to evaluate how well they will work and fit with the others on the team.

“Regardless of a particular persons skill set, experience or expertise, if they don’t

fit with our existing team, we continue to look for the ideal candidate. We believe this

is the right thing to do for the company and the candidates, whether they fit or not”,
ote Johnson.

Beyond hiring the right people, having a “living” cultural foundation is imperative for

Johnson. First and foremost, we are a science-based company and we make no

clinical claims, big or small, without substantial clinical proof. For this reason,
despite receiving FDA clearances based on substantial equivalency, Johnson

enlisted the assistance of researchers at University of California’s prestigious

Beckman Laser Institute to prove that the Celluma was in fact triggering beneficial

biochemical reactions in the body. In doing so, the researchers at the Beckman

published clinical papers that for the first time definitively demonstrated the

fundamental “mechanism of action” at work in LLLT, something only speculated in

prior research.

“Surrounding our commitment to scientific evidence,” explained Johnson, “are the

four cornerstones of the company’s cultural foundation: Accountability – we own

everything that happens with or to the company; Dependability – we do what we

say and we say what we do; Responsiveness – We get back to people before they

ever expect us to; and Compassion – we care about everyone the company

touches. In short, we don’t make excuses, we don’t blame, we don’t ignore and we

and don’t care. While our competition might be able to assess the same capital, the

same technology or the same markets as us, we believe that our people and how

they interact with the world will be the most difficult thing to “knock off”. Our people,

how they act, how we treat them and how they treat the world is our greatest

competitive advantage.”

From the beginning, BioPhotas’ mission has been to improve the health, wellness

and beauty of the world’s population by giving them affordable access to the non-
toxic, non-invasive clinical benefits of low level light therapy. While ultimately

viewed as a consumer product, BioPhotas has focused its marketing efforts to date on

the clinical professional, believing that the efficacy and credibility of the Celluma

had to first be proven in the hands of licensed practitioners. With this proof now

well in hand, BioPhotas is beginning to expand into direct-to-consumer sales,

which now represents 30 percent of its total business. At the same time, the

company remains committed to the further development of advance medial

applications for the Celluma.

Typically, companies select either the professional market or the consumer market

for their products. However, given the company’s mission of bringing LLLT to the

masses and its commitment to bringing innovation to every aspect of the company,

BioPhotas has elected to address both markets simultaneously. The Celluma can

now be found in hospitals, clinics, spas, physician’s offices and in homes in more

than 40 countries around the world. This dual distribution strategy is further

evidence that BioPhotas takes the path less traveled and that makes all the

difference.

Patrick Johnson is the CEO of BioPhotas and the inventor of the award winning

Celluma Series of Light Therapy devices. He is a seasoned executive with P&L

leadership in turnarounds, startups, emerging companies, as well as companies

challenged with mature product life cycles. With a history of repeatedly growing sales

and gross margins at double-digit growth rates, he has provided leadership in

strategic planning, sales, marketing, corporate branding, product positioning, and

operations. Mr. Johnson is a senior executive with 25 years of experience leading

manufacturing companies in diverse industries including medical, dental,
aerospace, and motorsports.

For more information visit: www.biophotas.com

Email: Info@biophotas.com, Tel: (714) 978 0080
Business is our Priority
Economic development departments within city halls are typically responsible for two things: bringing business to the city and keeping it there. But, as the world changes, business changes with it. To keep up, economic development specialists are needing to find new ways of being creative and innovative and city government needs to start thinking in a more entrepreneurial way.

This is exactly what the City of Corona is doing by taking a fresh, creative approach to attracting, retaining and growing business within our city. This is what makes Corona a great place for your business to thrive!

Entrepreneurial Mindset
Corona’s economic development team is made up of two entrepreneurial-minded professionals who have owned small businesses of their own. This really helps Corona to better understand the needs and wants of its business community and to think outside the box for solutions to issues.

Corona Innovation Center
Corona is in the process of creating an innovation center in its former police department building near City Hall. This 25,000 square foot facility will be focused on growing start-up companies and will offer coworking space, mentorship opportunities, connections to resources as well as business-related workshops and meetups.

The innovation center, known as the Co:LAB (Corona: Learning, Arts and Business) District will open in early 2019 and will be the center of innovation and start-up technology for Corona and the region.

Manufacturing
There are close to 400 manufacturers in Corona, spanning across five main industries: aerospace, food processing, after-market automotive, medical device and cosmetics/ nutrition. We work with our manufacturers daily to connect them to necessary resources for exporting and business incentives, adding to their bottom line and giving them the opportunity to grow in Corona. Quarterly, Corona takes a new group of its manufacturers to the Port of Los Angeles to have an intimate look at exporting and to gain connections to the resources that can help facilitate accessibility to world trade.

Tech
We work very closely with our tech companies to create an entrepreneurial eco-system that encourages the growth of start-up tech companies in Corona. Tech-O Tuesday, a monthly meetup for tech entrepreneurs, has been widely successful over the past two years in connecting with our tech community. Being part of Innovation Month in Riverside County is another way Corona helps to foster the growth of our tech cluster.

City of Corona’s Economic Development Team:

Kimberly Davidson is Corona’s Economic Development Manager, focused on encouraging the attraction and growth of manufacturers, entrepreneurs and tech-related companies.

Kimberly Davidson has been in Economic Development for more than 9 years and previously owned a home-based marketing firm, so she understands the challenges of being a business owner. Davidson was named “Woman of the Year” in 2016 by Assemblywoman Melissa Melendez and received the “Citizen of the Year 2014” award from the Murrieta Chamber of Commerce. In 2008, she was awarded the National Small Business Administration (SBA) Award for being a champion of home-based businesses.

Kimberly holds a B.A. in Journalism from California State University Northridge and has also completed a Leadership certificate program at California State University San Marcos.

Contact: Kimberly.Davidson@CoronaCA.gov or 951.736.2297

Ryan Cortez, Corona’s Economic Development Coordinator, began his career with the City of Corona in 2014. Prior to his career in local government, Cortez helped found and manage a privately held construction firm headquartered in Costa Mesa, California. The skills developed while working in the private industry translated into him leading the charge with Corona’s new development opportunities. Most recently, Cortez has focused on the disposition and development of City owned property within Corona’s Downtown district. A lifelong resident of Corona, he hopes to continue creating opportunity and helping Corona maintain its regional dominance.

Cortez holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration as well as a Master’s in Business Administration from California Baptist University. In 2016 he was recognized by the Riverside Community College District as the Norco College Young Alumnus of the year. Ryan Cortez is a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers and California Association for Local Economic Development.

Contact: Ryan.Cortez@CoronaCA.gov or 951.739.4964

Communication
Like many of other cities, Corona has an easy-to-use website, an app for flow of communication to its residents and businesses as well as accessible Council Members who are available to answer questions. But for something innovative, Corona added a weekly podcast and utilizes all social media platforms to focus on business-related news and events in Corona.

Partnerships
Collaboration and connections to resources are really what business is about in 2018 and beyond. Corona has worked hard to foster relationships with such entities as the US Department of Commerce, Riverside County Economic Development Agency (EDA), Small Business Administration (SBA), Center for International Trade Development (CITD), California Manufacturing Technology Consulting (CMT), and the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). The City of Corona also works very closely with the Corona Chamber of Commerce to ensure that our businesses have the best chance to succeed and thrive.

How can we help your business?
For more information visit www.CoronaCA.gov
Building on more than 30 years of culinary excellence on the Orange County dining landscape, Prego Mediterranean has settled into its new home at The District at Tustin Legacy. Long-time supporters and new guests have been enjoying the lively bar area and grand dining room at the new location, where Chef Ugo Allesina continues to lead the culinary team. With two decades of experience at Prego, Chef Ugo has brought back signature items and has added new Mediterranean-focused dishes to the menu. The kitchen continues to focus on utilizing seasonal ingredients, the best meat and seafood, and freshly made pasta.

New Mediterranean-focused dishes include Seasonal Hummus of mushroom and truffle, sundried tomato and roasted garlic basil, served with house-made rustic flatbread; Golden Beet Salad with mixed baby greens, yellow beets, goat cheese and caramelized onions tossed in a balsamic reduction; and Lobster and Shrimp Stuffed Sole in a white wine, garlic, lemon and caper sauce.

Adding a splash of Mediterranean color to California, Prego Mediterranean features a lively exhibition kitchen, allowing diners to view the artful chefs creating their delicious dishes. With a capacity to seat more than 250 guests, Prego features al fresco dining, full bar, private dining and catering services.

For more information, visit www.pregoOC.com.
11 Health and Technologies Inc., Tustin
Michael Seres, Founder/CEO

Founded in 2013, 11 Health and Technologies Limited is an integrated sensor platform for long term patients who manage chronic conditions while connected to medical bags. CEO and founder, Michael Seres has created a community centered connected health care network in the ostomy/IBD space that uses a patient to patient outreach and support model, while providing real-time bio-marker information to clinicians and health care providers via a cloud based IoT business model. The company’s vision is to connect those bags to the 11 Health Sensor Network to improve outcomes for patients, deliver relevant real-time data to clinicians and lower costs. Michael frequently works with the NHS, the Department of Health in the US and top hospital groups like Mayo, Cleveland Clinic, Stanford etc., advising on the patient to patient care model and the real time care platform that 11 Health has built.

Advantech North America, Irvine
Ween Niu, General Manager

As the general manager for Advantech North America, Ween Niu oversees sales and marketing revenue for the $1.4 billion company, while also managing its strategic business planning. From 2000 to 2012, Niu achieved 3,000 percent growth for the company and has continued to drive an average of 25 percent growth for the past five years. Niu’s commitment to help grow and stabilize the company with his exceptional operational and sales strategies has positioned him as a key player in Advantech’s globalization process, further achieving Advantech’s mission of enabling an intelligent planet. Leading companywide programs, including direct fulfillment and express delivery, Niu’s role within the enterprise has helped shape a team driven environment vital to Advantech’s progression in the IoT industry. Under his 18-year tenure at Advantech, Niu’s leadership and integrity has helped realize incredible business growth, helping grow the company in revenue and gaining strategic partnerships with Fortune 500 companies in sectors such as Medical, Industrial Automation and Digital Signage.

AVITIA Biomedical, Irvine
Hans Kerstaedt, PhD, CEO

Dr. Hans Kerstaedt is an internationally known stem cell expert and has led therapy development for cancer, immune disorders, motor neuron diseases, spinal cord injury and retinal diseases. Kerstaedt is the CEO of AVITIA Biomedical which was founded in 2016 to develop stem cell-based clinical therapies and commercial products that improve quality of life and save lives. Its most notable achievements are the advancement of a platform cancer immunotherapy capable of treating multiple cancer types, currently in phase II trials for ovarian and brain cancer, and the invention of a novel skincare active that has been commercialized to help fund the Company’s clinical programs. In 2005, Kerstaedt was awarded the Distinguished Award for Research, the UCI Academic Senate’s highest honor, as well as the UCI Innovation Award for innovative research leading to corporate and clinical development. He was a founding advisor of the California Stem Cell Initiative that resulted in a $3 billion stem cell fund (CIRM). He has been a long-time advisor to several governments on biomedical policy.

Allergan, Irvine
Dan Gill, VP, Research Technologies and Portfolio

Dr. Daniel Gill’s 30-year career at Allergan spans its evolution from a division of SmithKline Beckman selling primarily contact lens products, to a major stand-alone innovative pharmaceutical company. His innovations have contributed to the successful development of four medicines catalyzing the growth of the company, two of which have accounted for close to $1 billion in peak annual sales and spawned franchises that have endured for more than 15 years: Lumigan, the most effective eye drop for lowering intraocular pressure in patients with glaucoma, a sight-threatening disease. Alphagan, another glaucoma drug that both lowers intraocular pressure and directly slows the loss of the nerve cells in the retina. Dr. Gill’s promotion of an innovation mindset at Allergan has also contributed to a robust pipeline of future drugs. He is an inventor on more than 70 US patents and author of 42 research articles published in refereed journals. He is or has been a member of several boards of directors including the Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce and is an adjunct faculty member at UC Irvine.

Alteryx, Irvine
Dean Stoecker, CEO/Chairman/Co-Founder

Dean Stoecker is chairman, chief executive officer and a founding partner of Alteryx, revolutionizing business through data science and analytics. Dean’s leadership and motivational skills, along with his ability to create, communicate and realize a vision, are a driving force behind bringing back the thrill of solving to analysts and data scientists across the globe. Alteryx is a 20 year overnight success with Stoecker leading the company through solid organic growth, three rounds of funding and a successful IPO in March of 2017 to deliver a transformational experience to over 7000 customers. Stoecker’s unique vision and strategy around bringing a code-free and code-friendly experience unleashes the line-of-business analyst from the menial and mundane to truly loving their work again.

BANKCODE, Laguna Beach
Cheri Tree, Founder/CEO

BANKCODE has successfully developed a game-changing technology and methodology called B.A.N.K. is designed to increase sales up to 300 percent by predicting the buying behavior of the customer in less than 9 seconds and then delivering the custom formula to ultimately close the sale and engage the client. B.A.N.K. is reverse-engineered personality science and patents in BUYOlogy, the science of buying behavior. Cheri Tree, founder and CEO, published her book about this revolutionary methodology called Why They Buy. Tree is the leading expert in the world on selling using the power of personality science, and has spoken at Harvard University and UC Berkeley and recently had a white paper published by San Francisco State University. As a tool for sales, B.A.N.K. has been used successfully for more than 20 years with in-demand salespeople and all types of people have consistently increased sales success for users in the marketplace.

Beeya, Laguna Beach
Ladan Davia CEO/Founder

Ladan Davia founded Beeya at age 23, when she realized the troubles people have during the hiring and employment process. Prior to founding Beeya, Davia founded her first company in the tech space, Excelerate Test Prep, at 21. While the idea of finding a job online is not a new idea nor is connecting people in a professional network, what is new is the meta-search engine and employee matching platform, Beeya. Beeya is a platform that automatically matches employers and employees together using a matching algorithm based off of specific requirements selected by the user. The website brings the online job hunt, social network and professional network ideas all onto one platform. Beeya allows the user to look for exactly the job or candidate they desire, while filtering out results they don’t want. Beeya is now serving 98 companies and almost 7,000 employees in Orange County.

BioPhotas, Anaheim
Patrick Johnson, President/CEO

Patrick Johnson is a seasoned executive with P&L leadership in turnarounds, startups, emerging companies, as well as companies challenged with mature product life cycles. With a history of repeatedly growing sales and gross margins at double-digit growth rates, he has provided leadership in strategic planning, sales, marketing, corporate branding, product positioning, and operations. Johnson is a senior executive with 25 years of experience leading manufacturing companies in diverse industries including medical, dental, aerospace and motorsports. He has been at
BioPhotas for seven years and has helped obtain FDA approval and patents on products. BioPhotas manufactures and sell the Celluma Series of Light Therapy devices for treating skin, muscle and joint conditions. Since first receiving FDA clearance in 2013, the award-winning Celluma PRO has become the market-leading product in the light therapy product category, with sales doubling nearly every year.

Burns & McDonnell, Brea
Rick Cramer, Environmental Technologies Manager

Rick Cramer is environmental technologies manager for Burns & McDonnell in the firm’s Brea, California, office. He has more than 30 years of experience in the environmental field with a focus on developing geology-based groundwater Conceptual Site Models (CSMs) for complex sites to successfully design and implement remediation strategies. Cramer leads the environmental sequence stratigraphy practice and develop conceptual site models and site strategies, for contaminated groundwater sites. In 2017, Cramer and his Burns & McDonnell team members co-authored a technical issue paper published by the Environmental Protection Agency on an application Cramer developed earlier in his career called Environmental Sequence Stratigraphy (ESS). This year, he and his team from Burns & McDonnell will travel the country to train regulators on how to implement this technology.

ChromaDex, Irvine
Frank Jaksh, Executive Chairman

ChromaDex Corp. is an integrated, global nutraceutical company devoted to improving the way people age. ChromaDex scientists partner with leading universities and research institutions worldwide to uncover the full potential of NAD and identity and develop novel, science-based ingredients. Its flagship ingredient NIAGEN, nicotinamide riboside, sold directly to consumers as TRU NIAGEN, is backed with clinical and scientific research, as well as extensive IP protection. Frank L. Jaksh Jr. is a co-founder of the company and has served as a member of the Board since February 2000. Jaksh oversees research, strategy and operations for the company with a focus on scientific and novel products for pharmaceutical and nutraceutical markets.

Cie Digital Labs, Irvine
Anderee Berengian, Co-founder/CEO

Anderee Berengian is an accomplished entrepreneur, technologist and investor passionate about driving progress through digital innovation. As the co-founder and CEO of Cie Digital Labs (CDL), an innovation accelerator for large enterprises and a growth accelerator for emerging startups, Berengian is responsible for growing CDL’s digital transformation ideas into sustainable, profitable companies. He has helped raise close to $200 million for startups and create over 1,000 jobs through his entrepreneurial efforts. His vision for CDL was to build a company that steers all aspects of a venture and serves as a springboard for the development of innovative ideas and ventures, strengthens their impact, and extends their reach. By providing hands-on assistance through a unique combination of shared and dedicated domain experts in product web & mobile development, business & corporate development, finance, HR and IT, CDL consistently accomplishes these goals. Berengian’s leadership has led to exceptional growth for CDL and its portfolio startups and enterprise companies.

Cloudvirga, Irvine
Kyle Kamrooz, Co-Founder

Cloudvirga provides lenders and banks with a modern, cloud-based enterprise platform that automates complex back-office processes to reduce the time and cost of closing mortgage loans. Cloudvirga condenses the typical 40–60 day home loan process down to 7–10 days while empowering consumers with access to a transparent mortgage experience from any web-enabled device. An experienced lending and financial technology professional, Kyle Kamrooz has nearly 20 years of executive management experience in lending. Since founding Cloudvirga, Kamrooz continues to guide the firm’s success as its chief strategy officer and product visionary. In fiscal year 2017, Kamrooz significantly grew Cloudvirga’s customer base with the addition of some of the nation’s largest lenders, which together
represent over $130 billion in annual loan volume (approximately 6-7 percent of the overall U.S. mortgage market).

ConversionPoint Technologies, Irvine
Robert Talack, CEO

Robert Talack brings over 15 years of experience in the e-commerce industry, having sold his last consumer products company to a publicly traded Pharma company. As CEO of ConversionPoint Technologies, in just two years he helped the company achieve over $40 million in annual revenue. An industry veteran of the digital marketing business, Talack has developed direct-to-consumer sales and marketing campaigns that have generated millions per month in sales. His ability to build an efficient organization using technology to scale rapidly has contributed greatly to his success. The company’s proprietary e-commerce platforms enable high-volume product sales across multiple consumer verticals. Its technology suite includes a media optimization solution that uses machine learning to optimize ad purchases and lower customer acquisition costs, and a CRM that provides a robust payment processing and customer data management platform.

CureDuchenne, Newport Beach
Debra Miller, CEO/Founder

After her son, Hawkin, was diagnosed with Duchenne, a progressive muscle-wasting disease, Debra Miller left her job in Silicon Valley to launch CureDuchenne and raise funds to help find a cure. Since 2006, she has raised $30 million and invested over $15 million in scientific research. Miller’s efforts have resulted in the first drug approved by the FDA for the treatment of Duchenne. Additionally, 12 research projects CureDuchenne has funded have advanced to human clinical trials. She is also responsible for developing the first Duchenne-specific physical therapy program and PT certification. Today, Miller is highly focused on strategic partnerships that allow CureDuchenne to serve the Duchenne community through every stage, from early diagnosis, to clinical trials to adulthood. Through her leadership CureDuchenne has garnered international attention for its efforts to raise funds and awareness for Duchenne muscular dystrophy through venture philanthropy.

Devide Interactive, Irvine
Dalip Jaggi, Principal

Dalip Jaggi is the principal and founder of Devise Interactive, a brand and digital agency aimed at helping businesses with a chance to reimagine and reinvent their digital work. By harmonizing creative design & innovative technology, the agency produces effective brand experiences and strategic reasoning to engage their customer’s audience. This year, Devise Interactive was recognized as a top U.S. entrepreneurial business in Entrepreneur magazine. Having experience in building brands & technology, Jaggi set forth to invent and bring new products to market. He is the creator of EvaDrop, the world’s first smart shower device and Fraxton, an easy to deploy kiosk for brick-and-mortar shops. Both startups are bringing cutting-edge technology to the market.

E Factor, Tustin
Kari Willis, CEO/Co-Founder

Kari Willis and her husband Chris Willis started their own firm, E Factor to amplify their ability to make an impact in creating “experiences” for brands and events. Six years later, E Factor has grown exponentially, providing sales, marketing and event expertise across fields such as non-profits/charities, food & beverages, advertising and wireless. Willis’s success has also led her to become the Executive Producer of a new innovative wireless trade conference. That conference, Wireless West, is now an annual three-day event, with over 600 attendees from both the United States and abroad. Word of her success and expertise has allowed E Factor to grow at a remarkable rate.

Emerios Enterprise Services, Inc., Aliso Viejo
Jesse Crowe, CEO

Jesse Crowe has enabled one of the nation’s largest wireless providers to launch and achieve over $500 million in annual revenue in less than 18 months, while accomplishing and retaining the No. 1 market share in a very competitive industry. Emerios has empowered the nation’s leading telecom and energy companies in their highly regulated industries to quickly onboard new customers without compromising quality. The company works with Fortune 500 clients to extend or replace their existing systems by providing the Emerios Platform that makes their customer onboarding process efficient and compliant so they can outpace their competition. Ultimately, they accelerate their customer’s development roadmap years ahead and enable them to focus on their strategic vision resulting in more sales, more revenue and stronger brands.

Ephesoft Inc., Irvine
Ike Kavas, CEO/Founder

Ephesoft was founded in 2010 by Ike Kavas and by 2019 was listed as an Inc. 500 fastest growing company with 1132 percent growth. Ephesoft is the leading developer of supervised machine learning-based document capture and analytics solutions in the cloud or on premise. Organizations use Ephesoft’s platform to automate any document-based business processes, improving accuracy, increasing productivity and reducing costs. Kavas has 20 years of document capture, document management, workflow and systems engineer experience and has successfully grown Ephesoft into a multi-million dollar company. Ephesoft introduced the industry’s first browser-based, cloud and Capture-as-a-Service platform, making it simple for any sized organization to streamline document business processes. The company employs 150 people worldwide with customers in 50 countries and has over 250 global partners, including companies like Microsoft, Box, HP, Infor, Nintex, K2, Blue Prism and Quest Diagnostics.

Ergo21, Newport Beach
Steve Gambhir, President

Steve Gambhir has changed the lives of thousands of people with back, tailbone and buttock problems with his seat cushion, Ergo21. Gambhir licensed the unique technology and created Ergo21, a high-level cushion and back support that can be used in multiple ways – in the car, on a sofa, bed, and during yoga and meditation. The product has become so popular that Gambhir is closing in on his first $1 million in sales, and is also expanding his product line with LiquidCell®-filled bicycle seats, pillow cases and shoe insoles. With 500-plus five-star reviews on Amazon, Ergo21 is poised to become the leader in the seat cushion industry. The Ergo21 is getting rave reviews from drivers of all kind from Uber and bus drivers to pilots. In addition, wheelchair users also are getting relief from pressure sores when they use the Ergo21 cushions. This year Ergo21 is expanding its products to Canada, Australia, Japan, England and Europe on Amazon and their website.

Fairmont Private Schools, Anaheim
David R. Jackson, CEO/President

Since 1979, David R. Jackson has expanded Orange County’s largest, and oldest, non-sectarian private school’s award-winning academic reputation by building a multi-talented, student-centric staff, who have helped more than 67,000 students pave their own path to success. While under Jackson’s leadership, Fairmont Private Schools has expanded to four campuses throughout Orange County and has been named the ‘Best School in OC’ by Parenting OC for the last four years. He founded Fairmont Preparatory Academy in 1993 on the historical Stanton Estate, where 91 percent of graduates have been accepted to a top 100-200 college in the last five years. He also established Fairmont International Academy, integrated in the same campus as The Prep, in 2003, with 88 percent of graduates admitted to a top 100 college. Fairmont has continually dominated in the Orange County Academic Decathlon for more than two decades, while also having the highest participation in sports program of any other private school in the county. Jackson has provided more than $5.2 million in scholarships to Orange County families.

GlobeChat, San Juan Capistrano
Kevin Strom, Founder/CEO

GlobeChat originally launched as a social network with an instant language translator in 2016 and grew by word of mouth to more than 150 countries. In 2018, GlobeChat received a patent for “The System and Method of Multi-Lingual Networking and Communications” and immediately switched direction from a consumer product to a B2B product. While existing global translation solutions are 1:1 and often have delays, GlobeChat is the first in the world to provide multi-lingual instant translation in a chat environment enabling people in multiple countries and in multiple languages to all concurrently communicate within easily customizable groups. The brand new B2B version of the software is nearing completion and 20 additional languages have...
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Hyperice as the market leader within the recovery and movement enhancement medical industries. At Hyperice, Huether and his team have quickly positioned
Jim Huether is an executive leader with expertise within the sports technology and
requirements necessary for enterprise and industrial applications.
transformed Greenwave’s business from one that focused on smart home devices
member, Greenwave is actively educating and guiding the
Greenwave in 2008, Manniche has piloted the company in
vision and strategic roadmap, leading the hardware team
aspects of the company, including setting the company’s
Greenwave Systems. He is responsible for leading all
Gorilla Stationers has been servicing businesses and
government agencies throughout the country since 2012 with
their 24-hour service in addition to their knowledge of all products within the office solutions industry. Founded in Huntington Beach by Rosemary Czopek, an industry veteran with over fifteen years of expertise, the company prides itself as a woman owned business that has successfully carved its niche in the office supply sphere by offering top-brand, cutting-edge items with unbelievably low prices. By 2015, Gorilla Stationers had expanded across the country, with 28 shipping facilities nationwide to ensure promised next-day delivery. Gorilla Stationers has a relationship with one of the largest vendors of office products in the world, along with direct relationships with manufacturers, which provides access to over 150,000 products, meaning bottom-line savings for customers.
Greenlink Financial, Irvine
Brandon Avila, Director of Underwriting
Brandon Avila started with Greenlink Financial in 2016. As Director of Underwriting he established himself as the company’s top-innovator with record breaking numbers since he first joined the company. During his first year, he was the recipient of the Rookie of the Year award for funding $10 million in personal loans. He has been recognized numerous times for his exceptional sales method and being a key player in helping and training new hires and fellow executives for setting goals and optimizing performance. Within two years of bringing his expertise to Greenlink Financial, Avila paved the way in setting higher goals for the whole salesforce. His innovation with his sales process paved the way for Greenlink Financial to be one of the most competitive lenders in Orange County.
Greenwave Systems, Irvine
Martin Manniche, Founder/Chairman/CEO
Martin Manniche is the founder, chairman and CEO of Greenwave Systems. He is responsible for leading all aspects of the company, including setting the company’s vision and strategic roadmap, leading the hardware team and managing strategic partnerships. Since founding Greenwave in 2008, Manniche has piloted the company in raising $90M in total funding. As an IoT Consortium member, Greenwave is actively educating and guiding the industry toward a safe, frictionless connected future that will both serve and delight users. As needs changed within the industry, Manniche had the foresight to see that the software platform also needed to change and he transformed Greenwave’s business from one that focused on smart home devices and utility providers, to a platform that could scale much wider, to satisfy requirements necessary for enterprise and industrial applications.
Hyperice, Irvine
Jim Huether, CEO
Jim Huether is an executive leader with expertise within the sports technology and medical industries. At Hyperice, Huether and his team have quickly positioned Hyperice as the market leader within the recovery and movement enhancement technology space. He has played a key role in helping Hyperice change an entire industry and develop a niche market that did not exist five years ago. He is a two-time Inc. 500 CEO who helped turn around a small but promising company doing $450,000 in revenue, to a highly efficient company on pace to exceed $30 million in less than five years. During his time at Hyperice, he and his team hired a highly motivated group of former athletes, and trained and developed them into highly effective business professionals. Now, Hyperice products are distributed into more than 60 countries worldwide and is one of the fastest growing private companies in the US.
HyperX, Fountain Valley
Daniel Kelley, Corporate Director of Marketing
As director of corporate marketing for HyperX, the gaming division of Kingston® Technology Corporation, Daniel Kelley has helped shape marketing to support HyperX into becoming a leader in the gaming and esports community. With more than 20 years of professional marketing experience, Kelley leads his full-service marketing department to develop creative, innovative, carefully-planned, and award-winning strategies that support the company’s overall marketing programs, including advertising, media and public relations, web design and maintenance, and a variety of channel sales functions. Kelley has also driven all marketing efforts while HyperX developed and launched its gaming peripheral product lineup including award-winning headsets, keyboards, mice and memory modules. Since its inception, HyperX has grown to be one of the top gaming peripheral brands, shipping more than 5 million gaming headsets worldwide.

Mike Hopkins, CEO
Mike Hopkins CEO of Ice Energy since 2009, has most recently contributed to the Keep your Cool program. The company established the Keep Your Cool free HVAC replacement and energy storage program, as part of its historic award from Southern California Edison to provide 25.6 megawatts of behind-the-meter energy storage. Under the program, Orange County businesses are eligible to receive free, fully installed HVAC and thermal energy storage systems, using Ice Energy’s proprietary Ice Bear® solution. Ice storage is a clean, reliable and least-cost distributed energy storage solution for the grid. Since 2005, Ice Bears have been installed in more than 40 utility services, transforming inefficient and polluting air conditioners into efficient and clean cooling systems. With a reliability record in excess of 98 percent, they benefit both utilities and their customers. Ice Bear batteries improve the efficiency and resiliency of the grid, lower cooling bills and reduce carbon emissions.

iHeartDogs.com, Anaheim
Marshall Morris, Co-Founder/COO
In 2014, inspired by his rescued Siberian Husky Splash, Justin Palmer started a Facebook page called I Love Dogs. The page quickly grew to over a million fans and in 2015, Justin cofounded iHeartDogs.com with Marshall Morris, an army veteran. Inspired by their passions for helping shelter dogs and supporting our veterans, Justin and Marshall built a line of products that give back to shelters and raise money to provide service dogs for veterans in need. By the numbers iHeartDogs has fed 10,000,000 meals to shelter dogs, donated 100,000 toys to shelters, donated $200,000 to fund service and therapy animals for Veterans, dedicated $30,000 to disaster relief and funded 80,000 miles to move dogs from kill shelters to no kill shelters.

InstaMed, Newport Beach
Chris Seib, Co-Founder/CTO
Chris Seib co-founded InstaMed in 2004 and has since led the vision and successful execution of building one platform for all forms of payment in healthcare. At InstaMed, he is responsible for all aspects of the product strategy, product delivery and technology. Seib’s efforts deliver the foundational components of the successful growth of the InstaMed Network in processing over $300 billion in healthcare payments and two billion healthcare and payment transactions since inception. He combines expertise in financial technology, healthcare information technology and customer-centric design to drive the growth of the InstaMed Network which connects providers, payers and consumers and processes tens of billions of
dollars in healthcare payments annually. Seib is a named inventor of multiple patents held by InstaMed.

Klein & Wilson, Newport Beach
Mark Wilson, Partner

Mark Wilson, and the law firm Klein & Wilson, have been innovating change in trial work and litigation since 1994. Law firms typically do not create predictability in fees and transparency in services, especially when a case goes to trial. Mark has recently articulated Klein & Wilson's process on creating predictability in fees and outcomes which provides companies with a clear process that meets their needs and expectations. More than ever, clients are seeking efficiencies and predictability in complex business litigation. This firm can predict, with relative certainty, details of the litigation process that translate into realistic budgets and identifiable outcomes should a matter go to trial. In these days of spiraling litigation fees, Mark and his firm provide a clear roadmap of options and the costs associated with them. Their distinctive roadmap for plotting out litigation strategy, the Litigation Analysis Memorandum (LAM), is the backbone of the firm's process for winning over 90 percent of its trials.

Kush Bottles Inc., Santa Ana
Nicholas Kovacevich, Co-Founder/CEO

Nick Kovacevich has taken Kush Bottles from a small, three-man operation to a dynamic, growing, publicly traded company with offices in three states, multiple vertical markets, 60-plus employees and close to $10 million in revenue on sales of more than $100 million units. He has done this by recruiting a team of experienced and dedicated people, creating an atmosphere of inclusion and rewarding accomplishment. Under Kovacevich’s leadership, Kush Bottles continues to grow each quarter. He recently orchestrated several major acquisitions, including acquiring a genome bio-tech lab to create a new line of products in the company’s portfolio and internal growth. Additionally, the company is now selling globally, and has added direct-to-consumer sales to complement B2B sales.

Laurel at Sunset, Newport Beach
James Shun, Founder/CEO

James Shun is a founder of Laurel at Sunset and Head of Product Development and Founder of 3Dazer. The initial concept for the 3Dazer project management app and laser measuring device was born from the idea of creating a software system platform for interior designers that could connect them with their vendors, process their projects and provide them more efficiency in their day-to-day tasks, ultimately saving them money. After further research it was discovered that the home improvement industry was a more expansive market with an even greater need for the app that was built. General contractors, subcontractors, and project managers were also suffering similar pain points, if not more, from how to collect and manage their project data efficiently and securely, to connecting with co-workers, vendors, and clients easily. After two years of research and development, 3Dazer became a project management app that can be accessed on a smartphone and used with an accurate laser measuring device, and cloud service.

loanDepot, Irvine
Billy Spears, Chief Information Security Officer

As the senior vice president and chief information security officer at loanDepot, Billy Spears has transformed their information security presence into a robust ecosystem for cybersecurity throughout the enterprise. He discovered the known environment tolerances by identifying and exposing critical risks. His notable innovation has led to the implementation of artificial intelligence and machine learning, improved network monitoring and log correlation capabilities, dramatically increasing the company’s overall security posture. Most security professionals work in the background to provide the stable infrastructure needed for other departments to shine and earn credit for increasing sales revenue. Spears differentiated a traditional CIA model to include privacy, safety and reliability, ultimately making third parties feel safer providing their confidential data. Building trust in an era of industry broken systems is the biggest problem Spears has been dedicated to solving, and at loanDepot he successfully achieved his innovative architectural vision for revolutionizing technology, processes, and people- while simultaneously creating a market differentiator.
seven short years, My Metal Business Cards has become the world’s leading supplier of metal business cards, producing for companies such as Tesla, Uber, Facebook, LifeLock and West Coast Customs. MMBC has since developed an entire space around metal business cards, invitations, VIP passes, and more. And, the company now offers additional complementary custom-etched products that are all done in-house. In fact, My Metal Business Card is the only metal business card company offering cards in 24 hours due to its in-house manufacturing. The company also launched www.MyPlasticBusinessCard.com and the latest www.MyWoodBusinessCard.com. All of the wood business cards are made in-house on specialized lasers and printers.

MeridianLink, Costa Mesa

MeridianLink provides mission-critical software solutions to financial institutions. Developer of the industry’s first multi-channel account opening and loan origination suite, the company’s LoansPQ, LendingQB, and ACTion platforms allow banks and credit unions to process and accept consumer and mortgage loans as well as account opening applications, and integrate seamlessly with all major core and data services providers. MeridianLink also offers Synergy, a highly customizable and configurable loan processing and decisioning-workflow product, as well as MortgageCreditLink, the dominant provider of “tri-merge” integration functionality into credit bureaus and other third-party consumer and business databases. MeridianLink prides itself on being a learning organization for innovators and supports a culture of passion seekers who are relentless in pursuing excellence. Their learning and innovative orientation stretches beyond our company walls into both local community and the entire financial industry.

MERIDIUN, Irvine

Emerging as a sought-after expert in the virtual, mixed and augmented reality market, Robert Brown, founder and CEO of MERIDIUN, is leading the charge in applying augmented reality and cloud computing technologies to advance enterprises into a new era of technology. Brown founded MERIDIUN in 2015 with the mission to reinvent the way people interact with the world. It is one of the first companies to integrate augmented reality and artificial intelligence into an agnostic, multi-device platform for enterprises—enabling companies to connect and curate data-driven experiences. The MERIDIUN technology enhances the customer experience and inspires purchases but also improves employee training, education, productivity and efficiency. Garnering world-class clients such as Walmart, Ford and Edwards Lifesciences, MERIDIUN has realized tremendous success, with revenue growth of 205 percent in 2017 alone.

Money360, Ladera Ranch

Evan Gentry, Founder/CEO

Evan Gentry is the chief executive officer and founder of Money360, a tech-enabled direct lender specializing in commercial real estate. As the CEO, Gentry oversees the overall business strategy, operations and strategic partnerships, and long-term vision of the company, which has revolutionized the commercial real estate financing model by providing more transparent and efficient lending. With over 20 years of experience, Gentry is an entrepreneur and innovator with a strong background in the application of technology to the real estate, lending and investment industries. Recently, many traditional lenders have exited the market in response to new, restrictive regulations, and Money360 has filled the void for commercial real estate owners, ensuring they can maintain their properties and continue to offer space for local businesses. One of Money360’s greatest assets is its technology, which expedits and automates parts of the underwriting process; this capability combined with the Company’s seasoned underwriting team produces high quality loans to more borrowers.

My Metal Business Card, La Habra

Craig Martyn, Founder/President

My Metal Business Card was founded in 2011, by Craig Martyn of Fullerton, California, at the age of 26. Craig’s understanding of the chemical etching process from a previous business he founded helped spur the idea for metal cards. In just seven short years, My Metal Business Cards has become the world’s leading supplier of metal business cards, producing for companies such as Tesla, Uber, Facebook, LifeLock and West Coast Customs. MMBC has since developed an entire space around metal business cards, invitations, VIP passes, and more. And, the company now offers additional complementary custom-etched products that are all done in-house. In fact, My Metal Business Card is the only metal business card company offering cards in 24 hours due to its in-house manufacturing. The company also launched www.MyPlasticBusinessCard.com and the latest www.MyWoodBusinessCard.com. All of the wood business cards are made in-house on specialized lasers and printers.

Netreo Inc., Irvine

Kevin Kinsey, CEO

Kevin Kinsey and his two partners formed Netreo in March of 2000 with a vision of changing the world of network management software. Netreo’s plan was to focus on delighting customers and building a sustainable, viable business in order to quickly hit break-even profitability. As it turned out, break-even occurred in month 13 and the company has been cash-flow-positive ever since. Today, the company employs 21 workers and conducts business in numerous countries around the globe. Their client list includes Wells Fargo, AON, Broadcom, and client retention is 96.5 percent. The product is packaged as a Software-as-a-Service solution, so virtually all revenue is recurring. Recent growth has been a robust 29 percent for 2015, and 35 percent for 2016.

New American Funding, Tustin

Rick Arvielo, Co-Founder/CEO

Patty Arvielo, Co-Founder/President

Starting the business from scratch, Rick and Patty Arvielo’s vision of a mortgage company that would operate as a proficient call center focused on good pricing, fast home loan closes and excellent customer service quickly came to fruition. In 2003, the Arvielo’s launched New American Funding as a 40-employee, refinance call-center. They have transformed their small, mortgage refinance call center into a national mortgage banker that maintains a servicing portfolio of over 100,000 loans for $25 billion and funds approximately $980 million loans every month. The company now has approximately 160 nationwide branches and about 2,800 employees, and is a 5-time Inc. 5000 Honoree for one of the fastest growing companies in the nation. The couple leads one of Orange County’s top minority owned companies; employing over 2,800 individuals, 58 percent of which are female, with many C-level positions. Their innovative idea of bringing the entire loan process in-house—origination, processing, underwriting, funding and servicing, has given New American Funding a great advantage in the marketplace; allowing them to consistently close loans faster than competitors.

NextWorks Strategy, Irvine

Scott Hamilton, CEO

NextWorks Strategy has helped organizations ranging in size from start-ups to large cap enterprises define new growth opportunities, increase their competitive edge and build the internal capability of their teams to excel. They are trusted advisors in the field of global business, leadership and customer “next practices” strategies. NextWorks’ Strategy services include the development and facilitation of executive/board retreats, leadership development, improved customer-centricity and overall alignment via their trademarked “Immerse Maps”. Scott Hamilton has lead the NextWorks Strategy team in a variety of highly successful projects including internal alignment, performance management and operations performance improvement for such companies as Golden State Foods, Parsons, Nestle, Sizzler, Mimis Café, Shakeys, Printronix, Altura Telecommunications and many others. His unique approach to tapping the collective IQ of an entire organization produces a high level of innovation and ROI.

NotaryCam, Newport Beach

Rick Triola, Founder/CEO

Rick Triola has been working in the real estate, mortgage and technology businesses for over 35 years. He founded NotaryCam with offices in Newport Beach and Alexandria, Virginia, in 2014. NotaryCam is the first venture-backed,
NotaryCam is changing the way documents get notarized with its virtual signing room, which allows any and all parties to legally execute and notarize contracts and other documents on demand over the internet while deploying the industry’s highest level of security and ID authentication. NotaryCam is endorsed by the National Association of Realtors® (NAR), the National Notary Association (NNA), the Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae) and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (Freddie Mac). Its network of trained and certified eNotaries is the largest and highest-paid in the world.

NuEyes Technology Inc., Newport Beach
Justin Moore, President/Co-Founder

NuEyes was launched in January of 2016 by two childhood friends and military veterans, Justin Moore (Air Force) and Mark Greget (Navy). They started the company to leverage emerging technologies in augmented reality technology to help those who are legally blind, unfortunately the glasses don’t currently work for those with no vision. Justin Moore is a specialist in building distribution channels for medical devices as well as recruiting and training salespeople and independent representatives who consistently exceed their goals. He has over twelve years of experience in sales, sales management and marketing in various roles. The product helps those who are struggling with legal blindness as a result of eye conditions, live better lives, they do so by capitalizing on the technology in the glasses to make the most use of the vision these patients have left by magnifying screens much larger than glass can do and also using the digital camera in the glasses to scan text and have it read aloud to the user.

OC Facial Center, Lake Forest
Daniel Robbins, COO

Daniel Robbins is the chief operating officer of the OC Facial Center in Lake Forest. Robbins created a groundbreaking medical grade men’s skincare brand called ‘his’. He launched an advanced pigment technology sunscreen that helps to hide and cover-up skin imperfections including uneven skin tone, acne and scars, and redness. Robbins helps the spa generate additional revenue through marketing and PR to achieve what will be the second year on the Inc. 5000 list. He is also a writer on men’s skin health and has been featured in Forbes, Medium, Thrive Global and HuffPost.

Orange County School of the Arts, Santa Ana
Ralph Opacic, Founder/Executive Director

Ralph Opacic, Ed.D. founder and executive director of Orange County School of the Arts (OCSA), is now in his third decade of providing unparalleled arts and academic programming to students across Southern California. Dr. Opacic’s innovation, passion, creativity and tenacity have resulted in OCSA growing from a small after-school arts program to a comprehensive public charter school serving 2,100 seventh through 12th grade students annually. OCSA offers a rigorous academic program and acclaimed pre-professional arts training in 20 disciplines to a diverse group of students in a creative, nurturing environment. Students are recruited by top-tier colleges and universities across the country, and OCSA reports a 99 percent graduation and college-acceptance rate. These achievements have made OCSA one of the most selective schools in the nation. Today, Dr. Opacic is leading a vision to provide this same life-transforming experience to 10,000 students annually, by opening a network of public charter schools across California. The first campus, California School of the Arts – San Gabriel Valley, opened in August 2017 to great success.

Parrish Partners, San Clemente
Michele Parrish, Managing Partner

Co-founded in 2003 by Michele Parrish, Parrish Partners originally focused on M&A advisory before expanding in 2006 to include executive coaching services for Fortune 100 companies. Relocating to Orange County in 2011, the business further expanded to include private business consulting, executive search, organizational development and training, and most recently, technology and talent management. Through all its services, Parrish Partners leads with cultivating culture and makes the distinction between leadership (creating positive, lasting change in organizations, often transformational) and management (producing systemic, repeatable order, often from chaos). Parrish Partners is an innovator in the field of management.
consulting, placing emphasis on leadership and the power of transforming people as the vehicle for transforming performance. In doing so, Parrish Partners fulfills its vision of being a premier pathway guide for creating and sustaining cultures committed to excellence.

PhaTech Inc., Irvine
Richard Henson, Founder

Richard Henson is a director and co-founder of Irvine-based PhaTech, one of the most high-profile biotech firms to be spun out of publicly funded research at UC Irvine School of Physical Sciences. The product of this research is an entirely new class of materials referred to as biocconductors. Like semiconductors, biocconductors can connect directly to a digital device and allow blood and urine test results to be delivered electronically without a lab or highly skilled operator, all at a fraction of current cost. Current research is focused on studying the recurrence of bladder cancer by checking for biomarkers in urine. This promises to reduce the pain and very costly methods of current bladder cancer treatment. Future developments will allow testing of many other cancers and infectious diseases, a major problem in developing countries where there are no labs or even reliable electricity. The ability to deliver inexpensive and scalable testing to unserved populations will make a significant impact to global health and the economy. Early detection of diseases is considered the single, most effective way to reduce the cost of healthcare.

Plutos Sama, Irvine
Matthew Browndorf, CEO

Matthew Browndorf founded Plutos Sama LLC in 2013 and now works as the CEO, Chairman of the board of directors and managing member. Plutos Sama is a vertically integrated holding company with an expanding portfolio of entities providing its clients comprehensive business solutions. Plutos Sama LLC developed a diverse and stable revenue stream in an expanding, or declining, economy that is cyclic agnostic to origination volume and supply of non-performing loans. Revenue streams across all business platforms are enhanced with cross-selling of services that work due to the complementary platforms that service each other, providing clients with a one-stop shop for all their professional needs. Browndorf is an experienced investment advisor and has led the Plutos Sama affiliates to make successful strategic decisions positioning itself for organic growth in emerging markets while aggressively pursuing merger and acquisition growth across all brands.

POPin, Irvine
Hayes Drumwright, Co-Founder/CEO

Hayes Drumwright is the founder of POPin where he developed a platform that equips leaders to quickly implement decisions with the buy-in of the teams doing the work. He authored the book “Management vs Employees” which provides corporate leaders a roadmap for bridging the hierarchical gaps between management and employees to gain company-wide acceptance of transformative strategic initiatives. POPin provides a platform that allows members for a company’s initiatives through the intimate engagement of its employees, partners and clients. By making it safe to have a true conversation on a particular subject, leaders will uncover confusion before it negatively impacts success and at the same time build trust and foster buy-in by giving employees the ability to share in solution authorship.

PriceSpider, Irvine
Dave Templin, Director of Research and Development

As the director of research and development for PriceSpider, Dave Templin has spearheaded initiatives that have directly and positively impacted the continued success and growth of the company. PriceSpider has experienced unprecedented growth, especially over the last year, by expanding its product offerings. In addition to valuable enhancements to PriceSpider’s Where to Buy solutions, led by Templin, the company introduced Brand Monitor, an advanced monitoring component of its existing platform suite. The new content monitoring tool helps brand manufacturers quickly and easily visualize how their product content is displayed on hundreds to thousands of retailer websites to guarantee proper brand alignment. The product continues to evolve through cutting-edge enhancements, providing PriceSpider with a leg up on the competition. These innovations have been directly responsible for decreasing production costs, time to market, increasing overall consistency, reliability and both client and consumer satisfaction.

Restaurant 365, Irvine
John Moody, Co-Founder

Restaurant365 was founded in 2011 by John Moody, to fit the needs of an underserved, fragmented market, with the ultimate goal of helping restaurants grow. Restaurant365 is the world’s only all-in-one, cloud-based, restaurant-specific accounting, operations and reporting solution developed specifically for restaurants. Connectors, import functions and open APIs truly enable Restaurant365 to “talk” with other systems including POS providers, payroll processors, vendors and banks. The result is real integration of transactional and detailed information. The result is advanced software technology that alleviates the significant burdens placed on restaurant operators. With more than 700 clients worldwide, Restaurant365 specializes in: independent, multi-unit chains, franchisees, franchisors of multiple concepts, accounting partners and large enterprise deals. The Restaurant365 Academy is a learning management system that provides all users with clear and engaging learning experiences. The Academy is complemented by a support center that provides in-depth solution articles, announcements, registration for user groups and webinars, support ticket management, product roadmap and a community forum. Restaurant365 believes in always improving and innovating their company, product, policies, procedures and their industry.

SeneGence International, Foothill Ranch
Joni Rogers-Kante, Founder/CEO

Joni Rogers-Kante founded SeneGence® in 1999 and the company has since become a recognized, international leader in the cosmetics industry. After learning that cosmetic companies use the same ingredients in one product to the next -- Joni traveled across the world with a team of scientists and botanists to find ingredients for the unique formulas in SeneGence products, with a focus on long-lasting and anti-aging with lasting results. The SeneGence line stays on the cutting edge of technology with original, patented and proprietary cosmetic formulas blended with the same anti-aging properties of its skincare. It’s about healthy and natural products that conserve beauty, technology and cosmetics that are good for the skin. Thanks to her business acumen, visionary leadership and determination, SeneGence now offers more than 300 products and was the first to popularize the concept of long-lasting cosmetics. The appeal of SeneGence’s unique products combined with the entrepreneurial opportunity to run one’s own business has resulted in a rapidly increasing sales force with a growth of over 400 percent (in new distributors) since 2017.

Shark Wheel, Lake Forest
David Patrick, Chief Technology Officer

David M. Patrick reinvented the shape of the wheel for the first time in human history. Not only does it look different, but it has been scientifically proven in 2 years of testing by San Diego State University, Mechanical Engineering Department to outperform the traditional wheel in various categories including friction, load capacity, longevity and off-road ability. Patrick has appeared on Shark Tank, the Discovery Channel, and has his major science discovery that gave birth to this wheel shape. He found alternating motions in nature are inherently more advantageous than linear motions. Additionally, Patrick won a government grant through the National Science Foundation (NSF) to create a wheel that saves farmers money and down time. The Shark Wheel can also be used as skateboard wheels, farming wheels, wheelchair wheels, pallet jack wheels, etc.

Ship & Shore Environmental, Inc., Signal Hill
Anoosheh Osokian, President/CEO

Anoosheh Osokian launched her pollution control business, Ship & Shore Environmental in 2000, since then, it has developed a comprehensive array of engineering and manufacturing capabilities. With increasing market demand on businesses to reduce operational costs as a driver, Osokian has continuously expanded her company’s product lines and services. Ship & Shore is also making waves in the flexographic and packaging industries, by offering experience to manufacturers that need to address all of the latest EPA Regulations and changes made to environmental rules and regulations. In September 2017, Osokian led the company to start its “Keeping Up with the EPA Campaign” effort to help manufacturers address concerns and meet regulations, while saving time and energy. Likewise, under her leadership, the company grew 15 percent in 2017 and closed numerous new deals in different markets around the globe.

Restaurant365

John Moody, Co-Founder

Restaurant365 was founded in 2011 by John Moody, to fit the needs of an underserved, fragmented market, with the ultimate goal of helping restaurants grow. Restaurant365 is the world’s only all-in-one, cloud-based, restaurant-specific accounting, operations and reporting solution developed specifically for restaurants. Connectors, import functions and open APIs truly enable Restaurant365 to “talk” with other systems including POS providers, payroll processors, vendors and banks. The result is real integration of transactional and detailed information. The result is advanced software technology that alleviates the significant burdens placed on restaurant operators. With more than 700 clients worldwide, Restaurant365 specializes in: independent, multi-unit chains, franchisees, franchisors of multiple concepts, accounting partners and large enterprise deals. The Restaurant365 Academy is a learning management system that provides all users with clear and engaging learning experiences. The Academy is complemented by a support center that provides in-depth solution articles, announcements, registration for user groups and webinars, support ticket management, product roadmap and a community forum. Restaurant365 believes in always improving and innovating their company, product, policies, procedures and their industry.

SeneGence International, Foothill Ranch

Joni Rogers-Kante, Founder/CEO

Joni Rogers-Kante founded SeneGence® in 1999 and the company has since become a recognized, international leader in the cosmetics industry. After learning that cosmetic companies use the same ingredients in one product to the next -- Joni traveled across the world with a team of scientists and botanists to find ingredients for the unique formulas in SeneGence products, with a focus on long-lasting and anti-aging with lasting results. The SeneGence line stays on the cutting edge of technology with original, patented and proprietary cosmetic formulas blended with the same anti-aging properties of its skincare. It’s about healthy and natural products that conserve beauty, technology and cosmetics that are good for the skin. Thanks to her business acumen, visionary leadership and determination, SeneGence now offers more than 300 products and was the first to popularize the concept of long-lasting cosmetics. The appeal of SeneGence’s unique products combined with the entrepreneurial opportunity to run one’s own business has resulted in a rapidly increasing sales force with a growth of over 400 percent (in new distributors) since 2017.

Shark Wheel, Lake Forest

David Patrick, Chief Technology Officer

David M. Patrick reinvented the shape of the wheel for the first time in human history. Not only does it look different, but it has been scientifically proven in 2 years of testing by San Diego State University, Mechanical Engineering Department to outperform the traditional wheel in various categories including friction, load capacity, longevity and off-road ability. Patrick has appeared on Shark Tank, the Discovery Channel, and has his major science discovery that gave birth to this wheel shape. He found alternating motions in nature are inherently more advantageous than linear motions. Additionally, Patrick won a government grant through the National Science Foundation (NSF) to create a wheel that saves farmers money and down time. The Shark Wheel can also be used as skateboard wheels, farming wheels, wheelchair wheels, pallet jack wheels, etc.

Ship & Shore Environmental, Inc., Signal Hill

Anoosheh Osokian, President/CEO

Anoosheh Osokian launched her pollution control business, Ship & Shore Environmental in 2000, since then, it has developed a comprehensive array of engineering and manufacturing capabilities. With increasing market demand on businesses to reduce operational costs as a driver, Osokian has continuously expanded her company’s product lines and services. Ship & Shore is also making waves in the flexographic and packaging industries, by offering experience to manufacturers that need to address all of the latest EPA Regulations and changes made to environmental rules and regulations. In September 2017, Osokian led the company to start its “Keeping Up with the EPA Campaign” effort to help manufacturers address concerns and meet regulations, while saving time and energy. Likewise, under her leadership, the company grew 15 percent in 2017 and closed numerous new deals in different markets around the globe.
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deliver world-changing clean fusion energy as quickly as possible. Starting through fusion. The purpose of TAE Technologies is to all committed to starting a global energy revolution ventures. As president and CTO, he works with a team largest and most well-funded private fusion energy knowledge and technology of TAE, now one of the US’s has dedicated the past two decades to evolving the Michl Binderbauer helped build TAE Technologies, and has dedicated the past two decades to evolving the technology is compact, safe, carbon-free and sustainable. Drs. Norman Rostoker and Michl Binderbauer developed a fusion technology that – when combined with the hydrogen-boron fuel cycles – facilitates easier engineering and a safer environmental profile than competitive fusion methods. He holds more than 40 issued and pending U.S. patents and numerous international technology patents, in addition to authoring many peer-reviewed publications in plasma physics and fusion.

The Joseph Company International Inc., Irvine Mitchell Joseph, Chairman/CEO

Led by Mitchell Joseph, The Joseph Company International, based in Irvine, California, is the developer, manufacturer, and patent holder of the world’s first and only commercially viable self-chilling beverage can known as the Chill-Carr®. The Joseph Company intends to rapidly commercialize the self-chilling beverage can and associated self-chilling beverage packaging containers through private labels and the licensing of the technology to the beverage world. Joseph is the founder of the Joseph Company International and is a fourth generation of The Joseph Family, dating back to 1921 with the bottling and distribution of Dad’s Old Fashion Root Beer & Squirt, to dedicate himself to the beverage business. The Joseph Company is currently constructing a $20 million Beverage Production and Technology Complex in Youngstown, Ohio which will allow for the production of billions of self-chilling cans and associated containers annually.

Stich Ai, Huntington Beach Matty Squarzoni, CEO

Matty Squarzoni is the CEO and co-founder of Stich Ai, the new technology company focused on artificial intelligence and IoT technologies to improve geospatial and situational awareness. The company develops hardware and software for active shooter prevention, detection and response, military innovation and other smart city applications, and will launch commercially by the end of 2018. Outdoor geolocation has been available for a long time, but limited progress has been made for indoor geospatial awareness even though we spend 80 percent of our lives indoors. Stich Ai aims to bring these two worlds together with a self-learning, geospatially aware smart ecosystem of technologies and products. These integrated technologies will support the foundation for smart cities and buildings that will enable us to monitor, locate, track and manage for purposes of asset management, security and awareness, and behavioral analytics (consumer trends, etc.). Squarzoni is also establishing an innovation center in Orange County that will help to grow and develop dual-use technologies and tech companies that hold promising commercial and defense applications.

Sports 1 Marketing, Irvine David Meltzer, CEO

Over the past few years, David Meltzer has morphed Sports 1 Marketing into one of the fastest-growing sports marketing firms in the country, due to the forward-thinking development of a media division within S1M, S1Media House (S1MH). Since founding S1M with Hall of Fame quarterback Warren Moon, the business has changed rapidly, resulting in more than $20 million in revenue in its first fiscal year. With Warren’s guidance, Sports 1 Marketing has morphed from a boutique sports marketing firm into a digital marketing powerhouse, with an award-winning digital marketing platform that was named “Best in Sports” nationally and internationally and an award-winning media company, S1Media House. Meltzer has spent the last 25 years as an entrepreneur and executive in the legal, technology, and sports and entertainment fields with expertise across many industry verticals. In addition to his role as CEO of Sports 1 Marketing, he serves as executive producer for Entrepreneur Media’s first-ever original show, Elevator Pitch, which had over 25 million views in its first season, making it the No.1 digital business show.

Stroma Medical Corporation, Irvine Gregg Homer, Chairman/Chief Science Officer

Gregg Homer is the inventor of the laser eye color change which has been developed for commercialization by Stroma Medical Corporation. The patented laser initiates a natural metabolic process that gradually eliminates the superficial pigment in darker eyes to reveal your natural underlying color. Essentially, a low-intensity laser focuses on the iris to help it break down the pigmented tissues, unveiling the natural blue color underneath. The procedure does not instantly give a person blue eyes, but rather it may take a few weeks for the tissue to break down. The procedure has yet to be approved in the United States but has received mentions in media outlets like CNN, Time, Business Insider and Yahoo Beauty. In the meantime, Dr. Homer continues to innovate, primarily in the fields of medical devices, media and communications, and enterprise software applications. In addition to the laser eye color change, he has invented multiple technologies such as: subscription on demand, deep-packet inspection, iris laser irisplasty for glaucoma treatment, hyperpigmentation tattooing, and automatic document commenting and electronic scent generation.

TAE Technologies, Foothill Ranch Micht Binderbauer, CTO/President

Micht Binderbauer helped build TAE Technologies, and has dedicated the past two decades to evolving the knowledge and technology of TAE, now one of the US’s largest and most well-funded private fusion energy ventures. As president and CTO, he works with a team of 160 scientists, visionaries, researchers and rebels – all committed to starting a global energy revolution through fusion. The purpose of TAE Technologies is to deliver world-changing clean fusion energy as quickly as possible. Starting with the end in mind, a commercially competitive fusion power plant, the company developed a unique pathway by being the first to combine well-understood advanced particle accelerator with plasma physics. This combining technology is compact, safe, carbon-free and sustainable. Drs. Norman Rostoker and Michl Binderbauer developed a fusion technology that – when combined with the hydrogen-boron fuel cycles – facilitates easier engineering and a safer environmental profile than competitive fusion methods. He holds more than 40 issued and pending U.S. patents and numerous international technology patents, in addition to authoring many peer-reviewed publications in plasma physics and fusion.

The Wooden Floor, Santa Ana Dawn S. Reese, CEO

Dawn S. Reese, chief executive officer of The Wooden Floor, is a social innovator with 25-plus years of experience who leverages her unique blend of experience in business, technology, education and the arts to propel young people forward. Founded in 1983, The Wooden Floor is one of the foremost creative youth development nonprofit organizations in the country. It transforms the lives of young people in low-income communities through the power of dance and access to higher education. During Dawn’s nine-year tenure, the organization’s budget has grown from $2.1 million to $3.4 million and she has led efforts to take its model national by signing their first licensed partner in Washington, DC in November 2015. In addition, a second location of The Wooden Floor opened April 2018 at the Depot at Santiago, workforce housing community in Santa Ana, through an innovative partnership with C&C Development which increases the afterschool student body to nearly 500 year-round children and their families who are served up to 10 years.

Titan Health & Security Technologies, Inc., Newport Beach Vic A. Merjanian, Esq., Founder/CEO

Vic A. Merjanian, Esq., is founder and CEO of Titan Health & Security Technologies, Inc. and is dedicated to improving school safety, as well as organizational safety (spanning private and public businesses, NGOs, and governmental agencies). Titan HST has been used by 62 million times in the last year alone and has deployed patented next-gen features including augmented reality (allowing emergency personnel to see through walls and fire), real-time translation (bridging language barriers that cost precious time during an emergency), two-way communication with text, picture, group audio and video calling, and location services. Titan HST is also highly accessible for those who are visually or audiologically impaired. Titan HST is always pushing innovation with new technologies such as Mesh Networking (allowing users to communicate even in complete black-outs when all cell towers and Wi-Fi are down). Titan HST was created to provide immediately accessible, organizationally, and technologically structured comprehensive two-way emergency communication – empowering all, reducing anxiety and response time, and enabling incident resolution.

University of California, Irvine, Irvine Michael Dennin, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning/Dean of Undergraduate Education

Michael Dennin has contributed significantly to many milestones at UCI, but
Ken Goodrich with Goettl Air Conditioning thanks Orange County for the nomination of Innovator of the Year!

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most recognizably is his ability to popularize science and bring active learning environments to higher education. Last year he launched UCI’s Office of the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning (OVPTL). The division has sparked updated academic programs, exciting community partnerships and national outreach like never before, resulting in a number of recognitions for UCI embracing student diversity and college access. In the past year Dennin has created many opportunities for milestones including: building the Anteater Learning Pavilion, creating the Active Learning Institute, creating a new campus space called the Student Success Initiatives Center, and an initiative called First Generation Faculty which had so much success the first two years, that now all the University of California schools have adopted it. In addition he helped expand the Campuswide Honors Program, the international student excellence program and fundraising opportunities.

**Vinct, Irvine**  
Ville Houuttu is Founder and CEO of Vinct California, Inc., a custom software development and design studio originally from Finland. Previously Head of Business Development at Vinct Group, Houuttu helped the Finnish company grow from 350 employees and make it public in Nasdaq First North marketplace. He opened Vinct California in 2016, and has grown the US footprint to over 30 employees supporting local projects across multiple industries. Houuttu also founded Vinct Dev Talks, a quarterly meetup which brings together members of the Orange County tech community for networking and innovative discussions. These events cover various topics provided by speakers across multiple industries and backgrounds. He also keeps Vinct involved in events that support local coding schools and programs through UCI. Houuttu was recently awarded with the 2018 Entrepreneur of the Year Award from Irvine Chamber of Commerce and has received increasing press coverage for his work in Orange County, growing the presence and clientele of Vinct.

**ViridiSTOR LLC, Tustin**  
Terry Mullin, CEO/President

Terry Mullin is an active innovator and business builder in Orange County. He has formed and led teams in market leading companies that have brought first in class software and hardware to the market. Within his latest venture, ViridiSTOR, Mullin has launched a new era in compact content management systems to deliver information to the $595 billion dollar event, conference, and trade show industry. ViridiSTOR has designed and delivered a system to eliminate paper handouts from the trade show and conference industries. Through the use of their Green Box solution, not only are costs dramatically reduced, but the environmental impact of paper waste eliminated. At the same time, Mullin has innovated and patented other products including an online marketplace system that will aid millions in the recovery from oral surgery. Mullin has other patents pending in the area of wireless networking, retail management, and sustainable products.

**WHW, Irvine**  
Janie Best, CEO

Janie Best is CEO of WHW, a non-profit organization with the mission of providing the unemployed and the underemployed the skills and resources to get and keep a good job. Best is passionate about putting people to work because she believes that a job is more than a paycheck. It is essential to creating a stable, safe and educated community; the kind of community we all want to live in. But passion alone is not enough. Her persistence in finding new and more efficient ways to solve problems, increase efficiencies and track impact has taken WHW to a new level of operation, relevant to funders, donors and most of all the Job Seekers she serves. Today, WHW has served over 90,000 job seekers providing comprehensive employment support services to almost 10,000 Job Seekers last year with a $1.6 million budget, the help of over 1000 volunteers and the collaboration of over 275 partner agencies.

**Xitore, Mission Viejo**  
Mike Amidi, CEO/Board Member

Mike Amidi, has over 25 years of experience in semiconductor and technology industry where he spent the last 20 years in Solid State Storage where he held various management and executive positions in companies such as STEC, SMART, Netlist, and WD. Amidi has assembled world class executive and technology teams with over 620-plus authored and co-authored patents to join the company. At Xitore, Amidi and his team have developed a revolutionary disruptive Solid State Drive (SSD) product that improves the performance by 3.2X, reduce latency by 42.5X, reduce the size by 5.0X, and reduce the power by 1.6X compared to fastest product in the market. Xitore currently has seven issued patents and several more in pipeline to protect intellectual properties. Xitore’s focus is on developing a revolutionary, next generation Data storage which will enhance and improve user experience by increasing bandwidth, while reducing storage latency to a fix duration, and taking the experience into extreme new levels.

**Yonder, Laguna Niguel**  
Sheri Geoffreys, Founder

Being diagnosed with Hodgkin’s Lymphoma Cancer, as a new mom and having a brother who passed away of same cancer, Sheri Geoffreys learned the power of Bone Broth Collagen nutrients. All of her friends and family noticed the benefits she was getting and wanted to try it, but they would not drink the soup daily. In early 2017, Geoffreys dedicated herself to finding the best sources of these nutrients all over the world, aligning herself with one of the healthiest manufacturers in the USA and gathering amazing support to help her bring this dream into reality. She has built a team of amazing souls crafting great tasting and nutrient dense Bone Broth Collagen Bars making it easy to enjoy for all. Her Bone Broth Collagen Protein Bars have no broth flavor whatsoever and blend organic whole food ingredients with amazing flavors like wild blueberry nut, peanut butter chocolate chip and coconut almond with only 2-3g of sugar, gluten free, non-GMO, rice free, soy free, dairy free and 14 plus grams of protein, the first bar like it on the market.

**Ytel, Foothill Ranch**  
Nick Newsom, CEO

Founded in 2012, Nick Newsom started Ytel to help businesses better interact with audiences through self-service software. As the company evolved, Newsom invested into culture and identifying top talent that would help propel Ytel to the next level. Ytel powers communications for businesses to build deeper relationships through human interaction. Ytel offers a communications application programming interface (API) that enables voice, messaging and mail that integrate with existing applications, and a contact center application built for lead generation and sales acceleration. Ytel has been recognized by Entrepreneur Magazine as one of the fastest growing companies in America, by the U.S. Government for innovation in cloud communication, and has received extensive recognition for donating time and money to local education and tech programs right here in Orange County. In just four years, Ytel has grown from half a dozen people to more than 100 with several offices across the country to service its customers.

**Zadara Storage, Irvine**  
Nelson Nahum, Co-Founder/CEO

Nelson Nahum is a co-founder of Zadara Storage, the world’s first enterprise-class storage delivered as a fully-managed service. His roles include founding CTO and member of the Zadara engineering team that won two U.S. patents for innovative software-defined-storage. Zadara Storage’s service model offers enterprises, SMBs and startups a flexible, agile and cost-efficient storage infrastructure that’s always aligned with their needs. Solutions have been recognized for innovation and leadership. The accolades include the Frost & Sullivan New Product Innovation Leadership Award, No. 87 on the Deloitte Fast 500, Gartner ‘Cool Vendor’ in Storage Technologies, and Dell Founder’s 50. Despite managing the demands of the company’s rapid growth, Nelson has found ways to give back, including free data storage for the companies that were affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. Nelson brings over 20 years of experience in the storage industry in multiple storage software development positions. He is known for creating innovative products and successfully bringing them to the market.
Congratulations 2018 Nominees!

11 Health and Technologies Inc.  -  Michael Seres
   Advantech North America - Ween Niu
   ALVITA Biomedical   -  Dr. Hans Kerneid
   Allergan - Dan Gil
   AllergyX Inc. - Dean Stocker
   BANKCODE - Chen Tree
   Beacon Paine Advisors - Shannon Euny
   Beeya - Ladan David
   BioPhotons Inc. - Patrick Johnson
   Burns & McDonnell - Rick Cramer
   ChromaDex - Frank Jakus
   Cie Digital Labs - Andreea Banegran
   cloudVirga - Kyle Kamoono
   ConversionPoint Technologies Inc. - Robert Talsic
   CureDuchMJen - Debra Miller
   Devee Interactive - Dalip Jaggi
   E Factor - Karl Willis
   Emeros Enterprise Services Inc. - Jesse Crowe
   Ephesoft Inc. - Like Karas
   Ergo21 - Stev Gambhir
   Fairmont Private Schools - David R. Jackson
   GlobeChat - Kevin Strom
   Goetel Air Conditioning - Kirt Goodrich
   Gorilla Stations LLC - Rosemary Contop
   Greenlink Financial - Brandon Avila
   Greenwave Systems - Martin Manniche
   Hyperpr Inc. - Jim Huether
   HyperX - Daniel Kelley
   Ice Energy - Mike Hopkins
   iHeartDogs.com - Marshall Morris
   InstaMed - Chris Seib
   Kleen & Wilson - Mark Wilson
   Kush Bottles Inc. - Nicholas Kovacevich
   Laurel At Sunset - James Shun
   I Can Depot - Billy Spears
   Love & Puree - Jeffrey Chon
   MeridianLink - Tim Nguyen
   Meridien - Robert Brown
   Money360 - Evan Gentry
   My Metal Business Card - Craig Martyn
   Netreo Inc. - Kevin Kinsey
   New American Funding - Patty Arvelo
   New American Funding - Rick Arvelo
   NextWorld Strategy - Scott Hamilton
   Notary Cam - Rich Triola
   NuEyes Technologies Inc. - Justin Moore
   OC Facial Care Center - Daniel Robbins
   Orange County School of the Arts - Dr. Ralph Oparnica
   Parrish Partners LLC - Michele Parish
   PhageTech Inc. - Richard Henson
   Piutos Sama LLC - Matthew Brownord
   POP Inc. - Hayes Drumvright
   PriceSpider - Dave Tempel
   Restaurant365 - John Moody
   SenseBalance International Inc. - Joni Rogers-Karte
   Shark Wheel - David W. Patrick
   Ship & Shore Environmental Inc. - Anocoshe Orkouian
   StitchAr LLC - Marly Squarzone
   Sports 1 Marketing - David Melzer
   Sports 1 Marketing - Warren Moon
   Stone Medical Corporation - Gregg Homer
   TAE Technology - Michi Binderbauer
   The Joseph Co. International Inc. - Mitchell J. Joseph
   The Wooden Floor - Dawn S. Reese
   Titan Health & Security Technologies Inc. - Vic Mijiranian, Esq.
   University of California, Irvine - Michael Dennin
   Vintii - Ville Houltu
   ViridisTOR LLC - Terry Mulkin
   WHW - Janie Best
   Yxide - Mike Amend
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   Ytel - Nick Newsom
   Zadara Storage - Nelson Nahum

Keynote Speaker
Richard Sudek, Ph.D.
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Luncheon & Awards Program:
September 20, 2018 at Hotel Irvine from 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. *Tickets: $175 / Table of Ten: $1600

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