

269

MAGAZINE

inside:

HOW TO HIT THE TALENT
BULLS-EYE WITH YOUR
CORPORATE BOW

THE

WE'VE



LEADERS

ISSUE

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at Whirlpool Corporation**

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SOONER OR LATER, YOU
NEED TO STEP UP TO LEAD.
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about our first steps.*

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As captain of my eighth-grade cheerleading squad, I learned that it was sometimes easier to lead a crowd in a cheer than to get 12 girls to stop talking long enough to learn the cheer that they would lead.
@imheatherbaker

I was a section leader in my high school band. Often, humor was the only way to engage my fellow teenage trumpeters.

I attempted a coup in kindergarten, as I was certain I could teach the class better than my teacher. In that moment, I learned that leadership is earned and broom closets are dark and lonely.
@smille

As the ringleader of our neighborhood middle school scooter gang, I found that, to truly push the boundaries of stuntwork, I needed to be the first to attempt ambitious new tricks. The scars (mostly) healed, but the legacy remains!
@iAmAdamRossi

As captain of my high school golf team, I learned that leaders control not only their own attitude and effort, but they also control that of others.
@NickRiashi626



Our hope is that the readers of *269 MAGAZINE* will become active participants in the world around them and join our mission to make Southwest Michigan the place to build a home, go to work, and bring dreams to reality.

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BY HEATHER BAKER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

PHOTO SOLOVYOVA (ISTOCK)



Supply a Little Kindling

AND AN EMERGING LEADER COULD FIRE UP YOUR ENTIRE ORGANIZATION

WHEN THE ELEVATOR DOORS OPENED BEFORE ME, SIGNALING THE ADVENT OF MY FIRST JOB AS A COLLEGE GRADUATE, I DIDN'T STEP OUT ALONE.

I arrived with other recent graduates who had come as well for their first day at Anderson Consulting, now known as Accenture. My fellow elevator travelers were called a “Start Group” and had also been assigned September 14, 1992, as their first day to report to work at the consulting firm.

For the first two weeks, the “September 14 Start Group” traveled in a pack from one training session to another. Our progress was tracked according to that date, and even our introductions were tied to it: “Hello, I’m Heather. Start Date September 14.” To further our knowledge about our role in the global organization, we traveled to a corporate session in Chicago, where we engaged with new employees from other offices. There, the standard introduction expanded to, “Hello, I’m Heather from the Hartford office. Start Date September 14.”

Upon completion of all new-hire training, I was deemed ready for assignment. Assigned to a project team working for a worldwide consumer product brand out of New York, I went from feeling like one fish swimming in a packed fishbowl to one fish in an entire ocean. It was easy to get lost. But, I was found by a young manager leading our team, Carla Gregory.

Carla took the time to teach to me and my fellow guppies about the project cycle we were now part of, ensure we understood our role, review our work every night, and really get to know each

one of us. At the same time, she proactively found ways to integrate our team with that of the client so we operated as a cohesive unit. When we traveled back to our home base in Connecticut, I noticed her being called into meetings with upper management yet still finding time to keep our project moving forward remotely.

Looking back, I see that Carla had a tremendous impact on me while she was emerging as a true leader in her own right. A few things that I remember about her are:

1. Her commitment to responsiveness. Carla reviewed the team’s work nightly and gave daily feedback; it didn’t matter whether we left the office at 5:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. Her constant direction or redirection laid the groundwork for my own future strategic planning initiatives. She stood out in comparison to others who took days to get back to me or simply never responded as promised. From a customer service standpoint, she exemplified how responsiveness was a competitive advantage.

2. Her commitment to excellence and integrity. Our client hired our team with the expectation that we would produce results. Carla made sure we stayed true to our promise. Cutting corners was never an option; over-delivery was the target. Our actions affected our client and its employees, our company’s brand, and our

team’s reputation—in that order. I quickly learned that our actions and final deliverables spoke louder than the words put on paper for the initial proposal that won us the work.

3. Her commitment to recognition. Carla never missed a chance to say thank you and celebrate a team member’s success. In a world where everyone’s work was compiled into a single final document, she called out the contributions of individual team members to both the client and our corporate leadership who reviewed our work. This made us want to work even harder. When that project ended and another began, we all quickly volunteered for a place on the new client team to be led by Carla.

This issue celebrates young leaders like Carla, some of whom you may know and some of whom you are reading about for the first time. Look around you; you might notice other young leaders whose leadership is starting to spark. When you see that spark, give it some kindling and watch what ignites!

READ ON,

Heather

Tell us about your dreams for Southwest Michigan’s future @269Mag with #MyFutureSWMI!

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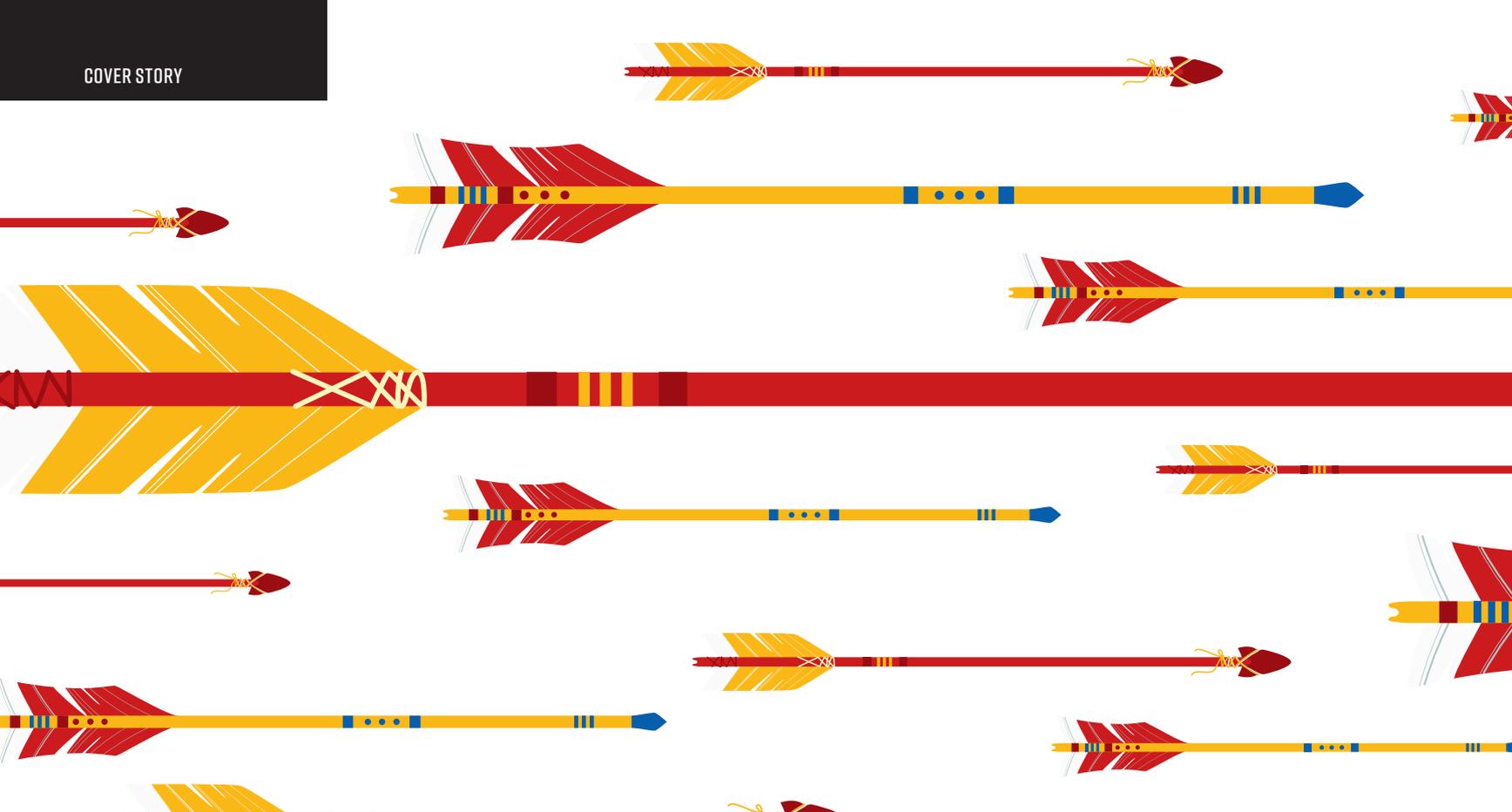
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HOW TO HIT THE TALENT BULLS-EYE

TUNE YOUR BOW WITH CORPORATE CULTURE | BY RICK VAN GROUW

ILLUSTRATIONS ADAM ROSSI AND EIREENZ (ISTOCK)

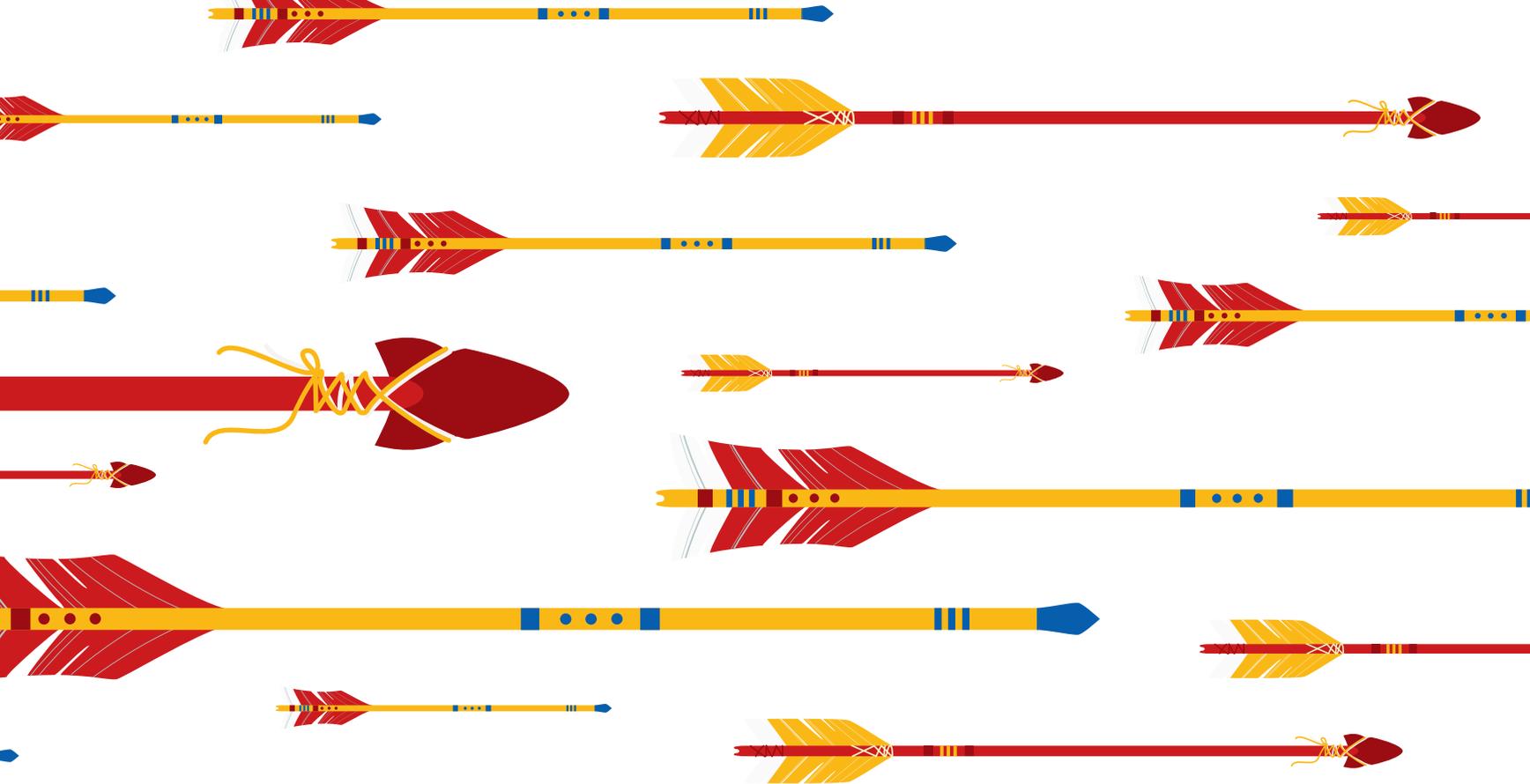
IN 2010, DURING THE MAD SCRAMBLE FROM THE NADIR OF THE GREAT RECESSION, RENOWNED BUSINESS LEADER ALFRED O. WEBER, RECENTLY RETIRED, STRODE INTO A HOTEL CONFERENCE ROOM IN DETROIT.

In January of that year, Weber had been named co-president and CEO of MANN+HUMMEL USA, a global leader in the manufacture of oil, fuel, and air filters. Weber was in Michigan visiting executives from MANN+HUMMEL GmbH location in Portage.

Among the team of executives in the conference room that day was Kurk Wilks, then director of business development for MANN+HUMMEL USA. “It was essentially a meet-and-greet with the new CEO,” Wilks recalls. He and his colleagues had put together a 12-inch binder full of helpful statistics and accomplishments. “We started

presenting all aspects of the business—financials, how we were growing the business, our recovery plans.”

For two hours, Wilks and his colleagues regaled their new CEO with tales of success, corporate efficiencies, internal and external synergies, and more. “He sat there, stayed focused, and listened to everything,” Wilks said.



At the end of this marathon session, Weber asked if everyone had finished with their presentations. They had. Weber stood and requested an easel with paper. One was provided. He approached the easel, drew a circle, and said, “If this represents a company, what’s the single most important thing it needs?” Weber asked his executives. They looked at each other and scratched their heads. “Happy customers?” Wilks proffered. Somebody from operations piped up, “Great operations?” Weber smiled and said, “You’re getting there.”

“Inside the circle he wrote, ‘People’ and ‘Talent,’” Wilks recalls. “He said, ‘Start with that. Next time I visit, make me a presentation on that, and then we’ll talk about the rest of it.’ Then he said he had to catch a plane and walked out.”

“That was my first wake-up call about the importance of talent,” says Wilks, most recently vice president and general manager of MANN+HUMMEL USA.

These days, talent acquisition and retention remain a primary focus not only at MANN+HUMMEL USA but across industries.

“The bull’s-eye is talent,” says Ron Kitchens, CEO of Southwest Michigan First, the nonprofit economic development agency serving the seven-county region in the lower left corner of Michigan. “My passion is getting young people—emerging leaders—to move to this community, stay in this community, and graduate from Western Michigan University (WMU), Kalamazoo College, or Kalamazoo Valley Community College.”

Kitchens’s question for area business leaders: “How are YOU developing young talent?”

HOW THEY DO IT

Wilks said the recruiting philosophy at MANN+HUMMEL USA has evolved since that eye-opening presentation in 2010. “It’s a manufacturing company, and its associates on the floor, the trade workers, tend to be homegrown,” Wilks said. That said, “It has grown by a factor of four in recent years, and the team has gone to other cities like Gary, Indiana, to attract workers in certain trades. It wraps its hiring strategy around a good set of values—leadership, teamwork, excellence, and trust.”

Wilks said MANN+HUMMEL USA also works closely with WMU, where the company

“aggressively recruits,” offers numerous internships, and demonstrates the career-defining benefits of joining the company. “As soon as new hires come in, the company gets them off to one of its sites around the world,” he said. “If they choose to stay in Kalamazoo, that’s great. But MANN+HUMMEL shows them it’s really an international network.”

Sarah Mansberger, a partner at Southwest Michigan First, offers a 40,000-foot perspective on talent acquisition in the area. “I see talent coming in from a lot of different organizations—mentorship programs and Leadership Kalamazoo, for example.

HOW ARE YOU DEVELOPING YOUNG TALENT?

RON KITCHENS | SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN FIRST

One of the things I’m interested to see is the focus on strength-based leadership. We’re not starting from a deficit mentality in assessing talent, but rather from a place of strength: Let’s identify what someone can do well and magnify and grow those traits into their strengths and other skill sets.”

This notion of individual development is a prime consideration among the region’s corporate elite. Shawn Premer, chief human resources officer at Consumers Credit Union, said her business tries hard to move employees up the company’s internal ladder. “Our average hire age is 22 years old,” she said. “Our average age overall is only 35. Ours is a really young population of employees. If we’re not focused on their development, they’re leaving for somewhere else.”



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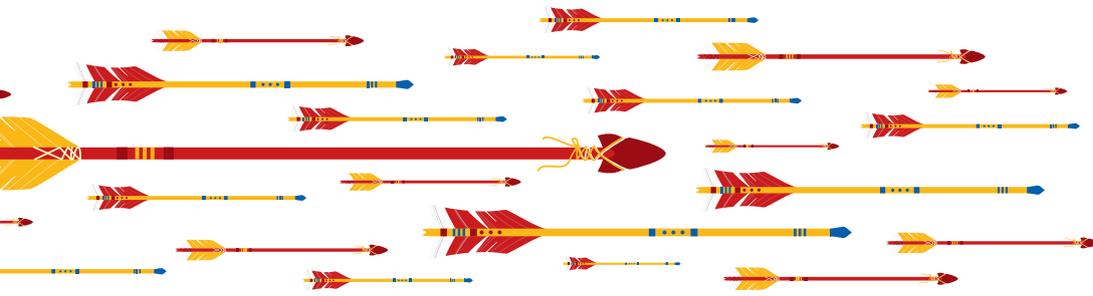
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Premer said the company takes a three-pronged approach to employee development:

Passion: including leadership development.

Purpose: allowing individuals to grow in their roles in the company.

Strengths: encouraging employees to take an assignment within the organization.

The strategy has proven effective. “Our turnover rate is less than 10 percent, and the reason is our investment in employee development,” Premer said.

Mansberger also stressed the importance of keeping the job interesting. “The question is, ‘How do you keep people’s professional quest for growth alive?’” she said. “The answer is getting people engaged in roles where they can experiment, where they can fail forward. This is common regardless of the type of industry. It’s also a cultural shift for a lot of companies: How can we embrace a more agile mindset, how can we develop projects that give our talent a chance to grow and shine? It can have an effect on how you arrange your work.”

Wilks agrees, adding that the strategy applies to workers of any age as long as the effort is tailored to the individual. “I remember sitting down to talk with one person who was getting ready to retire in two years,” Wilks says. “It was the best discussion I’ve had with an employee. I decided to keep her on as a consultant. I wouldn’t have known about her ability to help the company if I hadn’t taken the time to have a real conversation with her. This isn’t an approach that would work for a 20-year-old or a 35-year-old. You have to understand what they want in a personal discussion and then act on what you learn.”

A CHANGING WORKFORCE

“When I started in human resources, it was called ‘personnel,’” recalls Premer. “It’s really interesting to see the dynamics shift. We’re hiring people younger than we were

when we entered the workforce. That idea that your parents described where you work 20 years and then get your pension—that all blew up. People today are hungrier. They move faster. They learn quickly and we give them that opportunity. Older office managers may work with a financial representative who is 26 years old. That’s an interesting dynamic. They’re very educated, they work hard, and they’re not afraid to ask questions. The overall dynamic now is so collaborative when [the younger generations] are challenged, working with the team around them, asking questions, and getting smarter and smarter.”

HOW CAN WE EMBRACE A MORE AGILE MINDSET, HOW CAN WE DEVELOP PROJECTS THAT GIVE OUR TALENT A CHANCE TO GROW AND SHINE?

SARAH MANSBERGER | SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN FIRST

As Wilks points out, even change is changing. Wilks, 47, points to a 28-year-old MANN+HUMMEL USA purchasing manager as representative of this new generation of whip-smart workers. “They can adapt so fast compared to how we can,” he says. “I talk about having to prepare them for changes in business cycles, but in reality I have to prepare myself. According to the old way of doing things, I’d set up a meeting with ‘Brad’ to discuss options. But when I reach out to ‘Brad,’ he’s already collaborated with four other people and is way ahead of me in preparing for change. Change has been wrapped around him his entire career. People are coming out of college as Navy SEALs compared to what I did.”

“Change is so fast everywhere,” he said. “The fight for talent is everywhere. It’s about creating a vision of what the company is and wrapping

that vision around our values. We look at the young generation of people coming in and give them something to relate to. ‘Brad’ deals with a \$258 million budget per year. His managers knew almost immediately he was ripe with ability to take that position and weren’t afraid to give him that opportunity.”

PULLING TOGETHER A UNIFIED VISION

“Trust is the one thing that changes everything, regardless of gender, regardless of age,” Wilks says. “We set priorities and we really ask everybody to contribute. We say, ‘What are the three things you can do to move the ball forward?’ We need people to think about the company holistically, to be an expert in your area, yes, but also teaching them they can contribute to all areas of the company.”

Premer agrees. “Having an aligned vision of where you’re headed is so important,” she said. Three years ago, Consumers Credit Union stopped handing out employee scorecards. “Now we are able to focus on the same outcomes, the same measurables of customer satisfaction and operations. We hire and fire based on values; that’s what we’re measuring. Now we ask, ‘Are you achieving what you need to achieve in order to help us reach our objectives?’ Our success for the last 24 years is a pretty good indication that we’re steering the ship in the right direction.”

Mansberger is on the same page. “Start with purpose. Emphasize that clarity of purpose over and over again—both individual and organizational purpose,” she said. And authentically assess how employees implement that purpose. “When you have measures on every level, from a neutral third party, the focus on purpose is not going away, it’s only getting stronger. It is imperative to put purpose at the core of how you build your company, how you attract talent. Purpose goes deeper than mission. It taps into individual drive.”

Wilks, too, wants to move beyond the traditional corporate strategies. “Mission-vision-values is a circle, and you put talent at the center,” he said. “As an organization, before you can develop a mission, you need to develop your values, your DNA, what drives you, what’s going to steer others. Start with values—things like trust, leadership, respect, and integrity. These words have meaning. And these values apply whether you’re 62 and thinking about retirement or if you’re 22 and thinking about a career. Then have fun, and feel part of something that makes you feel special.”

EMERGING LEADERS

A Q+A WITH TOMORROW'S CHANGEMAKERS

BY RICK VAN GROUW | PHOTOS HANNAH ZIEGELER, RHINO MEDIA, NASHON HOLLOWAY, AND FARI NZINGA

To further our understanding of how to best cultivate the region's talent pool, 269 MAGAZINE called upon top corporate and regional leaders to bring bright, young Southwest Michigan talent to our attention. We asked the nominees about their work habits and philosophies, what brought them to Southwest Michigan, and what makes them stay. We celebrate these emerging leaders who are pursuing excellence for their companies, communities, and more—here, in Southwest Michigan.



Fari Nzinga, Ph.D.

CURATORIAL FELLOW AT KALAMAZOO INSTITUTE OF ARTS (KIA)

Why is the work that you're doing so important? Why should people know about this?

I think what's important about museums, or what's great about them, is that they are a resource for a community and a resource that everyone feels that they share in common.

So, if you go into the KIA and you start to see all of its multiple dimensions and facets, then





Michael Williams

PARTNER AT BUSH SEYFERTH & PAIGE LLC

What specific daily steps do you take to intentionally move the firm forward?

I brought experience with banks and pharma that the firm didn't have. I try to stay engaged in those areas. It's as simple as reading the news or sending an email to someone in the pharma industry.

Also, I try to bring common courtesy to the job. [The industry] can be adversarial, but I appreciate and respect the work others do, whether it's an administrative assistant or a paralegal or an attorney.

What is one thing you know now that you wish you knew when you started your career?

Everything's going to be okay. Lawyers tend to be a high-strung group. When

you come out of law school, in particular, you have this great weight on your shoulders. You want to conquer the world and you carry a lot of worry. I've been surprised how the legal community here and elsewhere has been very supportive in general. People give you support. Things work out as long as you do good work and do right by your clients.

What TV show have you envisioned yourself a cast member of?

In a law office, I would have to say the Sam Waterson character on "Law & Order." But more than that, every season of "The Office" I would identify with the Jim [Halpert] character. Hopefully not Michael Scott!

you can really learn about whatever it is that you're curious about—whether that's regional history, art history, or something about a culture or a group of people.

When you're gathering art at the KIA, is there something about this region's story that stands out?

What's surprising for me is how internationally connected this place is, because it can seem, from the outside looking in, like it's just a small area, very rural and idyllic in a way. I'm a city girl at heart. I grew up in Boston, and I just moved here from New Orleans. So, I'm really looking forward to delving into [the region's history] and seeing how that will inform the research that I do, art collections, and also the courses that I teach at Kalamazoo College, which will use objects in the collection as anchors to punctuate the

syllabus. So, it's like, "Okay, we're gonna read about such and such topic, and we're going to take a look at something that represents that in a very physical, tangible, material way," which I think is exciting.

What do you do to constantly improve yourself?

I ask a million questions and read as much as I can. I appear so young to people older than me, they're like, "Oh, you're a Millennial. You know all about the internet, and technology and stuff." But the fact is, I'm just learning how to set Google Alerts for things, so that if there's an author that I want to follow, whose name pops up in the news, I can know about it. Technology is amazing! You know, I'm just trying to learn how to take advantage of those things, those tools that are out there, so that I can stay on top of my game.

WHAT'S SURPRISING FOR ME IS HOW INTERNATIONALLY CONNECTED THIS PLACE IS, BECAUSE IT CAN SEEM, FROM THE OUTSIDE LOOKING IN, LIKE IT'S JUST A SMALL AREA, VERY RURAL AND IDYLIC IN A WAY.

FARI NZINGA, PH.D.



Alec Durocher

EXECUTIVE CHEF OF RESTAURANTS AT GREENLEAF HOSPITALITY GROUP

What is one thing you know now that you wish you knew when you started your career?

The number of hours that I work in a week—it's definitely not a 40-hour week. You find ways to better the life-work balance, but it's a struggle.

Eventually I will get to that point. I don't think I will ever be a 40-hour person; I'm more active than that.

What excites you about the future of Southwest Michigan?

We've seen over the last couple years a restaurant scene that has grown really quickly. There are new restaurants opening up, growing faster than the population. I hope the population catches up because that's going to bring new talent to the area. I don't go out to places as much as I want to but, when I do, I want to see and experience what others are doing.

What's one place in Southwest Michigan that everyone should know about?

Palazzolo's Artisan Gelato & Sorbetto. We feature their stuff at Zazios, but they have this tiny little stand in Fennville. Honestly, it's smaller than the room we're sitting in. There are two high school kids behind the counter and a room full of freezers with their delicious gelato.



John Barry

PRESIDENT OF SCHUPAN ALUMINUM & PLASTIC SALES

How can emerging leaders get involved in making positive change happen in our region?

The last handful of years, I've been more involved on community boards and in our industry trade association. I have always tried to surround myself with people whom I admire and respect while getting involved in causes I care about. If it's a compelling story and something I'm passionate about, it has been a win-win. Associating oneself with successful people who have different experiences broadens your wealth of knowledge. I don't think I have ever been involved on a board or in a charity where I didn't feel like I received at least as much as I gave—not to mention it feels really good to help people and make a difference.

What do you want to accomplish today? In one year? In ten years?

Big picture: Ultimately, I'm trying to build a sustainable company where people enjoy what they're doing, love coming to work, and feel like they're really building something. Being a family-owned business, you tend to have a longer view of things. At Schupan, the average tenure of our employees is 10 to 12 years. There are many situations where people's children, parents, grandparents, or siblings have worked or are working here. That is really satisfying and has allowed us to build loyalty in countless ways.

What's the best conference or training you have been to and would recommend?

Our trade association offered an executive MBA-style program where the only participants were suppliers or competitors in our industry. The program occurred over the course of a year and a half and hit on all aspects of business—leadership, sales, marketing, finance, and operations. It was an invaluable experience that not only allowed for a great educational experience but also fantastic networking. Southwest Michigan First's Catalyst University has also been a tremendous educational opportunity to which our company has sent employees who have come back inspired with a different perspective than what they went in with.

I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER BEEN INVOLVED ON A BOARD OR IN A CHARITY WHERE I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE I RECEIVED AS MUCH AS I GAVE.

JOHN BARRY

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Jose Orozco

SOLUTIONS SPECIALIST AT ARMSTRONG INTERNATIONAL

Where did you go to school?

I'm originally from Colombia. I moved to Michigan about 16 years ago. I went to Western Michigan University and played for the varsity tennis team for four years while studying sales and marketing. Then, I did my MBA at Western as well.

You've been at Armstrong for six years.

What has been the best decision you have made there?

I saw the potential of growing within the company. At the beginning, I was focused on just what I studied, which was business marketing. But it was comfortable, and when I feel comfortable, the next opportunity always comes. I have been able to take those opportunities and feel uncomfortable. I like that. I'm getting comfortable with my current job. It's challenging, but I'm always striving for the next thing. So, my short-term goal is to be a project manager.

What's your vision as a solutions specialist?

My vision is to get people on the same page and working together more effectively. I want to get them to work together so we can get the project done. We really don't have project managers here. That's the short-term goal—to show the value of the position and become a project manager. My long-term goal is to be a leader in the company.

How has the company's culture helped you in your growth?

Seven years ago, I did an internship here with the marketing team. The culture made a huge impact on what I wanted to do. During those six months, I even had lunch with the CEO. That was something! Plus, I appreciate the family-oriented aspect of the culture. I have a wife and three kids, and being able to work 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with no weekends is big. Armstrong also has events for families and kids. That's important, and so is its emphasis on the Christian faith. Our core values stress "Faith in God, Family, and Job," in that order.



Nashon Holloway

MOTIVATIONAL ARTIST

What is one thing you know now that you wish you knew when you started?

Oh, gosh. That's such a good question. Pain and discomfort are designed to propel you forward. It's okay to be afraid of transitions, but when you go through those obstacles, you are going to find out who you are, and it's only going to help you contribute.

What's one of the biggest risks you've ever taken?

Saying no is tricky for me right now. It's not that I feel I need to say yes to everything, but I guess the risk is trying to maintain relationships while not being able to do everything that everybody asks of you, yet still supporting people.

If you had your own podcast or blog, what would you call it and what would it be about?

"This Is Not a Solo," because even if you're in the spotlight, it's not just your show. There's a baton that people have passed on from before you that you'll pass on after you. There are so many people in the community who you can really impact on a small scale. There's so many things you can do, including smile, that make a difference every single day. I'm thinking about relationships a whole lot because that's how I see the world. I see the world from this standpoint of harmony as a philosophy, as a way of life. I myself want to be an instrument used by God. You know, just sing my notes.

IT'S OKAY TO BE AFRAID OF TRANSITIONS,
BUT WHEN YOU GO THROUGH THOSE
OBSTACLES, YOU ARE GOING TO FIND OUT
WHO YOU ARE AND IT'S ONLY GOING TO
HELP YOU CONTRIBUTE.

NASHON HOLLOWAY



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Kyle Frailing

SENIOR PROJECT
MANAGER AT MILLER-
DAVIS COMPANY

What change would you make at work if you had the resources?

Our company has been growing and adding a lot of new people from different backgrounds and with different levels of experience. Miller-Davis has a long history, and great culture, but because of our workload and project demands, one of our challenges is that we have people immediately involved in important roles before we are able to engage them fully into our culture. People learn it along the way, but it would be ideal if we could evolve our orientation and training to get people engaged early on—a kind of boot camp for new arrivals.

How do you provide motivation to your team?

What always helped me was when somebody made the effort to spend time with me while I was learning, and then gave me the opportunity to try it on my own. That's the approach I've taken. It always helped me when somebody took the time to show me how to do things, but didn't do them for me.

IT'S ALWAYS HELPED ME WHEN SOMEBODY TOOK THE TIME TO SHOW ME HOW TO DO THINGS, BUT DIDN'T DO THEM FOR ME.

KYLE FRAILING

What is the most useful app on your phone?

Apple Music. For me, music playing in the background is a helpful thing—old school rock, classical, I don't mind country or even news radio.

Angel Arnold

PRODUCER AT RHINO MEDIA

What's the project you've worked on that you thought was most exciting?

My first year, we started working on a documentary about the craft beer industry. I got to meet the people behind the beer, and they're just an eclectic, wonderful family.

But also, my name was on the end credits, and, at 21, you're like "Oh my gosh, this is a thing." Aside from that project, I think once we started working pretty heavily with Western Michigan University, that hit a little button in me: Maybe I wasn't a super student in college, but as an alumna, I'm so supportive and want to stay in Kalamazoo. It has been a big opportunity.

How do you approach new opportunities?

Honestly, I think it's being coachable, knowing that I don't know everything. Never in my life did I think people would pay me to shoot their wedding. I walked in, and I was like, "I don't know anything, but I am so willing to just learn, and listen, and absorb whatever you have to throw at me."

What would be something that you would like to see happen in the community?

It's an easy one to answer, but a tough one to solve. Honestly, it's [building more] affordable housing. Affordable housing is a huge issue, and I think the lack of it is why there's a lower retention rate. Out of college you're not being paid the income that would be needed to live in these beautiful apartments downtown.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS A HUGE ISSUE, AND I THINK THE LACK OF IT IS WHY THERE'S A LOWER RETENTION RATE.

ANGEL ARNOLD



I FINISHED MY MBA THIS PAST DECEMBER. THAT WAS VERY REWARDING BASED ON THE TIME AND EFFORT I PUT IN TO ACHIEVE IT ON TOP OF EVERYTHING ELSE

SCOTT A. LEMONS



Scott A. Lemons

GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGER
AT HUMPHREY PRODUCTS

How are you leaning on your mentors? How are you setting yourself up to be a mentor?

My boss, Dave Maurer, has really helped me realize that I can do this stuff and has empowered me to go do it. Dave has taught me a lot about being a good leader in the community, a good steward. And he has taught me how to navigate my business acumen.

What achievements—personal or professional—are you most proud of?

I finished my MBA this past December. That was very rewarding based on the time and effort I put in to achieve it on top of everything else.

What's the best book you've read this year?

"When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing" by Daniel Pink. I've actually changed my habits because of that book. He talks about the cycle of the day for different people and when they're at their peak. He talks about taking a nap, the length of it—30 minutes, no more. I wasn't a nap taker, but I've done that.



Sheila M. Strong

SENIOR VP OF COMPLIANCE
AND GENERAL COUNSEL AT
AMERIFIRST HOME MORTGAGE

Are you doing what you love and getting better at it? How does job satisfaction contribute to success?

Absolutely. I'm getting better every day. I'm constantly inspired by others in the industry and within my organization, different mentors and role models.

What's important is that I live a life that falls completely in line with my beliefs, my morals, my character.

My job allows me to be who I am and promotes my natural talents, yet challenges me in other areas. I have worked for other companies, but I'm most happy in this position because it gives me challenges to overcome while continually learning.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THAT I LIVE A LIFE THAT FALLS COMPLETELY IN LINE WITH MY BELIEFS, MY MORALS, MY CHARACTER.

SHEILA M. STRONG



Toni Daniels

BUSINESS OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
OF KALAMAZOO WINGS

What are some of the day-to-day things you do to take your team to the next level?

I have six leadership pillars. The sixth one, which is most important, is to have fun and laugh. That's how I take my team to the next level. I've worked in jobs where I have to be two different versions of myself, and I don't really thrive in that environment. I just want to be my authentic self, and I want my team to be the same way.

What do you do to keep your team motivated?

One aspect is clear communication. We need to know what our goals are, what our targets are, and how we're getting there. Recognition is another big piece. We do that weekly in our huddles on Fridays. I also take the team on what I call "field trips" in the hockey world. We'll go visit other hockey franchises in

I JUST WANT TO BE MY AUTHENTIC SELF, AND I WANT MY TEAM TO BE THE SAME WAY.

TONI DANIELS

What is the biggest risk you've ever taken?

I would say moving on my own to Southwest Michigan without ever having visited. I picked Western Michigan University without seeing it. Somebody who graduated from Western came to my school, and I found her very inspiring about the community as a whole. Based on her experience, I made my decision to move here. I packed everything up, and the first time I was here was at freshman orientation. And I'm still here.

What's something hidden in your desk or briefcase that you can't live without?

I cannot live without Yup Brands' B-Up Protein Bars—sugar cookie flavor. I've called my daughter "Sugar Cookie" since she was very little. I have these at home, in my purse, everywhere I go.

other states and countries. We were in Toronto this year, and I took them to the Hockey Hall of Fame. So, we do neat, fun things like that. We travel together. We do professional development courses. We invest financially in our team members so that they can learn and grow.

What is the biggest risk you've ever taken that paid off?

When I left banking, it was a career I had been in for 13 years. It was my first major career change, and I really just trusted my gut on it because I didn't know much about what I was embarking on. That was a huge risk. I chose to leave because the way that I operate didn't match the culture, and I left without knowing what was next. Because of the relationships I have in the community, I was able to land a job. I made less money and had no clue what I was doing, but it ended up being the best thing that ever happened to me. I could've sat in banking for the rest of my career, but I'm glad I didn't.

I HAVE A WIFE AND TWO KIDS. 6:00 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M. IS MY FAMILY TIME.

JESSE YOUNG

Jesse Young

SHAREHOLDER AT KREIS, ENDERLE, HUDGINS & BORSOS P.C.

What do you find most challenging about your schedule?

The challenge as a litigator is that you always have court deadlines. Trying to fit new clients or even an existing client into your schedule can be hard.

You have deadlines to meet, trying to service all these other clients. It's not like any other profession.

What are your tips for life/work balance?

I try to leave the office in time for dinner every night with my family; I have a wife and two young kids. I'm going to a baseball game tonight. My family time is 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

What's one hidden gem in Southwest Michigan?

Four Roses in Plainwell.



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DIGGING FOR TREASURE

GETMAN CORPORATION REIGNS AS KING OF UNDERGROUND MINING EQUIPMENT

BY HEATHER BAKER PHOTOS HANNAH ZIEGLER AND GETMAN CORPORATION

COMPANY

Getman Corporation

HISTORY

Getman Brothers Construction Company entered the equipment business following World War II with a small motorized wheelbarrow. Called the Scoot-Crete, it was used to transport concrete in municipal construction projects ranging from parking ramps to roadwork. In 1954, a Colorado uranium miner modified one for use in his underground trackless mine, replacing the mule-drawn cart system popular at the time. This milestone serves as the official start of Getman's mining equipment business.

With the Scoot-Crete concept proving to be a simple and effective solution in mining, the company began developing various new adaptations of the Scoot-Crete to support underground mining. For the past six decades, Getman has refined and added to its product line to meet the demand of mining customers around the world and enjoyed many "firsts" along the way, like a rubber-tired drill jumbo carrier and explosives charger in the early 1960s and a mechanical scaler in the 1970s.

WHAT DRIVES GETMAN

Throughout its history, Getman has developed products that replace dangerous manual activities (like manual scaling or removing loose rock), supplant methods that are inherently unsafe (like using loaders as high-capacity scissor lifts), or allow miners to work at a distance from a dangerous area (like the water cannon). "We are very aware that, at any given time somewhere in the world, a miner is using one of our trucks in a dangerous environment. Our mission is 'We Help Miners Work Safe,'" says Erik VanAllen, president and CEO.

THE MINING CYCLE

International demand for precious and industrial metals, minerals, and gemstones drives the mining industry. When the economy picks up or supply runs low, businesses and financiers demand commodities like diamonds, silver, gold, copper, zinc, and potash for production and investment. New mines come on until the demand is satisfied. These are the times when orders for Getman equipment ramp up.

FILLING ORDERS

Getman supports the entire mining cycle, from products that load explosives and secure the ground after the earth has been detonated and cleaned out to logistics and maintenance equipment that move people and materials around the mine. It also makes equipment to maintain the larger mining fleet, such as flat decks to move material and fuel or lube trucks that function as mobile oil stations. Infrastructure, development, and equipment to support underground workers who need water, ventilation, and electricity is also available in the form of scissor lifts, grappling holders, and more. Additionally, Getman has ground control products to secure rock, clean the rock face, spray shotcrete for stability, and grade the road so it does not heave.

And if they don't make it yet, they will: Getman will manufacture a custom product to specifications for safe applications.

YOU CAN'T RUSH PERFECTION

It can take 75 to 90 days to produce a flat deck truck and up to 120 to 150 days for a more complicated piece of equipment.

THE WHEELS GO ROUND AND ROUND

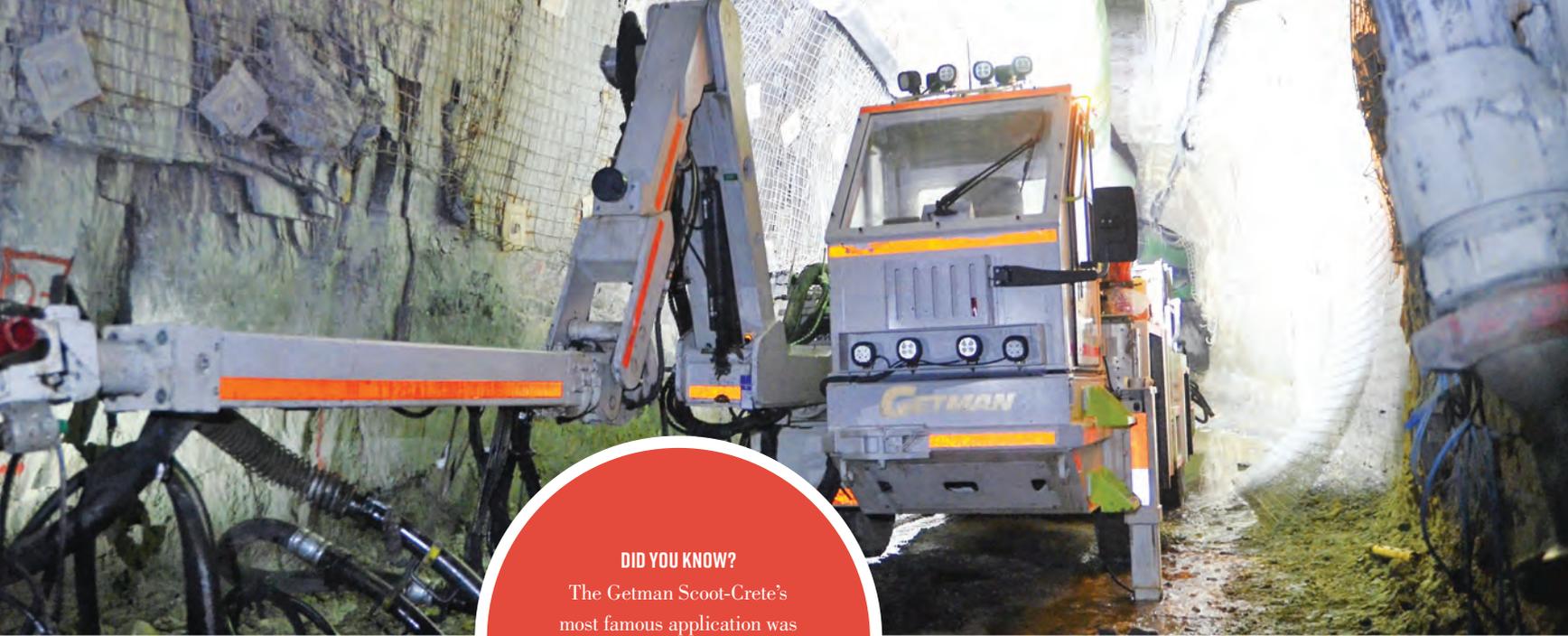
Upon first inspection, Getman's product looks very straightforward: a rubber-tired, diesel-driven truck. But the adverse working conditions and demand for complex mechanics to safely perform and support difficult human tasks result in a product more complicated than its appearance. All products must meet international health and safety standards as well as the regulations and requirements of individual countries and customers.

"Most of our competitors are priced lower than us but their products last maybe five years, seven years. Our trucks typically last several years longer, and, in some cases, up to 20 years or a multiple of competitive lifetimes," says VanAllen.

DEEP UNDERGROUND

Getman products can be found in world-class mining operations on six continents. Its largest installations are in Indonesia, Mexico, the U.S., and Southern Africa. The closest product in action is located at a copper mine in the upper peninsula of Michigan.





DID YOU KNOW?
The Getman Scoot-Crete's most famous application was to convey all concrete to the construction site of the Mackinac Bridge from 1954 to 1957.



REGIONAL LOCATIONS

Headquartered in Bangor with a second manufacturing facility in Comstock Charter Township

EXECUTIVE

Erik VanAllen, President & CEO

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

170

WHO WORKS THERE

Welder fabricators, machinists, mechanics/production technicians; engineers and designers; field service technicians; individuals supporting warehousing, customer service, product management, sales, purchasing, human resources, IT, and accounting.

INTERESTED IN A CAREER?

Getman is currently seeking technical tradespeople, engineers, and those who have the skills to support purchasing and warehousing. More information is available at getman.com/company/careers2.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT GETMAN.COM

COOKING UP CREATIVITY

A Q+A WITH LEIF NORLAND

BY JAKE FREDERICKS
PHOTOS BY HANNAH ZIEGELER

GLOBAL DESIGN DIRECTOR
FOR COOKING AT
WHIRLPOOL CORPORATION

The problem with being a designer is that when you finish a project, it becomes a part of the past. Afterward, you know what the product could be, and you know where you want to go next.

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HOW DO YOU APPROACH DESIGN FROM YOUR POSITION AT WHIRLPOOL?

Whirlpool represents many brands around the world, including Maytag, Jenn-Air, Amana, and KitchenAid, just to name a few. I head up the design of all of Whirlpool's cooking products globally.

My team and I spend a lot of time on what we call "assisted cooking." As designers, our mantra is to help our consumers deliver more consistent results to the table. Imagine the ability to create the perfect custard, for example. When you make a custard, you have to use a wooden spoon, and, as you stir, you have to watch how the bubbles cling to the spoon when you wipe them off. That's how you tell a custard is done—it's not easy. Our goal is to create solutions that empower our consumers to deliver that chef-level result every time. We want you to benefit from a chef's 30 years of experience in just two minutes.

WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

I thoroughly enjoy learning about cultures through their cuisine. When Whirlpool went global, I wanted to head the cooking division because, to me, the kitchen is the central hub of the household, and the chef is the hero of the kitchen. Think about the KitchenAid stand mixer; when that mixer gets switched on, you know you're not going to be eating something bland like broccoli—there is usually a sweet reward.

WHAT DOES A TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

I never know where the day is going to go. Working globally, an opportunity or a problem could pop up at any time, even overnight while I'm asleep. In the morning, after about four cups of espresso, I video-call my team globally. First, I take a look at what has happened overnight in Asia to see if there are any issues. By then, Europe's been online for several hours, so I usually focus there next. Later, I sit with my team and try to come up with new ideas. When we come up with a new product, we hand-carve models out of Styrofoam and then 3D print precise models. We even do our own testing and validation in on-site usability labs. Design is all about failing fast and refining ideas to deliver maximum quality, durability, and usability.



HOW DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION FOR NEW PRODUCTS?

My team and I approach design from a connoisseur's perspective. If someone on my team is working on a coffee maker, I want them to know everything there is to know about coffee. They have to know the brewing process, the boiling temperature, and how it is best enjoyed. So, to get new ideas, we conduct observational research in the homes of actual customers. Understanding the context of the kitchen is crucial, especially when it comes to other cultures. We want to design our products so that you feel like they're a part of your home.

When we come up with a new product, we hand-carve models out of Styrofoam and then 3D print precise models. We even do our own testing and validation in on-site usability labs.

WHICH PAST PROJECT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

I used to head the design team for our KitchenAid brand. I would say that the brand is most known for the iconic stand mixer. It is a premium product that sells all around the world. When people buy it, they're really buying a little piece of America. But the most striking thing about the mixer is its distinctive Streamline Moderne design style. You know right away that it's a KitchenAid.

So, when I got the job to head that design studio, the first thing I did was create a toaster in the same style as the blender. However, the problem with being a designer is that when you finish a project, it becomes a part of the past. Afterward, you know what the product could be, and you know where you want to go next. In the mind of a designer, by the time you're done with an idea, it's already dated.

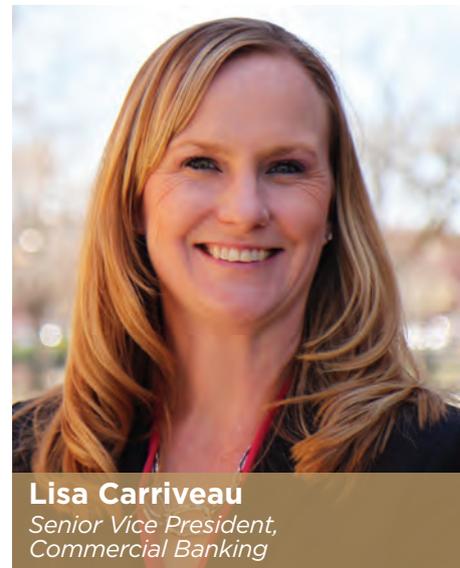
HOW DO YOU KEEP YOUR CREATIVITY SHARP?

Because of the diversity of my discipline, I need to stay sharp in multiple areas. To keep up my mechanical aptitude, I fix and repair motorcycles in my spare time. Likewise, trying out new recipes keeps me in the game of cooking. I love the artistry that can happen in the kitchen.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO AN ASPIRING DESIGNER?

Always seek to understand and know your audience above all else. But first, you need to master your craft at the highest level. You have to build muscle memory through repetition. During the first five years out of college, you have to practice that all day, every day. At the beginning of your career, it's all about working hard, not working smart. Through working hard, you understand how to work smarter. Think of it like saving for your retirement; if you start early, the payoff will be big, but if you start late, you will have to catch up eventually.

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ON PAGE

CONTINUING EVOLUTION SPURS GROWTH AND NEW JOBS AT XL MACHINE

BY CATHY KNAPP PHOTO COURTESY OF XL MACHINE

ON HIGHWAY M-60, WHERE IT WINDS PAST SCENIC LAKES AND LUSH FARMLAND IN ST. JOSEPH COUNTY, SITS A DYNAMIC MANUFACTURER OF HIGH-PROFILE PARTS FOR THE AUTOMOTIVE, MARINE, AGRICULTURAL, ENTERTAINMENT, AND INDUSTRIAL SECTORS.

Revved-up auto enthusiasts readily seek out its products such as covers for the superchargers on General Motors' Corvette, Camaro, and Cadillac supercars, and superchargers for Roush Racing that power the Ford Mustang and Raptor.

Established in 1976, XL Machine Company Inc. has quietly created a reputation for itself by being able to take a client's unicorn idea and transform it into a finished prototype ready to be produced in volume. The company has long since engineered a product portfolio containing a vast array of machined components and has tripled its sales and employee count. It is getting ready to grow again.

"We founded the business on building prototypes," General Manager Chris Orłowski said. "Then, we added production contract work to create more stability and went from one to three shifts in four weeks."

A division of the Burke Porter Group since 2012, XL Machine keeps pace with technology innovations such as additive manufacturing. "We utilize a company in Munich, Germany, for 3D printing of parts that go into a very high-profile vehicle," Orłowski said.

Under Orłowski's leadership, the company has established an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, become International Automotive Task Force (IATF) 16949 certified, and added management positions in quality, process, purchasing, production, and materials. Orłowski recognizes that the team assembled by XL Machine is responsible for the company's growth.

Our management team is all mentors and has identified individuals to fill the role of internal master trainers. A training matrix records what everyone has been trained on and where our gaps are.

CHRIS ORŁOWSKI | GENERAL MANAGER

The team meets regularly to brainstorm and debate new ideas. Orłowski's philosophy is to place employees in positions that maximize passions and talents. The company looks for

individuals with engineering and machinist skill sets and utilizes apprenticeship and educational co-op programs. It believes in grooming and developing its team and investing heavily in training.

This summer, XL Machine will enlarge its 83,000-square-foot footprint in Three Rivers by breaking ground on a 30,000-square-foot expansion. Recruitment has begun for 20 new employees with mechanical aptitude, which will bring the team to over 110.

"Our biggest challenge with growth is hiring people at the right time and being able to train fast enough," Orłowski explains. "Our management team is all mentors and has identified individuals to fill the role of internal master trainers. A training matrix records what everyone has been trained on and where our gaps are."

KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE A CONTRIBUTING MEMBER OF AN INNOVATIVE AND GROWING COMPANY? IF SO, GO TO

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CODY ALLKINS
WMU and KVCC Graduate
Bachelor of Business



FUTURE LEADER

I started working for The OnStaff Group in October 1998 part-time performing general office duties, answering phones, filing, etc. After graduating from Western Michigan University, I decided to continue my career with OnStaff. My current role at The OnStaff Group is VP of Finance and Treasurer. I love what I do because every day is different and there are always new challenges in the world of accounting and finance.

I currently sit on the Board of Directors for Ministry with Community and Big Brothers Big Sisters. I am also on the EFE - BMA Advisory Board for KRESA.

I have known my husband, Brandon, since 4th grade. We have been married for over 5 years and have two kids, Murry and Emmery.

I love Kalamazoo because it's the best of both worlds - you get the excitement of the city when you're downtown, but also have the quiet comforts of the country life just a few miles away. It's a great place to work and raise a family!



OUTSIDE THE BOX

WITH SARAH MELDRUM

BY JAKE FREDERICKS | PHOTO HANNAH ZIEGELER

EDUCATION

Western Michigan University (WMU)
Graphic and Printing Science, BBS '16

EMPLOYMENT

Material Management Analyst,
Graphic Packaging International

HOMETOWN

Sylvan Lake, Michigan

ON THE JOB

Graphic Packaging International is one of the world's largest manufacturers of folding cartons. A carton could be a cereal box, a tissue box, or any of the other packaging you see in supermarkets. We produce around 3.5 billion cartons a year, so chances are you have recently bought something that came off our line. I'm responsible for coordinating all of our end-process materials. This location is our highest outputting plant in North America; we are a fast-paced 24/7 facility, so there's a lot to manage.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

I do inventory in the morning to make sure that we have enough materials [to support production] for the day. I have 130 different materials to account for, everything from corrugated cardboard to pallets to film. Because this is such a dynamic environment, I have to be ready for any adjustments or changes. I also review and update our packing specs to ensure that we pack and send out everything correctly, either to the customer directly or a co-packer.

FORMING A CAREER

When I was at Western, I worked on the production floor at Graphic Packaging for a summer. During that time, I kept asking about an internship until I was finally able to get one. I worked throughout school and was an intern for about three years before they hired me at full time. I don't think I could have gotten where I am today any other way. You don't learn the on-the-job stuff in school; you have to put in the effort and pick things up along the way.

WORKING AND GROWING

The mentorship program here has been a great help. We are each paired with an upper management mentor who meets with us on a weekly basis. Our production manager, Joe, and I meet to talk about what I'm working on. We also go into detail about how the company operates. That way, I have a greater understanding of the big picture, how different departments work, and how it all affects the company as a whole. Along with the additional leadership training they have here, the mentorship will really help my career.

HERE TO STAY

My fiancé and I bought a house in Richland. We have two dogs and live on about an acre of land. I also have a horse out in Hickory Corners. I like to horseback ride and hang out at the farm, which is something that I could not do on the east side of the state where I grew up. I wouldn't dream of moving back. It's just more laid back here—even driving down the road is less stressful.

My classwork at WMU definitely prepared me for this internship. In class, I learned the computer design programs and technical vocabulary that I now use every day.

LEARNING BY DESIGN

LUIS RUIZ PUTS HIS CLASSWORK TO WORK AT FABRI-KAL

BY JAKE FREDERICKS | PHOTO HANNAH ZIEGELER



MEET LUIS

HOMETOWN

Chicago, Illinois

EDUCATION

Western Michigan University (WMU)
Engineering Technology Major; Mathematics Minor
Expected Graduation: Spring 2020

POSITION

Product Design Intern at Fabri-Kal Corporation

BECOMING A PART OF THE TEAM

Because Fabri-Kal is one of the nation's largest providers of food service packaging materials, our engineers are working on many projects at the same time. I assist the design engineers when they need help or a fresher set of eyes.

A lot of people ask me [to describe] the difference between a design engineer and a mechanical engineer. I use the way one of my professors described it. Mechanical engineers use incredibly in-depth equations. If you gave their plans to a machinist, the machinist would go crazy. So, the job of a design engineer is to take these technical designs, account for allowances of error, and make them understandable, manufacturable, and aesthetically pleasing.

TRIAL AND ERROR

One of the two projects that I have been assigned requires me to record the measurements of 3D printing shrinks of generic parts and shapes. Then, I take the average of those measurements and accommodate for that shrink rate. Hopefully, I'll get that part closer and closer to its intended specifications.

My second assignment is a common tolerance project. Fabri-Kal has multiple families of products, and because they are all made of different materials, each has a different common tolerance, or the range of acceptable error. Essentially, I am finding the "golden rule" of standard error that is acceptable for our different cups and lids.

GUIDANCE AND GROWTH

My mentor, Mike Hanson, meets with me almost every day to give feedback and updates on the progress of my projects. When something goes wrong on the production line, he takes me out there so I can see where the issue lies and how I could have designed the mold better to prevent the error.

EDUCATION IN ACTION

My classwork at WMU definitely prepared me for this internship. In class, I learned the computer design programs and technical vocabulary that

I now use every day. So, I started with a knowledge of plastics and the thermoforming process that Fabri-Kal uses to make its products. I am excited to continue to put my knowledge into practice outside the classroom and get some hands-on experience.

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HOW ABOUT THESE APPLES?



IF YOU SEEK TASTY CIDER, JUST SHAKE A MICHIGAN APPLE TREE

BY CHARLOTTE YOUNG | PHOTOS COURTESY OF VANDER MILL

AS THE LAST FEW WEEKS OF SUMMER PASS BY, IT'S TIME TO START THINKING OF COZIER THOUGHTS AND CRUNCHING LEAVES.

This means trips to the apple orchard, hayrides, donuts, and apple cider for many Michiganders. Although apple orchards are commonly thought of as simply a fall tourist destination, they have more to offer the state throughout the year than you might think. Regional cideries, like West Michigan's Vander Mill, depend on local orchards to supply them with large quantities of quality fruit for year-round cider production.

COUNTING APPLES

Michigan's climate and geography provide great conditions for hard-working apple growers to produce quality, flavorful fruit. The state, known worldwide for its tasty apples, ranks third in apple production in the U.S., with more than one billion pounds of apples harvested in 2016. There are more than 11.3 million apple trees in commercial production across the state, covering 35,500 acres on 825 family-run farms, including orchards right here in West Michigan. Apples generate almost \$293.5 million in gross

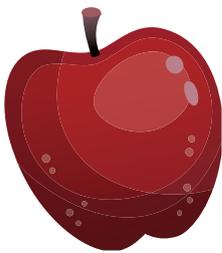
income, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research.

While Michigan is third in quantity, many believe the flavor of Michigan-grown apples to be the best in the world. Sunshine provides the energy trees need to produce flavorful, sweet fruit. Moderate night temperatures regulate fruit growth, and the right balance of moisture helps trees yield good-sized apples. Documented by Michigan Apple News in "Nothing Compares to Michigan Apples," the Fruit Ridge is "the area from Grand Rapids to Hart along the shores of Lake Michigan with ideal nutrient-rich soil in which apple trees thrive."

There are more than 11.3 million apple trees in commercial production across the state, covering 35,500 acres on 825 family-run farms, including orchards right here in West Michigan.

The rise in popularity of craft beverages in the last 20 years has fueled a cultural and industrial revolution within the beverage industry. The current demand for diverse and locally-produced beverages has resulted in the reemergence of hard cider as an alternative to beer and wine. The Michigan apple industry's rich history and established infrastructure positions it to capitalize on the recent groundswell of interest in hard cider.

In 2015, the hard cider industry in the U.S. generated more than \$430 million in sales, and it now represents one of the fastest-growing sectors within the craft beverage industry. This growth is reflected by the increase in hard cider drinkers, from 6.8 million in 2008 to 24.5 million in 2016. According to "Apple Cultivars for Production of Hard Cider in Michigan" in Michigan State University's Fall



2017 Extension Bulletin, Michigan supports the second-largest number of cider producers nationwide. It sits just behind New York and in a prime position to dominate the national cider scene.

AN APPLE A DAY

Vander Mill takes full advantage of its location within the Fruit Ridge. Paul and Amanda Vander Heide started the cidery in 2006. Their vision wasn't elaborate: a small-town cidery where people could feel at home. What started as a small and regionally-distributed product, the Vander Mill hard cider brand quickly gained a strong customer base, causing a production facility expansion in 2012. Greater regional distribution demanded further growth, and a new production facility and tap room was opened in Grand Rapids in 2016. Today, Vander Mill distributes to Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Vander Mill presses only the best Michigan apples for its ciders. It works with Dietrich Orchards, a family apple farm located in Conklin. Dietrich is run by fourth-generation apple farmers, and produces some of the best fruit in the country. Vander Mill cider is never pasteurized and does not have added preservatives. The cidery offers packaged

Paul Vander Heide and Vander Mill have helped put Michigan cider on the map.

and draft cider with a more recent focus on 12-ounce cans, a hugely popular package for craft cider and beer alike. Clocking in at a sessionable 4.3 percent alcohol by volume, one of its newest brands, Vandy Session Cider, has been a great source of pride and success for the company. In fact, the cidery's website claims that "Vandy is the answer to the old adage of 'an apple a day.' It's a cider that blends the crisp and clean flavor of fermented apples with the fresh harvest of those just pressed."



MICHIGAN CIDER IS ON THE MAP

Vander Mill is involved in the cider scene on a national level as well. In February 2018, the U.S. Association of Cider Makers (USACM) elected Paul Vander Heide as its president. The USACM is an organization of cider and perry producers with a mission to grow a diverse and successful national cider industry. It provides valuable information, resources, and services to its members and advocates on their behalf. On the USACM board since February 2016, Paul has served as committee chair for USACM's Certified Cider Professional program, a cider credentials program similar to "cicerone" for beer. Vander Heide also sits on the boards of the Michigan Cider Association and the Cider Institute of North America.

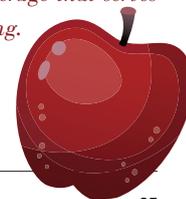


"My goal as board president is to listen to our members and my fellow directors," said Vander Heide. "We are a big tent organization, so hearing many diverse viewpoints on how USACM can help grow cider's market share will only help us."

Clocking in at a sessionable 4.3 percent alcohol by volume, one of its newest brands, Vandy Session Cider, has been a great source of pride and success for the company.

Paul Vander Heide and Vander Mill have helped put Michigan cider on the map. With the growing Grand Rapids-based hard cider producer making more than 250,000 gallons a year, and with further growth planned in its future, cider lovers can look forward to a renewed focus on education offered to Vander Mill's service professionals, buyers at beer bars, bartenders, and retail staff under Paul's leadership at USACM. Look for Vander Mill ciders available statewide in Michigan, perfect for the coming fall months and all year.

Charlotte Young is Creative & PR Manager at Imperial Beverage, a long-standing member of the Michigan beverage distribution community. Established in 1933 after the repeal of Prohibition and purchased by Kalamazoo's Cekola family in 1984, Imperial has grown from a one-county beer distributor to a Top 10 statewide beer, wine, and spirits wholesaler. With 330 employees and three locations in Kalamazoo, Livonia, and Traverse City, Imperial provides statewide coverage that serves every Michigan county, every week, all year long.



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JIM RITSEMA

CITY MANAGER OF THE CITY OF KALAMAZOO

JON RUMOHR

SENIOR MECHANICAL ENGINEER AT TOWERPINKSTER

WHAT IS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT ROLE AS A LEADER?

JIM RITSEMA: A leader needs to establish a vision for the organization and then get out of the way to let others do their job to achieve that vision. Along the way, they have to stay available for coaching and mentoring.

JON RUMOHR: The most important role I have as a leader is to be a facilitator for my team, making sure that they have the resources necessary to be successful. Those resources might be physical or mental—a leader has to provide both.

If you're changing the culture or even a vision, it's not going to happen overnight.

JIM RITSEMA

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE THAT YOU SEE FACING LEADERS TODAY?

JIM: Managing expectations. We live in a time where everyone gets everything they want right away from the internet. Some of the things we do in leadership don't happen right away. If you're changing the culture or even a vision, it's not going to happen overnight.

JON: The biggest challenge today is time. Everyone has some form of technology on them wherever they go. Whether it's

from your iPhone or iWatch, you're always getting a media blast. It makes it a constant challenge to manage time efficiently and put people first.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE GOING INTO A LEADERSHIP POSITION FOR THE FIRST TIME?

JIM: Simple: stay true to yourself, speak the truth, and do what you know is right.

JON: Be genuine, be kind, be who you are, and be natural. Don't be someone that you're not just because you're in a leadership role and think you need to act a certain way. People pick up on that very quickly.

WHAT IS THE KEY TO DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS?

JIM: The focus should be on soft skills, like emotional intelligence with empathy, communication and listening, and critical thinking. The basics of doing a job can be taught, but the soft skills come from mindful experience.

JON: Young people are getting leadership experience in college, whether as a leader in their hall or on a sports team. So, being able to identify and mentor young people early is the most essential part of the process.

Don't be someone that you're not just because you're in a leadership role and think you need to act a certain way. People pick up on that very quickly.

JON RUMOHR

WHAT RESOURCE HAS HELPED YOU BECOME A BETTER LEADER?

JIM: Executive coaching. My coach is someone who I can bounce ideas and concerns off of in real time. You can't beat getting feedback from an expert.

JON: My mentors have been my best resource. There are countless people that I could mention throughout the Kalamazoo area who have shaped me as a leader, going back to my time in college at Western Michigan University (WMU).

My daughter is two and a half, and she's into everything. My wife and I joke that we need to keep a good pair of running shoes around the house because we can't keep up with her.

JON RUMOHR

WHAT RENEWS YOU?

JIM: Just getting away and unplugging from the day-to-day stuff helps me relax and recharge my batteries. Spending time with family and friends makes all the difference.

JON: My family renews me. My daughter is two and a half, and she's into everything. My wife and I joke that we need to keep a good pair of running shoes around the house because we can't keep up with her. I also enjoy working in my wood shop, designing projects from scratch and watching them come together.

IF YOU WERE GUARANTEED SUCCESS IN ANY FIELD, WHAT WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO DO?

JIM: I would be a singer-songwriter. I like listening to alternative music; my favorite band is the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

JON: I would be in music in one way, shape, or form. I started out at WMU's school of vocal music with a vocal scholarship. I was really into performing for a while. Time doesn't allow me to do that anymore.

WHAT IS ONE APP THAT YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT?

JIM: Honestly, Facebook. It's miraculous to be able to connect with family and friends that I otherwise wouldn't be able to on a regular basis.

JON: There are about three to four apps that I use daily. My calendar app is number one. My wife and I keep our calendars shared—that helps to make sure that family is our top priority. Noteshelf is my other go-to app. It's a digital notebook for each project and each group that I'm a part of so I can keep tasks in running order and take notes from meetings.

The basics of doing a job can be taught, but the soft skills come from mindful experience.

JIM RITSEMA

WHAT DOES YOUR IDEAL LABOR DAY WEEKEND LOOK LIKE?

JIM: Camping is a real joy with family and friends. If we can get away for a long weekend somewhere near Lake Michigan, that would be ideal.

JON: We usually spend Labor Day at home and go boating on Gull Lake. For vacation, our favorite spot would be the Sleeping Bear Dunes to do some camping along the Leelanau Peninsula.



WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD, WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BECOME WHEN YOU GREW UP?

As a very young child, I wanted to be a bus driver. That quickly morphed into wanting to be an architect because I loved to draw houses. That stayed with me throughout most of the elementary school and high school years. I suppose I am not too far off from that dream today, working for an architectural company.

JON RUMOHR

I wanted to be a meteorologist. I had a fascination with weather. I still do, but I figured I could love weather without it being my profession.

JIM RITSEMA



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WHEN CONFLICT STRIKES AT THE OFFICE

FIVE STEPS TO GET YOU OUT FROM HIDING UNDER YOUR DESK

BY SARAH MANSBERGER | PHOTO ZOFF-PHOTO (ISTOCK)

WHEN YOU THINK OF CONFLICT AT WORK, WHAT COMES TO MIND?

For most of us, a laundry list of emotionally charged attributes and descriptors: tension, stress, negativity, and drama, to name just a few. The Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) highlights the threats to employee performance, attendance, and loyalty that unresolved and poorly-managed conflict can create. At its worst, SHRM warns of dramatic consequences: high rates of employee turnover and even litigation.

With the potential for serious negative consequences stemming from conflict in the workplace, and the socialized assumption that conflict is bad, it's little wonder we crave its opposite on the job: a sense of peace. But what if conflict and peace aren't opposites, but instead intertwined?

Consider this perspective: "Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the ability to cope with it." Attributed to Mahatma Gandhi, these words flip the script from conflict avoidance to a mandate to engage effectively in conflict situations. Healthy, strategic approaches to navigating and resolving conflict can transform challenging working relationships and equip people to "be the water, not the gasoline," as a wise colleague of mine used to say, when tensions flare.

With the potential for serious negative consequences stemming from conflict in the workplace, [...] it's little wonder we crave its opposite on the job: a sense of peace.

So, what's the recipe for peace on the job? Follow these five steps to increase the likelihood that you'll "show up" in conflict in ways you'll be proud of later and work toward resolution in the process:

1. PUSH PAUSE.

Take a step back—maybe literally. Turn down the heat on simmering emotions and remind yourself that peace is possible by reciting a calming phrase, taking a deep breath, and telling yourself that you have a choice in how you respond.

Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the ability to cope with it.

2. EXPLORE THE ROOT CAUSE

Put your rational self in the driver's seat by taking an analytical approach to the situation. What is the root cause of the conflict? We interpret many conflicts as relational in nature, when in fact the true crux is often something quite different. Think through a journalistic rubric (who, what, why, when, where, how) to explore what is at the center of it all. Is it a "who" problem? Ask: "Who decides, who is accountable, or who has a voice?" Is it a "what" problem? Probe: "What needs to be done, or what resources do we have at our disposal?" Think through these questions mentally or seek out another person who can offer perspective on the situation.

3. ARM YOURSELF WITH EMPATHY

This step is the most challenging—and the most critical. Take part in perspective-taking. Look at the situation through the other

person's lens. What is at stake for them? What might they be thinking or feeling? What do they stand to gain or lose in the interaction?

4. CHOOSE YOUR DESIRED OUTCOME

Your destination determines your path. What do you want to accomplish in the interaction? Who do you want to be in the process? What do you want to be known for? What do you want for the other person? How do you want the other person to feel? What do you want for the relationship? How would you behave if you really wanted a specific result? Make a plan and choose how you will participate.

5. ENGAGE IN RESOLUTION

Work your plan so the conflict doesn't work you. Now that you're properly armed, don't dodge conflict—face it head-on.



Sarah Mansberger is a partner at Southwest Michigan First tasked with curriculum development behind leadership programs like Managing From the Middle, Catalytic Cultures, First 50, and Leadership Kalamazoo. Learn more at catalystuniversity.me/programs.

How Did I Get Here?

KIT SNYDER

PRESIDENT AND CEO,
CONSUMERS CREDIT UNION

BY JAKE FREDERICKS
PHOTO HANNAH ZIEGELER

1956 | BORN IN COLDWATER, MI

I have lived my entire life in Michigan. I was raised on a 40-acre farm outside Coldwater. Every evening, my family would sit together at our dining room table, and everything we ate for dinner came from the farm. We grew everything and stored it in our fruit cellar. The farm's main purpose, however, was to raise horses. Growing up, I fell off a horse before I fell off a bike. We would often go to horse shows to train these animals so they would be friendly enough to sell to families. When one was sold, we would get another and start over; we had about one dozen horses at any given time.

1974 | GRADUATED COLDWATER HIGH SCHOOL

When I was at Coldwater High School, I was on the football team, wrestled, and played as many sports as I could. Neither of my parents went to high school when they were young, so when I approached graduation, I didn't have much of a career plan. That is, until my senior year, when I befriended a banker. He was a terrific role model for me, and I quickly decided that I would like to have a job like his someday.



1978 | ATTENDED WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

After I found my calling, I enrolled at Western Michigan University. I realized that if I were serious about becoming a banker, I would have to focus and study. During my freshman year, I joined a group of older guys who were very serious about academics. Looking back, much of who I have become has had a lot to do with whom I chose to associate. It's amazing how much impact someone can have on your life's direction.

When I suggested to my wife that I put my resume out nationally, her face saddened. She said, “Kit, do we really want to leave family, leave our families?” To me, family truly is most important, so we decided to stay here.

1976 | NATIONAL BANK EXAMINER WITH U.S. TREASURY DEPARTMENT

One day when I was at Western, I spoke to one of my finance professors about my need to find a job. When he suggested I apply for a job opening at the U.S. Treasury Department, I thought he was crazy. I didn't even know what they did. He said, “Well, do you know what the Federal Reserve is? How about you look that up.” So, I spent several days reading in the library on campus before I applied for the position. Somehow, they picked me over all the other candidates. To be able to get the national bank examiner position at 19 for two six-month internships set the stage for my future. In some ways, it was a lot for me to have so much responsibility at such a young age, but I loved it.

1977 | WORKED LENDING AND COLLECTIONS AT MICHIGAN NATIONAL BANK

I went to work for Michigan National Bank in December of 1977. I worked there for three years in the lending and collections department. Early in my career, I had to learn what I could by going to every meeting and trying to gather every scrap of information.

1980 | ASSISTANT MANAGER AT AUTO WORKERS CREDIT UNION

Those skills helped me get hired by Auto Workers Credit Union. I served as assistant manager, the number two in the office, at the ripe age of 24. Soon, I found that I had talent and fondness for strategic planning and dove into that headfirst.

1984-PRESENT | PRESIDENT AND CEO OF CONSUMERS CREDIT UNION

Three years later, Consumers Credit Union hired me to be their president and CEO. I was 27 years old. That was an incredibly pivotal year in my life. In January of 1984, I got the job as

president and CEO, met my wife, and bought my first house—all in the same month.

Before I began, Consumers Credit Union served about 2,500 members but was looking to expand its charter. The organization started when 49 employees, who worked at Consumers Power Company, voted to start a credit union. Back in the '50s and '60s, the board members

encouraged the employees of Consumers Power Company to increase their payroll deduction just so they could have enough money to make loans. That shows why credit unions exist: real people helping real people. They hired me to take that vision and bring it to as many people as possible. Today, we have over 100,000 members and 19 locations. And we are overjoyed to have unveiled a state-of-the-art headquarters just last year.

Initially, my plan with the board of directors was to work at the credit union for five years. The board thought that since the credit union was small and I had good credentials,

In my free time, I am a fitness freak. I ride horses when I can, and have even competed at the city, state, and national level in paddleball tournaments.

I would eventually leave. And they were okay with that. But around that five-year period, when I suggested to my wife that I put my resume out nationally, her face saddened. She said, “Kit, do we really want to leave family, leave our families?” To me, family truly is most important, so we decided



to stay here. I made a career commitment to Consumers Credit Union and renewed my personal commitment to my family.

KIT SNYDER TODAY

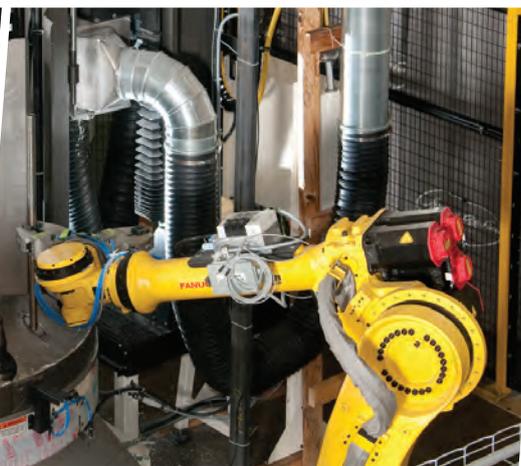
My wife and I live in South Haven now, and we couldn't be happier. In my free time, I am a fitness freak. I ride horses when I can, and I have even competed at the city, state, and national level in paddleball tournaments. In the last decade, I have developed a fondness for health and golf, so I work out regularly and love to hike. It keeps me always moving.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

There is so much room for growth at Consumers Credit Union. When I look to the future, I would say that we are in good hands. We have a motto here for our employees that we call “fail forward.” We teach everyone to be independent so they feel empowered to make decisions right on the front lines. We don't want them to have to say, “Let me check with my manager.” The idea is that even if they make mistakes, there is a tremendous amount of learning that happens. That's what enables us to move quickly and get things done.

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BACK IN THE SADDLE

A NIGHT OF HORSEING AROUND CHANGES LIVES AT THE CHEFF CENTER

BY JAKE FREDERICKS | PHOTOS HANNAH ZIEGLER AND GARY YONKERS



TARA EAST

Executive Director of the Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center

ORGANIZATION

Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center

EVENT

The Cheff Center's Annual Shindig

DATE

September 7, 2018

TIME

6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

LOCATION

8450 North 43rd Street,
Augusta, MI 49012

WHAT SERVICES DO YOU PROVIDE AT THE CHEFF CENTER?

The Cheff Center opened in 1969 as the first therapeutic riding center in North America. At first, the Cheff Center served only people with physical disabilities, but, as time went on, we started accommodating all special needs, both mental and physical. Today, we have clients seeking treatment for a wide range of diagnoses, including autism spectrum disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD), cerebral palsy, and addiction. We serve all people; our youngest client joined last year at 11 months old, and we have a group of senior citizens who come here for regular therapy.

Simply put, hippotherapy works. We sometimes prefer to call it magic, but there is science behind the approach. The three-dimensional movement of the horse's pelvis as it walks is as close as you can get to mimicking a human's gait. This cannot be effectively replicated in a traditional setting. You might get 30 inputs to your

Hippotherapy means treatment with the help of a horse. It comes from the Greek word *hippos*, meaning horse.

brain during a physical therapy session in a clinic, but you reach 5,000 in under 45 minutes on a horse. Plus, for clients coming here for mental and emotional treatment, the therapy is proven to boost serotonin levels in the brain, which is extremely beneficial [in elevating your mood]. When the session is over, everyone leaves here smiling. We love to be that safe and happy place.

WHAT WILL GUESTS EXPERIENCE AT THIS YEAR'S SHINDIG?

The Shindig is Western-themed and focused on fun. When you arrive, you can park out in the pasture, where we will have golf carts to pick you up and bring you up to the building. There will be a big tent outside with food, a silent auction, and a two-piece band. Outside, we have a big band playing country and rock music, so, by the end of the night, everybody will be on their feet dancing. People will take

off their shoes and put on cowboy hats. One year, we sponsored a mechanical bull and hired three professional bull riders. Another year, we had vintage 1969 Cadillacs with the horns and parked them out front. We love planning this event—this time you will be sure to see some surprises!

WHY IS THIS EVENT IMPORTANT TO YOUR MISSION?

The Cheff Center doesn't rely on any government funding, but we still want to keep our costs as low as possible for our clients. Most of our donations come from small donors, so this event brings in about one-third of our budget. It's a critical night for us. And aside from being a lot of fun, the Shindig helps communicate our mission to the community. People can walk around the center and learn more about our history and what we do every day. Plus, our volunteers will be more than happy to introduce you to some of our horses while you're here!



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KENDRA KINNISON



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BY RON KITCHENS
PUBLISHER

PHOTO MONKEYBUSINESSIMAGES (ISTOCK)



Giving It All Away

YOUR LEGACY WILL BE MEASURED BY WHAT YOU GIVE, NOT WHAT YOU GAIN

W

HILE THERE HAS NEVER BEEN AN EASIER TIME TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A LEADER, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A HARDER TIME TO LEAD.

These days, too many people confuse platform with prominence and reach with expertise. In this age of instant communication, although you no longer

have to own a printing press to have national media write about you, merely amassing fair-weather followers is not what real leadership is about.

For one's legacy to be lasting, emerging leaders have to develop authentically and find their purpose. Being authentic means not striving to become the next anything. Remember: the price of a real Louis Vuitton handbag is \$1,200, while a fake costs only 25 bucks. People won't pay for fakes, and they don't respect copies. So, if you're trying to be the next Tony Robbins, Beyoncé, or Steve Jobs, you're going to be undervalued. Your leadership could be so much more than that—the true article is worth the effort.

To navigate this forked and often lonely path, emerging leaders have a much easier time with the help of a mentor. In his

Being authentic means not striving to become the next anything. Remember: The price of a real Louis Vuitton handbag is \$1,200, while a fake costs only 25 bucks.

book “Outliers,” author Malcolm Gladwell contends that it takes 10,000 hours of practice to become an expert in your field. But a good guide is hard to find: it takes even longer than 10,000 hours to be able to distill your insights in a way that nonexperts can understand and learn from.

Every senior leader I've ever met was at one time lifted up and guided by such an expert. After reaching the top, these leaders agree that nothing is more rewarding than helping others on that same journey. It is a common misconception that leadership is a burden that only one person must carry. Leaders have got to look into their hearts, give away what they can, and get out of the way when need be; this is what it means to be a servant leader.

I believe that if you want to lead, go to the back of the line and find out how you can help. Listen to what people need and what they value. Lead outside yourself and lead with love. Know that you have the unique power to make others better. This is your obligation as a leader. The greatest accomplishments of my career have been the nine people who left my team to lead organizations of their own. I could not be prouder of that. At some point, you're going to be known by the ways

you contributed to the lives of others and the leaders you have grown, not your title or the resources you possess.

The greatest accomplishments of my career have been the nine people who left my team to lead organizations of their own. I could not be prouder of that.

To quote Jimmy Buffett, “If someone wants a piece of you, never let them pay. What you do not give to them time takes anyway.” We as leaders need to finish strong and pour our thousands of hours of experience back into our teams. When we go home for the day, our leadership buckets need to be empty, not full. It's hard, but we have to find it within ourselves to give it all away.

ALWAYS FORWARD,

Ron

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BRANDS THAT INSPIRE

Uniforms Make a Difference

Born in Kalamazoo and raised on Edwards Street, we've been a part of the community for 150 years. We began our journey as the Kalamazoo Pant Company manufacturing men's and boys pants. In the late 1970s we transformed the organization into Edwards Garment, a premier career and uniform apparel supplier. Known today as Edwards, a special brand with a strong heritage and a bright future. Drawing strength from our deep roots in our quest to change, risk, innovate, reinvent and grow. Edwards is your single most reliable source for career and uniform apparel that helps organizations bring their brands to life by sending people to work and play looking great and feeling engaged. It's the reason why millions of people have gone to work wearing Edwards. Call for a local distributor near you.

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WE LIVE POSITIVITY AND WE TEACH IT



Inspiring healthcare careers.

Positivity is about more than advancing the health of our community today. It's also about advancing it tomorrow.

That's why, at Bronson, we reach out to area youth and help them explore the many possible careers that exist in healthcare. It's why we support our staff's passion for learning with scholarships and tuition reimbursement. And it's why we continue our decades-long dedication to training the next generation of healthcare professionals.

As southwest Michigan's leading health system and top employer, we're proud of the caring team we have serving our community today, and the one we're building for the future.

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