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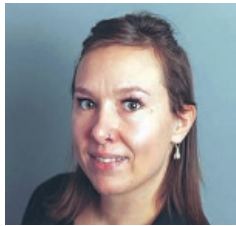
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**40**  
UNDER  
**FORTY**

**2022**



**BILLINGS GAZETTE**  
COMMUNICATIONS



# Lessons learned from troubled times will serve us forever

Succeeding as a young professional has always been a challenge. But that challenge has been compounded over the last two years by the lingering pandemic, the topic we're all weary of talking about.

But there it is making everyone's job harder, and it's likely some services will never be the same again. If there's a silver lining, it's that we've learned a thing or two about adapting to the pandemic. Things we are poised to take well into the future.

Eric Grider, one of this year's 40 Under Forty honorees, is operations manager at the Pub Station music venue downtown. In 2019, the Pub took in roughly \$1.3 million in ticket sales alone. In 2020, for months and months the venue sat dark. The difficult experience taught Grider to "always be willing to adapt and change as needed."

Kate Hagenbuch learned a similar lesson over at Billing Clinic. She describes adapting to COVID as the hardest part of her job as student talent and workforce partner. Adapting is essential to success in business or otherwise and the ingenuity of the last few years has brought out some of the best in Billings' up and coming leaders.

For decades The Billings Gazette has celebrated our community's brightest and best young professionals in the 40 Under Forty section. It has become one of the most well-read sections the newspaper publishes each year.

But it's not The Gazette that finds candidates for this honor. The winners were chosen from a large group of professionals nominated by their peers, the people who know them best.

The person who nominated radio personality Justin Hutchinson saluted him for using his celebrity and reach to raise funds for countless efforts. He is "one of the most community focused residents of our city," the nominator said. He "gives voices to those who desperately need it."

And, Mandy Nunes is one of those people who uses what she's learned from her own mistakes to help others build a better life. She's a manager at Rimrock Foundation, an addiction treatment center in Billings.

"She's committed to making a difference in the lives of others," said the person who nominated Nunes.

Our community is lucky to have people like this living among us, striving tirelessly to make our workplaces, our services, our products, and our community the best it can be.

**Editor's note:** Due to print space, many of the insightful and informative responses from the winners were shortened for our print edition. The honorees' full responses appear with their profiles online at [billingsgazette.com](http://billingsgazette.com).

## Index of winners

|                         |    |                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|-------------------------|----|
| Jamiee Belsky .....     | 3  | Katie Mueller .....     | 16 |
| Maureen Brakke .....    | 3  | Mandy Nunes.....        | 17 |
| Thomas Desmarais.....   | 4  | Valary Obert .....      | 18 |
| Melissa Fisher .....    | 4  | Lisa Olmsted .....      | 19 |
| Colin Gerstner.....     | 5  | Aubrey Peterschick..... | 20 |
| Catie Gragert .....     | 5  | Levi Plouffe .....      | 21 |
| Eric Grider .....       | 6  | Cody Reitz .....        | 22 |
| Kate Hagenbuch.....     | 6  | Tanya Riddle .....      | 22 |
| D'Vaughn Hayes .....    | 7  | Kevin Scharfe.....      | 23 |
| Lee Hoblitzell .....    | 8  | Chad Schreiner .....    | 24 |
| Jena Huck.....          | 9  | Tyler Slyngstad .....   | 24 |
| Justin Hutchinson.....  | 10 | Will Tedrow.....        | 25 |
| Megan Jordan .....      | 10 | Jacob Thiesse.....      | 26 |
| Casey Klein.....        | 11 | Brandon Treese .....    | 26 |
| Brad Kneeland.....      | 12 | Rachel Turitto .....    | 27 |
| Zane Luhman.....        | 12 | Colton Welhaven.....    | 27 |
| Acacia Madill.....      | 13 | Seth Wildung.....       | 28 |
| Andrew Marble.....      | 13 | Josh Wirth .....        | 28 |
| Morgan McQuillan.....   | 14 | Lauren Wright.....      | 29 |
| Bridget Sievers Merry.. | 15 | Daniel Zolnikov .....   | 30 |

# Congratulations Brandon & Catie on all your accomplishments!



**Brandon Treese**  
406-647-5007

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**Catie Gragert**  
406-697-4321



# JAMIEE BELSKY |

## Do not measure your success by others

**Age:** 36

**Company and Title:** Billings Clinic Hospital vice chair of ED operations, attending physician Emergency Department

**Hometown:** Saint Petersburg, Florida

**Education and/or Background:** Bachelor's degree at College of William and Mary. Master's degree at University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine. Emergency Medicine Residency at Virginia Commonwealth University

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** If I could not be in the field of medicine, I would love to study literature and be a writer or an editor. I also have interests in marine science and think it would be great to be on one of the large research vessels, cruising to remote but beautiful sites to discover and study new species.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Medicine is my professional calling. I enjoy biology and there is something amazing about the human body and how it

functions with so many different microcosms acting in perfect synchronization to support such a large, complex system.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "We should just go along to get along." It's important to have open relationships with your peers so that you can feel comfortable to challenge ideas and disagree with and fine-tune concepts.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Do not measure your success by others. Measure your achievements at your pace with your aspirations in mind. Some people reach their careers early, some later. Try to compete with others and you will not win or be fulfilled.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Massages. They do wonders for all the tension I carry in my neck and shoulders from work, and I cannot express how wonderful I feel after indulging in the aromatherapy.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I have been working hard in my career to become an emergency physician and take excellent, compassionate, evidence-based care of my patients.

**How do you measure your own success?** Success to me is measured in the goals achieved, but it must be personal and professional. I am very happy with my accomplishments in my professional success.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I am terrible at physics. Really. I bombed my first college exam, and have never worked so hard in my life to pass a class. At the time, I felt crushed because my dreams of becoming an astronaut flew out the window. But in the long run, being terrible at physics taught me so much more. It was OK to let go of those dreams and pivot to find another (and honestly for me, better) more fulfilling dream in medicine.



**What is the hardest part of your job?** Bad news. It comes in so many forms and is challenging in them all. The obvious clinical bad news in losing a patient is the worst. Sometimes, after all that effort and care, we lose. And it's difficult every single time. That quiet silence afterwards is heartbreaking. Lately our jobs have become that much harder with more deaths in the pandemic, less staff due to shortages, and fewer beds available due to our patients being sicker longer.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** Ted Lasso.

# MAUREEN BRAKKE | Don't let anyone tell you that you don't have what it takes

**Age:** 39

**Company and Title:** Montana State University Billings, director of communications and marketing

**Hometown:** Oslo, Norway

**Education and/or Background:** Master's degree in public administration, bachelor's degree in political science and intercultural communication

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I really enjoy what I do, but if I absolutely could not do what I'm doing now, I'd truly consider opening a forest school, which is a school that focuses on a child-centered inspirational learning process, that offers opportunities for holistic growth through play, exploration and supported risk-taking.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I immensely enjoy cross-country skiing and hiking. Since my daughter was born three years ago, she's become my outdoor adventure sidekick. I hope to instill the love of the outdoors in her and so far, so good.

Travel and learning languages is another passion.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** Someone once told me that everyone always has a car payment and that I should also plan to always have a car payment.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Find great mentors and go with your gut. Don't be afraid to speak up even if you're the youngest and/or most inexperienced person in the room.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Dark chocolate and coffee are two that come to mind. And trivia.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I'd like to get my Accreditation in Public Relations Certificate. I have many more, but it says to only list one.

**How do you measure your own suc-**

**cess?** As long as I feel that I'm working towards something and moving in the right direction, I'm on the right track. Feeling energized and accomplished after the work day is also success in my book.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I was once passed over for a position even when I let the hiring manager know I was interested. This person told me that I didn't have what it took. I worked hard to prove the person wrong and was hired on with another company doing almost that exact job a few months later. Don't let anyone tell you that you don't have what it takes.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Making myself unplug and letting go. In the PR and communications world, it's nearly impossible to completely unplug since you never know what's going to pop up next. However, I'm getting better at it.

**What was the last show you binge-**



**watched?** I'm actually a really big Trekkie. I've lost count of how many times I've binge-watched "Star Trek: The Next Generation" or "Deep Space Nine."

**What is your favorite book?** "The Historian" by Elizabeth Kostova and "Wild Swans" by Jung Chang.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I get to communicate and promote all the really great things that MSUB is doing and highlighting our incredibly talented students, staff and faculty.

# THOMAS DESMARAIS |

## The enemy of good is perfect

**Age:** 34

**Company and Title:** SCL Health, St. Vincent Hospital, vascular surgeon

**Hometown:** Tucson, Arizona

**Education and/or Background:** Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth. Integrated Vascular Surgery Residency Washington University in St. Louis.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would go hike the John Muir Trail and use the time to figure out what exactly I would go attempt next.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Anything that involves working with my hands or a physical challenge like gardening, building things at home, running a race, backpacking, etc.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** I am not sure I have had bad advice. Advice is usually someone's opinion of what they would do. More im-

portant than the quality of advice is figuring out if that advice is actually applicable to you and then deciding it or not.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Decide what success looks like for you so you do not spend your time chasing some definition of success that other's place on you.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Ben and Jerry's Cherry Garcia.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I really enjoy helping individual patients, but eventually I would like to spend time helping groups of patients through hospital administration, public health, or some related path.

**How do you measure your own success?** Ending the day knowing that I have given that day my best effort.

**What failure have you learned the**

**most from?** Any time something does not go as planned with patient care, I learn a great deal.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Setting appropriate expectations with patients.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Star Wars Rebels" with my son.

**What is your favorite book?** "Man's Search for Meaning" by Victor Frankl.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Using technical skills to provide excellent care for patients.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** Dr. Bill Rappaport, a surgeon in Arizona. He is humble, unflappable, intelligent, and selfless.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** The enemy of good is perfect.



**What advice would you give to anyone wanting to start a new business or excel in a business or field?** Find a mentor that has a strong interest in you being successful.

**How do you view failure and success?** Failure is when I have not given my best effort.

**What do you do for fun/relax/hobby?** Ski, mountain bike, spend time with my wife and two sons.

# MELISSA FISHER |

## Do more of what makes you happy

**Age:** 39

**Company and Title:** Activities director, Big Horn Hospital Association/Big Horn Senior Living

**Hometown:** Colstrip, and now Hardin

**Education and/or Background:** Bachelor's degree, elementary education

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I could really see myself having some sort of animal shelter or rescue.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I love animals. Animals are the best therapy. My kids love animals too. It's our fun time together, tending to our critters. We have 10 dogs, all breeds and all ages. I have six Silkie chickens and about 20 free-range chickens. I have 10 goats, some are fainters. I have nine cats. I don't know how that even happened. I have two Scottish Highland cows and three buffalo, along with some horses. My husband is a horse trainer, but I have two of my own.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** It's not the advice that is

bad. It's the application. I had a family member tell me once not to use my blinkers while driving because it was nobody's business where I was going.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** This is a quote I love from Stephen Hawking. "However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at it."

**What's your guilty pleasure?** I will eat Reese's Peanut Butter Cup for breakfast, lunch and dinner with no regrets. I also have a collection of holiday headbands/silly headbands that I wear to work.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I am working on a gerontology certificate through MSU-Bozeman. Go Bobcats.

**How do you measure your own success?** Setting measurable goals and objectives for sure. I have a wonderful department and we focus on teamwork, the mission of the hospital

and the organization.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** When we fail, it gives us a chance to learn.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** I came into this job with an open mind, but what I did know about nursing homes is that many people are at end of life. That is something that stuck with me and it scared me. After talking with my boss and a group of other department heads, they reminded me that this is an amazing job. We get to bring more quality of life, more health and well-being.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Survivor"

**What is your favorite book?** "Blind Your Ponies" by Stanley Gordon West.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Every day is different. Some days there are challenges, but every day I leave with a happy heart. Working closely with the residents, you get to learn



so much about them, about their families and about their life and history. At times, I actually think I have more in common with the older generation than I do my same-aged peers. This job has connected me on so many levels with staff, as well.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My family. My parents are amazing and so supportive. My brother is only a phone call away and is always up to help me when I need him. My children give me life, they give me energy and they give me some of the most amazing ideas to share with the residents at work. My friends (that are just like family) they have pushed me when I needed a boost, always telling me there is greater things ahead. And my husband, he has the most amazing work ethic.

# COLIN GERSTNER |

## Find something you love and pursue it

**Age:** 35

**Company and Title:** Partner and founder of Gerstner Adam Law

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Billings West High School, bachelor's degree from University of Wyoming, J.D. from University of Montana School of Law.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would love to be a history teacher and basketball coach. I was a history major, and at the end of my time in college, I was wrestling what to do for a career. I was discussing with one of my professors about the possibility of pursuing education or following some other path. He looked at me and said, "Colin, you know that good lawyers are just frustrated historians, right?"

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I love to do anything outdoors, including fishing, hunting, hiking and camping. Youth sports have also been dominating

my life.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** When I was entering private practice, multiple attorneys recommended that I start out at a bigger firm and stay for several years before even thinking about going out on my own. Instead, I started at a small firm with great mentors for a year, and then opened my own shop. I chased my dream, and it's paid off.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Find something you love and pursue it. The happiest and most successful people I know enjoy what they do.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Peach rings. There's no stopping me from demolishing the whole bag once I start.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I don't really have many specific professional goals. I figure that if I work hard and represent my

clients to the best of my ability, then the rest will fall into place.

**How do you measure your own success?** By how happy my clients are with my work and the results.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I lost a jury trial in 2020. Even though I was disappointed, I was so grateful for that experience. We generally learn more from our losses than our victories, and after losing that case, I learned many lessons.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Taking on our clients' burdens. Giving my area of practice, clients usually only see me after something traumatic has happened. A client's loved one may have died, or a client may have a permanent injury as the result of an accident. I can't help but feel the stress and anxiety that my clients have experienced. At the same time, it's also what motivates me to do the best I can for my clients.

**What was the last show you binge-**



**watched?** "You" on Netflix.

**What is your favorite book?** While I try to read when I can, I don't really have a favorite book. I just finished "Cloud Cuckoo Land" by Anthony Doerr, and it was an incredible novel that I strongly recommend.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Helping my clients when they are at their most vulnerable. After an accident or injury, the medical bills stack up, you might not be able to work, and your relationships can be strained.

# CATIE GRAGERT | It's amazing what a good attitude and an eagerness to get better can do

**Age:** 30

**Company and Title:** Berkshire Hathaway Floberg Real Estate

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Bachelor's degree in education from Carroll College

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I got my degree in education and I absolutely loved the kids. If I wasn't doing what I am doing, I would get back into the classroom and on the volleyball court as a teacher and a coach.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I love traveling and being able to experience new adventures. The outdoors is a passion of mine whether it be fishing and hiking during the summer or cross-country skiing when it gets cold out. I love experiencing the beauty that our world has to offer.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "If you want something done right, you have to do it yourself." I have

been blessed to be surrounded by an amazing support network of family and colleagues. I believe that different perspectives and a group that is working toward a common solution will always produce better results.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Success does not necessarily need to be measured by how much money you make. You need to figure out what you are good at and what you enjoy doing and find a way to build a pathway to your version of success. Surround yourself with people who are going to help you become the best version of you.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Ice cream. I have a terrible sweet tooth, so really any kind of desserts.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I would like to become a broker and continue to grow as an entrepreneur.

**How do you measure your own success?** At the end of the day if I can say that I did everything that I could for my clients, I am able to say that I am doing what I need to in order to maintain my own values and quality of living. If I can say that I am trying my best, then I'm experiencing success.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I have had a couple of failures that have happened as I am getting started in my new businesses. One thing that I love about my job is that no transaction is the same, but this has given me humility. I have learned and grown from my experiences and am better at what I do because of it. It is amazing what a good attitude and an eagerness to get better can do to help you through difficult situations. I am also blessed with an incredible support system that is there for me when I need them.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Real estate transactions can be super intense and a lot of the time you are dealing with a



lot of emotion from a buyer, seller, and even other agents. Occasionally, it can be hard to navigate the more difficult parts of real estate. For example, when a buyer doesn't get a home they want or if a transaction falls apart.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** I just got done watching the "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" and I would absolutely recommend it as a feel-good series that will make you laugh.

**What is your favorite book?** "Girl Wash Your Face" by Rachel Hollis was a great book that helped give me a different perspective on a couple of things in my life.

# ERIC GRIDER | Never settle

**Age:** 34

**Company and Title:** Pub Station operations manager

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Wolf Point High School and over 15 years working in the music industry.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** Tour manager or stand-up comedian, if I could get over my stage fright.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I've always had a passion for screen-printed posters/letter press. I admire the work and creativity it takes.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** While I find myself saying this at times, and on some occasions this can be true, but I'm not a fan of "it is what it is." To me, it sounds like settling. At least that's how I felt when a previous employer always said it.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Never settle, strive for more, learn from experience, be honest with yourself, and be humble.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Anything peanut butter.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I'll always work to climb/move up at my job, maybe become the owner one day. I'd also like to be more involved in the community.

**How do you measure your own success?** By how happy I am and how my job can make a positive impact on others.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** It's not failure if you learn from it. However, I wish I would have researched more before attempting to start a screen printing business years ago. That experience has helped me learn to plan, organize, and execute tasks more effectively and to keep learning and growing.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Dealing and working with all the various personalities of people. However, it keeps things fun.

**What was the last show you binge-**

**watched?** "Lost In Space."

**What is your favorite book?** As of late, "Extreme Ownership" by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin. Also, "Ego is the Enemy" by Ryan Holiday.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I love how music and entertainment can bring people with various opinions/beliefs together and everyone can have a good time. Seeing people laugh and smile make the long days worth it.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** All my grandparents. They've helped me become who I am and taught me so much.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** "You have power over your mind; not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength." - Marcus Aurelius

**What advice would you give to anyone wanting to start a new business or excel in a business or field?** Learn and experience things as much as you can and always be willing to adapt and change as



needed. It's not always "it is what it is."

**How do you view failure and success?** Failure isn't failure as long as you learn from it. Success is not being afraid to fail and keep going.

**What do you do for fun/relax/hobby?** I like to read, cook, and go camping when I can.

**What's the greatest gift you ever received? Why?** The opportunity to do what I do. I've met so many people I never would have anywhere else and I've made some great friends all because of music.

# KATE HAGENBUCH | It is all about balance

**Age:** 33

**Company and title:** Billings Clinic

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Master's degree in organizational development and leadership from Gonzaga University.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** If I had more hours in the day and my kids were at the age that allows for more free time, I would continue my education and pursue a Ph.D in workforce development and organizational leadership.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I enjoy volunteering and spending time in the community for various causes. A cause very close to my heart is the Billings Clinic Classic.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** I was once instructed that, "It's always been done this way. Just check off the boxes and get your job done."

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Simon Sinek said, "Focus on where you are going and you'll

know what steps to take. Focus on the steps you're taking and you won't know where you're going." As a young person, I was so worried about the process and not the big picture.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** I love a good glass of red wine, cheesecake and taking advice from classic Kate Spade quotes.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Widening access and creating opportunities for career exploration and awareness in healthcare. I truly believe if young people can see it, they can be it.

**How do you measure your own success?** By always learning and taking what I have learned and making meaningful change. Giving back and learning are also incredibly important to my measure of success in my personal life.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I left a company I loved for wrong reasons and was swept up in the grass is greener concept. I learned so much about

what I value in an employer, leader and culture.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** COVID has changed health care and access to education within the system. That will be a huge hurdle that we will continue to adapt around for a long time because everyone's health and safety come first. I work every day to find ways to fulfill the demand.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** I frequently binge watch "The Office," "Schitts Creek" and "New Girl." I love them all equally and for different reasons and I could binge every series at any given time.

**What is your favorite book?** "The Testaments" by Margaret Atwood.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** My job allows my colleagues who love their careers the opportunity to promote, share and inspire others interested in health care. Watching them inspire and find joy in connecting with the next generation of health care providers is so rewarding. It is also incredible



special to have students that participated in any of our programs choose health care and the Billings Clinic for their profession. Nothing could be more satisfying than helping our youth find their passion.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** When it comes to mentors, I am pretty lucky. I have a handful of really great mentors. I go to them for different things and I think that's important to have diversity in the mentorship. They fill your bucket in various ways and overall provide different advice for different situations.

# D'VAUGHN HAYES | Always be a learner

**Age:** 31

**Company and Title:** General manager, Profile by Sanford

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Educated in human health and performance with an extensive background in team building, sales, marketing, business development and community development.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would be in another career that helps me help others. One of my biggest drives in life is seeing others succeed. If I can play a small part in that success, my mission is accomplished.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Family life and fatherhood are my most cherished callings in life. The biggest change we can make starts within our homes so I invest into my family as much as I can while also building my community.

I currently serve my community in many ways. Here are a few:

- Lead organizer/licensee for TEDxBillings
- Co-lead of the Grow Committee for Billings

ings NextGEN

■ Member for the Billings Chamber of Commerce's Local Government advisory board

■ Member for the Billings Chamber of Commerce's Diversity and Inclusion advisory board

■ Head football coach for Yellowstone Youth Football

■ Head soccer coach for Yellowstone Soccer Association

■ Head baseball coach for Burlington Little League

■ Chief Influence Officer for 406media (an online community that showcases Montana)

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** Go to college, get a degree and work for a company with good benefits. Why? Not because this is bad advice but more so because success looks different for each individual and I believe children should be made more aware of the other possibilities to attain success.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Success looks different for everyone. Find what you're good at,

find what gives you joy and pursue a career in that avenue. Do not let anyone tell you that your dreams are impossible. Anything is possible. The only question is, "Will you put in the work necessary to achieve your dreams?"

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Lemon bars and movies.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** My team and I at TEDxBillings will turn Billings into the regional destination for TEDx speakers and sell out the Alberta Bair Theater.

**How do you measure your own success?** By the impact I am having on the people I surround myself with and the growth my community sees from my contributions.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Each failure provides a unique learning opportunity. I can't choose just one because they have all led me to this point.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Watching people who need and want change within their lives quit on them-



selves before reaching success.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Game of Thrones" or "Shark Tank."

**What is your favorite book?** Fiction - "Harry Potter." Non-fiction - "How to Win Friends and Influence People" or "Can't Hurt Me."

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I have the pleasure of watching people change their lives right before my eyes each and every day.



## Congratulations to Dr. Tanya Riddle and all the 40 Under Forty honorees!

Thank you for everything you do for your patients, your staff, and our medical community!

**Dr. Tanya Riddle** is a fellowship-trained, triple board-certified dermatologist at Billings Dermatology & Aesthetics. She has three board certifications in dermatology, dermatopathology, and micrographic dermatologic surgery (Mohs surgery).

Dr. Riddle is the owner of **Billings Dermatology & Aesthetics**, after purchasing the practice from Philip Tallman, M.D. in May 2021.

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# LEE HOBLITZELL | Failure is the predecessor to success

**Age:** 38

**Company and title:** Living Independently For Today and Tomorrow

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Graduated from South Seattle Community College in 2010. Graduated University of Washington Seattle Campus in political science (aka: coloring degree) in 2012. Certified in Project Management by the University of Washington in 2018.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would like to serve in public office as an elected official.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Politics, local and international. I see a lot of things happening around me, and they do not sit right. I am tired of complaining and want to do something about it.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** It was to not be opinionated, to follow the rules, and wait your turn.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Clean up your room. Your room is an externalization of your mind. To

the degree that you are in your room. Your room is you. So straighten up what you can straighten up, and quit saying things that make you feel weak. Then you will know what to do next.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Video games. They are fun, but there are real things to set right and dragons to be slain.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Elected office. Perhaps I will start with a local run in 2022.

**How do you measure your own success?** My level of contentment in my life. Happiness is fleeting. Contentment is ideal.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Failures to analyze and correct daily habits cause most people to think of daily habits as mundane and trivial. The things you do every day are the most important things you do.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Speaking the truth against a lot of push back

on an idea or project that isn't popular. In order to do this, you have to let go of the outcome. You have to think, "I am going to say what I think. As stupid as I am, as biased as I am, ignorant as I am, I am going to say what I think as clearly as I can and I am going to live with the consequences no matter what they are." Nothing brings a better world into a state of being than the truth.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "King of the Hill"

**What is your favorite book?** "As a Man Thinketh" by James Allen.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Having the pleasure and privilege to serve the disabled community in Yellowstone County and southeastern Montana. Getting the word out about LIFTT, reaching out to these rural communities that might not know there are resources available, to achieve or maintain independent living, and seeing the impact on the lives that we assist that continue to let the



consumers live thrive independently.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My father for providing a great childhood for me, showing me what a good work ethic is, teaching me valuable lessons, bestowing upon me good morals, giving me all the tools to survive this world, and lastly for putting up with me.

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UNDER 40

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# JENA HUCK | If I am successful, my team is successful, and vice versa

**Age:** 32

**Company and Title:** Nurse manager at St. Vincent Healthcare

**Hometown:** Laurel

**Education and/or Background:** Bachelor's degree in Nursing



**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would have been a teacher, or a cosmetologist. Very different career paths, I know.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Two things that have been most important to me over the last few years are my family and being an effective leader for my team at work. My husband and I have two beautiful boys and we spend all of our spare time going on adventures with them.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** I have always been a passionate and motivated individual. I would not let somebody else's opinion stop me from reaching my goals.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** To take a personal inventory of their interests. Try to branch out and gather as much experience as you can before deciding on one area. When you do, make sure it is something you are passionate about and it will fill your cup. If something makes you happy, you are more likely to devote yourself and succeed.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Lately I have been baking a lot of cookies. I mean like 60+ every weekend. I think it is a stress reliever, but then I have to taste them all to make sure they are safe to bring to work. Also, red wine.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Someday, I would like to get my master's in nursing leadership. This will be down the road after my kids are a little older. In the meantime, I want to maintain my professional certification as a Progressive Care Certified Nurse.

**How do you measure your own success?** Success looks different to everyone. For me, I

value feedback from my director, peers and team. I also measure success by how well my team is doing with our quality and unit goals. If they are engaged and motivated to meet our goals I feel like I am doing my job. I truly believe that if I am successful, my team is successful and vice versa.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I was not accepted into upper division in nursing school right away and was wait listed. I never gave up and continued to work toward my goal.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Health care in general can be hard, let alone during a pandemic and a staffing shortage. In the last two years, the hardest part has been watching the heartache and defeat you see on your team's faces after hard days.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** I don't get to watch a lot of TV with two young kids, but my husband and I have been loving "Chicago Fire" after they go to bed.

**What is your favorite book?** There are so many to choose from, but I would probably have to say "The Nightingale" by Kristin Hannah.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I am no longer in direct patient care, so it is now most rewarding when I can play a part in building a strong team that works well together, continues to find joy in the work and meet the needs of our community.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** I am constantly listening and observing from those that lead with such grace and thoughtfulness. Leading people is hard, yet I see so many master it when they align their team's goals and leverage each person's strengths.

CONGRATULATIONS



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# JUSTIN HUTCHINSON | Roll with the punches

**Age:** 33

**Company and Title:** Hot 101.9/Radio Billings, producer of The Big J Show

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or background:** Billings Senior High School

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** Growing up, I always wanted to be an entertainer. I loved making little movies and joke videos with friends. I think if I wasn't in radio, I would be making a movie.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I absolutely love getting to help people. Everything I do is to make sure I can use that to help others. Whether that's making short video clips to help friends promote their businesses, using the radio to raise funds for various charities, or using whatever other platforms I have to speak up for the voiceless.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** Not that he didn't mean well, but my dad used to ask me "when are you going to find a real job" through my early 20s. It isn't a field that is very lucra-

tive and having financial struggles through my early 20s, my dad thought I should do something else. I used that to eventually show him that I could establish a career doing it while getting to help others.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** There are different forms of success. What success looks like to one person is very different to what others perceive. Go work hard every day and chase what your passions are and find your own success.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Teen dramas on TV. The OC, Friday Night Lights, Gossip Girl, Laguna Beach... I can't get enough of them.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I'm still currently setting up my non-profit. Over the next few months, I hope to have that all done so that I can continue helping those in need in our area.

**How do you measure your own success?** In my business, it is easy to measure success with ratings and listeners and solid

numbers. But I feel I'm truly successful when someone brings up something we raised money for on air that affected them positively.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I can't think of a major failure, but many minor failures happen and you just have to roll with the punches. You can't let bad moments lead to more.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** The hardest part of my job for me is keeping a schedule. I struggle with it so much. I've gotten really good at adding every mundane thing to my phone's calendar app so that I remember to accomplish each thing and to remind myself to add everything to the calendar so I don't forget something. That and not saying the f-word on air. Both are equally difficult sometimes.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** There's so much good television out there that whatever I say now is old news by the time the next week rolls around. I will say a recent favorite is Maid which was adapted from a book by Montana author Stephanie Land. It makes me



realize there are so many more people out there that I may be able to help and so many amazing programs that exist to help people where the system otherwise fails them. It's an inspiration to keep fighting and keep pursuing your goals and dreams.

**What is your favorite book?** "Until They Bring the Streetcars Back," by Stanley Gordon West. It was required reading when I was in high school and it's still one that stuck with me many years later. I'm currently reading (listening on audio book is reading right?) "Maid" by Montana author Stephanie Land.

# MEGAN JORDAN |

## Leave a little sparkle wherever you go

**Age:** 35

**Company and title:** Billings Clinic Surgery Center nurse manager

**Hometown:** Laurel.

**Education and/or background:** Bachelor's degree in nursing.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I dreamed my entire life of being a famous singer. I love to perform in front of people. Not sure I would make it, but if I wasn't a nurse, I would give it a shot.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Family, music, singing and sports are passions outside of my work.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** It was to not use my voice and to be silent. I wear many hats in life and am a very loud vibrant woman. I am a wife, mother, leader and nurse. All of these roles require me to protect others. This in every way means to use my voice. As a leader in life being silent is not an option. Speaking up may be the difference in that one critical

moment. Don't be afraid to be who you are, use your inner voice and stand up for what is your heart.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** To be successful you must find something you are passionate about. It must fit you. It must fit your life. It must be something that fills your cup or it will be short-lived. Success is not something that someone can do for you. You must work for it. Do not measure yourself to others for their success might mean something different than yours.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** My guilty pleasure is indulging in a good musical. I love movie musicals and Broadway. I would break into song at a moment's notice if people wouldn't think I'm crazy.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Professionally I would love to earn my master's in nursing leadership.

**How do you measure your own success?** I measure my success by the team around me. Did we give the best care we could possibly give to our patient? Are my teams thriving at work and at home? Success is not just about money and quantity, but about relationships and how we live our lives. Is each day a quality day for those around me and myself? If you ask me, that is success. Living with joy.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Not being myself. Being fake and stiff. I have learned that putting on a face is not always what your team needs. Being a leader means being vulnerable. It means putting yourself on the level of your team. The more willing you are to be emotional with your peers helps them understand that they are not alone and that you are truly a team.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** The hardest part of my job is letting people down. Right now health care is so incredibly



overwhelming. There is not enough staff, not enough time and so many patients who need us. I find myself doing more jobs than I have hours in a day. This means that sometimes I drop the ball, sometimes I don't get everything done I need to and sometimes I just fail. All we can do some days is take care of patients so they have the best and safest care.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Vikings" with my husband and now "Schitt's Creek."

**What is your favorite book?** "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

# CASEY KLEIN | The solution is almost always to try a little harder

**Age:** 39

**Company and title:** Valley Credit Union CEO

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or background:** Montana State University, bachelor's degree in business management with a minor in small business management/entrepreneurship

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I've always had an entrepreneurial mindset. That is actually the reason why I moved back to Billings from Bozeman. There is an amazing business atmosphere in this market and the barriers to entry are much lower. My wife and I actually owned a business here in town for a number of years. So, if I couldn't be involved in banking, I would most likely go that route again.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I love to travel. My wife and I have been all over the place. It has slowed down a bit since we have had children, but they are finally at the age where

we can all pack up and go explore again.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "Who cares what they think?" While sometimes this might be true, I think that you'll find more success when you consider others' thoughts and perspectives as valid and important.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** I like to tell people that in a lot of ways, life is fairly simple. Any time you encounter a challenge or obstacle, the solution is almost always to just try a little harder. I believe grit will take people a lot farther than they realize.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** We live about a block away from Taco Johns and I stop there way more than I should. But I can't help it. They are amazing. My son and I will stop and get a large Ole' and split it while we are on our way to wherever we happen to be going that day.

**What is one professional accom-**

**plishment you still want to achieve?**

I've been lucky enough to accomplish most of my professional goals. At this point, my focus is on the impact I am making on other people. I took over as CEO of Valley Credit Union in January 2021 and my goal is to look back on my career someday and know that I had a positive impact on our member/owners, the communities we operate in, and most of all, the amazing employees we have.

**How do you measure your own success?** If I am able to produce an outcome that I am proud of then I was successful.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** It's hard to pick just one. When I was younger, I was extremely impatient and most of my major failures have been related to my impatience. Having children has really helped me get better with that.

**What is the hardest part of your**



**job?** Right now, I would say the challenges brought on by COVID are the most difficult.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "The Food That Built America," but "Friends" is also on constant rotation at my house.

**What is your favorite book?** "The Godfather" book series by Mario Puzo.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** The ability to have a tangible difference in the lives of our members and employees.



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**CONGRATULATES**  
**Daniel Zolnikov**  
on being awarded the 2022  
**40 Under 40 Award.**  
Well done Daniel!

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# BRAD KNEELAND | Do all the good you can

**Age:** 31

**Company and title:** Billings City Attorney's Office, domestic violence Prosecutor

**Hometown:** Miles City

**Education and/or background:** University of Montana, Western New England University School of Law

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would want to be a teacher. My dad taught social studies when I was growing up and I spent nights reading his textbooks when I was little. I enjoy working with kids and I was lucky to have some great teachers growing up in Miles City.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** In law school, I started running as an outlet to relieve the stress and anxiety of school. It would clear my head and keep me grounded. I worked my way up to doing a half-marathon in 2015 and I'm currently training for the Missoula Marathon this June.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** You have to have everything figured out right now. It is OK to not have every aspect of your life planned

out right this instant.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** It may not seem like it now, but the decisions and choices you make now affect your life and your options down the road. Keep your mind open to possibilities and your mouth closed on matters that you don't know about. Limit your always and your nevers.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Watching "Diners, Drive-In's and Dives."

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I've been lucky enough in my career to have been a defense attorney, clerk for the judicial branch, do pro bono family law work and I am currently a criminal prosecutor. I want to keep serving my community and am open to future opportunities of public service.

**How do you measure your own success?** Whether or not I gave it my all.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Getting wait-listed from the Univer-

sity of Montana School of Law. Law school had always been a part of my plan, so I was crushed to not have gotten in at Montana. But as chance would have it, I did get accepted to law school in Massachusetts, which opened my world up to perspectives and wonderful experiences that I never would have had if I had stayed in Montana.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Leaving the work at work. The decisions we make as attorneys have real world implications for the people we serve. I often find myself laying in bed at night replaying the day over again in my head or thinking about the work that needs to be done tomorrow.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "The West Wing" CJ Cregg is a role model for me and I admire the show's idealistic approach to politics and public service.

**What is your favorite book?** "Madam Secretary" by Madeleine Albright.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Helping victims find a sense of justice. The cases that



come across my desk are often complex, emotionally and legally. Domestic violence cases often involve substance abuse, mental health issues, or even systemic, multi-generational histories of abuse that need to be considered.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My parents. I come from a hard-working, resilient and resourceful family. A strong work ethic runs in my family.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people

# ZANE LUHMAN | It's not how many likes, follows, or views you get

**Age:** 36

**Company and Title:** MasterLube president/CEO

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Some college, MSU and MSU-B

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** It would almost certainly involve being active and helping people in some way.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** My passion outside of helping our teams, and the individuals that collectively make MasterLube what it is, lies at home, with my family.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** There's a saying about unsolicited advice rarely being well received. If there is a singular worst piece of advice I've ever gotten, I guess it wasn't well received and I let it go.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Guard against viewing success as a determination given by others of

you. It's not how many likes, follows, or views you get. Success is living with integrity, doing whatever it is you are doing to the best of your ability today, and maximizing your potential.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Chocolate-covered almonds for sure.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Every day I strive to get a little closer to being qualified for the position I hold currently. Some day I'd like to be able to confidently look back and say I gave it my best shot and was able to achieve that.

**How do you measure your own success?** Have I done my best today, made myself better for tomorrow, lived with integrity to my values, and helped those around me do the same? If I can answer yes at the end of the day, then it was a successful day. I've got work to do.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** When I was younger, I was part of starting a new family business and managed it when

we first opened. Looking back years later, there are many things that I did that I would consider personal failures, in my thinking, decision-making, and interpersonal relations with customers, colleagues and family. The business and experience wasn't a failure, but I look back on my time managing it and see many failures that are good lessons in humility.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** John Maxwell frequently says the hardest person to lead is yourself.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** Rainbow Rangers with my 2-year-old daughter. Though I couldn't tell you anything that happened, I could probably sing the Rainbow Rangers theme song.

**What is your favorite book?** Stephen R Covey's "7 Habits" probably tops the list.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** The most important aspect is building trusting relation-



ships inside and outside the company, and helping our teams and individuals to do the same. We strive to be centered on principles such as trust and teamwork at MasterLube.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** I would say Jesus. Whether you are religious or not, we know that a man named Jesus lived about 2,000 years ago and to this day has millions of followers, which would seem to make him the greatest leader that ever lived. What is inspiring is that he did it through acts of service and love to those he met, regardless of their social status. Many of the teachings, lessons, books on leadership (at least the good ones in my opinion) are iterations of his teachings.

# ACACIA MADILL | There are no handouts in life

**Age:** 32

**Company and title:** Stockman Bank of Montana

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or background:** Oklahoma Christian University and MSUB.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would open my own business, maybe a coffee shop or restaurant. Food and caffeine makes people happy.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Spending time with my husband, Bryan, and three kids. They are the most important thing in my life and my world revolves around them and their activities. The kids grow up so fast and I know that in the blink of an eye they will be off living their own lives and I will have all sorts of time to pursue other passions.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "You need to go to college in order to get a good job." Although I pursued a degree in interior design, I quickly realized that would not be my calling and started working at Stockman Bank. I have found over the

years real world experience far outweighs any degree that I could have obtained.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** There are no handouts in life. True success does not come easy. Work hard, stay focused and continue to learn as much as you can.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Bedtime bowls of cereal and Crumbl cookies.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I know it sounds cliché, but, retirement. I want to be able to travel and explore the world after I complete this chapter of my life.

**How do you measure your own success?** By how well I am maintaining my work/life balance. I am happiest when I know everything is taken care of and my family can be my priority in my off hours from work.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Failure happens when there is a break in the process or expectations are not clear. There have been times when I have not asked enough

questions to find out what exactly someone's end goal is and it causes them to feel as though their expectations have not been met. You can never ask too many questions to make sure everyone is feeling understood.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Home buying should be an exciting process. There are times when circumstances take out the fun and it is hard to tell people no when they have their sights on finding their new home.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Selling Sunset"

**What is your favorite book?** Mystery and thrillers, but do not have a favorite.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Seeing people happy. Whether it is helping a client finance their dream home or purchasing an investment property; seeing people happy and excited is the most rewarding part of my job.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My husband, Bryan, is my greatest men-



tor and the driving force behind my success. He has an amazing drive to always be better and never settle or become complacent in life.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** Prove them wrong. There will always be someone saying that it can't be done or you shouldn't be able to do it.

**What advice would you give to anyone wanting to start a new business or excel in a business or field?** Do your due diligence. You can never know too much and when faced with making important decisions, it's always best to have as much information as possible.

# ANDREW MARBLE | Learn how to learn

**Age:** 37

**Company and Title:** Landscape designer/artist at Billings Nursery and Landscaping

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Bachelor's degree from Rocky Mountain College.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** This is a hard question. I love what I do. Being a craftsman artist who gets to work with his hands and see his work continue to mature and improve with age is wonderful. However, my other passion is people. So, I would say some form of ministry work.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I love people and helping people. I feel called to share the true gospel of Jesus with others through words and interactions.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "Trust your heart." I know that everyone's heart is deceitful from birth and so trusting in a corrupted identity is not wise. Rather, I trust what is true and right in God's holy word and use that to advise my life.

**What advice would you give a teen-**

**ager about success?** Learn how to learn. Listen to others who are wiser and older than yourself. Experience gives knowledge one can only obtain through time. Do not become too discouraged from your mistakes and failures. Instead of becoming paralyzed, learn and grow from them and try again.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** I enjoy a good whiskey.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Nothing specific. Simply to continue to do better. Consistently improving my designs, installations, business management, and relationships while exceeding my customers' expectations.

**How do you measure your own success?** Doing what is right and good to the best of my ability and learning from failures.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Trying to change people. It doesn't work. But I can work on myself and

change my own perspective.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** People, myself included. Generally work is made easy or difficult by the people involved. We have been blessed with many wonderful employees through the years. However, between my own struggles and the struggles of others, clashes are inevitable. Thankfully, many of these times have also provided a needed catalyst to improve the work environment and grow better.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** It wasn't really a binge-watch, but the "Mandalorian."

**What is your favorite book?** The Bible, the only book that shows us who God is and how to enjoy him.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Three things primarily. The customer's joy with the project the team has accomplished for them. When our team works joyfully to complete a detailed and difficult project. The accomplishment of creating some-



thing distinct, beautiful and unique.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** I have many friends and family members that have shown me what a good work ethic is and how to love people well. I am thankful for them all. My parents have had a big impact on my life. Broken as they are, they have shown me what humility and love can accomplish. I also find inspiration in nature from the one who created all at the beginning of time.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** Love and enjoy God and others.

# MORGAN MCQUILLAN |

## I measure my own success by how I feel

**Age:** 27

**Company and title:** Joliet Public Library director

**Hometown:** Joliet

**Education and/or background:** Bachelor's degree in human services. Currently pursuing my master's degree in social work.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** A special education teacher.

What other passions/callings are part of your life? I love to help others and by getting my master's degree I feel that I can help others even more. Being a therapist is very intense so my goal is balance my work as a therapist in the Carbon County area while also continuing to work as the director at the Joliet Public Library. I am also the founder of a local nonprofit called Project Footprints. Our mission is to provide services to individuals and families who have been impacted by emergency situations.

**What is the worst advice you've re-**

**ceived and why?** "You should take a big bite of the green stuff next to the sushi." The green stuff is wasabi, not guacamole.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Watching HGTV and eating popcorn.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Earning my Montana Library Certificate as well as earning my master's degree in social work.

**How do you measure your own success?** I measure my own success by how I feel rather than by concrete milestones.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** The failure I have learned hardest from are the moments in which I fall the hardest. I have learned that when I'm juggling too many things, something is bound to hit the floor.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** The hardest part of my job is not wanting to

fail. I want to make sure I'm doing all that I can to make it the best workplace for my staff, the best library for my patrons and that I'm carrying out my duties accordingly for the board.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** HGTV's Fixer to Fabulous.

**What is your favorite book?** "Blind Your Ponies" by Stanley Gordon West.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** The relationships with my staff members, patrons, board members and supporters.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** It's hard to pick just one. My family is my rock. They each have their own admirable qualities and they make me want to be the best person I can be.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** "We don't have control over the cards we



dealt, but we do have control over how we play those cards."

**What advice would you give to anyone wanting to start a new business or excel in a business or field?** Do what you can with what you have. Be ready to fail, but also be ready to thrive.

**How do you view failure and success?** I view failure as a learning moment. Those learning moments can then lead to success.

**What do you do for fun/relax/hobby?** Spend time with family and friends.

*The Master Lube Family would like to Congratulate Zane and all of the 40 under 40 designees.*



Zane assumed his current position in February of 2021 following the retirement of Craig Godfrey, who had led the company from that position for 15 years.

2021 was the middle of the pandemic, and a difficult time for both individuals and businesses. Zane's quiet, understated leadership style has served him well through difficult challenges and has strengthened our staff and the company.

Zane and Callie have three daughters, Zoey, Eliza, and Josephine, plus two horses, Baron and Baby

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CONGRATULATIONS

**CODY REITZ**

Assistant General Manager of MetraPark

We applaud Cody for being named one of Billings' 40 Under Forty

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**METRAPARK**

# BRIDGET SIEVERS MERRY |

## Success is not accidental

**Age:** 37

**Company and Title:** St. Vincent Healthcare program manager, nursing decision support and projects

**Hometown:** Hysham

**Education and/or Background:** Bachelor's degree in healthcare administration and in the process of a master's degree in project management.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would be a portfolio or program director or I would consider returning to the HR profession.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I enjoy coaching youth athletics, but find I don't get the opportunity to do it often with my work schedule. Seeing teams learn, grow and then succeed while being pushed as their coach to strategize in game situations is a lot of fun.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** This question has stumped me. I either haven't been given bad advice, I haven't retained the advice or I never realized it was bad advice.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Success looks different for every individual and we all must determine what success means to us. It can come in the form of long-term goals, such as career aspirations or building a family, but it can also be in smaller forms.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Taking the time to read. Reading is how I disconnect from the day-to-day tasks and clear my mind. I also appreciate a long Sunday walk with friends, paddle boarding on almost any body of water and my favorite pleasure of all is traveling to Europe with family or friends. Oh, and I drink a lot of coffee.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I want to continue to be trusted with more responsibility, continue to grow professionally and lead big bodies of work that challenge me.

**How do you measure your own success?** The first is in the relationships I have with those I work or interact with. Being able to collaborate and build trust are key to being able to succeed for me. I appreciate when I create meaningful relationships, especially with those who don't give trust easily. I am



also very goal and planning oriented.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** One challenge goes back to my first job out of college. Within months of starting with the company, I was promoted into a position that was part of my five-year plan. I was quite young and in hindsight, I think I would have been better served to have had a mentor or someone to guide me through the transition from college student to professional.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Health care is always challenging, but the last couple of years have been heavy with uncertainty and new situations to navigate. Staffing shortages, fear, exhaustion and watching others struggle doesn't come lightly.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** I don't watch much TV. I would be more apt to say I binge read books when I have time to spare.

**What is your favorite book?** "The Candy Bombers: The Untold Story of the Berlin Airlift and America's Finest Hour" by Andrei Cherny, "Written in the Scars" by Adriana Locke, "Pioneer Doctor: The Story of a Woman's Work" by Mari Graña, "As Dust Dances" by Samantha Young, and "Until Now" by Cristin Cooper" are a few of many that I enjoy.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I have always had an appreciation for the challenges, critical thinking and complexity of health care, but more so than that is the showing of care and compassion that happens and the stories that come as a result.

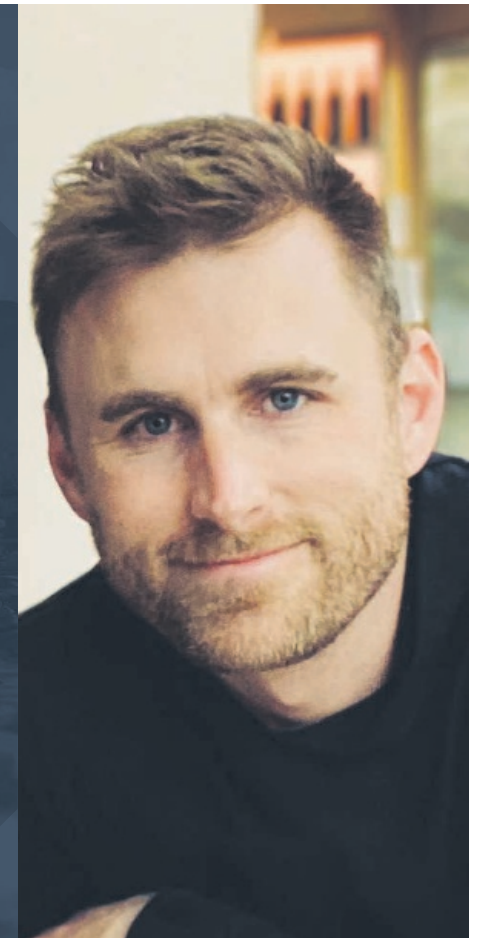
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# KATIE MUELLER | There is something special about showing up for people

**Age:** 35

**Company and Title:** RBC Wealth Management, vice president, financial advisor CFP

**Hometown:** Laurel

**Education and/or background:** Associates of science degree at Northwest Community College. Bachelor's degree in environmental design at Montana State University. Master's degree in architecture at Montana State University. CFP Certification, Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?**

My educational background would likely lead me to architecture which I am, in part, still drawn to. It would just definitely have to be something else that would still require creative problem solving.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?**

From an early age, I have loved the arts and have since taken many art and design courses. During graduate school, I student taught for both hand and digital architectural graphics classes. Nowadays, when the left side of my brain needs a break, I'll design graphics for friends and/or paint during my free time.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?**

"Picture one member of the audience in their underwear?" Anyone who knows me, knows that I have a very vivid imagination accompanied by the propensity to blush deeply.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** When successful, try not to be overly contented and when not successful try and apply the school-age notion of earning credit for showing your work. Instead of discounting your worth based on the failed final outcome, give yourself some credit for going through the process.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** All things sugar. I have the worst sweet tooth.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** There are so many different designations in my profession that can elevate your education and/or status, and there are a few I'd still love to obtain. Also, the highest ranking at RBC is Chairman's Council, so that would be the ultimate goal.

**How do you measure your own success?** I have a unique career in that success, in my eyes at least, is measured by the success of others. I'm successful at my job if my clients have a clear picture of their goals, how we are going to achieve them, and then lastly when it all comes to fruition.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Years ago, a close friend and I got into what we thought was an irreconcilable argument. We lost over a year of friendship because we failed to set our egos aside. Luckily, we've made it back to a close friendship and I have learned that oftentimes the way forward through differences is not one



side admitting guilt or seceding.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Leaving it at the office.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** HGTV's "Love It or List It." But really just about anything on that channel is on my watch list lately.

**What is your favorite book?** One I've especially loved recently was "The Giver of Stars" by Jojo Moyes.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** To be the relationships that I've cultivated. In taking genuine interest in what is important to a client, I find it's often reciprocated; finding myself with even more people caring about my well-being in turn.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** I would have to say my parents are my greatest mentors. Aside from shaping me into the person I am today, the reliability they have shown me throughout my life and still today as an adult is something I strive to emulate. There is something special about showing up for people when you've said you will and I have always appreciated knowing I can count on them. Accountability is something that should not be taken for granted.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** I've always loved the saying, "If opportunity doesn't knock, build the door."

**What advice would you give to anyone wanting to start a new business or excel in a business or field?** Instead of letting that doubt get in your way, let it fuel the fact that you, quite possibly, might be the perfect person for the venture.

**How do you view failure and success?** I have the tendency to never be contented in my successes and need to remember to take the time to celebrate them more before moving on to the next goal.



Three cheers for Chad Schreiner on receiving Billings Gazette's 40 Under Forty award.



create impact.



# MANDY NUNES | Change happens from the inside out

**Age:** 38

**Company and Title:** Rimrock Foundation  
Manager of RTs

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or background:** Management  
experience in various fields

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would work either in health care or human services. I love helping people.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I love working with other humans I love listening to people, finding their strengths and watching them grow.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "Don't share the hard parts of your story." The hardest, ugliest parts of my story are the parts that I am the most proud of surviving and they are the parts that can help people the most. By sharing my story without shame, I allow other people to do the same.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Individual success isn't defined by other people, it's defined by the individual. And every journey of success is littered

with moments that felt like failure.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** "The Bachelorette."

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Some day I would like to get into politics at some level. City Council or something. Change happens from the inside out.

**How do you measure your own success?** I am unbelievably proud of the woman I am today. I have a life that is fulfilling. I can talk about everything I have gone through to get here without shame and use it to encourage others through challenging times.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Honestly, not being honest with myself about who I am and what I want and need in life. I sacrificed my truth to make others happy or to appear the way I thought I needed to based on society's standards. It was pretty miserable and a hard lesson to learn.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Working through the pandemic has been

supremely challenging. Motivating people through uncertainty for such a long period of time. Watching people I care about feel anxious and not having concrete solutions.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "The Bachelorette."

**What is your favorite book?** "Daring Greatly," by Brene Brown.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Getting to know my team and my clients. Walking them through the hard stuff and making a connection. Watching them grow and believe in themselves.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** Brene Brown. Her desire to connect and lead through vulnerability, even though it is uncomfortable. To be true to yourself and hold space for others to do the same.

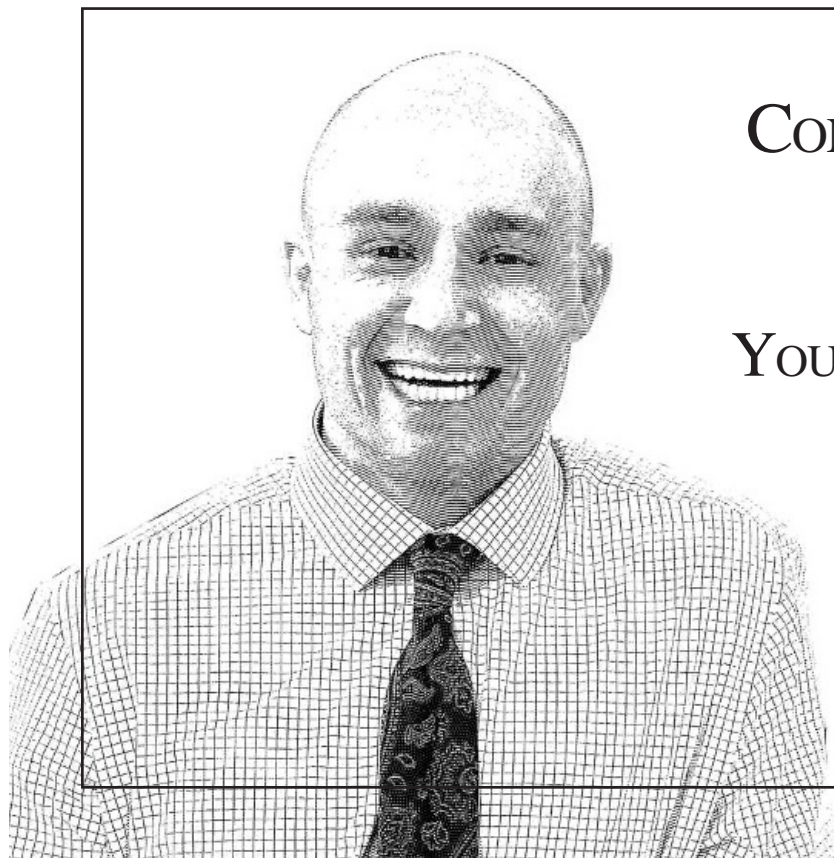
**Do you have a motto that you live by?** Be the change.

**What advice would you give to anyone**



**wanting to start a new business or excel in a business or field?** Suit up and show up as you are. Be willing to be yourself and do the work.

**How do you view failure and success?** My definition changes as I change and grow. I think as long as I am proud of the person I am at any given time, I am successful. The moments I am not proud of can be failures or lessons, depending on what I do with them.



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# VALARY OBERT | Do what makes you happy

**Age:** 32

**Company and title:** Home Builders Association, office manager

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Some college at MSUB and UM Western. Former cashier manager at Scheels.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I absolutely love what I do and the members that I work for. I feel as though I am exactly where I am supposed to be. I love being so involved in this community and meeting new people every single day. Aside from my full-time job, I also attend college full time for accounting. So I'm sure down the road I will switch career paths.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** My family is the biggest part of my life. I have been married to my husband, Ryan, for 10 years now and we have two incredible children, Ellie and Myles. Both of my children play sports and do many other activities outside of school which keeps me extremely busy. I love to go camping or travel every change I get. In my spare time, I like to get together with friends, do crafts, cook,

read, or binge watch Netflix.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** I wouldn't necessarily say that I've received any bad advice. Everyone has different opinions and I feel that no matter what, you can always take away something and grow from experiences, even if they are negative ones.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Believe in yourself and do what makes you happy. Don't let others push you to do what they want you to do. Sometimes it takes a while to figure life & future plans out. That's not a bad thing. Get involved in your community, make meaningful connections with people, and work hard.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Attending concerts every chance I get. I love live music and travel often to see concerts outside of Billings.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Obtaining my degree in accounting.

**How do you measure your own success?** Words of gratitude and encouragement from my members and peers. It reminds me why I do what I do. I love helping them grow and sustain their businesses.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I can't pinpoint any single failure. However, I've learned that when things don't go our way, we just move forward and learn from it.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Balancing it with my personal and academic life along with staying involved in the community.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Shameless"

**What is your favorite book?** I'm a sucker for a good mystery novel. I can't pick a favorite though.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Seeing my members succeed and grow their businesses, seeing kids come out of high school



and go into the construction trades, planning successful events and fundraisers.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My inspiration is my husband and my mom. Without them, I couldn't do all that I do. Juggling kids activities, PTA Meetings/events, working full time, attending school full time, and volunteering for other community organizations.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** You should never regret anything in life. If it's good, it's wonderful. If it's bad, it's experience.

## CONGRATULATIONS MAUREEN BRAAKE

University Communications & Marketing Director



We're proud to have you as a Yellowjacket!

Please join RBC Wealth Management in congratulating Katie Mueller on earning the Billings Gazette 40 Under Forty Award



**Katie Mueller, CFP®**  
Vice President – Financial Advisor  
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# LISA OLMSTED | Keep your eyes open and never stop learning

**Age:** 39

**Company and Title:** DOWL Public Involvement manager

**Hometown:** Livingston

**Education and/or Background:** Graduated from Park High School in Livingston. Earned a bachelor's degree in business management with a minor in entrepreneurship from Montana State University.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would love to be a venture capitalist or run my own foundation. Both of those would give me the opportunity to support people's dreams, brainstorming and building new things with them, but then I could move on to the next challenge.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I spent almost 15 years working in the nonprofit sector, so charities and civic endeavors are a priority for me. I currently serve as the president of the Billings Community Foundation board of directors. I think this organization is amazing, and worthy of the effort I put in because of the enormous impact it has on the many other smaller nonprofits through the region. The BCF distributes

grants, offers financial guidance, supports capacity building, and manages the investment of community endowments which offer long-term financial stability to our community nonprofits.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** I'm not sure there's ever really bad advice. It's just important to keep in mind the perspective from which it's coming.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** There are so many opportunities out there, including many you don't even know exist yet. Keep your eyes open and never stop learning.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** When my husband's away for work, I never cook for myself. Instead, I keep myself alive on chips and salsa and wine.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Earning an MBA has always been in the back of my mind.

**How do you measure your own success?** When I can make a positive impact on

the community and the lives of the people who live here. This comes from both professional and volunteer endeavors.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** When I didn't get a job on my former career path, I re-evaluated and made a significant move. That career change pushed me outside of my comfort zone, but resulted in new challenges, opportunities, and confidence.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Because I work on projects that range across different types of civil engineering and community planning, my job offers a never-ending learning curve.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Blown Away" and "School of Chocolate."

**What is your favorite book?** "My Life in France" by Julia Child.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I get to meet a lot of really interesting people doing



public outreach and engagement for planning and construction projects.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My college-era mentor, Dick Embry, taught me how to sell, how to interact with people, build rapport, and his high expectations sparked my drive. Not only was he my boss throughout college, but he also gave me my first professional job post-college at another of his businesses.



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# AUBREY PETERSCHICK | 'Be yourself'

**Age:** 39

**Company and title:** Advanced Care Hospital of Montana, CEO

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or background:** Registered Nurse, bachelor's of science in nursing, masters of science in organizational leadership.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I love what I do. If I couldn't do this, I think I would try to start my own business doing something that would still help people get back to living their lives in the best way possible.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I love to skate. Roller skating is my favorite, but I also very much enjoy hockey skating. I also enjoy the outdoors and hold a huge amount of respect for nature and everything nature offers us

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** Try to be a certain way to meet expectations. As I have grown in my career and as a professional, I have found that being authentic and vulnerable have made me a more satisfied individual as well as made me more successful in my leadership roles.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** You don't have to know exactly what you want to be to be successful. Success is not determined by how much money you are making, rather the impact you are having on other's lives and how satisfied and happy you are with what you are doing.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** When eating out in Billings, I enjoy drinking a "Street Fight" with my meal.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I honestly have achieved everything I could have imagined in my career up to this point. One achievement I would like to achieve though is becoming more proficient in coaching others to help them in their careers and achieve their goals.

**How do you measure your own success?** Being excited to come to work every day and learning new things every day about how to be a better leader and person

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Emotional decision-making.

In the past, I have let my emotions lead me to making impulsive decisions, which unfortunately do not usually end well.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** The people. Although the hardest is also the reason I do what I do, it doesn't make it any less difficult. Learning how to communicate and coach different people with different communication styles has definitely been the most difficult part of my job. Finally getting to a point where we are on the same page is also the most rewarding.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "The Great" on Hulu. Satiric comedy about Russia's Catherine the Great. It's pretty good.

**What is your favorite book?** "The Picture of Dorian Gray," by Oscar Wilde.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Making a difference in people's lives. Whether it is making a difference in the patients' lives that come to our hospital or the employees that work in the facility, it's definitely most rewarding to see how my leadership team



supports and grows the people.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My greatest mentor/inspiration cannot be isolated to one person. Judi Powers, my former CEO, has been beyond amazing in supporting me and mentoring me into the leader and person I am today. My celebrity inspiration is Elon Musk for being authentic, and eccentric, and continuing to push forward, even through difficulty and failure.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** "Be yourself"



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# LEVI PLOUFFE | Hard work pays off and you never want to be stagnant

**Age:** 40

**Company and title:** Bridge division superintendent for Sletten Construction

**Hometown:** Saco, Montana

**Education and/or background:** CET MSU Northern

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** Can you get paid for hunting and fishing? I have such a love for the great outdoors that I would probably figure out some way to get paid for guiding hunts or fishing trips.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** My passions are being a good leader and example at home and at work. Demonstrating to my kids that hard work pays off and you never want to be stagnant.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** Back in high school, one of my teachers said that if you don't go to college immediately after high school, you will never go and turn out to be successful. I took two years off after high school and I'm so glad I did because I figured out what I wanted to go to college for. Some kids go to college immediately after and have no idea what they want to do in life so they waste a degree or end up going to school later for a change of career. So, make your own decision because you're the only one that knows what's best for you.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Don't sweat the small stuff. There is a lot of fun to be had in high school, but make sure that you're getting the grades and applying yourself as well. You can still have fun and excel in school at the same time. It's not a popularity contest, be nice to everyone, apply yourself, stay out of trouble and it will get you very far in life.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Sneaking down into the basement to binge watch "Deadliest Catch" or "Wicked Tuna" with a bowl of vanilla ice cream and chocolate syrup, while hiding from my 2- and 4-year-old.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Retiring at 55 years old.

**How do you measure your own suc-**



**cess?** By the small joys of traveling with my family, fishing and hunting during my three-day weekends, and being the boss on most of my projects.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** If you don't read the plans carefully, your setbacks will take longer than if you sit down and take the time to do it right the first time.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Traveling the road and being away from my family.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Money Heist" on Netflix.

**What is your favorite book?** "Who Stole the Cookie from the Cookie Jar" or "How to Catch a Turkey," courtesy of my young kids.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** A safe, smooth riding bridge for Montana drivers. Also, getting a project done early and under budget.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My dad.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** You only live once; enjoy every minute of it.

**What advice would you give to anyone wanting to start a new business or excel in a business or field?** If you set your mind on doing some thing, make sure you follow through or you will regret it forever. It's better to have an oh well if it doesn't work out, than a what if you never take the plunge.

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# CODY REITZ | 'Opportunities don't happen. You create them'

**Age:** 30

**Company and Title:** Event coordinator Metra-Park

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Sports management with an emphasis in human resource management

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** If I had to do something else, I would have gone to law school so I could become a player agent. That is what my sports management degree is a basis for.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I enjoy meeting and interacting with new people. I am involved with putting on TEDx Billings, which will be taking place in March of 2022. I really enjoy being part of the Billings community and being involved in making Billings the best it can be.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** When my brother was about five, we were eating at Gusick's. They used to put an ice cream scoop of butter out on the table for bread. My brother was very upset because he thought it was ice cream and kept crying that

he wanted to eat it. Finally, after Mom and Dad had enough, they gave in and told him he could eat it. The look on his face was priceless as he took a big bite and realized what it actually was.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Keep working. When I was young, I struggled at baseball. I put in the time and effort and ended up playing baseball at the college level. That is when I realized that if you put in the work and are passionate, you can make anything happen.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Wilcoxson's huckleberry ice cream sandwiches. They are the best.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** To run my own venue and fair. This is my goal in this industry and this is my passion.

**How do you measure your own success?** By my ability to not simply achieve objectives, but to champion and entrench the values, the mission, the organization as a whole and the importance of every individual who contributes to the greater goal. Success is measured not

only by my ability to lead positive change, but to inspire, engage and enable others to optimize and engage their greatest potential.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** My freshman year of college, I was put on academic probation. This led me to taking a year off from school. When I was offered a scholarship to play baseball, I was required to take 22 credits in my first semester to be eligible to play. This was a huge workload for a student athlete and it required dedication and work to be able to play. I learned a lot about myself in that semester.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Dealing with situations that are out of my control.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Dexter," for about the 10th time.

**What is your favorite book?** "Jurassic Park" by Michael Crichton.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** The customer experience. There is something special about



when a crowd is connecting with an artist for a big show. It is hard to explain, but it's worth all the work we put into a show.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My father Charlie and my mother Teri. They have always been a source of inspiration to my brother and myself.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** "Opportunities don't happen. You create them." - Chris Grosser

# TANYA RIDDLE | Be kind. Work hard. Laugh. Repeat.

**Age:** 36

**Company and Title:** Owner of Billings Dermatology and Aesthetics

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or background:** Board Certified Dermatologist, Dermatopathologist, and Mohs surgeon

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I always appreciated my science teachers, and most especially my middle school teachers. I would have a lot of fun trying to make pre-teens enthusiastic about basic science. I would create elaborate experiments and take a lot of pride in my laboratory. I can imagine that being a very rewarding career.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I love ultralight backpacking with my husband. We try to spend as many weekends in the mountains as possible every summer. Since we only carry 10 pounds of gear each, it takes quite a bit of planning and preparation to have a successful backpacking trip. I find tremendous joy in geeking out while scrutinizing every ounce of toothpaste, food, etc. Our favorite adventures are those that we can bring our dog, Penny, along with us. She's our 3-year-old Labradoodle and is a complete joy

to everyone she meets. Training her the past few years has been a very rewarding challenge and passion. She is now mature enough to be an honoree staff member in my clinic. Having her sweet energy at work makes everybody's day better.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** "Nobody in life gets exactly what they thought they were going to get. But if you work really hard and you're kind, amazing things will happen." - Conan O'Brien

**What's your guilty pleasure?** I like mayonnaise more than the average person, substantially more. Additionally, I will never decline a side of French fries and would likely dip them in mayo.

**How do you measure your own success?** Through my ability to positively affect the lives around me, including my patients, staff, and family.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Improving the quality of my patients' lives is my primary goal. So, when treatment failures occur, it is hard not to feel defeated. In these moments, when I take it personally and get

discouraged, I find it best to be honest with my patient and promise to work even harder to help them find relief.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Squid Game."

**What is your favorite book?** "The Pillars of the Earth" by Ken Follett.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I am passionate about providing healing and health to patients while simultaneously developing meaningful relationships. Though some conditions are acute and do not require long-term management, so much of what I do as a dermatologist allows me to invest in getting to know my patients over different periods of their lives. Whether it is helping a patient clear their acne before their wedding or helping them recover from radiation dermatitis after cancer treatment, I often initially meet my patients during pivotal moments. I feel very fortunate for that opportunity.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** There are several key figures that helped shape my trajectory. My mother was



a remarkable woman whose constant support and encouragement gave me the confidence to reach for my dreams. I owe everything to her. Additionally, Dr. Madeline Duvic was my research supervisor and an ardent advocate at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. She helped me advance and succeed through multiple phases of my training. Lastly, Dr. Philip Tallman has been an outstanding mentor to me for dermatology, business, and life in general. His advice and guidance have helped me mold a successful and rewarding career.

# KEVIN SCHARFE | The real leaders are the ones who serve

**Age:** 39

**Company and Title:** Director of Rock31 at Big Sky Economic Development

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Bachelor's in design and education

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I've always thought it would be a blast to work as the creative director of an innovative industrial design firm.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I'm also the co-founder of a technology platform called Converge. We developed the platform to leverage meaningful in-person connection and competition to help people sustain a healthy, active lifestyle.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** I was once told that buying a house is always a great investment, as long as you own it for at least 10 years. I heard that advice in 2006, two years before the subprime mortgage crisis.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Ironically, learning how to sell a product or service is the one skill you will likely never learn in school, yet it's the one skill that every company in the world relies on to make money.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Eating an entire bag of chips and salsa from Guadalajara in one sitting.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I would like to see my technology startup Converge become a thriving business and make a measurable impact on community health within the next five years.

**How do you measure your own success?** I measure success based on whether or not the work I do can have a lasting, positive impact on my community, friends and family after I die.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I learned as a mission-driven person, to never go into business with someone whose primary drive in life is to

make as much money as possible.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** As a business advisor, programming director and entrepreneur ecosystem builder, it can feel like I am running a marathon without a finish line. The vast majority of the work I do happens behind the scenes, working to ensure clients and startup events are successful. It's gratifying work, but it can be difficult to catch my breath.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** The series "See" on Apple TV.

**What is your favorite book?** "The Brain" by David Eagleman.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I get to help passionate, hard-working entrepreneurs pursue their dreams. I love being around like-minded people and doing my part to make Billings a vibrant startup community.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My mother. I think too often in our



society we glorify the leaders that delegate all their work, but the real leaders are the ones who serve. My mom is the strongest leader that I know, and she does it all with a servant's heart.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** "Whether you think you can, or you think you can't, you are right." - Henry Ford

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# CHAD SCHREINER | Risk is an asset

**Age:** 36

**Company and title:** Designer associate at A&E Design

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or background:** Montana State University for bachelor's of arts in environmental design and master's degree in architecture.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would probably pursue a career in the video game industry. I don't often play anymore, but I have a huge appreciation for the medium. Architectural visualization is a large part of what I do and it would not only be an easy segue, but an interesting application of my skill set. I often marvel at the scope of visual design produced for modern video games and I think it would be fun to creatively produce those digital environments instead of ones that are built.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I would call it a quiet passion, but strong nonetheless, for supporting kids. Over the years it has taken various forms from providing student support and guidance through my time as the chairperson of the Graduate Council at the School of Archi-

ecture (MSU), to giving lunch-and-learns for high school students with Inspire Billings, or coaching baseball and soccer.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** I was once told that "some people just aren't cut out for leadership." How demoralizing. To me, anyone has the potential to be a leader or to become one in whatever capacity they feel comfortable. Years ago, I attended a mindset course with Elation here in Billings and it was eye-opening. Mindset is so crucial for personal performance and growth engagement. I prefer to positively promote others' abilities rather than discard their potential.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** "Risk is an Asset." The definition of risk is so simple, but it can equate to so much when applied correctly. Applying risk is an effective way to be bold, to stand out or innovate.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** The Marvel Movies. I have watched most of them more times than I'd care to admit. The climactic battles of these heroes who've permeated our culture is my ambient noise of

choice.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I have always aspired to have my work published. I think it would be so much fun, and immeasurably fulfilling, to open an architectural magazine and see my work printed on a page.

**How do you measure your own success?** Ignoring the Moneyball metric. There's no statistical or monetary measurement that can quantify personal success. It's all too subjective. I have accomplished a lot of what I set out to do in my career and those wins quantify success.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Following my first year of architecture school, I wasn't selected from my exceptionally competitive class to continue into the second year. It was a heavy blow because I had always excelled academically. The frustration was almost painful. In the end, however, I was selected during a last-minute expansion. The experience reframed my perspective, not only on merit, but on performance and personal accountability.



**What is the hardest part of your job?** Managing expectations. Design is subjective and beginning with the end in mind is an arduous task. Every day is a balance of showing great design while shaping expectations related to the final solution.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Yellowstone." I had avoided the first three seasons out of fear that it would misrepresent Montana. It does, but that proved to be OK.

**What is your favorite book?** "Wool" by Hugh Howey.

# TYLER SLYNGSTAD | Give each day the respect it deserves

**Age:** 39

**Company and Title:** SCL Health Montana Heart and Vascular Institute: interventional cardiologist

**Hometown:** Three Forks, Montana

**Education and/or Background:** Undergraduate at Montana State University. Medical school at University of Washington. Medical training at University of Rochester Medical Center (Internal Medicine residency, Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship, Interventional Cardiology Fellowship).

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** Something like a shrimp boat captain would be high on my list. A large part of my life has been spent either in a classroom or between hospital walls. The idea of drifting out at sea and immersed in bountiful creation holds a certain level of whimsy.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Being a constant, positive presence in my four children's lives.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** I need to go to college right after high school. It's certainly the right

move for many people, but I needed an extra year to understand more about who I was as a person and what mattered most in my life. This allowed me to enter college the following year with not only a career goal that aligned with these realizations, but a clear plan on how to achieve it.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Don't worry so much about what you want to do for a future career. It's far more important to invest your time and energy towards the type of person you want to become. Someone that has pride in the person they are striving towards can be successful in anything they choose to do.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** When your wife is from Buffalo, New York, you have a different level of appreciation for the chicken wing.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I want to help develop Montana Heart and Vascular Institute at SCL Health into the region's primary referral center for cardiovascular care.

**How do you measure your own success?** Balance. My occupation inherently takes up many hours of the week. The days when I can still ensure time for family and my own health and spiritual growth are when I am achieving success.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Give each day the respect that it deserves. This is something that I continue to fail at, but am now more aware of. The seemingly small daily choices that I make about nutrition, getting adequate sleep and hydration, physical activity and time for introspection has profound effects on the energy and focus that I am able to give back to each day.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Not being able to leave work at work. It's difficult to take care of a patient when they are at their most vulnerable state of health one minute and being fully invested in a Lego building session with my kids in the next.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Parks and Recreation."



**What is your favorite book?** "A River Runs Through It" by Norman Maclean.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** The immense variety of tasks required for my job is what I find most rewarding. I may be sitting down discussing a simple medication change with a patient one minute and rushing to the cardiac catheterization lab to perform an emergent, lifesaving procedure the next.



# WILL TEDROW | Whatever you are setting out to do, push yourself

**Age:** 31

**Company and Title:** Youth Dynamics, human resources director

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or Background:** Master's degree in organizational leadership.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** Mental health has been my calling for quite some time. If I wasn't working for Youth Dynamics, I would focus on developing programs to improve the quality of life for LGBTQ+ people in rural communities.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** In my time away from work, I am a Ph.D. student in health psychology, where I research the impact of mental health on physical health. There is a growing calling for me to eliminate health disparities among people who face adversities that others do not. Creating programs to help eliminate these disparities and improve health care outcomes is an emerging passion of mine.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** Blending in is the key to being successful. The suggestion came from a good place; caring adults who wanted to see me be safe and protected. I have found that the opposite is true. We can only become successful when we embrace the aspects of our personalities that make us stand out. We have to have the courage to think differently.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Embrace who you are. Sometimes accepting who we are at our core can be scary and leave us feeling isolated. When we find the courage to embrace the different aspects of ourselves, we can unlock our true potential. Take the leap, rip off the Band-Aid, and share yourself with the people around you.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** I am a sucker for frozen yogurt. Mixing flavors and getting carried away with the toppings is where it's at.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I plan to develop a new treatment approach to integrate physical health and mental



health to improve a person's total well-being.

**How do you measure your own success?** Success is about walking away from a situation and being proud of who you showed up as. I am a numbers guy, and I love to see my team and our organization reach our goals. But, at the end of the day, that feeling that I honored who I am through the process has so much more value to me.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Any time I launch a program that doesn't take off, I learn a lot. I worked on a new supervision model a few years ago that never gained the traction we needed. The framework was there, but the buy-in was lacking. This experience reminded me how important collaboration is and taught me new ways to involve others in the process.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** As the HR director, I deal with some challenging situations. Consistently, the most challenging aspect of my job is helping someone understand that they are standing outside of their integrity.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "The Foundation" on Apple TV.

**What is your favorite book?** I live and breathe textbooks. I am not sure I have a favorite, but "Research for the Social Sector" was a real page-turner.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** It is rewarding watching people realize their potential. I get to witness people overcoming obstacles they didn't think they could take every day.

## Celebrating our very own 40 Under Forty.

### Tyler Slyngstad, MD

SCL Health Heart & Vascular Institute –  
Billings Cardiology

### Thomas Desmarais, MD

SCL Health Heart & Vascular Institute –  
Billings Cardiac & Vascular Surgery

### Jena Huck

St. Vincent Healthcare – Nursing Leadership

### Bridget Sievers Merry

St. Vincent Healthcare – Nursing Leadership

St. Vincent Healthcare is focused on quality, and driven to provide the best patient care experience in the region. Our core values are reflected in the work of these outstanding associates. *Congratulations!*



# JACOB THIESSE | It doesn't need to be complicated

**Age:** 38

**Company and Title:** Pharmacy Informatics at Billings Clinic

**Hometown:** Brainerd, Minnesota

**Education and/or Background:** Doctor of pharmacy from the University of Montana, associate of arts from Central Lakes College

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I was an electrician's helper over summers when I was kid. I really liked that work. If life kept me from being a pharmacist that works on the electronic medical record, I'd definitely be an electrician.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Doing things with and being with my wife, Jacqui. I don't get to do much with my hands at work, so at home my wife and I do projects for the house. We built our family room furniture together. It's great to cook with her or read by a campfire or hike with her. We've been married for five years, and it's all been delightful.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** That I should be able to do everything on my own. There certainly are things one should be able to do on their own,

like change a tire or iron a shirt, but anything big or important is usually best done with a partner or a team.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Make a plan and write it down. Writing it down makes it real. It's the first step to getting it done. The plan might change and that's OK, just write down the new plan. It doesn't need to be complicated and shouldn't be complicated. Plenty of things will come along and complicate it for you.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** I eat more ice cream than anyone I know. We used to have big plastic pails when I was a kid. I never really grew out of it.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I've presented on panels at national conferences, but I've never presented a full, accredited session on my own.

**How do you measure your own success?** As an individual, it's my responsibility to grow, and as a leader it's my responsibility to provide an environment where my

team can grow, so I reflect on the abilities of myself and my team. If I'm growing in what I can contribute to the organization and our mission, and my team is growing in what they can contribute to the organization and our mission, that's success.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Early on, I had a direct report confidently tell me that she had learned everything there was to learn about what we do. I realized I had sheltered my team too much. After that, I didn't hold back.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Few will comment when something is working well, but you get a lot of attention when something doesn't work right. Sometimes it's challenging to think of that attention as necessary feedback. Despite good preparation and efforts, not everything will turn out perfect or as expected. I think a lot of jobs where serving others is inherent also have this difficulty.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** The first two seasons of Mr. Robot. It was such a clever series. I hope the creator and head writer does another project.



**What is your favorite book?** "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** When I was a clinical pharmacist, my wins would come every shift. I might help a nurse or physician with a difficult situation or help a patient understand. In my current role, the wins aren't as frequent.

# BRANDON TREESE | Do everything with a happy heart

**Age:** 38

**Company and Title:** Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Floberg Real Estate, Broker Associate

**Hometown:** Riverton, Wyoming

**Education and/or background:** Bachelor's of science degree in business administration from University Northern Colorado

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** Don't laugh, but my friends and family often say that I missed my calling as an attorney.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I love entrepreneurship and small business. I love that I get to sell business opportunities as part of my job. My wife and I also flip homes and she's a rock star designer with incredible vision. I love working with her on those projects.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "Wait until you are 100% ready." If you want to do something, and you've done your homework and you know it's something you're passionate about, start immediately and go for it. I'm so analytical and

such a perfectionist that I tend to over-analyze and never actually start. Then I look up and it's 10 years down the road and I've done nothing but analyze something to death. This is the advice I often give myself, and it's terrible advice.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** It starts with honesty and respect and goes from there. Who you are when no one is looking says a lot. Do everything with a happy heart; people notice and opportunities come from it. Do the right thing, even (and especially) when it's hard. Come to know something more than anyone else in the world.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** I love being with my family watching movies and eating popcorn.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Obtain my CCIM Certification (Certified Commercial Investment Member).

**How do you measure your own success?** It used to be, straight up, money. Success to me now is maintaining balance and quality of life. Work hard for a good income,

but not necessarily at any cost. Enjoy the moments of life; don't just make it about going to work and coming home and going to work again. It's a really easy routine to fall into. Work hard at building and maintaining relationships. Do what you love. Give and be part of the community you live in. Be involved and be present.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** Owning a manufacturing company in Colorado and having to shut it down. I learned so much from that entire process of starting it up, running it and shutting it down.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** **Not having a definitive financial future.** I came from a 10-plus year professional and managerial career with a salary and benefits. Now, working 100% on commission in a real estate market that can change is a different experience altogether.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** The Office. "That's what she said."

**What is your favorite book?** I hate to say it but "Think and Grow Rich" by Napo-



leon Hill is a book that I've read and re-read and listened to the audio version more than any other book. I do like the "Richest Man in Babylon" by George S. Clason as well. I'm also a fan of the "Killing" series by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I'm betting on myself every day.

# RACHEL TURITTO | Create your personal definition of success

**Age:** 37

**Company and title:** First Interstate Bank chief human resources officer

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or background:** University of Mary bachelor's degree in business administration

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** Growing up, I always wanted to be a hostage negotiator.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** Making sure that all voices are heard. I am passionate about people and using my resources to make the world a better place for everyone. I also have a lifelong love of horses. Growing up, horses taught me about responsibility, dedication and teamwork. These are values I've carried with me into my personal and professional life.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "Fake it until you make it." I have tried it in different seasons of my career and not showing up as my authentic self was exhausting. At the end of the day, I want to help create work environments where people

can bring their full selves to the workplace.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Create your personal definition of success. Don't worry about what others think. You are thinking about yourself far more than anyone else will.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Asiago bagels from Sourdough Bagels.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Be the CEO of First Interstate Bank.

**How do you measure your own success?** By evaluating if I am living to my values.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** When facing large projects and workloads, my instinct is to protect and shield others from the having to take on the brunt of the work. By doing this, I diminish my team's ability to prove their value and belittle their abilities.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Finding balance in my work vs. life integration.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Schitts Creek."

**What is your favorite book?** "Braving the Wilderness" by Brene Brown.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I love how dynamic HR is. It is a profession that is never static. The outputs from my department can make a positive impact on the lives of our employees. Whether it is designing our benefits programs to meet the needs of working parents or cultivating development programs that bring out the best in our leaders, I have the unique opportunity to make a difference for our employees for the better. This is a responsibility I take very seriously.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** My mom. She taught me a strong work ethic and a responsibility to use my resources to help others. Not only was she a single parent who worked night shifts as a nurse to support our family, she devoted her life to fostering children with special needs, opening her home and heart to many children for a lifetime.



**Do you have a motto that you live by?** Even the smallest person can change the course of the future.

**What advice would you give to anyone wanting to start a new business or excel in a business or field?** Create a board of advisors for your development. Seeking out advice from a diverse group of people can help you on your way and provide different aspects of success.

# COLTON WELHAVEN | Each one of us has our own path to success

**Age:** 27

**Company and Title:** Associate at Buchanan Capital

**Hometown:** Billings

**Education and/or background:** Billings Central Catholic High School and Carroll College for accounting and finance.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would want to own and operate my own business in the restaurant industry. A dream job, Peloton instructor.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "Good things come to those who wait." Don't get me wrong, in certain circumstances being patient and waiting your turn is the right decision. But as a young member of the Billings community, I am reminded of the opportunities out there of those who volunteer and who are willing to do the work. In my mind, I was nervous to be a part of the Billings Catholic Schools Foundation or Billings Public Library Foundation because of my age. However, I have thrown my hand up and been given an opportunity to be involved. I hope this resonates with those young and old. Do not be afraid. Raise your hand.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Stop comparing yourself to others. Be authentic and be you. Each one of us has our own path to success and how we define that success matters to only you and not how society sees it.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Easy, I have the biggest sweet tooth. I am always craving ice cream from Big Dipper.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** One day, a long ways down the road, I hope to be governor and serve the State of Montana.

**How do you measure your own success?** One line from "Atomic Habits" by James Clear sticks out, "Build a system for getting 1% better every day." The consistency of my daily habits has helped me reach my goals. It is so hard to see progress over the course of a week or month when we are in the daily grind of life. It is when we take a step back and pause that we can see how far we have come.

**What failure have you learned the**

**most from?** My college athletic experience. Like many other athletes, I wish I would have played more and achieved greater personal success on the field. However, I have never been more humbled or worked harder in my life. Sports have a funny way of molding us into the people we become. Without my time on the Carroll College football team, I know I would not be where I am today both professionally and personally.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** One of the hard truths about life is we do not get to live forever. We experience this working at a wealth management firm. Some of our hardest days have been speaking and working with families who have recently lost loved ones. We have the opportunity to build relationships with these clients over many years, and some of them become close friends. We realize the finality of life is a part of the business, but it does not make it any easier.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "Formula 1: Drive to Survive." I am hooked. Mercedes vs. Red Bull has so much drama and behind-the-scenes action.



**What is your favorite book?** "Make Your Bed" by Admiral H. McRaven and "Open" by Andre Agassi.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Making a tangible impact in our client's lives. We get the chance to work with amazing, thoughtful and inspiring people. Being a partner on their journey to their goals is special.

# SETH WILDUNG | My biggest successes have been following my gut

**Age:** 34

**Company and Title:** Roger L Daniel Insurance Co.

**Hometown:** Stanford, Montana

**Education and/or Background:** Bachelor's degree in business management minor marketing and small business management

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would be a physical therapist. I have always found the human body a fascinating machine. I also have a passion for helping people achieve fitness and health goals.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** My wife would say hunting. This is true from September through November as my weekends revolve around chasing elk in the mountains with my brother and father. My calling, however, would have to be fitness. I have been a CrossFit coach for seven years.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "If you have an itch, don't scratch it." I was once told not to step out and do anything that felt too risky. All of my biggest successes have been following my gut or scratching that itch. If I played it safe, I would

not be married to my wife, hired on at Roger Daniel or played college football.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Life's barely long enough to become good at one thing. So be intentional at what you become good at. Find a passion that fits into your pillars of life. Hold your morals close. They define who you become.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** I have seen every single vampire and werewolf movie ever made. Even the bad ones.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** As an agency, I would really love to win Agency of the Year. It is more of a team achievement with our office and Roger, but it would be a huge accomplishment.

**How do you measure your own success?** By my pillars of life. Faith, family and fitness. If my wife and family are happy, my faith is present and I feel good then my success is able to shine through no matter what challenge might be in the future.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** I love to fail. I always make sure I am failing forward.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Losing clients after building a relationship. When I first started in insurance, I would become disappointed when people would leave me, but it is all part of the business and I've learned that no just means not right now.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** Ted Lasso.

**What is your favorite book?** "The Unforgiving Race to Greatness Winning" by Tim Grover. My favorite audio book is "Greenlights" by Matthew McConaughey.

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Knowing I provide protection for people's most prized assets is so rewarding for me along with setting up their family for success in future preparations. The most important aspect is building a relationship with my clients. I truly enjoy speaking to all of my customers. The best part is you never know



who will be on the phone next. That is exciting to me.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** Roger Daniel has to be one of my biggest mentors. He took a chance on me and I have been with him ever since. My biggest inspiration has to be my grandfathers.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** Give 1% more each and every day.

# JOSH WIRTH | Get there early, whatever it is

**Age:** 39

**Company and Title:** Creative director at Kinetic Marketing and Creative

**Hometown:** Gillette, Wyoming

**Education and/or Background:** Bachelor's degree in fine arts from University of Florida

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I would find a way to do what I do. I love all things creative so if I couldn't be a graphic designer/creative director, I would love to be involved in making films.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I split my free time between photography, digital art and reading. I fell in love with photography after college and have amassed tens of thousands of photos since then. It's usually an understanding of my friends that I will be bringing my camera everywhere we go.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** I honestly don't think anyone has ever given me bad advice. I mean, a pet trainer once told me to punch my dog in the face (I promptly left that trainer). A guy in college told me that when on a date, I should

not only order food for a girl, but decide what she would be eating.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Get there early, whatever it is. I've spent my entire life doing my best to be on time (and on time is 10 minutes early). At a photo or video shoot, it allows me to have a moment to be in the space before everything starts moving. Before a meeting, I can make sure I have everything I need, I got my wi-fi password entered, the presentation is pulled up and I am ready to go. And even if you don't have any good ideas during the meeting, people might say at least he was on time. Plus you get first dibs on the donuts.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** I am a huge fan of video games. I grew up playing video games with my brother and it was always something that we could do together.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I am excited some day to be on a board for an organization that I believe in. It would be great to bring my experience to a new organization and even more so to learn from others and apply new

knowledge to my current personal and professional life. That or having your employees give you one of those "World's Greatest Boss" coffee mugs. I think that would be pretty great.

**How do you measure your own success?** Success has such finality. I succeeded. It's over. We can all go home. I guess I would have to say I don't really. Am I happy? Yeah.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Creative on demand can be challenging.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** You mean besides "The Office"? I constantly have the TV on in the background while I am designing, drawing or editing photos so the number of hours of content I have consumed is quite staggering. The last series that was a true three-in-the-morning-style binge was "Squid Game." There is a really great story there if you can get past the violence.

**What is your favorite book?** "11-22-63" by Stephen King is one of the top books I have read in a while. History and time travel are a fun combo and King is a master storyteller.



**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** Collaborating on something as a team and being happy with the outcome. My favorite part of any job is when the idea hasn't formed yet and we are all working together to figure out what the challenge actually is.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** I couldn't put it down to one person. I think it would be everyone I surround myself with. Trying to emulate the qualities of the people you love is just a never-ending supply of inspiration.

# LAUREN WRIGHT | Extend grace, celebrate honestly, accept vulnerability

**Age:** 34

**Company and Title:** Billings Community Foundation

**Hometown:** Aiken, S.C.

**Education and/or Background:** I graduated with honors from the University of South Carolina in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in business management and marketing, focusing on non-profit leadership. Since then, I have spent my professional career creating community through positions at the University of Montana, YWCA, MSUB, the Wise Wonders Children's Museum, and currently as executive director of the Billings Community Foundation. I thoroughly enjoy organizational development and institutional change that provide for the more efficient and effective use of local resources.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** When I've done all that I can for the Billings Community Foundation, I plan to take a short sabbatical to spend more time with my children, Henry and Judith. I've always thought the most important contribution I can make in life is to cultivate

kind, resilient, and secure little humans that will grow into engaged, community-minded adults. When the children are older, I'd like to explore options in corporate philanthropy or civic service, where my enthusiasm for policy change and strategic growth will provide additional community impact.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** "Fake it till you make it." In my experience, especially as a full-time working mother, this kind of superficial advice can be exhausting and suppresses the deep, authentic, and honest conversations that lead to personal growth. When so much of the world we see is indeed fake via Facebook, Instagram, and other social media, I believe it's more important than ever to extend grace, celebrate honestly, and accept vulnerability in ourselves and others.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** Define success for yourself early on and take advantage of opportunities in school and the community to

elevate yourself in that direction.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** I want to ensure the Billings Community Foundation's Endowment grows to an amount that will perpetually sustain the annual operating budget and allow 100% of donations and staff time to be focused exclusively on community impact. The community foundation represents a wide variety of ideas and interests of individual donors who have united in a common purpose of bettering of their community for current and future generation in perpetuity, now and forever. If we are indeed better off in Billings, we need to prioritize endowment building for the organizations that add value in our community.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** Human capital and capacity. Under my leadership, guidance, and commitment to financial stewardship, the Billings Community Foundation has grown tremendously and continues to work with local leadership,



both non-profit and public, to ensure that the most vulnerable in our community have access to critical resources. In fiscal year 2021, as a staff of only two full-time employees, the Foundation successfully cultivated \$1,611,000 for local investment, granted to 136 different charitable organizations, provided more than \$741,000 of financial support, processed and received 1525 donations, while also spearheading the annually Yellowstone Valley Giving Day, running five separate Community Grant Cycles, and renovating a historic building in downtown Billings.



## Congratulations for being named 40 Under Forty.



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# DANIEL ZOLNIKOV | Be brief, be brilliant, be gone

**Age:** 34

**Company and Title:** Broad Reach Power Energy Developer

**Hometown:** Roundup

**Education and/or Background:** Master's degree in business administration, three undergraduate business majors at University of Montana. Four-term Montana State Representative.

**If you couldn't do this, what would you do instead?** I really enjoy coaching and teaching. It is extremely rewarding to be able to influence positive change and help people maximize strengths, understand and minimize their weaknesses and identify aspects of their overall potential.

**What other passions/callings are part of your life?** I have been a public servant in Montana for the bulk of my adult life and am fortunate for the support I have received over the years. Being able to serve in Montana's legislature allowed me to work on a myriad issues that positively impacted not only Billings, but the entire state.

**What is the worst advice you've received and why?** Not all advice is benevolent and I would argue the reasoning behind why the advice was shared is just as important as the advice itself. Even though sincere advice isn't always helpful, it at least comes with good intentions of your best interest.

**What advice would you give a teenager about success?** You do you. Many people lack authenticity and commandeer other people's version of success. My definition of success is much different than yours, so it is important to identify what success means for you and not be coerced into living up to someone else's standards. And to really understand what your standard of success is, you will need to have a solid understanding of yourself. Or as the ancient Greeks said

it, "Know thyself"

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Superhero shows and movies, finding a great bargain, queso and nachos, dark chocolate and being a contrarian.

**What is one professional accomplishment you still want to achieve?** Tough call. I like to venture into new areas and different fields, which means I never know where I might end up. Currently, I want to see our energy projects get built out. This would have a huge impact for our county and state and will ensure Montana maintains its role as an energy exporter. I would like to once again serve in office and continue my policy work that covers a variety of issues. On the personal side, I am looking forward to having kids. I think I would be a great dad.

**How do you measure your own success?** Reaching the goals or completing the tasks we have in our sights. A deeper level of success can be understanding why it was identified as a goal in the first place and identifying the driver behind it.

**What failure have you learned the most from?** My life is an adventure. It has its ups. It has its downs. Neither can exist without each other and I can't really sum it up to successes and failures. I have had great adventures, bad adventures, educational adventures and adventureless adventures. After landing my first job out of college, I moved 2,000 miles away and arrived on the job site. Upon arrival, I quickly came to the realization that the job mainly focused on software development. Sadly, it was not communicated to me during the very lengthy, multi-step interview process.

**What is the hardest part of your job?** I am the type of person who needs to discuss

topics out loud and talk through the details, which can be a challenge since I'm not always afforded this luxury.

**What was the last show you binge-watched?** "The Prince" on Netflix, "Chappelle's Show", "Arrested Development" and "Rick and Morty." Real thought-provoking stuff, I know.

**What is your favorite book?** I have recently discovered audio books and am listening to all of the books that tie into Stephen King's "The Dark Tower" series with the most recent book being "The Stand."

**What is the most rewarding/important aspect of your occupation?** I get to work in a relatively flat structure. This allows me the independence I require and the support I need. There are endless amounts of moving pieces in development and there is never a dull moment. I think the most important aspect of what I do is working on the long-term vision of the projects.

**Who is your greatest mentor/inspiration?** Tank Man. China's Tiananmen Square protests occurred in 1989 where hundreds of thousands of Chinese protested the government on behalf of their basic rights including free speech, free press and government accountability. The Chinese military was brought in to squash the protests, which resulted in the deaths of thousands of people. Tank Man is the name given to the man who briefly stopped military tanks from moving forward towards the protestors. He did this by standing in front of the tanks and repeatedly shifting into the path of the tank as it attempted to maneuver around him.

**Do you have a motto that you live by?** Be brief, be brilliant, be gone.

**What advice would you give to any-**



**one wanting to start a new business or excel in a business or field?** Connect with and meet up with someone who has found success in their field or area of interest. It is amazing how many people in Billings are willing to take the time to grab a cup of coffee and have a conversation. Business school 101 would suggest writing a business plan.

**How do you view failure and success?** Failure is derived from a lack of an attempt. Success is derived from either a failed attempt, or completed attempt. The lesson derived from a failed attempt is usually not something worth celebrating. But the lesson of why the failure occurred must have been needed or else the previous attempt would have likely been completed.

**What do you do for fun/relax/hobby?** I have recently revisited an old high school hobby of floating the river on innertubes with cocktails. The true Montana way. I enjoy board games, fishing, road trips and using my air fryer.

**What's the greatest gift you ever received? Why?** On more than one occasion, I have been gifted a place to live by many of my friends and family. This allowed me to survive on a very low budget and spend my time and energy on my ambitions.



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# A HUGE THANK YOU



*I'd like to thank my family, friends, the Billings community, and my current and former clients that have entrusted me with their cases. I'm so grateful for all the support I've received through the years, and I wouldn't be anywhere if not for you all.*

– Colin

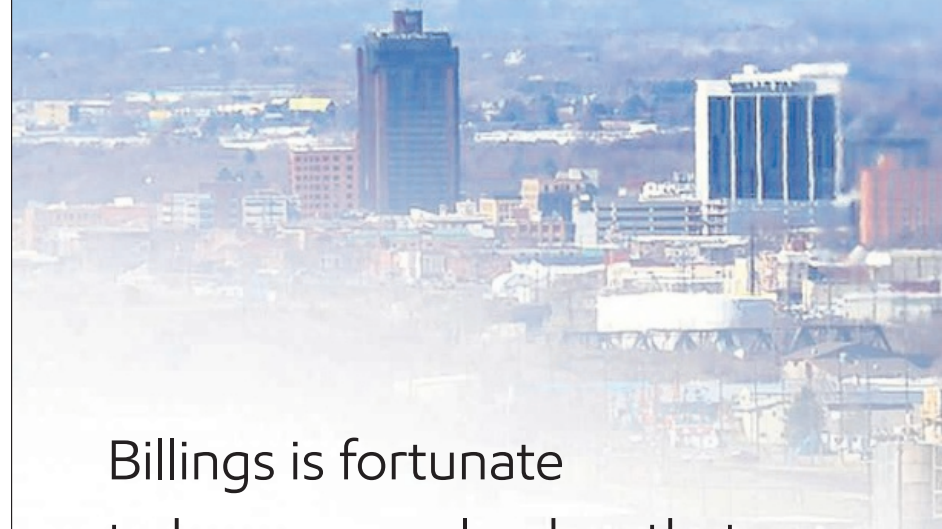


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HAVE TO HOLD A  
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ORDER TO BE  
A LEADER.”**

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