

2023

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Top Under 40^{and}
Up & Coming

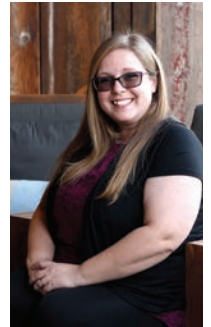


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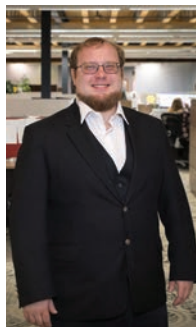
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**DAILY
NEWS**

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TOP LEADERS AND UP & COMING LEADERS SHARE PASSION FOR COMMUNITY

In a remarkable celebration of leadership, we proudly introduce this year's exceptional group of individuals: 26 Top Leaders Under 40 and nine Up & Coming Leaders. These individuals come from diverse backgrounds, yet they share a profound dedication to the community we all call home.

As we reviewed the nominations, a common thread emerged among our Under 40 Top Leaders. They are unwavering champions of our community, where they not only work and live but also play their part in making it better. They share the gifts of balance in their lives, a tireless work ethic, and the ability to inspire those around them.

Our Up & Coming Leaders possess these very same qualities, despite their younger age. Exploring their nominations is a testament to the profound influence they are already having in our county. Their potential is boundless and ever-expanding.

As you explore the following pages, we encourage you to take a moment to get to know these extraordinary leaders. Delve into their stories, absorb the wisdom they generously share, and who knows, you might just uncover a gem of knowledge you hadn't encountered before.

The Effingham County Chamber Board of Directors, along with the dedicated staff, and the Effingham Daily News, wholeheartedly congratulate this year's class of Top Leaders. We extend our deepest gratitude for their unwavering commitment not only to our community and employers but also to their personal growth, contributing to Effingham County's standing as a vibrant place to live, work, and play! Congratulations!



Lucinda Hart
CAE, MBA, IOM
President & CEO



Becky Brown
NFPC
Membership Director



Jeff Fritchtnitch, Ed. S.
Workforce Development
Director



Nicole Morrison
Director of Marketing &
Communications



Michelle Markham
Administration &
Membership Associate

EFFINGHAM DAILY NEWS

effinghamdailynews.com



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Senior Account Executive



Julie Harkins
Sales Executive

Alex Anderson

ADMINISTRATOR
THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF COSMETOLOGY



BIRTH YEAR
1990

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

DCFS
Warrior Nation Cancer Foundation

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Altamont High School Class of 2009
Illinois Licensed Cosmetologist 2014
Illinois Licensed Cosmetology Instructor 2021

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

My version of success is exactly what I am living. I have an amazing career that I worked hard for. I have the opportunity to teach and influence many young women in this community into gainful employment. I am a part of the education for future Salon Professionals. In my life, I was able to set personal goals and held myself accountable to achieve them. I also find success in my home life, as I am

raising 2 beautiful, healthy daughters that we adopted through foster care. I have a beautiful family and amazing friend group that recognizes and celebrates us for who we are.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Comparison is the thief of joy. This is something I say to my students frequently. It can be so easy to see what others have or have done and think you are not equal. I want the youth of today to realize that each of us is unique and creative and able in our own individual ways. With social media platforms readily available to anyone, someone will always seem to have it better. Find pride in your own work and abilities. Being proud of yourself is one of the best feelings.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Having a Tribe. Being able to give and receive support from family and friends and placing yourself where you have value. Starting careers, relationships, raising children, personal well-being and health are all things that require support and gratitude from the people you surround yourself with. Happiness can look different to everyone. In my life, I am happy with the people I spend it with.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

In the beginning of my career search, I would have to say my then and current barber, Kandice Houser. She started cutting my hair in high school, and I was always fascinated by her "job". I picked her brain for years on the process and how to become what she was. She inspired me to go to Cosmetology school. Through the years, I worked locally in

salons. My current inspirer is Chandra Niemerg. Working side by side in the salon with her, I was able to learn more about the industry and spark an interest in the educational side of Cosmetology. She told me that I would be great, and I took the chance. She encouraged me and trusted me with a major responsibility within her school, and I could not have done this without her. She has taught me so much through the years about business and life. I am exactly where I am supposed to be.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Accountability is my top quality. Being able to finish tasks and complete projects. Showing up and putting in the work. Being Ethical and Compassionate as well as understanding. Influencing others to work as a team. As a leader, you have to withhold trust and be accountable. Everyone learns or performs differently. Being able to make impactful connections within a group.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

I believe people need comfort in a community. Knowing your neighbor and being active within the community. Acceptance of all People. Effingham is expanding and growing. But in this community, people look out for each other. Many times this city has come together to provide support or relief to local families. I am proud of our big small town. Local youth sports and activities thrive in this area, and Effingham is grounded in faith and religion. Raising my own non-traditional family in this town has opened my eyes to the outpouring support available here.

I have an amazing career that I worked hard for.

Andrew Grunloh

CEO
GRUNLOH BUILDING INC.



BIRTH YEAR

1991

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

St. Anthony of Padua Parishioner and
Booster Club Member
EIU Construction Management Industry
Advisory Board Member
Effingham Knights of Columbus Member

EDUCATION/TRAINING

University of Illinois, BS in Civil &
Environmental Engineering

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

I have a passion for construction and real estate development and feel blessed to be able to work in these industries. My definition of success means being able to do what I love while prioritizing quality time with friends and family. Long term, I judge success as the positive impacts I can have on the people around me and the improvements I can make to the community through business, volunteering and giving back.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Hard work and dedication to a long-term goal are underrated in today's society. If a young person wants to set themselves apart, write down three-year and five-year future goals. Define who or where you want to be and make conscious decisions to meet, and ideally exceed, those goals. The earlier you start setting goals and planning for the future, the happier and more fulfilled your future self will be.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

I feel grit is an important factor in living a happy life. If we are working to grow and improve ourselves, we will invariably run into hardships and challenges. The ability to persevere and continue growing while overcoming fear and adversity is a trait that I feel leads to success, fulfillment and happiness.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

I've been lucky to have many great role models. First and foremost, my parents and extended family; with certainty, I would not be where I am today without their guidance over the years. Early in my career I was able to work at companies that had great leaders and mentors who pushed me to grow and were always willing to give me another challenge. I credit much of my professional growth on getting opportunities to work with entrepreneurial people who put a priority on continual education and merit-based career progression.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

I feel that leaders need to be engaging and accessible to create an environment for people to learn and succeed.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Good schools, entertainment and public safety are important, but the intangibles like "a sense of community" are what make people want to call a place home.

I've been lucky to have many great role models.



The team at
Grunloh Building
would like to wish
Andrew congratulations
on being named one
of Effingham's Top
Community Leaders.
Your hard work and
dedication to our
organization, your
family, and community
is remarkable. We look
forward to many more
years of success with
you at the forefront.

GRUNLOH
BUILDING, INC.

Bailey Whitney

OWNER/OPERATIONS/MARKETING, WHITNEY ROOFING
RN (PRN), SBLHS HEART CENTER



BIRTH YEAR
1988

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Establishing our Foundation: Roofing for a Cause

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Associate RN Lake Land College
Teresa McCloy's She-EO program

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Maya Angelou's quote of success sums it up beautifully: "Success is liking yourself, liking what you do and liking how you do it." I feel this deeply. I don't think of success as a tangible thing, but feeling at peace with my life, my careers and my family/friends.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Be kind to others and especially to yourself. Don't be a follower. If you are quirky, nerdy, athletic, artistic- embrace those gifts. Those gifts are what will set you apart as an adult.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Learning that saying NO is OK! I have stopped signing myself up for things that do not bring joy to me or my family. Right now is the most important time for me, my husband Kalen and my kids. If it isn't what is best for us, we don't need to do it.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My great grandmother "Gram." She babysat me for a large amount of my childhood. She was strong, independent, artistic, organized and caring. She taught me to craft, climb trees, garden, use my imagination to its full potential, and so much more. She included me in all of her day-to-day activities/chores. With her, I always felt "seen," and that meant more than I realized at the time.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

1. Making sure everyone feels appreciated for their hard work and dedication.
2. Being able to see things from other points of view.
3. Encouraging growth.
4. Ensuring that everyone takes care of their needs and families first.
5. Getting everyone seated in the right "Seats on the Bus" - (Thanks to Teresa McCloy!)

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Since moving to Effingham, I have noticed a lot of people take pride in being from this community. I love seeing a community that is constantly growing. Also, the support for new, local businesses in this city is AMAZING. I feel like we are all rooting for each other to succeed, and it is great to feel like we are all on the same team.

I love seeing a community that is constantly growing.

Congratulations!

BAILEY WHITNEY

Top Community Leader Under 40

To the **BEST**
Mother and Wife
we could have
asked for!

Love,
Kalen &
the Kids



Need a
"Ruff"
Estimate?
Give Pete
a Call!



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Chris Etter

CO-OWNER/BROKER
RE/MAX KEY ADVANTAGE



BIRTH YEAR
1985

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

I am currently involved on the CSS Golf Committee for their annual golf outing. In the past, I have served two terms as a board member for United Way and have been involved in YBNext.

EDUCATION/TRAINING

I have my Bachelor in Business Administration from Eastern Illinois University.

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

My definition of success is setting and accomplishing goals while maintaining a balance between business and personal. There isn't a more successful person in my mind than someone who is completely dedicated to growing their career yet simultaneously being dedicated to their family.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

The main advice I would give is to learn from your mistakes in business and grow from them. Everyone is going to make mistakes throughout their life, but coming out on the other side with new information is one of the greatest learning tools.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

I would consider the most important factor in living a happy life is a great relationship with family and friends. If you have a great support system around you, you can achieve anything.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My parents and my wife are definitely my inspirations and role models. Growing up, my parents showed me what hard work and a great balance between family and work can achieve. My wife everyday inspires me to be a better father and business owner. She is able to work tirelessly to grow her career yet still has the energy when she gets home to be a great mother.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

The qualities that I believe are important in a leadership role and are the main core values that we stress at Re/Max are honesty and integrity. If people trust you, they will follow your lead.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

People want to call a community home that they believe cares about them. Effingham, as a community, is great at doing this. The town's support for our small businesses is one of the greatest qualities that Effingham has. This was very apparent during the pandemic and has not changed since.

If people trust you, they will follow your lead.



Congratulations Chris Etter

for being named Top Community
Leader under 40. Thank you
for dedication to Remax and
contributions to our community



RE/MAX
Key Advantage

Christo Schultz

SR. FINANCIAL ADVISOR
MIDLAND STATES BANK WEALTH MANAGEMENT



BIRTH YEAR
1992

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Effingham County CEO Board
Effingham Performance Center Board
Lake Sara Forever Board (Beach Improvement Project)
Unit 40 Mentor Program
St. Anthony Church Picnic Chair
BNI

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Undergraduate - University of Illinois
MBA - University of Notre Dame
Certified Financial Planner

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Success, to me, is all about the positive influence and contributions you make to the lives of others and the community in which you live and work. It's not about personal gain but leaving a lasting legacy on the people and place you call home.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Get involved! There are so many great organizations out there to get involved within our community. Find something you are passionate about and get involved, or start an organization that feeds your passion. My mother gave me some great advice to not join an organization just because someone asks. I have turned down a handful of opportunities because I knew I didn't have 100% passion for the project, and I might be taking an opportunity away from someone who did!

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Finding your purpose is the most important factor in living a happy life. The neat thing is that everyone has their own unique purpose, which can involve family, community, career, spirituality, and so on. I truly believe if you find your purpose, happiness will follow. (Having a great spouse helps too. Thanks, Kelly!)

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My immediate and extended family has always been my inspiration because of their involvement in the community.

Their commitment to having a positive impact on others has shaped my values and aspirations. It has taught me the importance of giving back and making a difference in the lives of those around us. As a child, I watched both my parents take time out of their days and evenings to be involved in charitable endeavors. Growing up, I wanted to be like them and always knew I would try to give back if I could with my time as well.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Leading by example. It's hard to follow a leader who talks but doesn't walk the walk. Effective leaders inspire and energize their teams to focus on a common goal and lead them toward the finish line. The most effective leaders in my life have been those that I want to emulate and learn from.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

I am a big believer that family is the primary reason people stay or come back to their hometown. This goes beyond blood relations, however; everyone wants to belong. Effingham is a community that I feel a part of, and I would consider myself a member of the Effingham family because of the relationships I have socially and professionally. This is a testament to the culture of Effingham that makes it such a wonderful place to live.

I would consider myself a member of the Effingham family because of the relationships I have socially and professionally.



CONGRATULATIONS

Christo Schultz

on being named one of Effingham's
top community leaders under 40!

We are fortunate to call you colleague
and are proud of your dedication and
contributions at Midland and in the
community. Thank you for your passion
and commitment to helping individuals,
families, and business owners thrive.



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Midland Wealth Management is a trade name used by Midland States Bank, Midland Trust Company, and Midland Wealth Advisors, LLC, a registered investment adviser.

Clayton Hinton

PARTNER
WEST & COMPANY, LLC



BIRTH YEAR
1983

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

I'm a member of the Illinois CPA Society and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. I'm also a local member of the Effingham and Sullivan Country Clubs, where I've volunteered time with various projects and board positions. I participate in coaching park district baseball and softball teams and coaching the Midwest Iron Lions 11U Baseball team. I'm a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Effingham. I've been on various chamber and local charity committees over the past 10 years that I've worked in Effingham. I work with various local charitable organizations to assist them with financial and tax advice.

EDUCATION/TRAINING

I graduated high school from South Central High School in Farina, IL. I attended college at Kaskaskia Community College and transferred to SIU Edwardsville to obtain my Bachelor's Degree in Accounting. I obtained a Graduate Accountancy Certificate from Eastern Illinois University. I passed my Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam and continue to get 120 hours of continuing education every 3 years to stay current with CPA licensing requirements.

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

My definition of success is helping clients make informed decisions and growing our business and our clients while providing a stable home for my family. Two key things to this are to always listen and continue learning!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Don't worry about things you can't control. Focus on things you can control. Hard work (good work ethic) and a good attitude will take you a long way. Be willing to learn new things and adapt to change. Have a take-the-bull-by-the-horns mentality to get projects completed. Step outside your comfort zone, whether it's to work on things you've never done or to meet with people you've never met before.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Spending time with family and friends! No matter what life throws at you, these people will be there to enjoy all those happy times with you.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

I've had several great personal and professional influences in my life/career. My first boss was Lynn Freese in Sullivan, IL. The way he communicated with clients and treated employees taught me that I wanted to carry myself that way as well. I've met some of my best friends through working in public accounting. A handful of them have taught me how important giving back to the community is in the smaller communities that we serve. I'm extremely proud to call those few my friends and proud to live in a community like Effingham that is so generous at giving back and always supporting local organizations.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Listening and helping out are the most important leadership qualities. Leaders don't do all the work: Far from it. They listen to the problems and work with their teams to develop the best strategies to achieve success.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Communities need people to work together, give back, and care about one another.

*Listening and helping out are
the most important leadership qualities.*



CLAYTON HINTON, PARTNER

The Partners and Staff of West & Company, LLC, would like to congratulate Clayton Hinton on being named one of Effingham's Top Community Leaders Under 40. Thank you for your dedication to our clients and our employees.



Courtney Yockey

PRESIDENT AND CEO
EFFINGHAM REGIONAL GROWTH ALLIANCE



BIRTH YEAR

1984

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Effingham Noon Rotary Board
Promoting A Vision for Effingham
County (PAVE) Coordinating Council
PAVE Housing Action Team
PAVE Childcare Action Team
Effingham Regional Career Academy
(ERCA) Board of Directors
ERCA Workforce Readiness Committee
Effingham County Childcare Research
Committee
Effingham County Chamber Board of
Directors (Chamber)
Chamber Workforce Development
Committee

Business Navigator Alliance of
Southcentral & Southeastern Illinois
Local Workforce Innovation Board #23
(LWIA 23)
LWIA 23 Business Service Team
East Central Illinois Development
Corporation
Illinois Enterprise Zone Association
Illinois Tax Increment Association
Illinois Economic Development
Association
Illinois Manufacturers' Association
Midwest Community Development
Institute

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Master of Business Administration
(MBA) from the University of Illinois
Professional Community & Economic
Developer (PCED) certification
through the Community
Development Council
Talent Pipeline Management
Practitioner through the U.S. Chamber
of Commerce Foundation
Economic Development Credit Analysis
and Finance through the International
Economic Development
Council (IEDC)
Economic Development Strategic
Planning through the IEDC

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Success is when you productively
collaborate with others to reach
milestones and work towards attaining
identified goals.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Continuously strive to educate yourself
and make improvements. Knowledge is a
competitive advantage.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Maintaining a good life/work balance and
being present when you are with friends
and family.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Important leadership qualities include
seeking feedback and advice from others.
Surround yourself with knowledgeable
people and learn from them. A leader
should empower their team members
and provide them with the tools and
resources they need to be successful.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

A sense of community and the feeling
of belonging is important. Having the
opportunity to connect with fellow
community members, with options for all
ages, is an element needed to call a place
home. Community members need to lend
a hand and help each other out in good
times and bad.

*Surround yourself with knowledgeable people
and learn from them.*

Congratulations



**COURTNEY
YOCKEY**

TOP COMMUNITY LEADER UNDER 40



Emily Combs Photography

We Appreciate All You Do For Effingham County!



The Alliance

Effingham Regional Growth Alliance

903 N. Keller Dr.
Effingham IL 62401
217.342.4214

Derek Koester

DIRECTOR OF SALES - CASEWORK AND MILLWORK DIVISION
STEVENS INDUSTRIES, INC.



BIRTH YEAR
1988

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

American Society of Healthcare Engineers (ASHE)
Construction Specifications Institute (CSI)
SIU Alumni Association
St. Rose Catholic Church - Finance Council
Dieterich Park District - Volunteer Youth League Coach

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Bachelor of Science (BS) - Mechanical Engineering
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Success, to me, involves leaving a positive impact and lasting legacy for yourself and others around you. Individuals or organizations that I view as being successful hold themselves to high standards in personal/moral values, integrity, and creating life fulfillment not only for themselves but for others around them and in their community.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Find out what you are passionate about and "Go ALL IN" in terms of following this as a career path. Throughout my life, I felt I have been "good" at many things but maybe not necessarily the "greatest" at them. After completing my degree and finding my passion for a career I love, this has changed dramatically. I feel each and every day that I bring to the table an unrivaled talent and enthusiasm for my work, and I can be the "greatest" at what I do. One of my most cherished accomplishments now comes from sharing that same passion with our customers, team members, colleagues within our industry, and the youth within our community.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

To me, the most crucial factor to living a happy life is finding satisfaction in what we do each and every day; this applies to both a work/career and personal life standpoint. By finding a career that I am truly passionate about and surrounding myself with the most important people in my life, such as my close family and friends, I have found that no matter what challenges each day may bring, I can face those challenges with a positive attitude. It also helps to have a great support system at home, particularly my wife, whose never-ending support of my goals and our family has played a crucial role in my development as a person.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

One person who will always stick out in my mind as my greatest inspiration and role model would have to be my older brother, Kevin Koester. At first glance, many of the people who know him would think this is because of his unwavering work ethic, as he has the strongest work ethic of anyone I know. However, those who know him best

will tell you it is his love for others and willingness to go above and beyond to help everyone around him that truly sets him apart. From the many organizations he is involved with, such as the Knights of Columbus St. Francis Church Men's Sodality, to his role as a Steward/Chairman for his local Union chapter, in addition to those things, he still always manages to find additional time to help anyone that asks him for it.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

For me, the most important qualities of a good leader include leading by example, maintaining unwavering ethics, and demonstrating a strong commitment to building a cohesive team, even when these values/qualities might not always be the easiest path to take. By sticking to these 3 principles, a leader can stand up to almost any challenge they may face and will be successful in building a strong and cohesive team around them.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

From my perspective, the most important thing to creating a great community is having ample economic/prosperous career opportunities and giving people a strong sense of belonging/community identity. Obviously, having ample economic or job opportunities is what will initially attract individuals to a community in the first place. However, by also having a strong sense of belonging or connection to a community, whether it be through family ties, friendships, or community involvement, it forms the foundation upon which people are inclined to stay.

Congratulations **Derek Koester**

on being named one of Effingham County's
2023 Top Community Leaders Under 40!



*Thank you for your outstanding service to Stevens Industries, Inc.
as we continue our growth. We are proud of you!*



**704 West Main Street
Teutopolis, IL 62467**

www.stevensind.com

Henry Siemer

VICE PRESIDENT/SECRETARY/TREASURER
SIEMER MILLING COMPANY



BIRTH YEAR
1989

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Boy Scouts of America
Teutopolis Civics Club
Effingham Noon Rotary
Toastmasters International
International Association of Operative Millers
North American Millers Association
International Association of Food Protection
St. Francis of Assisi (T-Town) Choir

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration
A lot of week-long specialized training courses I have lost track of
Emerging Leadership Institute

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Seeing something that you had a hand in creating/completing and feeling a sense of pride and/or satisfaction.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Join a community club, a civic club, an investment club, a church club.... Meet with people who aren't necessarily your friends or work associates but share this common interest. Seek advice from them and offer it when they seek it. There is wisdom and knowledge in these connections, and through them, you are further connected to individuals you may never meet but may be able to aid you.

Practice your communication skills. The ability to express complex thoughts is one of the greatest abilities we as humans have, but it is only as great as your ability to be understood and to understand what you hear.

Take and practice accounting. Tracking your money and budgeting it has been the most universal skill I learned in college.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Physical connections to other people. I am naturally introverted, but I would go crazy if I didn't interact face-to-face with other people.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

The Leadership Group of Siemer Milling Company for the last 30 years. I have had the rare opportunity to observe how the LG has grown Siemer Milling Company, not just financially but also culturally.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

A Sense of Direction. A vision of a destination to bring your team to.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

An innate trust in your fellows that you can have random face-to-face conversations with neighbors and a willingness to invite them into your residence.

Meet with people who aren't necessarily your friends or work associates but share a common interest.

congratulations!

Henry Siemer



**top community
leader under 40**

siemermilling.com 217-857-3131

Teutopolis, IL • Hopkinsville, KY • West Harrison, IN

Jake Niebrugge

VP - DEVELOPMENT
HEARTLAND DENTAL

**BIRTH YEAR**

1985

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Effingham Regional Growth Alliance
Niebrugge Cares Foundation
Southern IL Community Foundation
Elementary school basketball coach

EDUCATION/TRAINING

St. Louis University, Bachelor's Degree
in Finance; Master's Degree in
Healthcare Administration
Maryville University, Masters Degree in
Business Administration

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Success is about our willingness to solve
problems for ourselves and others.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

There are 2 things in life you can fully
control: attitude and effort.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Surround yourself with positive-minded
people who want to be better.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My dad. He was an example that
anything is possible with hard work and
perseverance.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Promoting a culture of discretion and
encouragement. Most people want to
do the right thing for the right reasons.
If they have an environment where they
can, they will thrive.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Essential elements of a thriving
community are safety, affordability, and
welcomeness.

Most people want to do the right thing for the right reasons.

CONGRATULATIONS JAKE NIEBRUGGE



You have made an impact with your contributions to our company and the community.



Jennifer Kinkelaar

FINANCIAL ADVISER
BRUCKE FINANCIAL INC.



BIRTH YEAR

1984

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Retinoblastoma Support Mentor/Mentee Program

Know the Glow

Effingham County Chamber Member

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Teutopolis High School

Eastern Illinois University

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Success is not one size fits all. Just like no person is alike, no one's success is either. My definition of success is when one strives to be the best version of themselves and pushes themselves to grow as a person.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Remember that life often doesn't turn out the way you expect it to. Embrace the ride and use the forks in the road to grow and not as an excuse as to why you can't succeed. Sometimes, the hardest parts of life will open the most doors.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Five years ago, I would have answered, "Don't sweat the small stuff." Looking back, I wasn't really living this expression; I was just saying it. It is often said that hardship is a powerful reminder of what is important in life. My daughter's cancer diagnosis made me reflect on the small things I let consume my world. After hearing "Your baby has cancer," all those trivial problems TRULY melted away, and I was able to actually

let go of the small things. Being able to see past the noise of life and focus on family is a hard but vital part of a happy life.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

It may not be a common response, but my oldest daughter is definitely my inspiration. She is the embodiment of compassion and grace. After her little sister's cancer diagnosis, her world was turned upside down. Even so, this 10-year-old put her needs aside, gave up whatever was needed to support her sister, and did so with such grace. To this day, I cannot believe the true compassion she showed during such an immensely difficult time.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

My vision of a leader is someone who leads with compassion and dedication. They don't always have to be the loudest or the most assertive. They just need a passion they are willing to fight for. A true leader advocates for their cause while keeping their morals and beliefs intact regardless of their personality.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Simply put — a community that shows up. The people who help mentor our youth, the friend who brings a struggling family dinner, or the business who organizes a fundraiser for someone who needs a helping hand - this is why people feel pride in their home.

A true leader advocates for their cause while keeping their morals and beliefs intact.

CONGRATULATIONS!

JENNY KINKELAAR

*TOP COMMUNITY LEADER
OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY*



www.bruckefinancial.us

Jessica Mottashed

PHYSICAL THERAPIST
HSHS ST. ANTHONY'S MEMORIAL HOSPITAL



BIRTH YEAR

1991

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Peace for Parkinson's- Parkinson's Disease support group facilitator
Board of Education at St. John's Eagle's Nest Preschool
Effingham County Relay for Life, HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital
HSHS Emerging Leaders 2023

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Altamont Community High School 2009
Lake Land Community College Associate of Science 2011
Eastern Illinois University- Bachelor of Exercise Science 2013
Eastern Illinois University- Master of Exercise Science 2014
Missouri State University - Doctor of Physical Therapy 2017

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

My definition of success is having a goal, working hard to achieve that goal, truly enjoying your career choice, and being able to balance work and family life.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

You have one life; make sure you take advantage of it. When you are able to, whether financially or physically, help others and be involved in organizations through church or your community.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

I feel the most important factor in living a happy life is finding someone to share your life with that will motivate and support you. Find a balance between

work and family, and make sure to spend time with those who mean the most to you. When choosing a career, find an organization that encourages growth and success.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My family. My parents, Lonnie and Sally Wilson, have demonstrated hard work and perseverance and raised me to keep God and family at the center of my life. They have always been my biggest supporters and encouraged me to reach my goals. My siblings, Seth Wilson and Erin Lilly, have both accomplished so much in their lives and are successful business owners. My husband and children give me the drive and inspiration to be a better person daily.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

I feel that as a leader, it is important to have great communication and active listening skills. It is important to have a passion and desire for your group or organization so that those in your organization can see your passion.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

I believe that elements needed in a community to make it a place to call home are safety, community events, opportunities for growth, connectivity with residents, and a variety of activities for all ages.

When choosing a career, find an organization that encourages growth and success.



Congratulations to the leaders at HSHS St. Anthony's and HSHS Medical Group on receiving the **Top Community Leaders Under 40 Designation**

We appreciate your dedication to our ministry and the community. These young professionals embody the HSHS mission and spirit. They are committed to excellence and promise to make a healthy difference every day.



HSHS
St. Anthony's
Memorial Hospital

HSHS
Medical Group



JESSICA MOTTASHED
Physical Therapist
HSHS St. Anthony's
Rehabilitation and Wellness



KATIE RINCKER, APRN
HSHS St. Anthony's
Wound Healing Center



KAYLA BOWLING
Practice Manager
HSHS Medical Group

STANTHONYSHOSPITAL.ORG | HSHSMG.ORG

Katie Rincker

NURSE PRACTITIONER - WOUND CENTER
ST. ANTHONY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL



BIRTH YEAR

1992

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Nurse Association
St. Anthony Parish Member

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Lakeland (2012) Applied Sciences
Lakeview College of Nursing (2014)
Bachelors of Nursing
Indiana Wesleyan (2019) Master in
Primary Nursing Care

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Providing a strong example for my children and giving them the best possible life.

Success in my career is developing a trusting relationship with my patients and providing positive outcomes in their care.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Focus on contribution, not achievement
Commit to personal growth
Find an "expert" in your professional field and become a sponge

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Strong relationships
Making the people around me feel happy and loved
Love what you do professionally

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My parents strived to instill a work ethic in my siblings and me at a young age. Watching my parents balance a successful career yet never missing anything for their children was admirable.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Dependability, admitting failures, and working efficiently with the team is key.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Togetherness, pride, and kindness. These are all elements that I am proud to say Effingham encompasses.

Success in my career is developing a trusting relationship with my patients and providing positive outcomes in their care.

Kayla Bowling

PRACTICE MANAGER
HSHS MEDICAL GROUP



BIRTH YEAR
1988

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

ARRT - American Registry of Radiologic Technologists
ASRT - American Society of Radiologic Technologists

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Master of Science degree in Radiologic Sciences – SIUC (2017)
Bachelor of Science degree in Radiologic Sciences with specialization in Radiation Therapy - SIUC (2013)
Bachelor of Science degree in Health Care Management - SIUC (2012)
Clinical internships at Jackson Purchase Medical Center, Marion VA, Carle Hospital, Memorial Hospital of Carbondale, and SIH Cancer Institute

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

My family, my education and career, and my friends have all contributed to what I deem as success in my life. I love where I live and who I work with!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Be respectful to everyone you encounter, especially during the high school years. As you get older, you may need to rely on those same people through networking for a future career, small business support, community involvement, etc.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Enjoying your career makes a big impact. If you are unhappy with your work and are unfulfilled in what you do, it will trickle into your home life. Find your passion and pursue that.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My parents. They taught me to be respectful, kind, and fair and to always go after my goals. Because I learned such a strong work ethic from them at a young age, I have been able to excel in my different career paths.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Being approachable, being a good listener, exuding patience, and promoting teamwork are extremely important qualities that are evident in my leadership style.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

A great school district plays a large factor, along with the small-town support people show in times of need. Community involvement is truly admirable in my hometown, and I am very proud to say I am from Teutopolis!

Be respectful to everyone you encounter, especially during the high school years. As you get older, you may need to rely on those same people.

Kayla Schumacher

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
CRISIS NURSERY OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY



BIRTH YEAR

1987

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Crisis Nursery of Effingham County
Effingham County Health Coalition
100+ Women of Effingham County

EDUCATION/TRAINING

BS in Psychology from SIUE
Masters - coursework completion in
Clinical Psychology from EIU

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

I define success as accomplishing goals, big and small, that make you happy. For me, "success" is raising my beautiful family and working in a field that makes a difference/gives back.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Find your connection! Find that person (or organization) who will give you support and guidance, as well as be your cheerleader.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Staying true to yourself and your values.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My husband, Jason, has served as my role model as an administrator/leader. We have been together since high school, and I have had this unique window looking into the progression of someone in management. Jason is fair and kind, hands-down and one of the hardest

workers I know. However, what continues to inspire me is how he constantly strives to grow as a person and a manager. If he feels he lacks experience or knowledge in an area, he researches and applies it until he feels confident that it is the right approach for that situation/person. I've seen these same characteristics of leadership cross over into his role as a father to our children. It is a true gift to share my life and learn from someone who is so devoted to giving their all in everything they do.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

I believe empathy, flexibility, communication, and having a clear vision/purpose are the most important qualities for those in a leadership role.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

I think for a community to feel like home, there needs to be a sense of sharing that space for common goals (e.g., education, faith, culture, etc.). To create those common goals and that sense of community, it requires a group of people willing to build those relationships, plan those activities, and create opportunities for connection.

*I define success as accomplishing goals,
big and small, that make you happy.*

CONGRATULATIONS

Kayla Schumacher

Assistant Director



Crisis Nursery
of Effingham County
Safe Hands, Open Hearts

Thank you for your
dedication to the children
of Crisis Nursery and
your commitment to
community service that
makes our area
a better place to live
and raise a family.



2023 Top Community Leader Under 40 Award Winner

Congratulations from your friends at



Krista Mette

DIRECTOR, HR EMPLOYEE RELATIONS
HEARTLAND DENTAL



BIRTH YEAR
1985

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Past Commander & Current Member
Teutopolis American Legion
Altamont VFW member
Altamont Auxiliary member
Effingham 40&8 Chef De Train
New Hope Church Member and 4-year-old class volunteer
Heartland Dental Veterans and Women in Dentistry Employee-Led Communities member
Cub Scout and Girl Scout Mom

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Altamont High School Alumni
Associate in Science from Lake Land College
Bachelor's degree in Paralegal Studies from SIU-C
Master's Degree in Human Resource Management from St. Mary's University, MN
Bell Leadership Achievers I, II, and Advanced Communications completion

Talent to Value Program completion
Graduate of Basic Combat Training
Paralegal Specialist Advanced Individual Training
Sergeant non-commissioned officer training in the US Army.

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

To me, success is the achievement of my personal and professional goals. It's about finding a balance between pursuing my passions and positively impacting others.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Using your voice to make change in the world is free and powerful. As Americans, we often overlook the freedoms we enjoy. I served in the military to preserve these freedoms. Exercise your right to vote, vocalize your opinions, and correspond with your community and government representatives regarding important matters. Be an advocate for those who may not have a voice, and commit wholeheartedly to pursuing your passions while striving to excel. Your actions can shape the world into a better place for everyone.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

A critical factor in living a happy life is using your time wisely. Proactively pursuing your goals and desires without delay can lead to lasting happiness. Seizing opportunities and taking action enhances personal satisfaction and contributes significantly to a fulfilling life. Don't wait — embrace the present and make the most of every moment.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

This question presents a meaningful reflection as I've been fortunate to have been positively influenced by exceptional leaders and role models in my life. Two matriarchs, in particular, have impacted on my personal and professional development: my Mother, Brenda York and my Grandmother, Judy Krone. Both have served as remarkable role models.

My Grandmother, Judy Krone,

exemplifies the quintessential servant leader. She ventured into entrepreneurship, establishing a business to care for the elderly. Her commitment to service knew no bounds, whether it involved stepping in as a cook when needed, assisting individuals with their daily routines, or working tirelessly during overnight shifts when no one else was available. Her dedication taught me the valuable lesson that with determination and effort, I can achieve anything I set my mind to.

My Mother, Brenda York, is another source of inspiration. She has consistently demonstrated kindness and resilience. At one point, she was a single mother and persevered through those difficult times, continuously improving herself. Through sheer determination, she built a successful career entirely on her own merits. All three of her children have graduated college, and two have served in the military.

Both women exemplify hard work, selflessness and generosity, consistently prioritizing the well-being of others. I am profoundly grateful to have the privilege of calling these extraordinary women my Mother and Grandmother.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Empathy, active listening, prioritizing the needs of others, continuous self-improvement, and the capacity to establish trust are all fundamental qualities of a successful leader. The guiding principle should always be to do the right things for the right reasons.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Creating a community that people truly want to call home must provide a foundation of safety, strong and supportive social networks, values of faith, generosity and volunteerism, access to essential amenities, quality education, and ample job opportunities. I believe Effingham County has all these elements, and I am proud to call this community my home.

CONGRATULATIONS KRISTA METTE



Your service
to our country,
community, and
company make
us proud.



Logan Arney

TECHNOLOGY TRAINING MANAGER, PATTERSON COMPANIES
HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH LEADER, NEW HOPE CHURCH • VARSITY SOCCER COACH, UNIT 40



BIRTH YEAR

1993

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

In addition to my job at Patterson, I oversee the high school youth group at New Hope Church, which we host at oneightly. I also am the Varsity Soccer Coach at EHS.

EDUCATION/TRAINING

I received my Bachelor's degree in Youth and Family Ministry at Lincoln Christian University.

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Success is hard to define as it looks different in every aspect of your life. But one thing I've learned is that success is only valuable if it helps others & positively impacts the lives of many. I think we often get wrapped up in thinking of worldly success, which will never satisfy us & will always leave us desiring more. Ecclesiastes is one of my favorite books and is a constant reminder to not get caught up in what the world

tells you success is but to focus on what really matters.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

I could fill a lot of space sharing advice I'd want to share with today's youth. One thing I would share is that life is good & you are enough. Today's culture has glorified self-deprecating talk, which has led to a negative perception of themselves & the world. I'd also share to celebrate the differences between yourself & the people around you. Those differences do not divide us but give us opportunities to learn and grow as a person. And finally, be present. Leave your phone off for a day every so often & engage in the world and people around you.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Love. We are designed to love people and to receive love from people. If we live in the cycle of receiving love & pouring love out, that will make us happier & more joyful. When either of those flows of love goes away, it can lead to a negative experience in life. This is also why faith in Jesus has been important to me as I experience this cycle of love to & from Him.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

I feel extremely grateful for so many incredible role models throughout my life. I think all great leaders are direct results of the people that have poured into them. My parents, Larry & Laura Arney, have always been very supportive and encouraging throughout my life, and I'm grateful for everything they've done for me over the years. My brother, Landon Arney, has always been a role model for me as an older brother I could look up to. I have been blessed with 4 incredible grandparents as well. My grandma, Joyce Dively, showed me how

to unconditionally love everyone I come in contact with and to see the potential for greatness in everyone. My grandpa, Brad Arney, often says and always models the line, "Everyone is in some way my superior." That really clicked with me at a young age. This changes the way you view people, from thinking of yourself as better than them to viewing everyone as a wealth of knowledge in something they love that you can learn from. Beyond family, I've had a lot of great mentors in Van Brooks, Jim Carroll, Matt Fogle, Kurt Roberts, and many other people I wish I could list here.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Love, humility, and confidence. People follow people who care for them and make them feel loved. You can get people to follow you for a limited time without that care, but it doesn't last & it isn't truly following a leader but following a position. Also, leaders need to show humility while balancing confidence. Often, humility is looked at as weakness or passivity, but leaders can remain confident while leading with humility.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

My wife & I lived in Phoenix for a while. We loved the city, mountains, hiking, exploring, professional sports, and everything else. But despite all of those amazing things, we missed the community. We love living in Effingham, where people care for each other and live life together. We love that it is a community with opportunity & growth while still remaining a fun & safe place for families to grow. And unlike many towns our size, Effingham doesn't feel stuck, but we consistently see growth and new businesses and development.

Congratulations **Logan Arney**

Top Community Leader **Under 40**

The team at Patterson Technology Center
offers its sincere congratulations to
Logan for being named a 2023
Top Community Leader Under 40.

Thank You



Michael Brummer

OWNER
SELF-EMPLOYED



BIRTH YEAR
1991

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Downtown Effingham Business Group
Tourism Advisory Board

EDUCATION/TRAINING

BA in Tourism Management at University
of Illinois Champaign-Urbana

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Living a life of integrity.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

College isn't for everyone.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Centered in faith and gratitude.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

So many people in the Effingham community have helped me in different ways. Their generosity is an inspiration.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Integrity, communication, and vision.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

3 things: Safety, Jobs, Things to do.

So many people in the Effingham community have helped me in different ways. Their generosity is an inspiration.

Congratulations Michael Brummer

for being named a Top Community Leader!



From Jim Cooper, Frank Brummer, and the whole Farmweld Team



Michelle Fombelle

EXTENSION EDUCATOR
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION



BIRTH YEAR

1988

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church
Parish
Illinois Extension Association of Family
& Consumer Sciences

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Master of Public Health (MPH)-Southern
Illinois University
Bachelor of Science degree in
Community Health Education- Illinois
State University
Certified Health Education Specialist
(CHES)

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Success is finding happiness in what I do
each day, whether it's at work or at home
with my family.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

My advice for today's youth would be to
consider working a part-time job while in
high school and/or college. Working with
the public built a skill set and taught me
more than I realized at the time.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

A healthy work/life balance is so
important, as well as a supportive
foundation of family and friends to help
when things are not so balanced.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My family inspires me to be better
and help build a better community
for my children to thrive and grow up.
My parents have always served as role
models of hard work, faith and family.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

The qualities I feel are most important
include communication, being an active
listener and trust.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Pride. I believe communities with the
most pride in their towns thrive. If you
want your community to continue to
grow, you need to build it for future
generations to want to come back to
raise their families.

*My family inspires me to be better and
help build a better community for my
children to thrive and grow up.*

Congratulations Michelle Fombelle!

on being named a
Top Community Leader Under 40!



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

The staff of University of Illinois Extension in Effingham would like to congratulate Michelle Fombelle on being selected as a Top Community Leader Under 40. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to our community.

1209 N Wenthe Drive | Effingham | 217-347-7773 | extension.illinois.edu/cefi

Michael Esker

PROJECT MANAGER
J.B. ESKER & SONS CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION



BIRTH YEAR
1992

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Teutopolis Fire Protection District
Construction Trades Education Curriculum
Sacred Heart Church

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Teutopolis High School Class of 2010
Lake Land Community College, Associate Degree
Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Civil Engineering Bachelors Degree

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Success in my book is being able to look back after a series of events and recognize all the struggles and challenges that were overcome to get to where you are. Knowing your journey is not over but still recognizing the people and events that have shaped you into who you are today is a great success in itself.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Prioritize. There are so many distractions in today's world. It is very easy to get caught up in the things that don't matter and miss out on the things that do. Prioritize who and what you spend your time on. Time is a currency that, once you spend, you can never get it back.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Faith and Family. An individual will only be truly happy when they are living for something bigger than themselves. When you put your faith and family ahead of your own personal wants and needs, everything else falls into place a lot better.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

Many people have served as a role model for me in one form or another throughout my life. The main and most consistent would definitely be my father. Since I was little, he has never failed to show me what it is to live a life of integrity and humility. He has never failed to support me in any endeavor or undertaking in my life and continues to be a sounding board for me as I navigate my career, faith and family.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Integrity and Resilience. A leader must have both of these in order for a team to trust them. The team must trust the leader who always has their best interest in mind and will make decisions that reflect that even in the face of hardship. When hardship shows up, as it undoubtedly will, a leader has to be resilient enough to adjust his or her plans, make the best decision for the team and push through it.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

A community has to have something that brings about a sense of pride in everyone. Whether it is heritage, location, faith, or sports, people need something to rally around. When people are proud to be a part of something bigger than themselves, the rest will happen on its own. People will naturally want to take care of their neighbors, invest in the youth in the community and continue to make it a place people want to call home.

Prioritize who and what you spend your time on.

Congratulations

MIKE ESKER

**FOR BEING NAMED
ONE OF
EFFINGHAM'S TOP
COMMUNITY
LEADERS UNDER 40.**



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND CONTRIBUTIONS
TO J.B. ESKER & SONS AND TO THE COMMUNITY.**



J.B. ESKER & SONS, INC.
CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION

212 W. Main St. P.O. Box 490
TEUTOPOLIS, IL 62467
(217)857-6543 WWW.JBESKER.COM

Nick Lechman

SALES MANAGER
NOVA SOLUTIONS INC



BIRTH YEAR
1990

EDUCATION/TRAINING
Effingham High School
California University of Pennsylvania

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?
My definition of success is having goals and achieving them.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

To set goals in life, whether the goals are big or small, but to always push to achieve those goals. I would also advise today's youth to participate in public speaking and to get out of their comfort zones.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

I would consider having key people in your life a huge factor in being happy. Family and friends bring positivity at dark times in your life and are there for you when you need it most. A good support system and positive relationships go a long way to being happy.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My Father. He has shown me over the years what hard work and dedication to work means, but also making time for your family. I am blessed to have been able to work side by side with my father over these past 15 years, learning from him and understanding what a true leader is.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Communication, Passion, Problem Solving, Goal Setting and Accountability, to name a few.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Good school system and activities for our kids

I would advise today's youth to participate in public speaking and to get out of their comfort zones.



TOP COMMUNITY LEADER UNDER 40



NATIONAL SALES MANAGER NICK LECHMAN

Thank you for your dedication to our community and your commitment to excellence.
Thanks for continuing the success and values of your family business.

Nicole Morrison

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
EFFINGHAM COUNTY CHAMBER



BIRTH YEAR

1984

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

St. Anthony of Padua Parishioner
PAWS - Parents Active Within St. Anthony
St. Anthony Grade School Volunteer
City of Effingham Tourism Advisory Board

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Bachelor of Science in Speech Communication (Public Relations)
- Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Pursuing your passions and finding true contentment in your life and the people in it.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Don't sweat the small stuff. Life is about choices, and I urge you to make choices that point you in a positive direction. It's OK to let a situation, person, or anything go when it doesn't better your life in a positive way.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Understanding & doing what makes you personally happy & fulfilled and building & maintaining meaningful relationships with family, friends, and loved ones is crucial.

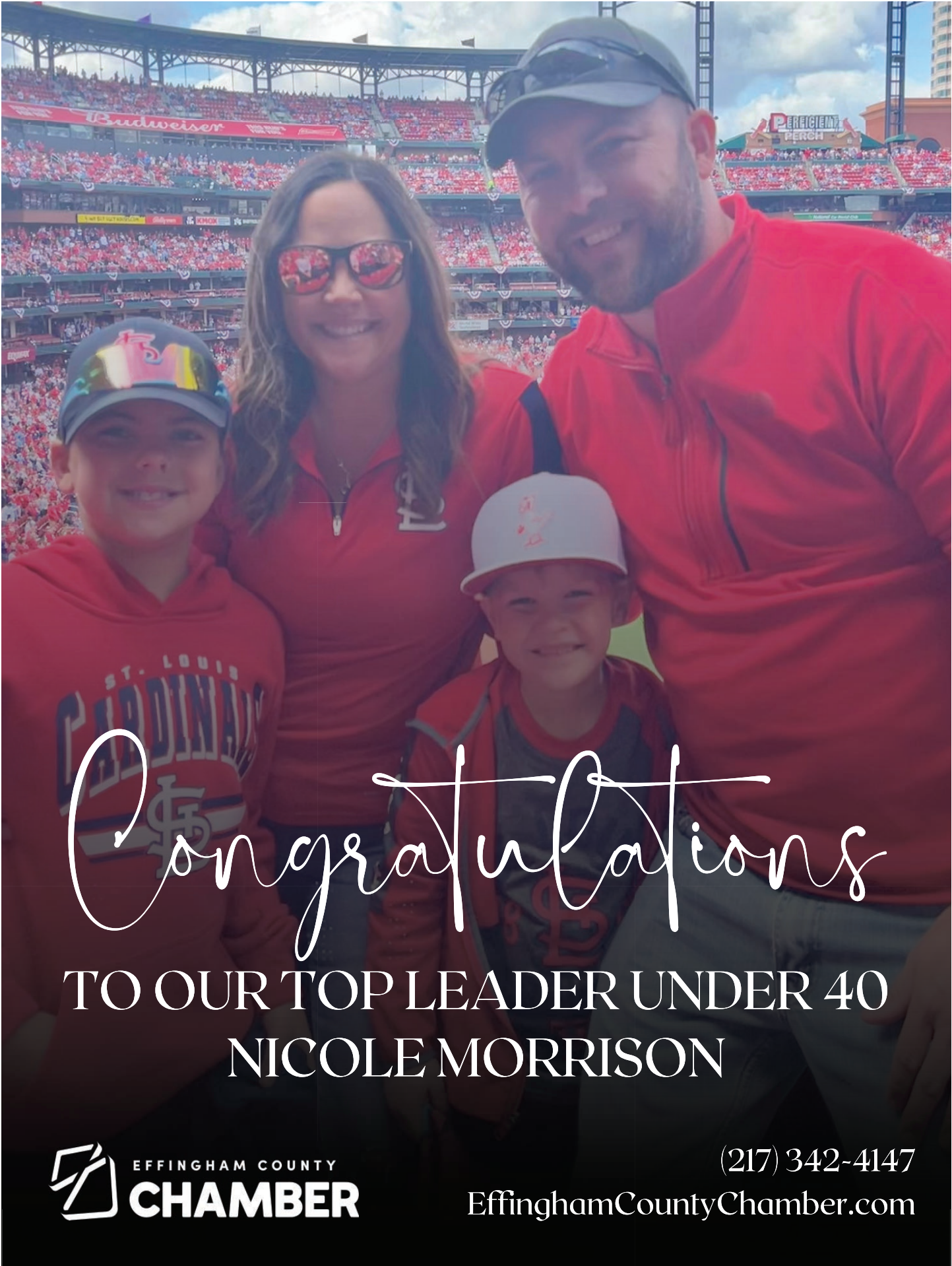
WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Trustworthy, accountable, reliable, adaptable, problem solver, and most importantly, positive.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

To make a community a desirable home, you need a strong sense of belonging, safety, good amenities, opportunities, and a supportive, friendly atmosphere.

Life is about choices, and I urge you to make choices that point you in a positive direction.



Congratulations

TO OUR TOP LEADER UNDER 40
NICOLE MORRISON



(217) 342-4147

EffinghamCountyChamber.com

Ryan Brandt

VICE PRESIDENT
PYRAMID MARBLE & GRANITE INC.



BIRTH YEAR
1989

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?
Effingham County Chamber
Stone Fabricators Alliance

EDUCATION/TRAINING
Bachelor's degree in Business
Management from SIUC

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?
Success is the achievement of one's goals and life aspirations accompanied by personal happiness.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?
For any age group, not just the youth, people often get caught up in perfection or waiting for the right time and never actually start anything. Half of the battle is beginning the steps towards your goal.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?
The art of knowing when to be content with a situation vs. when you should be uncomfortable enough to initiate change is a huge contributor to a happy life. Be happy when you are unable to alter the outcome of a thing but unhappy when it's within your control to improve your circumstance.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?
My father has been a great inspiration in business success as well as a litmus test for many life decisions.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?
When you are a leader, controlling emotions and being visibly calm under pressure, even when you may not be "calm" on the inside, will give you an advantage in most situations.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?
People generally want to live where there is wealth as it provides for the following: housing availability, good amenities, business growth, updated infrastructure and safe, clean towns. These essentials are very important in attracting the right people to a community.

It's imperative that local government is supportive of entrepreneurs trying to better the community by improving any of these criteria. Conversely, unnecessary complications, lethargic public servants, roadblocks and personal egos in local government slow the growth of a community.

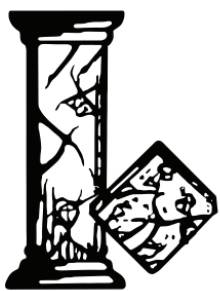
My father has been a great inspiration in business success as well as a litmus test for many life decisions.



Ryan, we are proud of you and all that you have accomplished. Your hard work and leadership skills do not go unnoticed! Your ability to navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and be an innovative thinker is truly commendable. You have demonstrated a remarkable level of expertise and professionalism within the workplace and community. You inspire confidence among your peers and admirers alike.

Thank you for leading by example!

On behalf of all of us at Pyramid Marble and Granite, congratulations!



PYRAMID
MARBLE & GRANITE

Shelley Smith

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
DRS. SEHY AND JONES OPTOMETRISTS



BIRTH YEAR
1991

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

American Board of Opticianry
American Optometry Association-
Paraoptometric
National Society of Leadership and
Success

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Lake Land College- Associates
Western Governors University- Bachelors
in Business Management and MBA

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

I believe success happens when we live out our values. For me, that means achieving professional goals, continuous learning, having a positive impact on those around me, and having a balance between my personal and professional life.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

The dream you have today may not be the dream you end up following forever. Don't be afraid to have more than one dream.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

For me, a happy life means having a balance and finding a way to make all the things I love fit into my life.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My mother stands as my most profound inspiration. With every interaction, she radiates kindness, embodying the essence of a remarkable leader in her organization. Her intelligence is unparalleled, and she gracefully demonstrates that women can excel in their professions without compromising

a fulfilling family life. The wisdom and lessons she has imparted over the years have been instrumental to my achievements. I owe the majority of my successes to her guidance and influence.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

To me, the most important quality of an effective leader is effective communication through clearly conveying information, listening actively, and fostering open dialogue are all essential skills for leaders. Without this, a leader will never be able to get the necessary information to teach, inspire, or guide those they lead.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

I believe safety is the most necessary element to make a community home. Safety from crime is important, but that's not all. People need a place where diversity is accepted and encouraged to feel safe. People need to know they have access to affordable housing, childcare, and health care to feel safe. People need to know that they have access to jobs to feel safe.

People need a place where diversity is accepted and encouraged to feel safe.

CONGRATULATIONS

Michelle Smith

TOP COMMUNITY LEADER UNDER 40



**WE ARE PROUD OF YOU AND ALL
THAT YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED!**



DRS. SEHY & JONES OPTOMETRISTS

MEMBER *VISION SOURCE*

303 N Keller Dr. • Effingham • 217.342.2672

Tiffany Wasson

HEAD CHEF/PARTNER
THE GIVING PLATE/DEB'S CATERING



BIRTH YEAR

1983

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

The Be a Tiffany Scholarship
The Giving Heart Meals program
Fundraising for several Farm Bureaus in our local area
Immanuel Lutheran Church praise team and Sunday School teacher

EDUCATION/TRAINING

ACHS 2001
Lake Land College
Teaching degree in cosmetology, left Lake Land to learn the family business in 2018

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

Happiness and spreading positivity into the world are being successful. Helping others in a time of need, showing compassion, and being a positive influence on our youth.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Be kind! Kindness is so important, and being a positive light in the world will only help you in your career. Work hard and set goals. When you reach them, celebrate them, then set new ones. Trust in God, keep showing up and put in the effort. If you want it bad enough, you can do it.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

Giving back! You'll never regret helping someone who truly needs it. Remember to share a smile as often as you can. It just may make someone's whole day turn around.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My friend Tiffany Dunaway. She passed away in 2022 from cancer. She was a huge inspiration to me. She showed me what it meant to be a hard worker, a fighter, a faithful servant, and a great friend and more than anything, she showed me how to never give up. Without her and her giving heart, the Giving Plate wouldn't exist.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

A strong work ethic, determination, and understanding. You're never too important to do any job! Be an example to your employees.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

Community, to me, is a feeling of acceptance. You're greeted with a smile at your local store. You shake hands with the members of your church. A place where you feel safe and always welcomed.

Kindness is so important, and being a positive light in the world will only help you in your career.



Congratulations **Tiffany Wasson** on being named
Top Community Leader! Thank you for your
dedication to our community!

the **G**iving
Plate

by Deb's Catering

Tyler Micenheimer

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES
HEARTLAND DENTAL



BIRTH YEAR

1984

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Effingham Community Support Group
Lake Land Foundation Board
Effingham Park District, Small-Fry Coach
University of Illinois School of Labor and
Employee Relations, Guest Lecturer

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Associate Degree, Lake Land College
BS, University of Illinois, College of
Business
MS, University of Illinois, School of Labor
and Employee Relations

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS?

I think success is defining the future you want, personally and professionally, and doing whatever it takes to create it for yourself.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TODAY'S YOUTH?

Focus on building resilience rather than chasing success. It's pretty rare for personal or professional success to be linear, so the ability to navigate challenges and repeatedly do the hard stuff wins in the end.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LIVING A HAPPY LIFE?

I think your mindset defines your ability to be happy. If you frame the world through a negative lens or view challenges as punishment, no amount of wealth or success will make you happy.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

Without a doubt, my Mom and Dad have been my biggest inspirations and role models. My Mom taught me to be conscientious in my work and to always frame challenges as opportunities. My Dad taught me that there can be joy in hard work. Whether it's getting up early, working long hours, or even participating in endurance sports, there's pride to be found in repeatedly rising to the occasion.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

The best advice I got early in my career was from my first boss, Dick Ruth. I was straight out of college, so naturally, I knew everything. He taught me to approach every new assignment, role, team, or project, reminding me, "I don't even know what I don't know." It was a lesson in humility that I've tried to carry with me, and that's the importance of always being a learner or a student before attempting to be a leader. Ironically, those qualities become more and more important the further you progress throughout your career.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT A PLACE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO CALL IT HOME?

There are some obvious features like great schools, housing, and amenities. But I think what sets great places like Effingham apart is the strong sense of shared responsibility for your neighbors and your community. I think about the tragedy in Teutopolis a few weeks back and the amazing reaction of our first responders, the outpouring of support for folks displaced from their homes, and the sheer volume of people finding ways to pitch in to help...That's just not something I experienced to this degree until I moved back home. Sometimes, it takes moving away for a decade to realize how great you always had it.

*If you frame the world through a negative lens
or view challenges as punishment, no amount of
wealth or success will make you happy.*

CONGRATULATIONS TYLER MICENHEIMER



We're proud
to have a
leader like
you on
our team.





Blayne Pals

BIRTH YEAR: 2005

SCHOOL: Effingham High School

GRADE LEVEL: 12

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

National Honor Society, Academic Hall of Fame, Chess Club, Golf and Tennis teams, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Member of Christ's Church

WHAT LEADERSHIP ADVICE HAS HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO AN UP & COMING LEADER?

The best leadership advice I've received is to lead by example. By doing this you can speak with your actions and not just your words. People can trust in you more if you are willing to do what you ask of them.



Hadley Hagler

BIRTH YEAR: 2006

SCHOOL: Beecher City Jr.-Sr. High School

GRADE LEVEL: 12

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

I am a part of and happily involved in 4-H, Girl Scouts, New Hope Church, Greenland Baptist Church and CEO in Effingham County. At school, I enjoy being involved in the National Honor Society, Library Club, Spanish Club, and Future Business Leaders of America.

WHAT LEADERSHIP ADVICE HAS HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO AN UP & COMING LEADER?

Some of the best advice for me has been "talk to people smarter than you." Numerous people have shared that advice, and that has been so helpful. I have so many ideas and things I want to carry out, but without a clue how to carry them out. Surrounding myself with people older than me and smarter than me has allowed me to learn about different ways to start up ideas and make them successful. There is no way I could have started any projects or be the person or leader I am today without the support and knowledge gained from all those individuals who gave me insight into their knowledge and experience. "Talk to people smarter than you" has been the advice most influential in my leadership journey.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADER?

The top three qualities I feel are most important in a leader are empathy, confidence and integrity. People are more likely to follow someone who is confident or at least shows confidence, because they can trust that person and follow the leader's passion and belief displayed through their confidence. Also, when a leader can show empathy towards their workers and others, they will be more likely to follow and show empathy



Anna Niemeyer

BIRTH YEAR: 2005

SCHOOL: St. Anthony High School

GRADE LEVEL: 12

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Within the community, I am incredibly fortunate to be a part of the Effingham Co. CEO program, as well as a member of the St. James Hornets 4H club. Within my high school, I am involved in volleyball, pep club, history club, band, founder of the sewing club, and costume designer of the musical.

WHAT LEADERSHIP ADVICE HAS HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO AN UP & COMING LEADER?

"You get out what you put in." This is the motto that has been pivotal to me throughout my entire life. Throughout every aspect of life, I have

Up & Coming Leader

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADER?

Being an effective communicator is a huge step in the direction of success. One of the most important qualities for a leader is the ability to provide and accept feedback. This can help anyone immensely when you learn how to effectively use it. Another important quality is the ability to adapt. When faced with the unknown, a leader should be able to overcome any challenging situations they may face.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My biggest role model has been my father. I have seen him throughout my life successfully run his own business and more importantly enjoy his profession. He is always striving to be better at what he does even 20 years into his career as a chiropractor. I hope to one day be able to do the same in my field of work and life.

Up & Coming Leader

to others. That creates a better environment and motivates everyone to keep moving forward. Finally, integrity gives people confidence in your leadership and you. This will keep people following you and wanting to work for your cause. Therefore, empathy, confidence, and integrity are the top three qualities in a leader to be effective and keep people following to make the change the leader wants to see.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

There are a lot of people that I have looked up to as a role model and for inspiration. However, from a leader's standpoint, I would say that Kelly Altman has been my inspiration and role model. She was the high school leader at my church for 8 years and my personal small group leader. She was a servant leader. She never asked anyone to do something she was unwilling to do, and she always worked alongside her volunteers. She thought about the behind-the-scenes things that needed to be done to keep everything running smoothly. She worked hard in her leadership position to do her best and be there for those she worked with and ministered to. However, she kept her family and personal faith as a priority as well. She did not allow her job to erase her relationship or time with her family or her growth in the Lord and her faith. I admired her commitment to her personal life and job, even in her leadership position. I also admired how she served others, even though she technically was in charge. That is the kind of leader I want to be; I want to serve everyone around me, even as a leader. I want to prioritize my faith and family, even when I have many responsibilities. She was a great role model of the leader I want to be. She was not perfect, as no one is, but she did not pretend to be. She did her best and kept a positive attitude no matter what came. She was the model of the kind of leader I want to be because of her service, commitment, and positivity. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to watch and get to know her.

Up & Coming Leader

always strived to give a hundred and ten percent in everything I do, and to do everything to the best of my ability.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADER?

Perseverance, Respect, and Responsibility are qualities that I find most important in a leader. These combinations of qualities allow for a person to stand up and provide an environment of growth for those around them.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My biggest inspirational role model is an individual whose determination, dedication, and service to others I have been able to experience firsthand: my godmother and Aunt, Natalie Stout. Mrs. Stout, is a family consumer science teacher at St. Elmo High School. Her dedication to her students and community has spanned over 28 years. She is a constant reminder of how someone can impact someone's life, as well as an entire community.



Noah Stanley

BIRTH YEAR: 2006

SCHOOL: Altamont High School

GRADE LEVEL: 11/Junior

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

I am involved in a youth group which performs at fundraisers for causes such as missionaries and orphan outreaches. I play 1st trumpet in Band and am either left or right guide while marching. I am a member of Library Club and Spanish Club, the Secretary of National Honor Society, President of the Altamont High School Junior Class of 2025 and President of the Altamont High School Student Council.

WHAT LEADERSHIP ADVICE HAS HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO AN UP & COMING LEADER?

My parents provided me with the leadership advice that has helped shape me into an Up & Coming Leader. From a young age, they instilled Christian principles in my life that revolve around treating others the way you want to be treated and not letting yourself be persuaded into what you know isn't right. These ideals have evolved into my empathetic expertise and

self-confidence that I possess today.

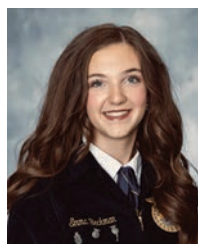
WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADER?

In my opinion, humility, accountability, and openness are the three most important qualities in a leader. Humility, to me, is never putting your ideas over others and being able to admit when you are wrong. Accountability is leading by example and embracing your mistakes. Mistakes are what define our successes and shape our leadership qualities. Finally, openness is always listening to others' ideas, no matter how outlandish they may seem. A leader sees value in everyone's opinion and makes the decisions for the group as a whole based on those opinions.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My leadership inspiration came from my first high school student council advisor Mrs. Teresa Lee. Her advisory skills were tremendously effective, and she truly pushed me and others around me to realize that leadership is listening to yourself but also listening to others around you. She showed me that being yourself is the most fluent way to communicate your thoughts, and I truly think that she led me to become a young leader, but more importantly the person that I am today.

Up & Coming Leader



Emma Beckman

BIRTH YEAR: 2007

SCHOOL: Dieterich High School

GRADE LEVEL: Junior

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

I am primarily involved in FFA where I hold an officer position of President in my Chapter at school and Treasurer in the whole Section 20. I am also involved in my 4-H club called the Sunshine Pals 4-H club where I hold the position of President. I am an active member of the Effingham County 4-H Livestock Judging Team. I am also given the title of the Effingham County 4-H Communications Person. In my school organizations, I am a member of our Student Council, Future Christian Athletes(FCA), Spanish Club and a member of the Dieterich Honors Society.

WHAT LEADERSHIP ADVICE HAS HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO AN UP & COMING LEADER?

Through life I have grown up with knowing that if something needs done, then you jump in and get it done quickly and efficiently. When it comes to the outcome of things, the biggest advice that has shaped me is that God has a plan for everything and if it's not in that plan, then it

wasn't meant to be. Therefore, I live by this by not getting flustered in crazy situations, and instead taking the reins in a leadership role and executing to my best ability.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADER?

I feel that all qualities are equally important when being a leader. One big quality that took time to develop, as a shy young girl, was speaking out with my opinions and ideas. However, with speaking out, you have to be able to listen to others with consideration. I believe leaders need to have creative minds and fun but yet serious personalities. With this they can truly build up relationships, not only on a personal level, but in their community.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

In the many organizations I am involved in, I have had several individuals who have molded me into the person I am today. Therefore, I can't exactly narrow it down to one, as many people have impacted how far I have come. I would say that my Advisor, family, 4-H leaders, and many other friends and professionals have all been inspirations. They have all helped in different ways whether it be advice, support, or just being my ride to my many events, where I got to execute my leadership abilities.

Up & Coming Leader



Gracie Eaton

BIRTH YEAR: 2005

SCHOOL: Effingham High School

GRADE LEVEL: 12

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Student Council, National Honor Society, Class Officer, Academic Hall of Fame and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

WHAT LEADERSHIP ADVICE HAS HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO AN UP & COMING LEADER?

God has given you that platform as a leader for a reason. This is a part of His plan for you. Seek and follow Him. His plans never fail. As a leader, never stop listening and never stop learning. Care about and for the people around you and go make a difference!

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADER?

A good leader is someone who is confident, honest, trustworthy, and dependable. A good leader serves others. A good leader never stops listening, learning and loving. A good leader is someone who has integrity and always does the right thing. A good leader stands up for others. A good leader always has a kind and caring heart. A good

leader is willing to help others when needed and finally, a good leader perseveres regardless of the situation.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My parents because they have always supported me in everything I do. I am a very busy person, being involved in many different things, but my parents never fail to show up. Sometimes life can be hard, but my parents always remind me to never give up and always persevere. They have shown me what true loving parents are like, and someday I strive to be a parent to my kids just like they have been to me. They have also shown me what it's like to step out in boldness and be courageous. Throughout my life as I have served as a leader, I have grown to learn to step out of my comfort zone more. Doing this has shown me my true potential as a leader. There have been many times where I was leading something and someone later came up to me and said "You're a natural. How do you do it so well at such a young age? When I was your age, I would have never been doing what you're doing." Hearing people say this has revealed to me some gifts and talents I have been blessed with. I am forever grateful for my parents for always pushing me to be the best I can be in all I do and allowing me to lead in different ways.

Up & Coming Leader



Connor Roepke

BIRTH YEAR: 2005

SCHOOL: St. Anthony High School

GRADE LEVEL : 12

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Iron Sharpens Iron – men's group led by Tony

Kreke to help grow young men in their faith.

WHAT LEADERSHIP ADVICE HAS HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO AN UP & COMING LEADER?

Actions speak louder than words and not doing what everyone else does isn't always the best choice.



Spencer Fox

BIRTH YEAR: 2005

SCHOOL: Effingham High School

GRADE LEVEL: 12

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Football (serve as captain), basketball (serve as captain), baseball, Student Council, National Honor Society, Society of Academic Achievement, Class President, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Chess Club, Best Buddies Club, Extreme Elite baseball team and a member of Christ's Church.

WHAT LEADERSHIP ADVICE HAS HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO AN UP & COMING LEADER?

My parents have raised me to lead by example, while also treating others how I would want to be treated. They have always told me that the stands are full of little kids looking up to me as an example, setting the tone with my choices, words, and actions and that I should be an example that would make them proud. They have taught me that true leaders lead through their example, in the trenches working alongside others toward a common cause whether that be an athletic endeavor, a class assignment or the mission of an organization. I have always tried to implement those ideals in my everyday life.



Olivia Copple

BIRTH YEAR: 2005

SCHOOL: Teutopolis High School

GRADE LEVEL: 12

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

At Teutopolis High School, I am Student Council President and Senior Class President. I am also an active member of National Honor Society, Science Club, Varsity Club, In-Touch, and Volunteers. This year, I am a member of the Effingham County CEO class. In addition to school, I volunteer at my parish, St. Francis of Assisi in Teutopolis, and attend weekly religious education classes.

WHAT LEADERSHIP ADVICE HAS HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO AN UP & COMING LEADER?

For as long as I can remember, my parents have been heavily involved in our community. They have always lived by the motto that you can't complain about something unless you try to change it. Seeing their dedication to improve our community has made a lasting impact on me. I have become a very involved member of my school because of them; I have been in Student Council for three years and am now president, and I have been Class President for four years. Being taught that I do not have the right to complain unless I try to make a difference has shaped me into the Up & Coming Leader I am today.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADER?

Advocate. Personable. Firm. Generous. These are four of the many

Up & Coming Leader

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADER?

Honesty, respect and willing to stand up for others.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My parents serve as my role model to be a leader because over the years I have seen how they have stepped up and helped many people. They have taught me respect and how to lead by example.

Up & Coming Leader

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT IN A LEADER?

I believe leaders have to be able to build positive relationships with others. Those relationships are built through compassion, empathy and good listening skills, all qualities that help a person better understand and relate to others. Leaders also have to be devoted and have an incredible work ethic, dedicating their time and energy into the task at hand, whether it is a job, a sports endeavor, an organization or a project. Leaders have to guide others through their example, be willing to make tough decisions, problem solve and compromise in order for a team to be successful.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My parents have been role models each and every day of my life. They both lead by example and try to give their best in all they do. They have an incredible work ethic and a true servant's attitude, willingly helping their staff and students in any way they can. They lead in the trenches, working alongside their staffs, always taking time to help and make the life or job of someone else easier. My grandfather, John Davis, has also served as a very important role model for me. He taught me what it means to be a man of God. He also taught me to always respect others and to be a man of integrity. He has also helped me to realize that family is our greatest gift. Without them, I would not be the person I am today.

Up & Coming Leader

attributes some of the greatest leaders I know possess. I used to think that people were born leaders, that they had a certain personality that made them more qualified to be a leader than someone else. Being in CEO has taught me that this is wrong. I have learned that leaders come in all shapes and sizes. I have also been taught that leadership is hard and takes a lot of dedication. Therefore, I feel that the most important quality a leader can possess is humility. The ability to identify your weaknesses and turn them into strengths. The ability to surround yourself with others who are better than you at something. The ability to be forever improving. I have never met a great leader who wasn't humble.

WHO HAS SERVED AS YOUR INSPIRATION OR ROLE MODEL? WHY?

My parents have been my biggest role models because of their never-ending dedication to our community and to me. My parents have been active members in the community for as long as I can remember. They have taught me so many valuable life lessons and shaped me into the Up & Coming Leader I am today. Not only have they dedicated countless hours to improving our community, but they have been my biggest supporters in my personal endeavors. Throughout everything I've done in my life, my parents have been on the sidelines, cheering me on and helping however they can. They not only encouraged me to take on leadership roles in school but provided great leadership examples for me to emulate. I would not be where I am today without them, and I hope to one day be an effective, dedicated and humble leader like they are now.

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Awards Dinner

Wednesday, November 15, 2023
at Thelma Keller Convention Center

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Congratulations to our 2023 Top Community Leaders

16th Annual Class | Under 40

Alex Anderson
Andrew Grunloh
Bailey Whitney
Chris Etter
Christo Schultz
Clayton Hinton
Courtney Yockey
Derek Koester
Henry Siemer

Jake Niebrugge
Jennifer Kinkelaar
Katie Rincker
Kayla Bowling
Kayla Schumacher
Krista Mette
Logan Arney
Jessica Mottashed

Michael Brummer
Michelle Fombelle
Mike Esker
Nick Lechman
Nicole Morrison
Ryan Brandt
Shelley Smith
Tiffany Wasson
Tyler Micenheimer

4th Annual Class | Up & Coming

Noah Stanley | Altamont
Hadley Hagler | Beecher City
Emma Beckman | Dieterich
Blayne Pals | Effingham

Gracie Eaton | Effingham
Spencer Fox | Effingham
Anna Niemeyer | St. Anthony
Connor Roepke | St. Anthony

Olivia Copple | Teutopolis



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