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AWARDS

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ABOUT THE AWARDS

Leading  
in times  
of crisis

**WHEN A COMPANY** gets hit with a crisis, it leans heavily on the commitment and expertise of its top leaders to meet the challenges.



So, when CO-VID-19 shook the world, it should be no surprise that C-Suite leaders across the state sprung into action to calm colleagues and clients and help their employers chart a course through the chaos.

For many, including Dr. Matt Collins, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island’s executive vice president and chief medical officer, a lifetime of problem-solving and innovation helped them approach the new coronavirus as one more workplace challenge to conquer.

PBN’s 2020 Career Achiever, Collins acknowledges “there is no playbook” for dealing with a pandemic, but the insurer aggressively moved to boost access to telemedicine, waive fees and expedite payments. And the key for successful companies and achievers such as Collins, “We ... are constantly seeking ways in which we can do more.”

Stepping up to challenges, of course, is nothing new for all of this year’s C-Suite honorees.

Rising Star Jennifer Bose, Providence Children’s Museum associate director, faced a host of them when she joined the museum in a different position in 2017. She quickly boosted information technology, got the building rewired and upgraded security and human resources functions.

“I’m at a time and place where all my experience can make a difference,” she said.

Experience, and a relentless energy, also drives David Hemendinger, Brown Medicine’s chief information officer. It’s why Brown Medicine was prepared for the increased demand for telemedicine created by the pandemic.

When COVID-19 struck, he recalled the words of Brown Medicine President Dr. Louis P. Rice: “Dave, your career has been built for this.”

Returning for the fifth year as presenting sponsor of the C-Suite Awards program is KPMG LLP. And returning as partner sponsor is the Hilb Group of New England. We thank them both.

*Michael Mello*  
Michael Mello  
Editor





## Providing quality care is Collins' calling

BY JOHN A. LAHTINEN | Contributing Writer

**CARING FOR OTHERS:** While in college, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island Chief Medical Officer Dr. Matt Collins became interested in serving underserved communities and hopes to improve health care in those areas.  
COURTESY DR. MATT COLLINS

**DR. MATT COLLINS** wanted to be a doctor for as long as he can remember with dreams of one day opening his own practice in a small town such as Cohasset, Mass., where he grew up.

“I was impressed by the physicians in my community,” Collins said. “We lived across the street from a surgeon who worked long hours and had his own practice in his home. The pediatrician I went to was straight out of a Norman Rockwell painting. I just felt drawn to the profession.”

Years later, Collins would find that his medical training at Howard University in Washington, D.C., would take him on a slightly different path. He said he became more interested in serving in underserved communities, and working in the poorer parts of the nation’s capital steered him in that direction.

“I sought out residency training programs that focused on training physicians to serve culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged communities,” said Collins, now executive vice president and chief medical officer at **Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island**. “In the hopes of improving ‘the system,’ I became interested in physician leadership and sought training to develop necessary knowledge and skills.”

Collins was asked to lead the clinical program within the Federally Qualified Health Center, where he had completed his residency training and assumed the vice president of medical service role at Family Health Center of Worcester in Worcester, Mass., for five years.

The firsthand primary care experience lit a fire in Collins. He dove into learning as much as possible about quality improvement methods and advanced primary care designs, feeling that primary care could do a better job at meeting patients’ needs and delivering positive results.

Desiring a role where he could have more of a direct influence, particularly from a payment perspective, Collins accepted a medical director role with Neighborhood Health Plan of Massachusetts. He held that role for more than three years before taking a senior medical director job with Fallon Community Health Plan.

Collins was drawn by Blue Cross’ commitment to improving primary care when he joined the insurer five years ago. Currently, Collins said assuring that Blue Cross supports its members and customers, as well as the community and provider groups, in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic is the top priority.

“As people have said over and over, there is no playbook for responding to a pandemic of this scale,” Collins said. “We have done a great deal so far and are constantly seeking ways in which we can do more. Empowering providers and members with the ability to do and access telemedicine, waiving cost sharing for diagnosis or treatment, and advancing payments to providers hurt by the precipitous drop in clinical revenue are some of the important things we’ve already enacted.”

Beyond the pandemic, Collins is focusing much of his work toward identifying and

reducing low-value care – care that does not contribute to improved health in most cases and therefore represents unnecessary cost and time wasted.

Blue Cross CEO and President Kim A. Keck said Collins is passionate about improving Rhode Island’s primary care system experience and that his background as a family physician and a medical director gives him a unique perspective on how a health insurer can meet the needs of the community it serves.

“He leads by building consensus with stakeholders, inspiring their trust through direct, understandable communication, and following through on his commitments,” Keck said. “Matt is a master of productive collaboration, never shying away from challenging tasks. He has shown tremendous leadership during the time of the pandemic.”

Collins remains steadfast in his dedication to doing everything in his power to see that the people of Rhode Island have the best primary care system possible, he said.

“I’m passionate about a lot of things but believe health care is my calling,” Collins said. “I feel that as my chosen profession, I need to ensure health care reaches its fullest potential for both the people who work within the system and [those] who are served by it.” ■

‘I need to ensure **health care reaches its fullest potential** for both the people who work within the system and [those] who are served by it.’

**DR. MATT COLLINS**, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island executive vice president and chief medical officer



**SOCIAL IMPACT:**

Rhode Island Medical Imaging Inc. Chief Marketing Officer Dana Alexander Nolfé has exponentially increased the health care practice's presence on social media since she started with RIMI in April 2018.

COURTESY RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL IMAGING INC.

## Building a brand, brightening the image

BY KIMBERLEY EDGAR | Contributing Writer

**IF NUMBERS INFORM AN IMAGE**, Dana Alexander Nolfé has painted a clear picture in her time with **Rhode Island Medical Imaging Inc.**

Its robust social media stats from November 2018 through December 2019 show a 120% increase in followers with a 98% retention rate of those who have liked social media accounts for the outpatient diagnostic imaging network, also called RIMI.

Impressions tracking frequency with which ads or promoted posts are fetched from servers and displayed on social networks – also grew by 119%.

RIMI's engagement rates on four major platforms tower above industry standards. Facebook engagement swelled to a 6.9% rate when 1% is average. On Instagram, RIMI engagement grew to 16.6%, far surpassing the 4% strength threshold.

On platforms such as Twitter and LinkedIn, where 0.5% to 0.8% is healthy, RIMI's engagement on Twitter is at 1.9%, while RIMI's engagement on LinkedIn is about 12 to 18 times the norm at 9.3%.

The Radiology Business Management Association sought RIMI's advice, inviting it to share secrets to its social media success with other radiology marketers last November in Louisville, Ky.

"Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and others existed in the most basic fashion. We decided this was a real growth opportunity," said Alexander Nolfé, who became RIMI's chief marketing officer in April 2018. "Now, we see double- and triple-digit growth in a way that is unusual for

any industry – never mind health care."

And this says nothing about her other successes, including 21 media placements made in her first year and tripled to 63 last year.

"Dana is a total overachiever," said Giselle Mahoney, senior account executive and partner with integrated marketing and communications firm RDW Group, hired by Alexander Nolfé in November 2018. "What makes Dana the perfect recipient of this award is she's able to see and execute a vision."

In a network of 500 employees well-versed in the life-and-death importance of clear, precise imaging, Alexander Nolfé is the standard-bearer shaping and networking RIMI's brand image.

In addition to revamping the social media strategy, she has stretched RIMI's reputation as an American College of Radiology Center of Excellence beyond RIMI's traditional business-to-business physician-provider partnerships.

Alexander Nolfé also has balanced marketing through more business-to-consumer relationships with RIMI's multifaceted clientele; tapped her broadcasting background with ABC News to develop two 15-second TikTok videos, and RIMI's newest "Seeing the Unseen" video cam-

paign representing more than 80 radiologists' work with patients; and championed RIMI's corporate social responsibility and event planning and presence through American Cancer Society initiatives, including a StyleWeek Northeast fashion sponsorship and RIMI's Stand Up to Cancer campaign with Providence College Friars basketball.

"The execution was flawless," said Greg Leonetti, Providence Friars Sports Properties general manager, of RIMI's Stand Up to Cancer campaign. "The Rhode Island Medical Imaging brand was able to own the night."

Also, on April 16, Alexander Nolfé and her five-member team launched RIMI's new cleaner-looking, customer-catering website.

"She has been able to quickly understand the spirit of who RIMI is as an organization – what its brand is – and drive that forward," Mahoney said.

While metrics are essential to marketing, they paint only part of the picture. As RIMI's radiologists see patients from the inside out to promote better health, Alexander Nolfé X-rays the 13-site network and its seven hospital partnerships to find stories showcasing RIMI and its culture.

The words "care," "caring," "warm," "welcoming" and "nurturing" come up often in conversation.

She shares RIMI's subtle, sensitive yet substantive side found in soft pink robes adorning women awaiting oft-dreaded mammograms.

Instead of sitting in sterile surroundings garbed in drab hospital gowns, these women sip hot and cold beverages while listening to a nearby waterfall's peaceful trickle mingling with soothing, musical strains in spa-like settings at RIMI's two newest breast-imaging centers, in East Greenwich and Johnston.

She even offers to help someone overdue for a mammogram book an appointment for after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mammogram or MRI, ultrasound or uterine-fibroid intervention, lung-cancer screening or liver-cancer intervention, patients are getting the message RIMI is laser-focused on providing the highest level of care possible.

"[Alexander Nolfé] has been instrumental in leading RIMI to be seen as the true health care company and leader that we are," said JoAnn Barbato, executive director of RIMI patient financial services. ■

**'Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and others existed in the most basic fashion. We decided this was a real growth opportunity.'**

**DANA ALEXANDER NOLFE, Rhode Island Medical Imaging Inc. chief marketing officer**

**CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER**  
**LARGE PRIVATE COMPANY**





**SMOOTH OPERATOR:** Brown Medicine Chief Information Officer David Hemendinger implemented IT strategies in order to help improve workflow at the physician group practice.  
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

# Remaining steadfast within fast-paced health care

BY ALEXANDER CASTRO | Contributing Writer

**INSOMNIACS TEND TO** be studious thinkers. They're up all night, dissecting tomorrow before it even arrives.

For David Hemendinger, sleeplessness is precious fuel in the 24/7 realm that is the health care industry.

"Not needing a lot of sleep, I found that sort of fit with the paradigm of health care today," he said.

Driven by a quest to understand how things work, Hemendinger obtained his master's degree in health care from Bryant University. His enthusiasm for data is apparent in his current role as chief information officer at East Providence-based **Brown Medicine**. Hemendinger oversees the day-to-day and strategic information technology operations for a medical group of more than 200 physicians teaching, researching and practicing in numerous specialties.

Brown Medicine CEO Ann M. Kashmanian has noticed Hemendinger's relentless energy.

"David works tirelessly in the pursuit of creating technological changes that enhance the workflow and workday of our physicians," she said.

A smooth workflow requires a deft understanding of the technics needed to make it happen and, for Hemendinger, these changes begin in the IT department. When he arrived at Brown Medicine in July 2019, the physician group lacked a formal IT strategy. So he implemented a robust three-year plan, prioritizing physicians in the first year.

Hemendinger notes that today's doctors deal with a multitude of both patients and data in a health care system that's as complex as ever. He introduced improvements such as a virtual scribe program that allows for digital dictation of patient visits, and federated sign-in so doctors working at different offices can log in across scattered systems.

"[Physicians] are folks that we as technologists need to find creative ways to de-stress," Hemendinger said. "Even prior to COVID-19, from an IT perspective, we were focusing on

physician burnout."

The idea isn't to make physicians' jobs easier but more manageable. Another initiative saw collaboration with the R.I. Department of Health on a Healthcare Training Consolidation Act, in the hopes of streamlining facility- and state-mandated compliance and credentialing. Hemendinger said centralized training can consolidate once-redundant sessions from 20 hours annually to about 10 hours.

"If [doctors] practice at multiple locations, the training is quite extensive," Hemendinger said.

Hemendinger's career, which includes 17 years at Lifespan Corp. and five years at Hope-Health, helps break down some of the parochialism that exists at a technology and workflow perspective.

Additional experience as a licensed EMT-B, as well as a former chief operating officer at Woonsocket-based Summer Infant Inc. (doing business as SUMR Brands) familiarized Hemendinger with nuances of health care delivery, from product design to chaotic emergency rooms to everyday follow-up visits.

Questions of preparedness have become ultra-relevant in a health care system strained by COVID-19, but one might consider Hemendinger a sophisticated prepper. He remembered Brown Medicine President Dr. Louis P. Rice's words: "Dave, your career has been built for this."

While doctors' offices nationwide were scrambling to institute telemedicine, Brown Medicine was ready. Hemendinger had instituted "Televisits" within his first month on the job.

Televisits are only one part of the data-driven changes Hemendinger plans to roll out. He's most excited for an artificial intelligence-powered project that will generate predictions

that physicians can use as part of their thought process, he said. That's in addition to more-ordinary measures, such as fortifying support for Brown Medicine's teaching and research functions, or expanding services available to patients.

Hemendinger sees IT forming a roadmap of the infrastructure that's needed. For him, the notion that a patient's care might be enhanced by a computer's foresight is idealistically bright.

"It all rolls back to my philosophy of the physician: [Gathering] all the information ... at the right time, in the right way, [doctors] can consume it with the patient. Then everyone can make the next best step," he said. "I love the ability to get us to that utopia." ■

**'David works tirelessly in the pursuit of creating technological changes that enhance the workflow and workday of our physicians.'**

ANN M. KASHMANIAN,  
Brown Medicine CEO

**CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER**  
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**Dr. Matt Collins**  
Chief Medical Officer & Executive Vice President  
Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island

# A VISION FOR INNOVATION

**Dr. Matt Collins'** entire career—from EMT to nursing assistant to family practice physician and teacher—is inspired by his vision of an effective healthcare system that delivers for patients. His passion for innovation is fed by seeing to the needs of his patients and soliciting ideas from providers across Rhode Island.

Congratulations to Dr. Collins, Career Achiever honoree, and all the other C-Suite Award winners!

Thank you for all your efforts toward a healthier Rhode Island.

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# Bleeding green and embracing challenges

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

**SCOUT'S HONOR:** Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England CEO Pam Hyland had to face various challenges, such as moving programming to virtual means due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to keep the organization moving forward.  
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

**IN THESE EXTRAORDINARY** times, Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England CEO Pam Hyland finds new environments invigorating.

She and other executives for Girl Scouts of the USA must keep the organization viable and meaningful, even as they face challenges, such as the Boy Scouts of America's 2018 decision to welcome girls into its organization and, more immediately, the social-distancing protocols that were implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"If girls leave for the Boy Scouts or some other girl-centric program ... they are ours to lose," Hyland said. "We teach girls to make decisions that are right for them."

As for social distancing, Hyland is doubling down on creativity. Microsoft Teams and virtual website programming keep GSSNE staff and Girl Scouts, respectively, involved and engaged. Eager to ensure that the organization remains meaningful to Girl Scouts and their families, Hyland said that the Girl Scouts "haven't gone away."

"[We] just look different," Hyland said. "The girls are selling cookies virtually and adults are delivering them safely to hospital workers."

GSSNE serves 5,800 girls ages 5-17 who are part of 519 troops within Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts. With an annual budget of slightly more than \$3.8 million, Hyland manages 32 full-time and 70 seasonal employees.

Deb Ricci, a GSSNE board member since 2019, said that Hyland "stays calm under pressure [and] uses educated resources to make her decisions."

Those decisions included promptly suspending all troop activities, including in-person cookie sales, closing the office to visitors and allowing employees to work remotely, even before Gov. Gina M. Raimondo ordered nonessential workplaces to close due to the pandemic.

When Hyland arrived to lead GSSNE in December 2015, she recognized the need to establish some much-needed infrastructure. Hyland implemented policies and procedures related

to board governance and development, by-laws, fundraising, risk management and human resources. Gallup Certified Strengths Coach Facilitator Cindy Scibetta-Butts and Tim Hebert, a long-time entrepreneur, public speaker, author and leadership activator, were particularly helpful in the human resources arena.

"The further along you are on the leadership path, the more you realize what you don't know. You need [your] team to move you forward," said Hyland, who lauded Scibetta-Butts, Hebert and GSSNE board Chair George Shuster for their support and guidance.

Running a nonprofit organization requires diverse skills. While CEOs must keep a close eye on the business's bottom line, they must give equal attention to creatively furthering the organization's mission.

To that end, Hyland is focusing on evaluating the GSSNE's properties, which include four campsites.

"We're looking at right-sizing ... to make the camps we keep stronger, better and more financially sustainable," Hyland said.

Hyland, who gained an appreciation for environment and nature as a young Girl Scout, endorses an Iroquois belief she learned during an earlier GSUSA leadership post: "The decisions you make today must be solid and good for seven generations out."

So often, Hyland said, people make decisions that make them look good in the short-term.

Hyland "bleeds [GSUSA] green," Ricci said, meaning Hyland's "entire thought process

[focuses] on what will this do for the betterment of the girls and the volunteers, as well. It's not always looking at profitability."

At Hyland's initiative, a board committee is also working to identify GSSNE alumnae so that they can be recognized and, perhaps, recruited to participate in event planning, committee or board work, Ricci said. The committee is eager to explore volunteer partnerships with local companies.

Girl Scouts do far more than sell cookies. Asserting that every girl can be a go-getter, innovator, risk-taker and leader, the GSUSA reported in 2018 that three of the nation's four female governors and 73% of the female U.S. senators were Girl Scout alumnae.

Earning badges in coding and cybersecurity, today's GSSNE girls have initiated anti-bullying initiatives and welcomed three transgender boys transitioning to girls. Those situations were handled on a case-specific basis, said Hyland, who embraces her myriad challenges.

"I want to get [them] right. I like innovation and I don't like to stand still," Hyland said. ■

**'I like innovation and I don't like to stand still.'**

**PAM HYLAND, Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England CEO**

**CEO**

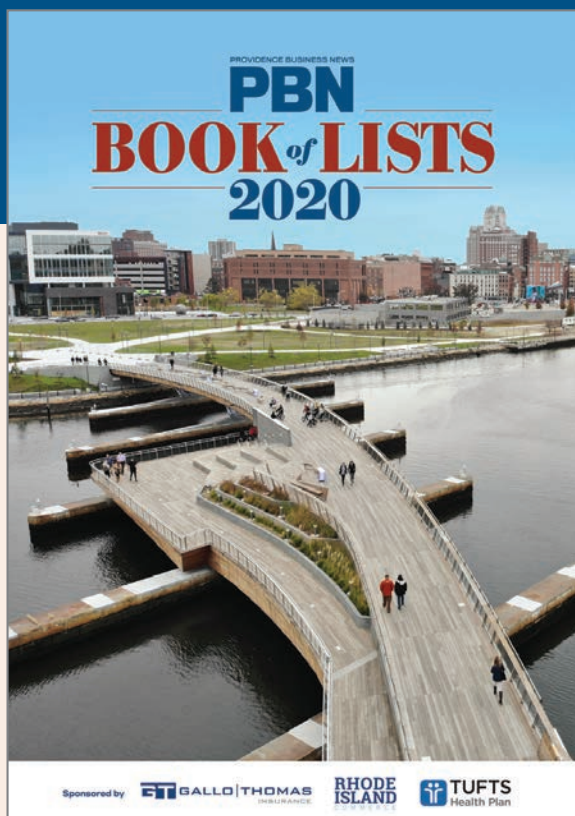
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Rank	Company	Assets	Employees
1	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
2	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
3	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
4	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
5	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
6	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
7	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
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14	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
15	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
16	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
17	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
18	First State Credit Union	\$7.1 billion	1,000
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# Congratulations

to David Hemendinger  
 and all of the winners of the  
 2020 PBN C-Suite Awards



**David Hemendinger**  
 Chief Information Officer

**David, we're proud to have you as an executive leader in our C-Suite and a valued member of the Senior Management Team.**

Brown Medicine, Inc. is a nonprofit primary care, specialty outpatient and sub-specialty medical group practice with over 200 physicians and multiple patient care locations across Rhode Island. Brown Medicine is part of Brown Physicians, Inc., a clinical, research and teaching affiliate of the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University.



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Everyone at RIMI applauds and congratulates you on your PBN C-Suite Award. We appreciate all you do for us and we are thrilled that you're part of our team.

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# Woodard continues Groden's mission to help others

BY JOHN A. LAHTINEN | Contributing Writer

**AS A MEDICAL STUDENT** at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania, Cooper Woodard quickly learned that medicine was not the right path for him.

"I did not do well in chemistry," Woodard said. "But then I took abnormal psychology as an elective and it was absolutely fascinating to me. For the first time, I could not put the textbook down."

Woodard recalled that he went to the college's psychology department to find out more about this area and was "amazed by all the information and topics." He knew right away that he wanted to be a psychologist, he said.

"I have enjoyed it ever since," Woodard said. "I feel very fortunate to have known what I wanted to do so early in life."

Fortunate indeed for both Woodard and the many children, teens and adults with learning and behavioral disabilities he helped through his work as **The Groden Network's** chief clinical officer since 2002.

The network includes The Groden Center, founded in 1976 by Drs. June and Gerald Groden in response to the absence of effective services for youths with autism and other developmental challenges. The Providence-based organization currently offers day and residential programs providing functional skill and social development for youths ages 3-21 via The Cove Center in Providence and The Halcyon Center in Attleboro.

Woodard has been part of many programs that have forwarded the network's mission. One he is particularly proud of is the residential intensive treatment and evaluation program, a community-based, staff-secured setting where clients receive behavioral and psychiatric assessment support and stabilization.

Woodard and his team found that some of the children and adolescents supported by the center may be in crisis but did not need hospitalization or were in need of "step-down" services from a hospital setting. The 1-to-1 RITE

program, which also offers parent training and case management, has effectively served many individuals with autism and developmental disabilities without them having to go to, or be maintained in, an inpatient setting.

A story from Woodard's childhood encapsulates who he is and the passion that he brings to his work. At the age of 11, Woodard was allowed to pick out a new kitten from a litter. He picked out one of the kittens, but then noticed another kitten that didn't look quite right.

"I asked the neighbor about that kitten and she said, 'You don't want that one. It's the runt. No one wants the runt,'" Woodard recalled. "I couldn't believe that she would say such a thing and I put my kitten down and took that one. I worked with him and he became one of the most beautiful cats."

Woodard said he always felt badly for people who are different or vulnerable and it's "physically painful" for him to see someone in pain. People with autism and other disabilities are in that situation, Woodard said.

"They are vulnerable and need support, and I am so glad to be able to do anything to help," he said. "It is a gift to me to be able to be of service in that way."

Groden replaced its clinical supervisor model with board-certified behavior analysts, worked to reduce medication use and restrictive interventions by enhancing behavioral interventions, and maintained Dr. June Groden's contributions of progressive relaxation and cognitive picture rehearsal techniques for all children. It also increased the use of positive

psychology interventions for individuals with autism and developmental disabilities, and expanded vocational and employment supports.

Catherine Nassa, Groden's director of marketing and development, has seen firsthand how much Woodard's work impacts people's lives.

"At its core, Cooper's work helps our students and clients develop coping skills so that they can better interact with their families and their community," Nassa said. "This allows them to live more productive and meaningful lives. Cooper is willing to listen to all sides of an issue before making a decision. He is also willing to jump in wherever necessary." ■

**'[People with autism and developmental disabilities] are vulnerable and need support, and I am so glad to be able to do anything to help.'**

**COOPER WOODARD, The Groden Network's chief clinical officer**

**CHIEF CLINICAL OFFICER**

**NONPROFIT/SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES**





# Different leadership style creates unity at IGT

BY JENNIFER L. GRYBOWSKI | Contributing Writer

**PASSIONATE AND AUTHENTIC:** Wendy Montgomery, senior vice president, global brand and marketing communications for International Game Technology PLC, feels that having a people-centered focus is a key component of leadership. PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

**WENDY MONTGOMERY** has had a career full of marketing and general management roles around the globe.

The senior vice president, global brand and marketing communications, for **International Game Technology PLC** landed in Providence two years ago, and said returning to her passion of marketing and having another global role were what drew her most to the company.

“Marketing is a wonderful mixture of art and science,” she said. “There is an analytical piece in terms of the discipline focusing on objectives and how to get to them, and then you look at how to tap into motivations and create awareness and desire for a change in behavior.”

Kim Barker Lee, IGT vice president of diversity and inclusion, said while Montgomery’s marketing expertise and global viewpoint were attractive for IGT, she came into the organization from the unique vantage point of being a customer through her work at Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corp.

“I think it gives her a view on how we can do things from [a] customer and player perspective, and that’s an innovative approach for us,” she said. “She has provided us with insight that has helped our global position from [a] marketing and branding perspective.”

Montgomery rose through the ranks at IGT quickly, moving to the C-Suite within a year of joining the company. She was the only woman in the C-suite at the company at the time.

“I brought a different perspective that was valued and a leadership style that was different,” she said. “At the time, the organization was looking for more diversity, and my style enabled me to be accepted in a way that I could add value from a diverse perspective.”

Montgomery said respecting and valuing people is her main strength as a leader. She believes that a people-centered focus is a key component of leadership and appreciates hard work and what people bring to work every day.

“I’m a passionate person and I’m authentic; I show up the way I am,” Montgomery said. “I think that as a leader, providing frequent communication and providing context in a frequent and relatable way with passion and enthusiasm is the mark of my leadership style.”

In fact, when IGT launched its global Women’s Inclusion Network diversity and inclusion group in 2018, Montgomery volunteered to be the co-executive sponsor despite still being new to the organization. The WIN group really attracted Montgomery to IGT because she had been involved with it in her previous position.

“I had seen the power of bringing women together, not just for women’s sake but to the value of the organization, as a way to break down silos between levels and from a bringing the organization together perspective,” Montgomery said. “It was another way I thought I could contribute from a leadership perspective that was not just about business but a culture change and helping to support women.”

Montgomery said she always believed it’s important to help and support women in their personal and professional lives, and that women have more to prove in the professional world.

“I think it’s really important to support each other and for us to continue to strive for the

equality we deserve in the world, which we don’t have,” Montgomery said.

Montgomery said moving to a new country wouldn’t have been possible without the support of her husband and 13-year-old son, and they have found Rhode Island to be a welcoming community.

“This was an opportunity for us as a family to expand our horizons,” Montgomery said. “It takes a village and the people of Rhode Island have been very welcoming and friendly to us and have helped make the transition easier for us. We’ve found Rhode Island a great place to call home.”

“[Montgomery] is really at home here in Rhode Island,” Barker Lee said. “She is a role model to our organization and in the gaming industry. We should be really proud she is here in Rhode Island and I’m really proud to see a newly minted Rhode Islander recognized in this way.” ■

**‘I brought a different perspective that was valued and a leadership style that was different.’**

**WENDY MONTGOMERY**, International Game Technology PLC senior vice president, global brand and marketing communications

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# Passion to succeed drives Cherry

BY JOHN A. LAHTINEN | Contributing Writer

**CAPITAL GAINS:** Carousel Industries of North America Inc. Chief Financial Officer Jason Cherry has helped improve capital efficiency at the Exeter-based IT consulting company, such as reducing past-due balances by more than 50%.  
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

**GROWING UP THE SON** of a U.S. Marine, Jason Cherry's leadership training began at a very young age. He and his brothers were held to high standards while learning the importance of honesty, integrity and accountability.

The lessons Cherry learned as a child have molded him into the business leader he has become.

"Leadership to me means being willing to fight for what is right, advocate for your team, be willing to make the hard decision even when it isn't popular, and ultimately be an effective communicator so everyone is clear on both the 'what' and the 'why,'" said Cherry, chief financial officer at information technology consulting, management and cloud services provider **Carousel Industries of North America Inc.** in Exeter.

Heading Carousel's financial operations and security since 2018, Cherry puts his professional experience and commitment to excellence to use every day to guide the company in an often-challenging economic environment.

After 20 years working between General Electric Co. and Nielsen Holdings PLC, Cherry saw opportunity in joining Carousel.

"It is smaller, privately held, and in an industry that I didn't have any direct experience," Cherry said. "But what I did have was a strong financial management, accounting, process improvement and business process improvement background. I was able to put that to work immediately at Carousel."

In the past year, Cherry led the company through several critical projects, all aimed at growing and strengthening Carousel financially.

First, Cherry said, was improving capital efficiency, in which he identified several opportunities to address, including the management of credit lines and accounts receivable, as well as looking at how and when suppliers were paid.

"We've had tremendous success here and I am really impressed with the team that respond-

ed to the challenge," Cherry said. "In our first year, we reduced our past-due balances by over 50%, increased our cash flow from operating activities by \$28 million and increased liquidity by three times, allowing us to de-lever the balance sheet."

Cherry has also worked diligently on Carousel's business operations and systems. He said that although Carousel already implemented best-in-class systems to manage customer relationship management and services, the area of enterprise resource planning stalled.

"My team was unanimous that our current path was not going to deliver the [return on investment] we expected, so I killed it," Cherry said. "We went on a long pause, worked process improvements within our current environment, better aligned teams, introduced lean principles."

In the fourth quarter of 2019, Carousel launched its new enterprise resource-planning efforts to drive control, consistency, productivity and speed into the business. The efforts will deliver new efficiencies and capabilities to more effectively run the company's business.

"Jason has so many strengths, ranging from his passion to succeed, a boundless energy, a high degree of intellectual curiosity that goes far beyond the finance function, and an innate ability to focus on business drivers that support and dovetail with our value proposition," Carousel co-founder and CEO Jeff Gardner said. "He is a quick study, a strong and active listener, and one who has great empathy for all he works with."

"After speaking with many of Jason's direct

[colleagues], they all share similar thoughts on how he has helped them to better achieve success in their roles."

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact Carousel's business from how and where the company's employees work to customer buying decisions being deferred, in-process project work being delayed and customers looking to conserve cash.

Cherry said Carousel understands the situation everyone is facing and is actively working with customers to help arrange financing or to reschedule work.

"Our ability to help them quickly deploy remote work solutions has seen an increase, as we responded quickly to help our customers embrace remote work models at the same speed as changing coronavirus guidelines," Cherry said. "Internally, we are ensuring that our cash lines are sufficient, and our working capital generation is strong so we can continue to maintain business continuity for our customers." ■

**'Leadership to me means being willing to fight for what is right, advocate for your team.'**

**JASON CHERRY,**  
**Carousel Industries of North America Inc. chief financial officer**

**CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**  
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**FIXER-UPPER:** Upon arriving at Providence Children's Museum in 2017, Associate Director Jennifer Bose quickly took action to help upgrade several operating systems in order to get the museum up to date.  
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

# Creativity, leadership on full display

BY ALEXANDER CASTRO | Contributing Writer

**JENNIFER BOSE** had never visited a museum when she chose to major in art history at Boston University. Consider it an impulse decision: “I say I had my midlife crisis at 18,” she said.

Around the same time, Bose began working at the student activities office on campus, a job that would prove just as formative. Two years after completing her bachelor’s degree, Bose obtained a master’s in not-for-profit administration, with a concentration in arts administration.

That education led her through several careers’ worth of executive positions, such as being Museum of Fine Arts Boston exhibitions director and a director of business planning at the Bank of New York Mellon.

Bose, now **Providence Children’s Museum’s** associate director, blends her managerial and creative talents seamlessly. Her ability to balance the two has been warmly noted by her colleagues.

“So much of the children’s museum is about empowering kids to find joy through play. We want people who are mirroring that themselves,” Providence Children’s Museum Executive Director Caroline Payson said. “[Bose] comes at things with a playful spirit. ... She embodies that sense of fun and play despite having super-serious administrative jobs.”

For Payson, Bose’s “super-serious” duties have meant “steadfastly” chipping away at changes needed to modernize the museum.

Numerous amenities were missing at the museum when Bose arrived in 2017 as director of finance, operations and facilities. There was no point-of-sale or customer relationship management system; an old cash register filled those roles. Payroll wasn’t automated and there were no standard security or human resources practices. The museum’s computer network server, Bose said, was a Mac mini – a model that had been discontinued in 2014.

Bose quickly reached out to tech consultants to bolster the museum’s information technol-

ogy, and electricians when upgrades called for the building to be rewired. Once the tech was in place, different departments such as development and membership could finally and effectively communicate. Standardized human resources soon followed, as did the museum’s first security manual – not to mention staff training, including active shooter drills.

The administrative offices, meanwhile, were littered with “an odd collection of stained, splintered office equipment,” Payson said. Bose then facilitated furniture donations from Fidelity Investments Inc.

“It sounds trivial, like the furniture behind the scenes,” Bose said. But there’s a “morale boost when you get something that works,” she said, whether it’s newer desks or a faster server.

Having strengthened back-of-house operations, Bose in 2019 became associate director. Her duties now involve the museum’s overall operations. She’s been active in the museum’s Creativity Initiative, which invites local artists to conceive and install interactive exhibits.

Bose spent the last year fine-tuning the systems needed for useful visitor analytics, so the museum can now pore over useful data.

“Do our members use their benefits? Are there ZIP codes we’ve saturated or not saturated [with memberships]?” Bose said. These new levels of insight allow the museum to be more strategic about their audience, such as tailoring email content based on visitors’ interest in past exhibits.

“The basics of project management or exhibit management are understanding the goals and where you want to go. [That’s] the thread of the majority of what I’ve done,” Bose said.

She’s worked in institutions both mature and fledgling, so she understands what accelerates growth or stalls change.

“You want to put your dollars toward what seems the most mission-driven, but you get to a sort of threshold where you’re getting bigger and more complex, and you’re relying on Band-Aids and bubblegum,” Bose said.

At that point, institutions must invest in themselves to grow any further. At Providence Children’s Museum, Bose’s efforts and investments feel tangible.

“I feel like I’m at a time and a place where all my experience can make a difference. I feel invigorated every day,” Bose said.

That sense of empowerment has uplifted her co-workers as well.

“We joke that she’s a superhero,” Payson said. “But she is one.” ■

‘I feel like I’m at a time and a place where **all my experience can make a difference.**’

JENNIFER BOSE, Providence Children’s Museum associate director



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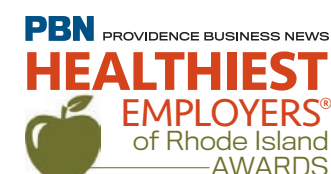
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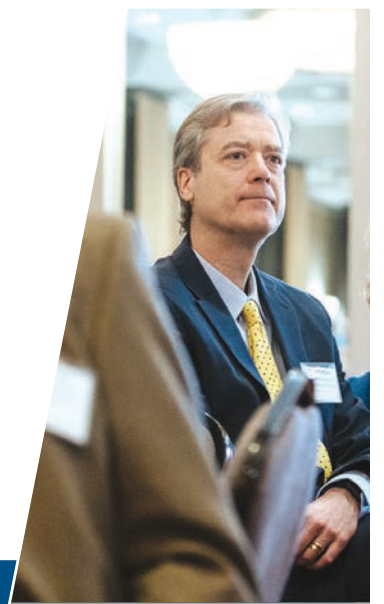
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