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MOLLY DONOHUE MAGEE | PG. 4

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FROM THE EDITOR

Breaking barriers to new heights

MOLLY DONOHUE MAGEE proves that it's never too late to take on a fresh challenge.



Our 2019 Business Women Career Achiever, after nearly two decades in executive roles with the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport, was instrumental in forming the Southeastern New England Defense Industry Alliance in 2013, a group that supports the region's defense contractors.

Today, the organization has more than 125 member companies, along with subgroups that include the Maritime Cybersecurity Center and the Undersea Technology Innovation Consortium. Probably her biggest initiative has been the now three-day Defense Innovation Days, an event that helps connect large defense contractors with each other but also with smaller companies that could be key vendors at some point.

Magee has achieved all this in what traditionally has been a male-dominated industry, a fact that makes her particularly attuned to mentoring the next generation of women.

The defense industry is not the only one that has been dominated by men, as so many women know.

Kimberly Silvestri is a project executive for BOND Brothers Inc., a large construction company (it is doing major work on the Providence Public Library at the moment). But she is so much more.

Exposed to the concept of mentoring early on, when a female supervisor helped her learn that getting everyone to work to their potential would help the team do the same, she has made it her mission to be an active mentor.

She has built two mentoring groups at BOND, a path that she finds very rewarding and one that is the reason she is the Outstanding Mentor among this year's class of Business Women.

The presenting sponsor of the 2019 Business Women program is Webster Bank, while the partner sponsors are the Executive Development Center at Bryant University and CVS Health Corp.

Mark S. Murphy

Mark S. Murphy
Editor

ON THE COVER: HIGH PERFORMANCE:

As executive director of the Southeastern New England Defense Industry Alliance, Molly Donohue Magee has taken the organization from an all-volunteer group to one with a \$1 million budget and more than 125 member companies.

PBN PHOTO/DAVE HANSEN



Her in-depth acumen is an industry asset

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

“IMAGINE HOW MUCH of the world is water,” said Molly Donohue Magee, executive director of the **Southeastern New England Defense Industry Alliance**.

She cites statistics showing 70% of the Earth’s surface as water, with 80% of people living near the coast, 90% of trade transport done via water and 95% of internet traffic being transmitted via underwater cables.

“I think that shapes why the underwater domain is important,” she said.

Passion about possibilities that lie beneath drives her many achievements in her SENEDIA role and other positions she’s held over the past four decades, including as a civilian working for the U.S. Navy. This opportunity also fuels her desire to mentor others in the defense industry.

Before SENEDIA, Magee had served from 1993 to 2010 as the first chief financial officer at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport, managing a \$1 billion annual budget. She was also the first female department head at NUWC, in charge of technical-risk assessments for major submarine systems.

In leading SENEDIA, a Middletown-based nonprofit started in 2013, she champions

the southeastern New England defense and technology sector, of which the underwater domain figures prominently. She has the skills and experience to connect partners in order to maximize potential and create mutual benefit. Where she sees need, she creates programs and initiatives.

“It’s about getting innovation technology and industry to work together,” said Magee.

In addition to her role with SENEDIA, Magee created and leads its strategic partner organizations: the Maritime Cybersecurity Center and the Undersea Technology Innovation Consortium. Both initiatives were the result of SENEDIA member surveys, she said, with SENEDIA responding to the results by forming the groups in 2015 and 2016, respectively.

ON THE OFFENSIVE: Molly Donohue Magee has taken the Southeastern New England Defense Industry Alliance from an all-volunteer group to a \$1 million entity with five employees and more than 125 member companies.

PBN PHOTO/DAVE HANSEN

‘It’s no stretch to call Molly a **state and national treasure.**’

DAVID C. KRING,
Navatek vice president of science and technology

“Molly is one of those rare, exceptional talents that has connected people and ideas across government, industry and academia over her career,” said David C. Kring, vice president of science and technology at Navatek, an engineering company in South Kingstown.

“She has an effective focus on business and personally represents a huge draw to the regional economy. ... I think it’s no stretch to call Molly a state and national treasure.”

Magee grew up in a military family that moved around a lot, but she eventually settled on making Rhode Island her home. She was a math major who graduated from Salve Regina University, and has an MBA from the University of Rhode Island.

On Magee’s watch, SENEDIA has grown from an all-volunteer group to a \$1 million organization with five employees and over 125 companies as members.

SENEDIA’s Maritime Cybersecurity Center, which is focused on cyber-workforce development, and the alliance’s Undersea Technology Innovation Consortium have made great strides. UTIC now has more than 230 member companies from 35 states.

Magee also started Defense Innovation Days a few years ago – an annual, three-day event bringing companies and policymakers together to explore ways to work together. Sponsors have included The Raytheon Co., Northrup Grumman Corp. and General Dynamics Corp.

As someone who has forged her own path in a male-dominated industry, Magee believes in mentoring others, as others mentored her.

“When I started out working for the NUWC, there were not a lot of women,” Magee said. “One of the things I focus on are people and mentoring. It’s important, even with school-aged kids, to let them know how important working in this domain is and how great the benefits are.” She also points out the importance of providing insights into careers, showing kids that math is cool and how it can be used in real life.

As part of that, Rhode Island Women in Science and Engineering – launched by SENEDIA in 2017 – focuses on mentoring and education. It is a resource for women, professors, K-12 teachers and college students, presenting opportunities such as internships.

“I succeeded with people willing to mentor me,” said Magee. “If I can help someone get ahead, that is very worthwhile. We have to give back.” ■

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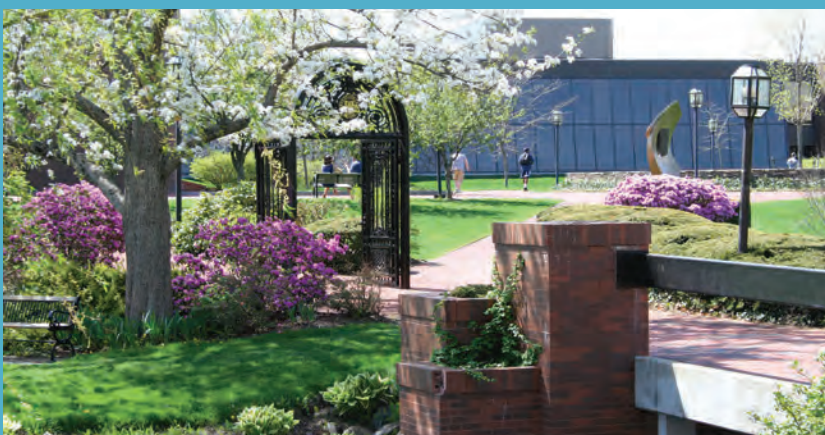
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Providing the tools to demolish barriers

BY WENDY PIERMAN MITZEL | Contributing Writer

GRAND PLAN: Kimberly Silvestri, project executive at BOND Brothers, says she finds it rewarding to help other women make their mark in the construction industry.

PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

YOU COULD SAY the building blocks for Kimberly Silvestri's career were there all along.

Her grandfather was a land surveyor, and she can recall visiting work sites with her dad, who also worked in the construction sector. Her brothers are in the industry, as well. But Silvestri, project executive at **BOND Brothers Inc.** in Providence, insists working in construction wasn't a conscious choice.

"I was always good at math, and so not knowing what else to do, I went to school for electrical engineering. Then I changed my major to be a lawyer," she said.

When her husband became ill, she put college on hold and joined a small construction company as bookkeeper. "As fate would have it, I got exposure to all the things I needed to be in construction: law, engineering and budgets." As she gained more responsibility, she went to Roger Williams University at night and earned a bachelor's degree in construction management.

"I was the only woman in the room," she said. "I got the typical 'Why are you here?' Nobody was going to tell me, 'No.' I would bulldoze right over them."

She went on to become the first female project manager at Dimeo Construction Company in the 1990s, and now, as project executive for BOND, she brings 20 years of management expertise in space planning, preconstruction, logistics, phasing and project delivery.

She was formerly the director of facility development and project management for Care New England Health System and served as the director of space planning and construction for Women & Infants Hospital, delivering the nation's largest single-family room newborn intensive care unit.

"She is amazing," said Laurie Vandal, who worked with Silvestri at Care New England. "When she puts her mind to something, she

'[Women] just need to recognize the talent they have and translate it to the design and construction environment.'

**KIMBERLY SILVESTRI,
BOND Brothers project executive**

does it very well. And when she's teaching you something, it makes you feel good about yourself instead of feeling stupid. She will sit and work with you until you understand it."

Silvestri said a former female supervisor helped her to understand "that the way everyone on the team advances is if everyone is working to their potential, and if I could help them reach their potential, that would be

rewarding for everyone. That was probably the start of my active mentoring."

In 2016, she began something called BOND-PLX, or Professional Learning Exchange. Featuring a new "class" every year for minority and women business owners, Silvestri and her team provide after-hours pizza and lessons on business development and the construction industry.

"We want them to get to know each other as well," she explained. "Everybody there learns something from someone else's experience."

She is the co-chair of BONDing Women in Construction, the company's internal professional women's association. She is also on the board of directors for the ACE Mentor Program, which attempts to inspire high school students to pursue a career in architecture, construction and engineering.

"It has been very rewarding to forge my own path in life down a trail not many women were taking," said Silvestri, who lives in North Smithfield with her husband. "To be able to help others as they make their way on their own journey is very meaningful. I am inspired by their dedication and curiosity and passion to succeed."

Silvestri said that even though the construction industry has been more accepting, it can still be difficult for women to break through.

"One of the obstacles is the continuing perception that women are not suited or adept at the skills needed for this type of profession," she explained. "To be successful in this industry, you need to be detail oriented, organized, focused, persistent, understand what motivates and inspires people and, of course, be a good communicator. Women work, run households, volunteer, continue their education, take care of families, pets and parents. They naturally have the skills; they just need to recognize the talent they have and translate it to the design and construction environment." ■



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DECISIONS, DECISIONS:
Mary Jean Keany, owner of Anamika Design in Newport, looks through swatches for an interior design project.
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY



Growth pattern is part of her designs

BY ANDY SMITH | Contributing Writer

FOR INTERIOR DESIGNER Mary Jean Keany, the key to her business is focused creativity.

That means interpreting the concepts of her clients in a way that maintains the integrity of the space, the satisfaction of the client, and Keany's own artistic vision. That's true whether she's working on ski condos in Vermont, an oceanfront home on Martha's Vineyard, or an 1860s Victorian in the Boston suburbs.

"I try to keep it timeless," she said.

Keany is founder and owner of **Anamika Design LLC**, which operated in the Boston area for more than 20 years. In 2017, she moved to Newport.

Anamika, she said, comes from a Sanskrit word meaning "nameless" or "beyond naming," which she considered an apt title for a firm that can't be defined by any one style.

Keany had been working out of a carriage house at her home in Weston, Mass. But with her kids in college, she decided she no longer needed such a large house, and was looking to make a move. She had a good friend in Newport and had visited the city many times.

"I thought, what a cool place to live," she said. She also sees business potential in Newport for Anamika Design to grow.

When Keany moved to Newport, she was in the midst of two major projects. One was the complete interior design of 28 ski condos at Southface Village in Ludlow, Vt. The other project was a chance to go back to one of her very first assignments, the Beechwood Hotel in Worcester, Mass., where Keany redesigned the guest rooms.

Keany said she particularly likes working with hospitality venues such as hotels.

"It's the chance for the big bang, to make an impression," she said. "I really want the cus-

'I really want the customer to feel something when they walk into their room.'

MARY JEAN KEANY,
Anamika Design founder and owner

tomer to feel something when they walk into their room."

Current projects for Anamika include two condos in Boston, homes in Westerly and North Kingstown, and perhaps more work at Southface Village.

Stephan Rodriguez expects big things from Keany. Rodriguez is alumni manager for the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program at the Community College of Rhode Island, which Keany attended last year.

"She's really looking to grow her business,"

he said. "I think the direction she's going will make 10,000 Small Businesses proud. She's put the work into it."

Keany said she heard about the program from the owner of a health club, Bridge to Fitness in Middletown, and decided to check it out.

"I'm a designer foremost," she said. "I learned the business and marketing side as I went along. 10,000 Small Businesses is an amazing program. You're among peers, and we all learn from each other. We all have the same basic issues – managing payroll, employees, spreadsheets, trying to market your business."

In five years, she said, she'd like to have annual revenue of at least \$2 million and five full-time employees. Now she uses mostly freelancers, as many as 10 on a project, and has one full-time assistant. Current annual revenue, she said, is about \$800,000.

Keany grew up in snowy Watertown, N.Y., and got a degree in art education at the State University of New York in Buffalo, spending a semester studying abroad in Siena, Italy.

After college she moved to Boston, where she worked in corporate sales, then as a fashion stylist and events coordinator for Reebok. She started her own company, Melrose Productions, to design and install trade shows.

She said she always loved interior design and got her first job at the Beechwood Hotel thanks to the recommendation of Cambridge, Mass., architect Peter Sollogub.

Her style tends to use sleek, clean lines, sophisticated colors and high-end materials. That works beautifully in a contemporary setting, but Keany said she's equally comfortable in a more traditional environment. "Traditional doesn't have to mean stodgy," she said. ■

A proven master of brand overhauls

BY SARAH PARSONS | Contributing Writer

WHEN BUSINESSES ARE undergoing major change, they call Beatrice Thouveny.

Thouveny has 20 years of experience in rebranding companies and launching new marketing strategies. “I’m a passionate person, and I love big challenges,” Thouveny said. “So I’m always very happy when I have the opportunity to work on a new business line or launch a new company from scratch.”

She had such an opportunity three years ago when she became the marketing director of the New Bedford-based printing company **NFI Corp.**, then known as Nameplates for Industry. Around the time that Thouveny came on board, the company was acquiring a larger competitor, Design Mark Industries, and starting a new business, Flexible Pack, which produces packaging for everything from foods to cosmetics. Thouveny led efforts to modernize Nameplates for Industry while also developing marketing strategies for all three businesses.

She rebranded Nameplates for Industry as NFI Corp. and created a new color scheme, logo and tagline. She implemented a new constituent relationship management system. And she expanded

all three companies’ social media presence and created fresh web content.

“We asked, ‘How do we market ourselves in a more trendy and fashionable way?’ ” said NFI Corp. President and CEO Renaud Megard. “Working with her, we made sure we rebranded with a new and more dynamic look.”

Thouveny said that since the rebranding, traffic to the company website has increased and customers spend more time on the site.

Past experience prepared Thouveny for the challenge of working at NFI Corp. She spent nearly seven years as a marketing manager for Samsung Electronics, where she oversaw the launch of the business-to-business division.

“It was a great experience because, trust me, launching a B2B division in a [business-to-consumer] company, that’s very big and it’s very hard,” Thouveny said. “Everything is different.”

She’s also held marketing positions at NEC Corp. and at Acer France, where she led a rebranding effort.

When she isn’t directing NFI Corp.’s marketing efforts, Thouveny is a consultant for WatchHelp, an app for children



NAME DROPPER: Beatrice Thouveny, marketing director at NFI Corp., revamped the company’s brand when she took the position three years ago.
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

and adults with disorders such as autism. The app programs daily tasks on a watch, which notifies users when it’s time to brush their teeth, put on their shoes and other activities. ■



University Orthopedics would like to congratulate
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UNCOMMON QUALIFICATION: Kathleen Ryan had extensive experience as a trust and estate attorney when she joined Washington Trust Wealth Management 3½ years ago.
PBN PHOTO/DAVE HANSEN

Ryan's legal skills help make an impact

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

KATHLEEN RYAN, chief wealth management officer for **Washington Trust Wealth Management**, abides by this rule: Whatever she does, she works to make an impact, whether at work or serving her community.

For the latter, she joined the Providence College Alumni Association right after graduation, working her way up to the National Alumni Association board of governors. Ryan was a Women & Infants Hospital corporator and foundation member; president of the Diocese of Providence's Catholic Charity Fund Appeal; and a board member at the Rhode Island Foundation.

That was just for starters.

"I had gotten to a point where I was serving on 10 boards at the same time," she said. "I had to take a step back. I had to learn how to be productive and be a good board member. For every meeting, I wanted to make it a meaningful one."

Making a difference and producing results was at the forefront, she said. No matter how much she's juggling, she tries to ensure that her work produces an impact in some way.

Ryan graduated from Classical High School, in Providence, and Providence College. And when she was enrolled at Suffolk University Law School in Boston, she still lived in Providence and commuted to classes, she said.

Though she's rooted herself in Rhode Island,

Ryan believes in shaking things up and creating change wherever it can do the most good.

She came to The Washington Trust Co. with a strong foundation gained as chair of the legal trusts and estates group at the law firm Partridge, Snow & Hahn LLP, moving into wealth management about 3½ years ago.

"Wealth management folks deal daily with trusts and estates," said Deborah DiNardo, an attorney who worked with Ryan at Partridge, Snow & Hahn. "There are numerous legal issues germane to those two entities ... Washington Trust gains an advantage, as she still has that legal knowledge."

This broader perspective helps clients, paving the way for "deeper conversations," Ryan

'Kathi's ability to mentor is one of her unique strengths. ... She has an ability to give natural guidance and share her experiences.'

LARRY HUNT,
Orson and Brusini attorney

said.

While at Partridge, Snow & Hahn, Ryan was someone who recognized needs and worked to fill them. She was the only full-time trusts and estates attorney at the firm, growing the practice area to include more than 15 professionals.

She co-founded a group at the firm that would better allow women to advance professionally. WAVE – Women AdVocates for Enterprise – started out with about 12 women. The initiative connected women from across the firm who normally weren't interacting on a day-to-day basis, giving them a chance to develop relationships with one another, a value that hadn't previously existed.

"Networking relationships are different with women," Ryan said. "Partridge, Snow & Hahn was fabulous and embraced the idea. They wanted it, to support and mentor other women. We wanted to make sure that across the firm, we were giving women the opportunity to develop those relationships on their own, and feel comfortable."

The group offered external events in the community, as well, that were open to any industry. It was a way that women could build business connections. Events such as the WAVE spring luncheon grew to attract 100 or more attendees, Ryan said.

"After a few years, men asked to come. We said, 'Absolutely.' It wasn't meant to have exclusivity," she said.

Estate-planning attorney Larry Hunt, of Orson and Brusini, worked with Ryan at Partridge, Snow & Hahn. He saw Ryan's leadership at work in helping to form WAVE, and vouched for her mentoring, as well.

"Kathi's ability to mentor is one of her unique strengths. I have been a true beneficiary of that," he said. "She has an ability to give natural guidance and share her experiences. It is very organic." Additionally, her work with WAVE was important to team building at the firm, he said.

With her innate ability to mentor, Ryan continues to be impactful where it counts – such as with her sons Patrick and Brendan. Both are in their 20s and in the financial-services arena as well. ■

She's empowering clients, co-workers

BY SARAH PARSONS | Contributing Writer

WOMEN HOLD LESS THAN 20% of finance jobs in the U.S. But Ashley Abbate Macksoud doesn't let that intimidate her.

"I have finally come to the realization that being younger and being female are my biggest assets," said Macksoud, a **Merrill Lynch** vice president and wealth management adviser.

Macksoud, 36, works as part of a four-person team and manages \$100 million in assets. She's set herself apart from competitors by catering to what she calls "females flying solo," women who are managing finances because of a divorce or the death of a spouse.

Macksoud first found this niche seven years ago, after her father died. She saw how emotional it was for her mother to navigate the financial and estate planning, even though she and Macksoud's father had planned for retirement together.

"That's when I realized this is so underserved – women who have lost spouses," Macksoud said. "I was grieving at the same time, but that is when I really fell in love with being a financial adviser because I saw the true impact of my work."

In addition to being a certified financial

planner, Macksoud is a certified divorce financial analyst. She sees this designation as another way she can advocate for women, especially in asset distribution and long-term financial planning after a divorce.

"[Ashley] has the ability not only to offer sound, competent advice, but she does it in a way that she makes people feel like family," said Jim Calbi, a senior vice president and senior resident director at Merrill Lynch.

Female empowerment extends beyond Macksoud's clients. She ran the local chapter of Merrill Lynch's Women's Exchange for five years. The internal networking group helps women professionally and personally while supporting philanthropies.

Nowadays, Macksoud coordinates the firm's Financial Adviser Development Program for staff in Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts. She oversees 40 trainees and delivers monthly sessions on sales techniques, market analysis and more.

"I substitute-taught the fall after I graduated college, and thought, 'This is not for me,'" Macksoud said. "But in some respects, I'm still a teacher, and certainly a coach. It has made me be a much better adviser." ■



SPECIAL NICHE: Ashley Abbate Macksoud, a Merrill Lynch vice president and wealth management adviser, caters to women who suddenly are going it alone because of a divorce or the death of a spouse.

PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY



Lifespan congratulates

Crista Durand

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Durand's leadership a big shot in the arm

BY ROB BORKOWSKI | Contributing Writer

NEWPORT HOSPITAL PRESIDENT Crista F. Durand, credited with a turnaround in recruiting, fundraising and community outreach at the hospital while expanding its emergency room, built her successful medical-administration career through networking, professional curiosity and a team-oriented management style.

“Crista Durand is among the most dynamic, compelling and effective leaders I’ve had the pleasure to work with over my long career in health care,” said Dr. Timothy J. Babineau, CEO of Lifespan Corp., which owns **Newport Hospital**.

Babineau said Durand’s impressive accomplishments at Connecticut health care institutions persuaded him to recruit her to lead Newport Hospital in 2014.

Durand joined Connecticut-based Community Health and Homecare as a staff accountant in 1994, two years after earning a bachelor’s degree in financial management from Salve Regina University in Newport. Durand attributed the early success to her networking skills. The finance director at Community Health and Homecare was a friend of the family, she said. When he moved to another position in 1995, she landed his job, she said.

When mentoring young professionals, Durand said, “One of the things I impress upon them is to network.”

Within three years, she had implemented a pay-per-visit home health aide compensation program, payroll merger and reengineered the department, saving the company \$600,000.

When Community Health and Homecare was integrated into Day Kimball Hospital in Putnam, Conn., she participated in seven merger teams, leading three. It was her first experience with hospital administration, “So that was a big leap for me,” Durand said.

Hospital administration ended up being her calling. She earned an MBA at Nichols College in Dudley, Mass., in 2001, the same year she was named chief financial officer and senior vice president at Day Kimball.

She helped develop and execute the hospital’s strategic plan from 2001-2005, increasing

HEALTH CONSCIOUS: Crista F. Durand, Newport Hospital president, has breathed new life into the facility since taking over in 2014, from beefing up community outreach to recruiting new doctors.
PBN PHOTO/ DAVE HANSEN

‘I would say it was a whole lot of **hard work and grit.**’

CRISTA F. DURAND,
Newport Hospital president

net revenue of \$30 million, expanding programs and market share, and earning high customer-satisfaction scores.

In 2009, she took a job as vice president of strategic planning, marketing and business development at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital in New London, Conn., developing the hospital’s strategic plan, annual business plan and master facility plan.

Since starting as president at Newport Hospital, Durand’s list of accomplishments “has continued to grow beyond my expectations,” Babineau said.

In five years, Durand launched a community newsletter and lecture series, recruited 60 new physicians and led the hospital’s first capital campaign in 20 years to fund expansion of its emergency department and intensive care unit, Babineau said.

Durand said her approach to teamwork and planning has been shaped by her passion for sports, particularly her experience playing basketball at Salve Regina.

“Basketball was really my passion, although I’m not very tall,” Durand said. She said she appreciates the lessons basketball taught her about teamwork, now that she is also “coach” of her business team. “It really helps you be versatile in both of those roles,” she said.

While working to establish trust within the community, Durand said, it was important for hospital staff to engage with the neighborhood, volunteering on local boards and hosting focus groups. That engagement has helped the capital campaign, which is about \$700,000 from its \$12.5 million goal to fund expansions of the emergency room and ICU.

Peter Capodilupo, a board member of the Newport Hospital Foundation, pointed to the accolades the hospital has earned under Durand, from its five-star rating for overall quality from the national Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to receiving the Press Ganey “Guardian of Excellence” award for inpatient rehab services four times.

“I’ve been a member of the business community for many years, and have worked with many business leaders, but I’d have to say that Crista’s communication skills, [and her] ability to present and organize information, are really the best I’ve ever seen,” said Capodilupo, who is also chairman of OceanPoint Financial Partners, the holding company of BankNewport.

“I would say it was a whole lot of hard work and grit,” Durand said. ■

Unique viewpoint guides Snelgrove

BY WENDY PIERMAN MITZEL | Contributing Writer

HAVING BEGUN HER CAREER as an occupational therapist, **University Orthopedics Inc.** Chief Operating Officer Kathleen Snelgrove finds she has a unique insight about management.

“I have treated patients for a living and I understand the clinical side of things,” she said. “It’s not just business.”

Snelgrove made the transition from hands-on clinician to leadership over the course of 19 years with University Orthopedics. Physicians and managers noticed her successes with creating performance management systems and encouraged her to continue with professional development and new challenges.

“I’ve always been very lucky to work for great physicians who invest in education for employees and who saw my potential,” she said.

She now leads a team of 15 directors and recently streamlined 350 employees across five states to provide care for more than 1 million visits by patients each year.

The past four years were spent planning, building and opening a new 90,000-square-foot facility in East Providence. The new location has been open for about a year.

Snelgrove was involved in site choice, engineering, building design and the even-

tual interior design, according to Dr. Julia Katarincic.

“Without her 24/7 effort over those years, the building would have never been built,” Katarincic said. “One of the most impressive parts of this project was not only to design for patient care but to get over 40 surgeons to agree with the design.”

Snelgrove’s background at University Orthopedics helped her guide planners to address specific needs of physicians and staff, as well as deliver the best possible patient experience.

“As a physician, if you don’t have all the tools you need, you can’t provide the best care,” she said. “It was so rewarding. Something completely outside of what I learned in school. To have had that experience, I feel so lucky.”

Snelgrove still has plenty on her plate. She’s played a major part in the practice’s strategic planning for the next five years and is in the midst of earning an MBA. She also participates in OrthoForum, a national physician specialty organization. She has been a volunteer middle school field hockey coach for many years and is involved in Relay for Life and other Susan G. Komen breast cancer fundraising activities. ■



ABOVE AND BEYOND: Kathleen Snelgrove, chief operating officer at University Orthopedics, spent years overseeing the planning and building of a 90,000-square-foot location in East Providence. The building overlooking the Providence River was completed last spring.
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY



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On her own course through legal world

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

MULTITALENTED: Attorney Lauren Motola-Davis, managing partner at Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith, says she enjoys drumming up business for her firm as much as the legal aspects of the job.

PBN PHOTO/DAVE HANSEN

'I like the entrepreneurial side; many don't.'

LAUREN MOTOLA-DAVIS,
Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith
managing partner

different skill set than is demanded to [establish] and manage a law firm," said retired Chief Judge George E. Healy of the R.I. Workers' Compensation Court. "Lauren is one of those rare individuals who can do both."

As a child, Motola-Davis asked a lot of questions.

Her mother, an educator, and her father, a doctor, suggested law would be a fitting career for Motola-Davis, who loved exploring to find answers; it's what she wanted to do ever since.

Born in London, she was exposed to a global perspective early on.

Her father was born in Istanbul, but her parents spoke French at home, which she and her brother learned to understand. The family moved to Newport when she was 3, later moving to Cranston.

She earned a bachelor's degree in Russian studies from Providence College, though she knew she would go to law school.

Shortly after passing the bar in the late 1980s, she defended an insured individual and the insurance carrier in a jury trial for a motor-vehicle accident.

Healy, her boss and mentor at Healy & Pearson in Providence, urged her to defend the client. He considered the outcome a victory based on the amount of damages awarded, and heaped praise on her, she said. "George built me up and I credit that man with why I am sitting in this chair managing this office today," she said.

Motola-Davis finds satisfaction in helping and educating others.

"Ms. Davis ... is always eager to provide career advice and mentoring to men and women alike," wrote attorney Michael J. Marcello, a partner at Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith.

This mentoring gained a new dimension after she and her husband became parents when Motola-Davis was 46. The doctor told her that there would be a 1% chance of a successful pregnancy using her own egg. But that's what happened.

Their daughter, Skye, was born in 2005.

"It's such a blessing that she arrived," Motola-Davis said. ■

SHE IS NOT a yachtswoman, although she is asked that question often.

She doesn't hang out at marinas or wear boat shoes every day.

But Lauren Motola-Davis is a "proctor in admiralty": an attorney specializing in maritime law. And that was her specialty at a time when even fewer women held that title than they do now.

The admiralty designation covers things such as crimes on ships, violations of shipping lanes, salvage matters and accidents at sea. Choosing this area of the law is just one of the many ways Motola-Davis successfully opted for the unbeaten path in both her life and career.

Motola-Davis has made her own way, on her own time. She went on to embrace other areas of the law, excelled in management within firms and even became a parent along the way.

Maritime law was just one example of her open-minded nature and disregard for traditional stereotypes.

Years after Motola-Davis graduated from the New England School of Law in 1984, she was living in Houston due to her husband's job transfer. She began working for a firm that specialized in maritime law.

"I knew nothing about the high seas. ... I became fascinated," she said. "As luck would have it, the leader of my old firm's admiralty department left and there was an opening. They needed someone to grow it."

She eventually added workers' compensation experience to her arsenal. And managing law firms is another area of the industry in which Motola-Davis finds her passion.

She enjoys the challenge of finding new business for the national firm where she is now a managing partner, **Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith LLP**, which has Providence offices. "I like the entrepreneurial side; many don't," said Motola-Davis, who added she can drum up business for her firm while chatting with people waiting in line at the supermarket.

"The trial of civil cases calls for an entirely

Carr relishes trials of her profession

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

ANGELA CARR, A PARTNER at Barton Gilman LLP, a law firm with offices in Providence, Boston and New York, is living her dream.

“I always wanted to be a trial lawyer; [there was] nothing else I wanted to do,” said Carr, whose legal work emphasizes medical malpractice defense.

Barton Gilman, said Carr, prioritizes collegiality. As a member of the firm’s hiring and compensation committees, she carefully reviews applicants not solely for their legal acumen and experience but also for their ability to get along with and respect others, inside and outside of the firm.

“We find people who will interact with and respect other people, and then train them to work with opposing counsel,” she said. “They can disagree about legal issues but [must] do so in a respectful way.”

She has found a lot to love about her profession.

“I love the sophistication of the issues, learning about medicine; and the clients, I work with an exceptional group of human beings,” she said. Asked what she liked least about litigation, Carr said, “Waiting for the jury to come back [with a verdict]. ... It’s out of your control. ... You have to trust that

you’ve made your case.”

She has been successful in making her case; in several very lengthy medical malpractice lawsuits, juries returned verdicts in favor of the defense within three hours or less.

“[Angela] has her finger on the pulse of the firm ... in terms of who we’re hiring, what areas we’re hiring for and how those people are compensated,” said Diana Beaudet, the firm’s director of marketing. “She’s absolutely a mentor [to] associates. ... She gives them exposure to all levels of the practice.”

Yet, Carr said her greatest professional challenge is finding time to mentor associates.

Even with a demanding work schedule, Carr is deeply committed to several community initiatives, legal and otherwise. She finds special satisfaction in serving on the Providence College President’s Council and being president of the college’s Greater Providence Alumni Club, which are most meaningful to her.

At the law firm, she said, “I’m proud of the work we do and the quality of young lawyers we raise.” ■



COLLEGIAL COUNSELOR: Angela Carr, a partner at Barton Gilman serves on the firm’s hiring and compensation committees and puts emphasis on job candidates’ ability to get along with peers inside and outside the firm.

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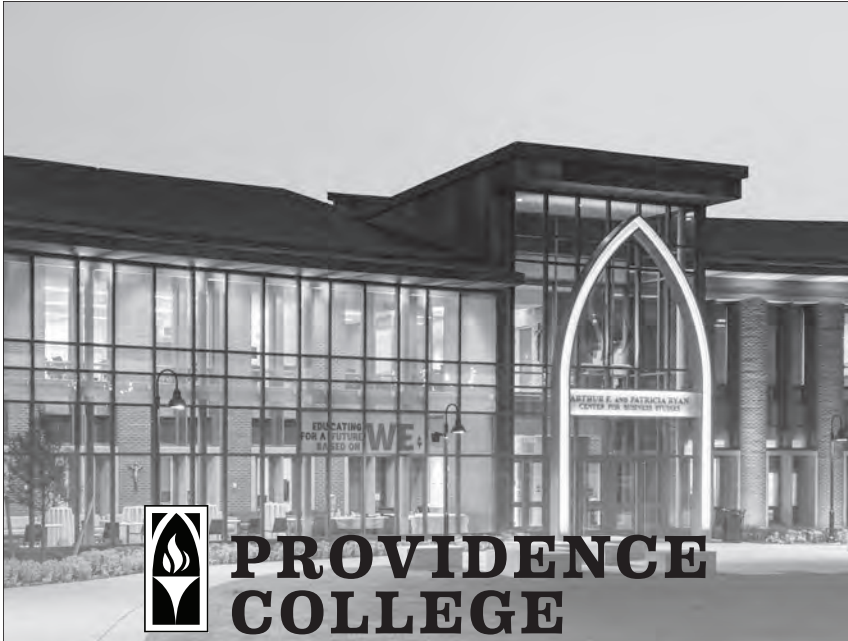
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Robson has enduring love of logistics

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

KEEP ON TRUCKING: Elizabeth Robson started on the lowest rung of her family's business, JF Moran, decades ago and worked her way up – including earning a law degree – until she was named president in 2015. She also teaches at Johnson & Wales University. PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

SOMETIMES, YOUNGER GENERATIONS have little interest in following footsteps into their family's business. Elizabeth Robson was the exact opposite when she started at **JF Moran Inc.** as a teen nearly 40 years ago.

"I loved working there from the first minute I started," said Robson, who is now president of the Smithfield-based customs brokerage and freight-forwarding company owned by her family since the early 1970s. "I was about 15, looking for a part-time job. They needed help in their export operations."

She worked there after school for a year in the early 1980s with her sister Victoria Black, who is now senior vice president of human resources. In 1982, when another family company, JF Moran Trucking Co., was formed, Robson performed the weekly billing. "I sat there with my IBM Selectric [typewriter], and typed delivery orders as the drivers were bringing them back, issuing statements to the clients."

Even as she attended Boston College, where she majored in political science and economics, she spent her summers at JF Moran. By her junior year, she was working at the company's Logan Airport office in Boston. When she graduated from BC in 1987, she started full time at JF Moran as an ocean traffic clerk while she studied for a year to get her customs-broker license. She climbed the company ladder, eventually managing the Boston office, and then the New York office.

After moving to Chicago and then to Florida, she followed a "natural progression" and earned a law degree at Stetson University in 1996.

"So much of what we do on the import/export side is subject to regulation," she said. "I had been a licensed customs broker since 1988 and was very aware of how important our

'My weeks are very busy, but there's a lot of synergy among all the roles.'

**ELIZABETH ROBSON,
JF Moran president**

role is with our clients to make sure they're getting accurate information and good advice. We had been working closely with attorneys who specialize in customs-related matters. It just seemed like a natural progression for me to push through a law degree and get better experience and to expand the level of expertise within the company."

She and her husband, George Robson, also a licensed customs broker and now JF Moran senior vice president of operations, settled in

Rhode Island after living in Florida and Boston. She was installed as company president in 2015, after serving as senior vice president of legal affairs.

Now she is also president of JF Moran Trucking, managing a total of 74 employees between the two companies. Robson also teaches full time for Johnson & Wales University's MBA program. "My weeks are very busy, but there's a lot of synergy among all the roles, so it's actually really good," she said.

At JWU, she teaches classes on global economic environments – "It's like teaching exactly what I do in my professional life." – and international business negotiations, which she performs professionally on a regular basis.

"So the two really feed into one another. I believe that by teaching at Johnson & Wales, it makes me stronger professionally, and through my role at JF Moran and Trucking, it makes me a much stronger professor because I can bring industry experience directly into the classroom."

She enjoys all aspects of working at a family-run business. "We speak our own language. We understand the stresses that one another are experiencing; we experience similar highs and lows; and are able to bring our family values into our organization," she said.

In the 1980s, Robson was one of a few women in the logistics industry. She saw it as an opportunity to stand out from the competition.

Things have changed. "My sister and I were just at a conference two weeks ago in Newport," Robson said. "At one point we looked around the room and noticed two notable things: We are clearly no longer the young people in the room, but secondly, look how many women are here, and that's a really cool thing to be watching." ■

Majewski spurring a 'cosmic shift'

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

A NEW YORKER WHO moved to Rhode Island a few years ago is making a big impact in women's business leadership here, an impact that continues to grow, evolve and thrive.

Seeing a need for a movement that supported, educated and advocated for women in leadership – no matter their role or industry – Carrie Majewski founded the **Women in Leadership Nexus** as a community movement in 2017 and serves as CEO.

The Rhode Island chapter opened in 2018, now boasting over 100 members.

"She had an idea and clearly executed it. She's very focused," said Kathleen Malin, Nexus member and vice president of technology for the Rhode Island Foundation. Nexus quarterly seminars are held all over the state. Malin joined the group and its events committee, and she hasn't looked back.

Thanks to Majewski's careful, on-theme planning, attendees would be hard-pressed to attend a Nexus event without finding valuable takeaways.

Ten percent of its members have launched their own businesses in the first year.

"You're not just in a room with a lecturer, you're making connections. It's very active, rewarding and really focused on benefits," said Malin, with pop-up training sessions, happy hours and other events all part of the

effort to connect women to each other and to their goals. Benefits are there for women in larger organizations, as well as entrepreneurs, she said.

According to Majewski, the Nexus members have a special bond. "We're of a common mindset that there is a lack of equality in terms of development in management," said Majewski, who is vice president of marketing for Trilix, in Cranston, which supports her efforts.

Topics such as embracing abundance, cultivating personal resilience and controlling professional reality have all been discussed in Nexus seminars.

A board member of the Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England and of the Tech Collective's Women in Technology Committee, Majewski's work in guiding women leaders is consistent, well-defined and crosses platforms.

Her next step is nurturing remote Nexus initiatives, in places such as New York, New Jersey, California and Massachusetts.

"As women, we tend to be in the passenger seat in our careers," said Majewski. "But women can be their own cosmic shift and grab for something more profound in their leadership journey." ■



GROWTH FACTOR: As founder and CEO of Women in Leadership Nexus, Carrie Majewski has been behind the rapid development of the Rhode Island chapter of the professional women's group. PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY



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Lewis Brisbois congratulates Providence Managing Partner **Lauren Motola-Davis** on being named the Legal Services Industry Leader by the *Providence Business News* for its 2019 Business Women Awards!



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ROOTING INTEREST: Joanne McGunagle, Comprehensive Community Action Program president and CEO, visits CCAP's new greenhouse, which will help produce vegetables for the agency's food pantry. Behind her is Lee Beliveau, CCAP vice president of development and corporate affairs.
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

Comprehensive effort to assist families

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

JOANNE MCGUNAGLE has been president and CEO of the **Comprehensive Community Action Program** since 1985 and has witnessed myriad changes with the Cranston-based social services agency, many of which she implemented.

The private nonprofit was formed under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to assist the poor and has offered an array of programs and services over the years – workforce and GED training; physical, behavioral and dental health services; affordable housing; a food pantry; and youth centers.

Since McGunagle took the reins in 1985, the CCAP annual budget has grown from \$3.1 million to nearly \$34 million today; in the same period, the staff has grown from 60 to 350.

While some services are offered to clients statewide, CCAP primarily serves individuals and families with low incomes in Coventry, Cranston, Foster and Scituate. Last year, the agency served more than 40,000 individuals.

What led to the steady growth?

CCAP expanded its medical services, generated more income through enhanced Medicaid fees and had more grant opportunities by becoming a Federally Qualified Health Center in 1985.

“Things turned around for us,” said McGunagle. “We began integrating other services – [such as] behavioral health – into health care.”

As a federally qualified agency, CCAP was required to meet and report on numerous operational requirements and quality measures. Under McGunagle’s direction, CCAP implemented professional development for the staff, and facility upgrades for its programs, which raised their quality.

Meanwhile, McGunagle is committed to leading with – not from above – her staff.

“Joanne wanted to allow staff to bring forward their issues, concerns and successes, and talk openly with their colleagues; that’s why

‘We’re
focusing on
... **supporting**
families.’

JOANNE MCGUNAGLE,
Comprehensive Community Action
Program president and CEO

she created [her 10-person] leadership team,” said Lee Beliveau, CCAP vice president of development and corporate affairs.

After converting CCAP’s food bank into a choice pantry, where clients can select their preferred foods rather than getting prepackaged groceries, the staff wanted to grow fresh produce to stock the pantry. So CCAP obtained a grant to build raised beds, and planting will begin soon.

“We want to invest in [staff] development,” McGunagle said. “They come up with creative ideas.”

At the same time, McGunagle sees where the needs are and brings or adds programs, now up to more than 90, Beliveau said. When the Rhode Island Donation Exchange was struggling to continue operations, it turned to CCAP, which found a warehouse and carried on its mission. “Our staff rose to the occasion,” McGunagle said.

During McGunagle’s tenure, CCAP achieved numerous milestones, sometimes in partnership with others.

Among CCAP’s achievements: It purchased a new facility for CCAP headquarters; renovated a former rectory into 19 affordable housing units; purchased a home for pregnant and parenting teens; financed and built the Cranston Community Youth Center; purchased two two-family homes for female prisoners reentering the community; created Rhode Island’s first Parent/Child Center; developed a fully integrated health facility with medical, behavioral health, dental, and women, infants and children services; established two health centers in Warwick; and established a community health center and recently opened a state-of-the-art, 5,000-square-foot dental clinic.

Recognizing the benefits of working with other nonprofit organizations, CCAP tries “to collaborate with everybody,” said McGunagle, who is a Providence Cranston Community Youth Center board member and chairwoman, for the second time, of the Rhode Island Community Action Association.

While changes in funding and governmental priorities are challenging, McGunagle said, “I’m optimistic by nature. We’re focusing on ... supporting families ... with a comfortable place to fall and wraparound services.

“We stand out in our ability to be flexible enough to provide as many services as possible under one roof,” she said.

While CCAP has transformed thousands of clients’ lives, CCAP’s purchase of the former St. Matthew Rectory proved transformative for McGunagle. “The priests were trying to fix me up with their attorney while I was fixing up St. Matthews,” she said with a laugh.

The matchmaking worked. She and the attorney, Ken McGunagle, are married and have two grown daughters. ■

Big energy boost delivers results

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

ERIN DONOVAN-BOYLE'S BACKGROUND prepared her well to be executive director of the **Newport County Chamber of Commerce**.

The native Rhode Islander served as director of outreach for Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., vice president of the Providence consulting firm Mayforth Group LLC, and owned a business, Capital Resource Strategies, before taking over at the Chamber four years ago.

“Erin is a former lobbyist; she knows the Statehouse really well,” said Evan Smith, president and CEO of the tourism agency Discover Newport. “She knows how to get something accomplished with working with the private sector and public sector, and that’s a very notable talent. Some people are good on the public side, and some are good on the private side. But it takes a really talented person to be good on both sides – she’s multilingual.”

Since becoming director, Donovan-Boyle has reorganized the Newport County Chamber – one of the state’s largest business-advocacy groups – restructuring staff duties while boosting salaries to align with industry standards.

She also has spearheaded a regional economic development division, launched

in 2018. She and the Chamber serve as instrumental players in Innovate Newport, a collaborative effort among the city of Newport, the Newport County Development Council – the nonprofit arm of the Chamber – and the Economic Development Foundation of Rhode Island. One initiative of Innovate Newport is the redevelopment of the city’s historic Sheffield School into a technology business hub.

The school, which was built in 1922 and is nearly 34,000 square feet, is being converted into an office complex and co-working space, with suites and event space. The Chamber has also relocated into the building as part of the rebranding of the organization.

Meanwhile, the Chamber’s board of directors recently approved a five-year strategic plan for the organization, the first of its kind for the Newport County Chamber.

“There was a time when the Chamber was not front and center,” Smith said. “She’s brought a whole new energy level to it, she’s brought a whole new posture for it, and it’s one of the moving forces again. She’s got it now in full gear and is really going forward with a lot of energy and a lot of collaborators.” ■



POWER UP: Since taking over as executive director of the Newport County Chamber of Commerce, Erin Donovan-Boyle has raised the profile of one of Rhode Island’s largest business-advocacy groups. PBN PHOTO/DAVE HANSEN

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SHE'S A WINNER: Rachel Barber, IGT senior vice president and chief technology officer of gaming and lottery, started with GTECH as a software engineer 28 years ago and a merger with IGT hasn't stopped her corporate climb.
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

Taking her game to the top levels

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

RACHEL BARBER remembers fondly how she loved video games as a kid. “I liked ‘Space Invaders,’ ‘Qbert’ and ‘Centipede,’” she said of her ninth grade self. Little did she know that an adolescent aspiration to work for the video game company Atari would lead to her becoming a leader and pioneer in gaming and lottery technology.

Barber is senior vice president and chief technology officer of gaming and lottery at **IGT Inc.**, overseeing a global team of 1,900 employees.

She has spent 28 years at the company (originally GTECH Corp., prior to its merger with IGT in 2015), starting out as a software engineer after graduating from the University of Rhode Island in 1991 with a computer science degree. As a software engineer, she developed software for the company’s online lottery point-of-sale terminals, then oversaw the installation of online lottery terminals in over 20 states. In 1996, she relocated to Olympia, Wash., where she managed a regional technology services hub for GTECH. Before long, she shifted from overseeing one region to the entire U.S. Eventu-

ally, she was promoted to technology director in 1998 and returned to Rhode Island in 2002. By 2006, she was vice president of global software engineering and was promoted to chief technology officer of gaming for GTECH a year later.

The GTECH merger with IGT led to major changes for Barber, who first had an expanded role of senior vice president and CTO of gaming, then advanced to SVP and CTO of gaming and lottery in 2018.

“Four years ago, at GTECH, I led our gaming-technology team and the organization size was approximately 500 people,” she said.

‘I feel very fortunate at this company that my bosses have always encouraged me to grow.’

RACHEL BARBER,
IGT senior vice president and chief technology officer of gaming and lottery

“When we merged with IGT in 2015, my team size tripled and the portfolio of products I was responsible for grew astronomically.”

With the expansion, Barber found herself traveling frequently to offices in Las Vegas and Reno, Nev., which allows her to keep her finger on the pulse of the company’s culture.

“My job right now is focused on integrating technologies across the portfolio and seeing how to best combine our lottery and gaming technology organizations into one,” Barber said. “With that, comes a lot of challenges. ... Today I have 1,900 people that I’m overseeing, with teams all over the world, so I try to do employee-engagement outreach activities, to stay in touch with people and keep a beat on what the organization is concerned about.”

Still, Barber finds time to volunteer. She was previously a board member for Big Sisters of Rhode Island, and she also mentors women working in the tech industry. At IGT, she’s also involved with launching the Women’s Inclusion Network employee business-resource group.

“Being a woman, I’m aware that I’m in the minority, at the senior levels especially,” she said. “When I meet with customers, it’s often-times very similar, where I’m in the minority. At the same time, I really can’t say that it has held me back. I feel very fortunate at this company that my bosses have always encouraged me to grow and mentored me in a way that has allowed me to grow. I’m excited to watch our new Women’s Inclusion Network at IGT begin to offer even more support to the women at IGT.”

Indeed, she’s concentrating on excelling at her latest role as IGT’s chief technology officer of gaming and lottery.

“It’s a new organization for me and, lucky for me, I spent many years in the lottery organization, as well as gaming, so the industry, technology and the people are very familiar to me. That said, the organization is only 6 months old, so I’m very focused on making it a success.” ■

Anders ensures hiring remains on target

BY MARY HOWE | Contributing Writer

WHEN CATHERINE ANDERS' plans for a career as a dancer ended because of a serious injury during college, it was natural for her to turn to public service through the military: She had grown up in the orbit of Washington, D.C., and she had close relatives who had military careers.

Now, 11 years into her career, Anders is a civilian employee in charge of hiring and many other related tasks as head supervisory human resources specialist at the **Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport**.

Chief HR specialist at NUWC is a wide-ranging, fast-moving job that requires extreme productivity and lots of support. The division has hired about 350 people – mostly civilians – in each of the last three years, and the pace is not likely to slacken, said Capt. Michael R. Coughlin, commanding officer of the division.

NUWC Division Newport is one of the state's largest employers, with an operating budget of more than \$1 billion, employing about 3,300 civilian workers, 2,600 contractors and 40 military personnel, according to NUWC.

Anders "is the person in the middle" of the hiring process, said Coughlin. She and

her staff of 13 people work the demanding ground between department heads, job applicants and off-site entities that must approve all hiring packages. "She is a flexible listener and she is demanding of her team, in a positive way," Coughlin said.

Vicki Comeau, department head for corporate operations, said Anders' "biggest quality is her skills in working with folks. She can get teams working together to get these actions through the system quickly."

Anders previously worked in HR for the U.S. Army and the Coast Guard, and used hiring flexibilities, including programs for veterans, to meet and exceed hiring goals. She transferred to Newport in 2016, working as a lead workforce specialist. She moved up to the supervisory position in November 2018.

Anders said she likes the work in Newport because people in the division are "focused and driven."

"There is a clear vision why we are doing the work we are doing," she said. "The mission is to keep undersea warfare technology up to date. We have to constantly move forward as the rest of the world moves forward. We cannot stand still." ■



FULL SPEED AHEAD: Catherine Anders, head supervisory human resources specialist at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport, has been busy in recent years. The division has hired about 350 people in each of the last three years, and the pace isn't slowing.

PBN PHOTO/DAVE HANSEN



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CCAP is one of the largest organizations in Rhode Island that is dedicated solely to fighting the war on poverty. As the community's helping hand, we provide a spectrum of services to assist individuals and families when times are tough. CCAP began helping the people of Cranston in 1965 and has since expanded to provide programs and services including health services, family support, education and job training programs throughout Rhode Island.

Family approach extends to the staff at Grey Sail

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

“YOU CAN’T TEACH work ethic, but you can model it,” said Jennifer Brinton, co-owner of **Grey Sail Brewing of Rhode Island**. “I don’t ask [staff] to do something I won’t do, and they see that.”

Brinton said that the common culture of all team members pitching in equally nurtures the family atmosphere at the Westerly brewery she owns with her husband, Alan Brinton.

“We are a family brewery with our 11 staff members,” said Jennifer Brinton. “We strive for that culture of feeling like we are a family brewery.”

Having the right team members in place sped up the couple’s plan to start the brewery seven years ago. Brewing, said Brinton, was a hobby for her husband while their children were small. The two talked about exploring the idea of starting a brewery as a business but were purposely moving slowly in their planning. Then, they found a head brewer, and things just snowballed from there, said Brinton.

There were other signs that the brewery should begin, as well.

A distributor sought out Grey Sail early on: McLaughlin & Moran Inc. of Cranston, after reading about the brewery in the news.

“They really have been essential. [They] wanted to meet and were interested in our story and taking us on as a brand. They believed in what we wanted to create,” said Brinton, who admitted to doing cartwheels in her house after receiving the message from the company that it was interested in Grey Sail for its craft-beer portfolio.

Grey Sail products are now distributed all over New England and in New York.

Since its 2011 founding the brewery has doubled in size and is now at 7,500 square feet after a fall renovation, boosting capacity for the summer season, when Grey Sail brews multiple times a day, Brinton said in 2018.

Brinton, a former process engineer, and her husband have four daughters. She runs an event-planning company on a part-time basis,

in addition to handling the financial side of things at Grey Sail.

For a woman with seemingly limitless energy, Brinton also manages a chronic disease, multiple sclerosis.

That, she said, is also a team effort at the brewery.

“My husband is huge at preventing triggers from happening,” she said. “My staff prevents me from having almost all stress. It’s all about having the right people.”

Housed in the former Westerly Macaroni Factory on Canal Street, in a 1924 building that still bears the pasta company name, Grey Sail is in an iconic location.

She enjoys learning about the old building’s history and has even met a woman who used to live in the building as a child, when her relatives worked at the factory.

But along with pride in its historic location, the brewery is always looking ahead. So, with the building reincarnation well underway with the brewery, Grey Sail opened its taproom in 2016. Though manufacturing is the core



SPIRITED CULTURE: Jennifer Brinton, co-owner of Grey Sail Brewing of Rhode Island, strives to maintain a family atmosphere and culture at the brewery. PBN FILE PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

business, the taproom features regional beers in addition to their own, Brinton said, and tasting events.

As a member of the Rhode Island Brewers Guild executive board, she then takes it a step further, getting involved and banding with other brewers to further elevate the regional craft-brewing industry and spur growth.

“We shouldn’t be battling it out with each other. The guild works to promote synergy rather than competition,” said Brinton. ■



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Urbach has been quick to make the connections

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

KRISTIN URBACH HAS BEEN executive director of the **North Kingstown Chamber of Commerce** for four years. She's quickly made her mark as a strong organizer, marketer, fundraiser and connector.

She's credited with broadening the scope and ramping up the size of the Taste of the NK Chamber, for example, partnering with R.I. Airport Corp. for the annual food and beverage event. Attendance quadrupled and revenue climbed 300%, she said.

Whether building partnerships for Chamber projects or fostering connections for others, Urbach is known for linking like-minded people who would benefit from knowing each other.

"I have a unique opportunity to hear from businesses and communities about what they are seeking. I make a point of connecting people," she said. "It's something I learned in developmental leadership in Washington, D.C."

Now she's using those skills in her home state.

A graduate of Rocky Hill School

in East Greenwich and Sweet Briar College in Virginia, Urbach was director of human resources for the American Enterprise Institute, a political think tank, where she worked for 10 years.

"At AEI ... I was instrumental in hiring White House and ambassador staff for scholars," she said. "It's where I was really able to develop my leadership skills."

She rose through the ranks in the Junior League of Washington during this time, becoming its president in 2007.

Urbach served as the George Washington University Hospital's director of service excellence in Washington, D.C. There she oversaw patient-service programs for a facility with 1,900 employees and more than 800 physicians.

She went on to lead member services at the Bristol-based United States Sailing Association and product marketing for a global telehealth company, before starting at the Chamber in 2015.

Along the way, Urbach said she learned a few things about being organized and being effective in

whatever role she is serving in.

"I am a multitasking, list person," she said. "I do my homework."

The Chamber represents more than 400 businesses in South County, nearly all of them small businesses, Urbach said. Along with her team, she has increased Chamber revenue significantly, including gains in annual golf-tournament revenue and in membership.

Though the Ocean State and the nation's capital seem very different, there are similarities, Urbach said. "In both areas ... there [is] a very engaged group of political officials. People are proactive and wanting to improve."

Urbach has led a Shop Small campaign in the community, and she is leading its efforts to help create an offshore wind-energy career pathway.

A talent pipeline is a priority, Urbach said, especially with [Orsted U.S. Offshore Wind] announcing 50 permanent and 800 construction jobs to be created with its Revolution Wind project. Ports in



MAKING HER MARK: Kristin Urbach, executive director of the North Kingstown Chamber of Commerce, at the NORAD facility on Davisville Road in North Kingstown. NORAD is one of dozens of North Kingstown Chamber member manufacturers.

PBN FILE PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

North Kingstown and Providence will share in the work and related jobs.

The team at the Chamber secured an R.I. Department of Labor and Training grant last August, to help ready a talent pipeline for wind-energy work.

"We support Real Jobs RI to develop ... job opportunities for the offshore wind-energy sector in the state," she said. ■

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Photopoulos designs her own work-life balance

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

WHAT'S THE SECRET to building an award-winning interior design company while caring for three children, one with special needs, and going to school?

"Late nights," said Janelle Blakely Photopoulos, owner of **Blakely Interior Design**.

Despite not getting a lot of sleep, a life creating pleasing, functional interior spaces for her clients has been her dream.

Her interior design business was sparked when she bought "the ugly house on the street," as she calls it, and transformed it. Word of her work got out, and suddenly she had other projects underway.

But even with a knack for color, fabrics, furniture and accessories, she decided the Rhode Island School of Design Interior Design Certificate Program would give her a foundational knowledge that would add to her competitive edge.

"I needed to learn the technical aspects – to earn my stripes, if you will. It did mean a lot of ... late nights. I sacrificed sleep more than anything else," she said.

At the time Photopoulos en-

tered the RISD program, in 2011, her younger son was a baby, her daughter was a toddler and her other son was 5.

Since then, she has earned awards from interior design website Houzz for the last five years, and from the Rhode Island Home Show. Her company also won a Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses entrepreneurial program's Revenue Growth Award – increasing its numbers by 187% over a six-month period in 2016.

Blakely Interior Design now has a staff of five working in its renovated space at the Lafayette Mill in North Kingstown. Though the firm serves mainly residential clients, it also does commercial work, having designed South Kingstown's Matunuck Oyster Bar and Flawless Medical Spa in East Greenwich.

Photopoulos, who has a bachelor's degree in marketing and management from Syracuse University, spent years fine-tuning her project-management skills in the corporate world.

She also learned the skill of

"developing a rock star team" and keeping members motivated.

And she's imparting her knowledge to future designers and marketers through internships involving local college students and a work-immersion program at Rocky Hill School.

"It's rewarding to ... watch them develop," Photopoulos said.

Last year, Blakely Interior Design produced a Facebook video series, "Design Dish," which offered weekly design advice. The episodes offer information and education to the general public and exposure for local vendors and artisans.

The company also launched Blakely Gives Back, the firm's philanthropic arm. It leads the Rhode Island chapter of Savvy Giving by Design, a nonprofit that transforms bedrooms of children with medical issues at no cost to the family.

It's a cause that resonated with Photopoulos.

"I'm a firm believer that the environment you live in greatly impacts your mental health, your



DYNAMIC DESIGNS: Janelle Blakely Photopoulos, owner and principal interior designer at Blakely Interior Design, in her studio in North Kingstown. PBN FILE PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

ability to heal," she said. "It's important from more than just a general design perspective."

Another thing she has learned is the idea of work-life balance for women such as her isn't realistic.

"Any female entrepreneur that goes out looking for a state of balance? It doesn't really exist," she said. "Your areas of priority are like buckets. You fill them up as best you can. If I had important deadlines, I'd focus on that bucket. But once those deadlines were met, I'd dedicate time to the others." ■

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NONPROFIT

Thomas E. Noret has been hired as the Executive Director of the South County YMCA where he will oversee fundraising efforts, membership, and community development. Noret is a retired Coventry Police Officer. He served as a Tax Investigator for the RI Division of Taxation, and also served for four years in the RI Air National Guard's 143d Air Lift Wing's Security Forces Squadron. A resident of Coventry, Noret was recently elected to Rhode Island House District 25. He serves on the Executive Board for the Black River Elementary School PTA and is a member of the Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School PTA.



HEALTH CARE

Michele Marchesseault, RN, has joined Saint Elizabeth Home's leadership team as Director of Nursing. Marchesseault previously was the Assistant Director of Nursing at a skilled nursing and rehab center in Providence for eight years. She is a wound care and rehab certified Registered Nurse. A graduate of CCRI, Michelle is a resident of West Greenwich, RI. Saint Elizabeth Home is a skilled nursing and rehab center in East Greenwich and a member of Saint Elizabeth Community, a non-profit, non-sectarian, charitable organization that offers a full spectrum of care and services for older adults in Rhode Island.



BANKING

BankNewport is pleased to announce that **Lisa A. Sellar** of Portsmouth, Rhode Island, has been appointed to senior vice president, director of retail banking operations. Lisa joined BankNewport in 1990, and has held various positions, most recently serving as vice president, retail banking administrator. She is responsible for coordinating all retail banking operations including branch procedures, regulatory compliance, and special projects. Lisa earned a certificate from the New England School for Financial Studies. She is a member of the Newport Chamber of Commerce and the American Cancer Society. BankNewport offers a full suite of loan and deposit products and services for families and businesses throughout Rhode Island.



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Trip abroad provided the detour Conn needed

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

KSA MARKETING + PARTNERSHIPS is, in many ways, all about contrasts.

The marketing communications firm works out of a 1710 grist mill in Warwick all while helping clients' companies develop branding ideas that will take them into their future. The company started in 2011 around a dining-room table. And its founder, Katie Schibler Conn, first worked her way through various executive marketing jobs with brands such as PlayStation, taking time out in the middle of it all to travel the world.

"PlayStation was a dream job, but it came with major sacrifices," said Conn, an Ohio native who moved to Rhode Island when she was in junior high school. "I loved everything about my job but was not feeling very fulfilled on a personal level. I dreamed of traveling. I really wanted to take a year off and be intentional about my career. I thought I would travel for six months."

Her trip alone through Asia and South America stretched to

a year and a half, she said, where she picked up odd jobs along the way and learned about people and their culture. She said there are people with no running water or electricity. "Every day was about survival," she said.

The experience left her feeling more present.

Back in the United States in 2011, it wasn't long before she got a call with a job opportunity from a contact with PepsiCo Inc. She took on a project.

And so began KSA Marketing. With her company now at six full-timers and contractors, KSA – which Conn says stands for "Kick Some Ass" – has grown into a full-service marketing firm. It's seen 500% growth since 2011.

Last year, Conn was invited into the Forbes Agency Council. Its members are hand-selected to offer marketing insight and publish articles in areas of public relations, marketing and advertising.

Conn was also a Forbes contributor to a recent panel on workplace diversity issues, featured at Forbes.com.

"They take topical, timely issues and curate the best responses," she said. "It's really rewarding to be able to be a contributor and great to see different perspectives."

Though she's earned a bachelor's degree in organizational communication from Fairfield University, Conn said much of what she's learned in business can be traced back to her trip abroad.

"I often didn't have all the information," she said. "I didn't speak the language, and I didn't always know what the plan was. Previously [in professional life], I'd need all the details. But sometimes, in crisis mode, as long as we have direction and are able to move forward, it is most helpful. It forced me to find other ways to get messages across, which can sometimes be as important as the actual messages themselves."

Conn now has a targeted business approach. She works to help clients move away from paying too much attention to competitors and feeling they must be on all media channels at once.



VALUABLE EXPERIENCE: Katie Schibler Conn left a marketing position with PlayStation because she wanted to take time off and travel abroad. She says the experience helped her to successfully launch her own marketing firm, KSA Marketing + Partnerships.
PBN FILE PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

"I always look at it this way," she said. "Marketing is a conversation. You have to know who you are having a conversation with. [Ask] 'What is the right strategy for who I'm trying to connect with?' The biggest mistake I see is the copy-cat mentality, where [a business] sees someone do something really good, really big, and they want to replicate." ■

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Milos advances genomics innovation on home turf

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

PATRICE MILOS, president and CEO of Providence startup **Medley Genomics**, is no stranger to Rhode Island. Although she's lived here since 1989, until a few years ago she had never worked in Rhode Island.

Previously, Milos had been commuting from her home in Cranston to Claritas Genomics in Cambridge, Mass., a now-defunct genetic diagnostics lab spun out of Boston Children's Hospital.

Before that, the New York-born Milos headed up the Boston site for Pfizer Inc.'s Centers of Therapeutic Innovation, where she led partnerships between academic institutions and medical centers. Other positions at Pfizer and Helicos BioSciences allowed her to explore new opportunities in genomics and medicine.

But the Ocean State – where Milos has founded Medley Genomics, raised seed money and achieved an exclusive license with Brown University – is a great place for this kind of innovation, she said.

"[Gov. Gina M. Raimondo] really understands life sciences and

what kind of innovation economy could be here," she said.

In addition to now being an opportune time for Medley Genomics' brand of innovation – developing genomic-analysis tools to decipher the highly individual layers of data in biological conditions such as cancer as part of developing targeted treatment – it's a good time for women in the field, Milos said.

She's seen improvement in diversity. The number of industry women in science with Ph.D.s has increased, particularly over the past few years.

"Maybe it's driven by business needs, particularly in the last few years as goals and strategies have emerged, this ability to attract and retain talent, regardless of race, gender, culture, sexual orientation," Milos said. "Companies are measuring metrics more, so we're off to a good start."

Milos is married to Curt Spalding, former regional administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and former longtime executive director of Save The Bay. Spalding is now a Brown Univer-

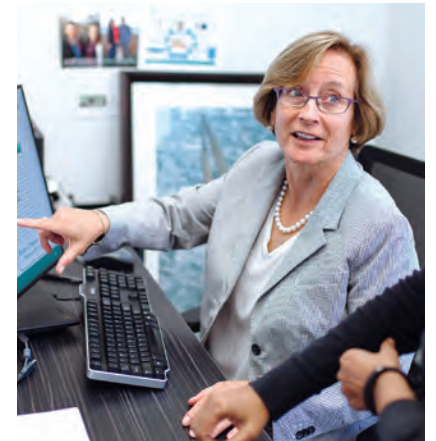
sity professor, and their son and daughter are now in law school and medical school, respectively.

Like the partnership with her husband allowing them both to accomplish more, Milos sees benefits of partnerships in her industry. Developing new, innovative approaches to diseases by forming partnerships with academic medical centers, such as the pairing of Medley Genomics and Brown, are the way of the future.

"It's all about alignment with a company strategy, and does it fit or not. What's the benefit to each entity, and how does that fit within a portfolio?" she said.

With Milos at the helm, Medley Genomics has had its share of good news.

It won the grand prize in the Pistoia Alliance President's Challenge in 2017, which included \$20,000, mentorship, as well as research and development resources. In 2018, the company was picked over 200 startups as one of nine companies to participate in the Philips HealthWorks Startup Program, focused on oncology. In May 2018,



IMPROVED INDUSTRY: Patrice Milos, president and CEO of Medley Genomics in Providence, says she's seen improvement in the number of industry women in science with Ph.D.s. PBN FILE PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

it was awarded Phase 1 funding in the form of a Small Business Innovation Research grant from the National Cancer Institute for \$299,670. The grant will support Medley Genomics' software platform to customize treatment based on the unique ecosystem of a cancer patient's tumor.

"My passion is seeing more women in the field," said Milos. "We really can offer the potential for diversity in the [science, technology, engineering and math] fields." ■

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Pastry chef's creations prove she's a smart cookie

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

BEING A PROFESSIONAL CHEF in Rhode Island is unlike anywhere else, says Melissa Denmark, executive pastry chef at Gracie's restaurant in Providence. It's mutually supportive.

Folks look to help each other. Along with working at Gracie's, Denmark also started the bread and pastry program at its sister location – Ellie's Bakery in Providence – overseeing several bakers between the two locations.

Rhode Island's foodie community made an impression on Denmark after she and her team began using Hope & Main's commercial kitchen in Warren in 2014. They had outgrown their space at Ellie's, migrating to the larger kitchen part time at first, then full time.

"It's a cool organization with food-incubator space for new or growing businesses," said Denmark, a 2010 Johnson & Wales University grad. "We're all like-minded ... we help each other."

Denmark loves leading classes, watching bakers grow in the industry, put their own desserts on

menus and teach classes.

Her baked creations have won her awards and accolades from Edible Rhody and StarChefs magazines, and nationally from Zagat and Food & Wine, which recognized her as one of the 50 best new pastry chefs in the nation six years ago.

Bakers, Denmark said, are a unique breed when compared to chefs, with a different skill set. "We bakers are very detail oriented, we note every nuance," said Denmark. "Cooking is more spontaneous; the chefs I know are more into risk-taking and more loose with recipe development," and their craft allows room for that.

The support Denmark gives to bakers she works alongside and the mutual support within the Hope & Main environment echo early support she experienced growing up.

She recalls a summer her mother made lemon meringue pie after lemon meringue pie, working to perfect the recipe.

"I kind of do that too, I obsess,"

said Denmark.

Her dad pushed her to go into culinary school, telling her that if she didn't like it, she could try something else. Denmark wasn't thinking of baking as a career. Today, she's grateful, doing what she loves.

Dishes she invents often have a nod to her childhood, she said: crab apple and sesame flavors, or Concord grape jam with hazelnut stemming from memories of peanut butter and jelly, for example; or her cheesecake with raisin sourdough crisp with jam, amid memories of her aunt making toasted raisin-bread with cream cheese for breakfast.

Fresh, local ingredients make a difference, said Denmark. It's another area where she is involved, and somewhat out of her comfort zone.

Denmark and her wife started Moonrose Farm in Cranston in 2017, selling flowers and vegetables to restaurants and to community-supported agriculture members. With beekeeping, honey production is getting underway.



WINNING CONFECTIONS: Melissa Denmark, executive pastry chef at Gracie's restaurant in Providence, was recognized as one of the 50 best new pastry chefs in the nation in 2012 by Food & Wine magazine. PBN FILE PHOTO/ MARK S. MURPHY

Owning a local farm brings Denmark full circle with the farm-to-oven-to-table process, in which customers at Ellie's and Gracie's benefit and find value.

"She has an amazing mind in exploring new techniques," said Ellen Slattery, owner of Ellie's Bakery and Gracie's. "She is a gem in Rhode Island ... and possibly all of New England." ■

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Experience taught Brooks financial literacy is key

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

MARGARET BROOKS IS PASSIONATE about empowering the state's vulnerable populations via financial literacy, a subject she knows intimately.

Brooks grew up in Warwick, one of nine children in a poor family. Food, clothing and other basics were often tough to come by.

Her parents tried to shield her and her siblings from the financial struggles. "A lot of times parents don't want to talk to [their children] about money," she said. "They think children will grow up worrying."

But Brooks, president of the **Rhode Island Jump\$tart Coalition**, was always interested in the subject of economics.

She dropped out of high school, as did some of her siblings, but she went back and got her GED. And she didn't stop there.

As a single mother of two, she enrolled at the Community College of Rhode Island, transferring to Brown University after two years. Brooks earned bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees – all from Brown, all in economics, and with

high marks.

"Not having a financial safety net made it challenging," said Brooks. She won scholarships, took out loans and worked as a teaching assistant.

Brooks now lives in Warwick with her spouse, Robert Brooks. Between them, they have four grown children.

Brooks enjoys teaching economics, especially to younger people. She has leadership roles with three groups that spread the word on healthy economic and financial management.

In addition to the nonprofit Jump\$tart, where she began as a volunteer, Brooks also leads the **Rhode Island Council for Economic Education** – part of a national effort pushing for financial education for K-12 students. She is also the director of the Center for Economic Education at Bridgewater State University in Massachusetts, and director of that school's Office of Financial Literacy Initiatives.

Jump\$tart and the economic education council have held a Financial Capability Conference

at Rhode Island College annually for five years. The free event is an opportunity to get stakeholders to the table, said Brooks.

A major milestone came more than four years ago, when Brooks helped lift financial literacy's place in Rhode Island's classrooms.

She was instrumental in the 2014 adoption of educational standards for financial literacy. But Brooks gives credit to students.

"Over a period of eight months, a group of students from East Greenwich High School called Re-alEdRI conducted student surveys and used social media to advocate for the adoption of financial literacy standards," she said.

Brooks said the skills the standards represent should be introduced gradually, starting in lower elementary school grades. She believes in giving children allowances and encouraging entrepreneurial ventures such as lemonade stands. That way, students will be prepared for one of their biggest financial decisions: college.

"They have to decide [on] one, comparing the different options



MANY HATS: Margaret Brooks, president of the Rhode Island Jump\$tart Coalition, also directs the Rhode Island Council for Economic Education, advocating for more financial education for K-12 students. She is the director of the Center for Economic Education at Bridgewater State University in Bridgewater, Mass., and leads the school's Office of Financial Literacy Initiatives. PBN FILE PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

and look not just at the sticker price but add in financial aid, scholarships ... it's a complicated decision," she said. "They have to decide if they are living on or off campus and the associated decisions, such as buying a car, and then how they pay for insurance."

Bartels the architect of a unique career path

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

KATHLEEN BARTELS, a principal at **LLB Architects**, took a path to her chosen profession that included foreign-language study and public-relations work – not typically things related to the field of architecture.

But varied interests have helped shape Bartels into a well-rounded leader who gives back to younger professionals and the community at large in myriad ways.

Bartels earned a bachelor's degree with a focus on Russian language from Dartmouth College and took a job after graduation with Lincoln School in Providence, where part of her role was to write the newsletter.

"I had to report on construction of a very large lower-school addition," she said. "As part of that, I'd take photos and interview the architects."

She became hooked on architecture.

After taking a summer studio architecture course at Rhode Island School of Design, Bartels

eventually committed to getting a master's degree in architecture at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

Her first project after graduate school – a Westport house she designed – earned her an American Institute of Architects Rhode Island award and a place on the cover of Rhode Island Monthly.

Bartels joined LLB Architects in Pawtucket in 1996 and became partner a few years later.

She and business partner Chris Ladds bought a vacant mill now known as the Design Exchange in Pawtucket, winning awards for the historic reuse project.

The firm is known for its institutional work. Projects include work at the Brown University Department of English in 2001 and at the R.I. Division of Motor Vehicles in Cranston in 2010.

Other interesting LLB projects: the renovation of Church of the Blessed Sacrament in Providence, a renovation and addition to North Scituate Public Library, and a

mixed-use building renovation on Federal Hill.

"We are less focused on attracting specific types of clients and more about doing interesting work. Architecture is, for us, about the process of coming up with design solutions for real-world problems," she said.

Bartels and LLB have hit some milestones recently: Bartels was named president, and the firm opened an office in Worcester, Mass.

Her career path circled back when Bartels began collaborating on projects for Lincoln School, such as the \$5 million STEAM Hub for Girls.

"Kathy has a great eye for details and is able to translate abstract concepts, [such as] Lincoln being a place where 'tradition meets innovation,' into bricks and mortar, as she did with the marriage of modern design on a traditional building," said Suzanne Fogarty, head of Lincoln School.

Bartels has seen more women



BUILDING HER WAY: Kathleen Bartels, left, principal at LLB Architects in Pawtucket, speaks with Haley Hardwick-Witman, architect. Bartels studied Russian before discovering her love of architecture. PBN FILE PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

entering architecture. About 50% of LLB employees are women, with 25% being the national average, Bartels said. Under her leadership, LLB nurtures the development of younger colleagues.

Last fall, LLB Architects won a 2018 AIA New England Emerging Professional Friendly Firm award for its commitment to emerging team members working their way through the ranks. ■

Shallcross finds niche making sense of data

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

WHEN SHANNON SHALLCROSS began working for Amica Mutual Insurance Co. in Lincoln in 2002, she had no intentions of leaving the company, or the industry.

Hired as an undergraduate, she traveled extensively for Amica and happily moved up the ladder.

"I was so impressed. Everyone who I met was passionate about their mission to serve customers," she said.

Shallcross stayed with Amica for more than a decade, advancing to assistant vice president of sales and client services before accepting a position as national vice president of client management with Provant Health in East Greenwich, where she stayed for two years.

Taking the job with Provant, she said, was a decision made after a realigning of priorities after her first child, Teddy, now 5, was born. Shallcross had a new infusion of purpose after becoming a mother; it encouraged her to take that leap into a new industry.

"It became more about leaving a legacy for kids, about recogniz-

ing and using your strengths," she said. Teddy now has a brother, 3-year-old Gethan.

Provant is where Shallcross met the rest of the force behind **BetaX-Analytics LLC** in East Greenwich: Mark Regine, chief epidemiologist, and Phillip Murphy, technologist. The three had their own areas of expertise but had collaborated at Provant. Regine and Murphy approached her with the idea for the company, and they set out to use technology to make health care more transparent to employers, identifying potential cost savings and better wellness initiatives for employees.

"We all saw the challenges in wrangling massive amounts of data," Shallcross said. "I saw it in my role at Amica, too."

Shallcross' extensive knowledge of health and insurance industries would serve her and BetaXAnalytics clients well. She took the role of CEO.

In the health care industry, it is especially cumbersome to make sense of the endless data out there. Advanced technology that

can aggregate the data effectively is a definite need. Shallcross said 30% of all data stored is related to health care. But, of the 6,000 data scientists in the U.S., only 180 work in health care, she said.

Shallcross said the health industry's evolution to a more performance-based business model gives providers incentive to be part of the solution. But for employers? They can't fix what they can't see.

BetaXAnalytics does its part by cleaning and aggregating data, making health care and its costs transparent to employers.

Without all vendor data in one place, for example, a company would have a difficult time strategizing things such as wellness plans, proposing pharmacy-spend changes or structuring benefits packages.

These data complexities vary, so BetaXAnalytics customizes its solutions.

"You may have one patient recorded in 20 different places," said Shallcross, or a procedure coded incorrectly, or patients on conflicting medications, or medica-



CLEAR NUMBERS: Shannon Shallcross is the CEO of BetaX-Analytics in East Greenwich. The company cleans and aggregates health care data to make the associated costs more transparent for employers, enabling them to make better-informed spending decisions.

PBN FILE PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

tions where a lower-priced version exists.

Many companies are beginning to realize that we need data scientists, Shallcross said. They help employers see what their spending looks like – their worker population, what medications might be driving costs, where they should be investing and educating. BetaX-Analytics tracks it all and reports back, usually on a quarterly basis.

Luong discovers career through trials of kimchi

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

MINNIE LUONG, head of **Chi Kitchen** in Pawtucket, came to the United States as a small child in dramatic fashion.

"I was born on a rice farm in Vietnam," she said. "My father and I left as boat people and lived in two different refugee camps before ending up in Boston."

While she doesn't remember any of that experience, she has since been passionately creating her own experiences.

It was while living in Cambridge, Mass., that she first tried making kimchi, a Korean side dish made from salted and seasoned, fermented vegetables.

"It came out disgusting," she said solemnly. "I didn't touch it again for six years."

After her dad, a widower, remarried and moved to Pawtucket, Luong tried to make kimchi again. She mastered it, then decided to create a kimchi business.

Chi Kitchen's small team began at Warren culinary incubator Hope & Main three years ago.

Kimchi is steeped in Asian tradition. It's high in sodium but is loaded with probiotics, is free of gluten, MSG and preservatives, and comes in a vegan version. With the metabolic changes involved in making fermented food, it's a complicated process.

"It's on its own timeline. Once you start making it, you can't stop. I was [regularly] running out to Warren to check on kimchi," said the mother of two.

Due to margins, costs and other factors, it was about six months in when Luong realized that she needed her own kitchen. Tim Greenwald, her husband and co-owner, was there for support.

Chi Kitchen moved to a former glass-blowing studio at Lorraine Mills in Pawtucket – amid brewers, artists and woodworkers.

Luong saw her scholarship to a Goldman Sachs program as the boost that helped her build her business – an important educational milestone.

She had applied for the 10,000

Small Businesses Program last summer, and then discovered that she was accepted – and also that she was pregnant.

"I was on the fence" on doing the Goldman Sachs program, said Luong. "But I was impressed with the improvement statistics based on conversations with them. I realized, 'I've got to do this now.' It was kind of like my thing to do for myself."

Luong had a baby boy, Rumi, who joined sister Lakshmi. And now with the program's knowledge under Luong's belt, and \$125,000 in financing to fund expansion of manufacturing operations at Chi Kitchen's Pawtucket space, things are cooking.

Chi Kitchen kimchi is offered in more than 100 retail stores and restaurants in the region – such as Dave's Market and Whole Foods – the company is adding a research and development kitchen and licensed kitchen rental space to emerging food companies, said Luong.



ON A MISSION: Minnie Luong, head of kimchi producer Chi Kitchen in Pawtucket, said it's her mission to educate people about the unique Korean dish made from salted and seasoned fermented vegetables.

PBN FILE PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

Being self-taught, Luong feels it's her mission to talk and educate about kimchi. She wants it to be a tabletop staple.

"Statistics say that kimchi and fermented foods will be on menus in 2019," said Luong. "It's such a unique food. People have been making and eating it for thousands of years." ■

Helping lower the barriers for black-owned businesses

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

FOR LISA RANGLIN – risk and compliance manager for Providence-based Citizens Bank – it’s been a busy professional track.

Her executive experience includes more than a decade at Bank of America, having filled a senior program-manager role there before she left the company in 2016. Over the course of her career, she’s earned accolades and awards for her leadership and achievement.

That may have been enough for some people.

But the worlds of technology, banking and business need more equity, in Ranglin’s view. She’s long been concerned about statistics that document the ongoing struggle for women and many minorities to receive equal opportunities in work and business.

That includes blacks in Rhode Island earning less than the median income and being incarcerated, underemployed or unemployed more than white counterparts, she says.

“These stats are real people,”

she said. “Most black families don’t have emergency money.”

So, she started an initiative to address the disparity.

While at Bank of America in 2011, Ranglin founded the **Rhode Island Black Business Association**, creating a volunteer role for herself as president.

RIBBA works to boost economic vitality and revenue opportunities for member businesses. The nonprofit is open to organizations, providing resources, networking, events, referrals, development, advocacy and investor services. Its goals are to improve the quality of jobs and foster business growth for people of color.

“We help them develop a business plan, ready them for loans and for creating revenue,” she said.

Unconscious bias around race still exists, and much of RIBBA’s job is to educate, said Ranglin.

“A lot of it is about identifying resources in the state today, leveraging partnerships and building empowerment,” she said,

“learning how to take advantage, educate and gain access.”

Raised in poverty in Jamaica, the youngest of nine children, she said her father, Eric, opened the family home to people in need. Though the family did not have much, Ranglin learned about giving back.

After her father’s death, she came to the U.S. as a teen with her mother.

Her mother, Mavis Ranglin, 90, still lives nearby.

“Growing up on an island, education was very important,” Ranglin said. “Going to college was a part of my upbringing, not an option. I was coming to the [United States] ... for opportunity, to seize them all.”

She worked in a factory during the day. At night, she attended New England Institute of Technology. Her supervisory strengths were quickly apparent. The factory made Ranglin a “lead girl,” responsible for taking orders and supervising operations.

Now, years later, with an NEIT



DEDICATED ADVOCATE: Rhode Island Black Business Association President Lisa Ranglin says RIBBA aims to identify and remove systemic barriers of race and ethnicity in business. PBN FILE PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

degree in computer programming, banking career established and RIBBA rolling along, Ranglin is still improving herself. She’s a candidate for a master’s degree in human resource management at Johnson & Wales University.

RIBBA is moving forward, too, looking to grow from a grassroots organization into a widely recognized and respected brand identifying and removing systemic barriers of race and ethnicity.

“We are lifting communities up. It’s a win-win for all of us. I am so blessed and privileged to have this honor – to be given a place where I can share knowledge,” she said. ■

Her formula for CPA group relies on cultivating partners

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

MELISSA D. TRAVIS is breathing new life into the 2,100-member **Rhode Island Society of Certified Public Accountants**.

The Cumberland native is president of one of the largest industry groups in the state and the first woman appointed to its helm since its formation in 1905.

Travis’ formula for the CPA group relies on cultivating partners.

“Her considerable background in business development, finance and government advocacy, as well as having strong organizational management and leadership, will make her a great president,” John Ayers, vice chair of RISCOPA’s board of directors, said in a statement.

Leaving her role as commercial sales director for HealthSource RI for Employers in February – when she was chosen to lead RISCOPA – Travis is clearly not afraid to try new things. That’s also evident by RISCOPA’s Real Jobs RI grant she successfully applied for to provide education and skills training.

“We’re excited about ‘RISCOPA 2.0,’” said Travis, adding that the group has a strong foundation on which to build.

Travis felt the Real Jobs RI grant was imperative to fund a program to address the accountant-workforce shortage, to replace those retiring from the field in Rhode Island, training them in soft skills such as communication and marketing. A state society such as RISCOPA had never received such a grant before, said Travis.

The grant effort was a collaboration with several partners. Word that the Accounting and Financial Collaborative program grant was approved was met with a great rush of hope for Travis as a solution to the workforce-gap problem. Accountant retirements are coming at record levels, with a lack of needed skills in the current pipeline. The R.I. Department of Labor and Training and the nonprofit Skills for Rhode Island’s Future will be collaborating on the effort, along with other partners, she said.

She’s a strong believer in forming partnerships and maintaining connections that might be tapped later.

Travis has experience in international trade, customs support and managing other global business relationships. Past sales roles include working for Teknor Apex Co. in Pawtucket.

She serves as a Rhode Island Manufacturers Association board member working to promote legislative advances and economic development and as a board member for the state chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council.

“I don’t say no to very much,” she said. “But if I do ... I offer an alternate way, such as, ‘Here is a way we can work together,’” said Travis. “I can call Dave Chenevert [RIMA executive director]. He says ‘yes’ before I finish the sentence. That’s what’s nice about already having these relationships.”

She is also intent on making sure the CPA society is ready to absorb and respond to innovation, such as blockchain, artificial intel-



STRONG LEADER: Melissa D. Travis is the new president of the Rhode Island Society of Certified Public Accountants and the first woman to hold the position since the organization’s formation in 1905. PBN FILE PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

ligence and other market disruptors, citing a need to “be comfortable being uncomfortable” with technological change.

Helping to introduce those as young as high school age to the world of accounting, it’s important to see information technology applications, such as data analytics, said Travis.

As she does with other ventures, she remains at the ready to welcome expertise wherever she can find it.

“I never assume I am the smartest one in the room,” she said. “I am good at setting up people. That is my strength.” ■

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