



The region's top young leaders channel their inner child

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Melissa Jost

MELISSA JOST
Clinical informatics
program manager,
UC Davis Health

Jost develops new methods to increase efficiency in health record documentation. She created the Physician Efficiency Program to allow for customized training and optimization of software used by doctors to enable them to more efficiently input electronic health records. The program launched in February and has gained national attention. In August, Jost spoke about the program at a conference with over 18,000 attendees, encouraging other health systems to adopt the UC Davis methods in order to improve the lives of their physicians. Jost is also a triathlete and has spearheaded a program to expand opportunities for women to participate in local races.

**AGE
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Education: B.A. in history, B.A. in political science and M.S. in health informatics, UC Davis
The biggest challenge I've overcome: "As a manager in a field where young women are the minority, I've had to work to change perceptions about what women leaders in technology and health care look like. It takes time to build trust, but it benefits everyone."

Ten years ago, my main goal was: "To study law with the aim of drafting and analyzing congressional legislation."

In 10 years, I want to be: "Improving legislation for regulation in health care and health care technology. I believe that government can be a critical driver for progressive health technology adoption and standardization, through which we can build a healthier world."

My biggest pet peeve: "When I run out of coffee. No perfect morning starts on tea."



My ideal weekend includes: "A trip to Temple Coffee and time to disconnect from my phone and technology. I crave unscheduled time with my family and friends after maintaining such a demanding daily work and triathlon training schedule."

I wouldn't be where I am today without: "Jennifer Burger, my mentor and former manager at UC Davis Health. When I joined UC Davis Health she promised to always challenge me. She kept her word and inspires me to become a better person and a stronger leader."

Dave Kempa

DAVE KEMPA
Founder/editor
VOICES: River City

Kempa is the founder of VOICES: River City, an online news publication that serves the greater Sacramento area. The goal of VOICES: River City is to fill gaps in Sacramento news coverage and to provide a platform for community members to write about local issues. Now in its second year, the online publication generates about 5,000 unique visits to its website each month. Kempa has established VOICES: River City by hosting meet-and-greets during which community members can engage with writers and editors and by focusing on local buy-in. Kempa won a first place

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award from the California News Publishers Association in 2017 and a Robert F. Kennedy Award in journalism in 2010. He is also an adjunct professor of journalism at American River College.

Education: B.S. in English/creative writing, University of Wisconsin-Madison; master's in mass

communication/journalism, Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University

The biggest challenge I've overcome: "My friend Tex's death in 2017"

Ten years ago, my main goal was: "Seeing how long I could spend living out of a backpack in South America. (Answer: Just under a year.)"

In 10 years, I want to be: "Living out of a backpack in South America"

My biggest pet peeve: "Coffee shops with spotty internet"

My ideal weekend includes: "Soccer, a day trip, day drinks, night owls and hiding out with a great book from the Sacramento Public Library."

I wouldn't be where I am today without: "Personally? My parents, sisters and friends. Professionally? The Nehemiah Emerging Leaders Program (Class 007), and VOICES: River City's volunteer editors Anthony Siino, Kris Hooks and Blake Gillespie."

MATT KEASLING

MATT KEASLING
Attorney, Taylor & Wiley

Keasling specializes in land use and development law. Some of his most significant cases include getting approval for a 15-story tower in midtown Sacramento, working on Sutter Park, the largest infill redevelopment project in East Sacramento, and approving the remodel of a family shelter that keeps nearly 100 homeless families together. Keasling is also the president of Sacramento Steps Forward, a nonprofit that manages all federal funds for local homelessness service providers, working closely with the city and county of Sacramento.

**AGE
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Education: B.A. in history, UC Santa Barbara; J.D., McGeorge School of Law

The biggest challenge I've overcome: "Learning to operate without sleep after I became a dad."

Ten years ago, my main goal was: "Simply to make it through the Great Recession and figure out how to help my clients develop land during an incredibly difficult time."

In 10 years, I want to be: "At a point in my career where I am known by my clients and my peers for providing legally supportable innovative solutions. I'd also like to attend every meeting in shorts."

My biggest pet peeve: "As I look out the office window at a flag at half-mast for Senator McCain, my biggest pet peeve is the increasing incivility in politics. We need to get back to a time when we treated others with respect."

My ideal weekend includes: "A trip to the Central Coast with my son and beautiful wife, a little wine tasting and a sunny beach."

I wouldn't be where I am today without: "A lot of hard work, hours reviewing case law, brutal exams and lots of gray hairs."

Jackie Kirkwood

JACKIE KIRKWOOD
Vice president of operations, Goodwin-Cole Company Inc.

As a Marine Corps veteran, Kirkwood has translated her leadership skills from public service into the private sector.

Kirkwood retired from the Marine Corps in 2015 with the rank of gunnery sergeant and moved on to work as the executive administrative manager at the Children's Receiving Home of Sacramento, a local foster care facility. Now, Kirkwood serves as vice president of operations at Goodwin-Cole Company Inc., a manufacturer of awnings, textiles and ornamental iron,

where she oversees the company's manufacturing teams. Kirkwood continues to support the military community as president of Woman Veterans Giving, an organization that seeks to narrow the gap between civilian and military relations. Additionally, she volunteers with the Sacramento chapter of The Mission Continues, which helps veterans find purpose through community impact.

Education: B.A. in business administration, Lindenwood University; M.A. in management and leadership, Webster University; graduate certificate in business principles, The Fullbridge Program at Concordia University

The biggest challenge I've overcome: "Moving up in the ranks as a female in a male-dominated organization called the Marine Corps."



Ten years ago, my main goal was: "Retire from the Marine Corps and start my second career."

In 10 years, I want to be: "The CEO of The Goodwin-Cole Company and still promoting the largest and most successful women veteran's nonprofit: Women Veterans Giving."

My biggest pet peeve: "The smell of

cigarette smoke"
My ideal weekend includes: "A weekend getaway near the beach where we can relax with food, wine and time together."
I wouldn't be where I am today without: "The knowledge and support of family, friends and all of the Marines I served with"

TOO MANY TO CHOOSE FROM ...

Many of our honorees had a lot of fun at the Sacramento Children's Museum. Here are extra photos that we had to share:



Josh Rubin, CEO and owner, Post Modern Marketing



Brenda Forman, Vice president, managing director, Merlot Marketing



Michael Cox, Service area vice president, mission integration, Dignity Health



Jackie Kirkwood, Vice president of operations, Goodwin-Cole Company Inc.



Dave Kempa, Founder and editor, VOICES: River City



Nathan Ush, Executive director, Franklin Blvd Business District



Ashley Mellott, Chief operating officer and chief of staff, Webconnex



Nicholas Haystings, President and executive director, Square Root Academy



Kelly Brenk, Manager, community health, Sutter Health



Christine Mahon, Associate vice president, marketing and communications, Associated General Contractors of California



Katherine Bardis-Miry, President, Bardis Homes



Colin Roe, Regional sales manager, Fidelity National Title Co.

SAFE CREDIT UNION CONGRATULATES

Anne Descalzo
Assistant Vice President Community Banking

for being chosen as one of
Sacramento Business Journal's 40 under 40

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