

# **INNOVATOR** *of the* **YEAR AWARDS**

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## OC's Innovators: Year in Review

Last September, the Business Journal honored five local executives, medical researchers and inventors leading the charge in a variety of fields at the eighth annual **Innovator of the Year Awards**.

From renowned disease researchers to an AI expert, the winners hail from varying industries but all have made breakthroughs in their respective spaces over the past year.

The Business Journal recently caught up with the winners to see what's changed since 2022.

The next Innovator of the Year Awards is scheduled for **Sept. 7** at the **Irvine Marriott**.

Bios for the nominees for the upcoming event begin on page 40.

—Katie Murar

## Justin Chen Li: Wins China OK for Liver Cancer Test

■ By KAITLIN AQUINO

A version of **Helio Genomics**' liver cancer test this month got the green light from China's equivalent of the **Food and Drug Administration**.

The Irvine-based cancer diagnostics firm, which is one of the better-funded medtech companies in Orange County, said that the liver cancer detection test from its sister company, **Laboratory for Advanced Medicine & Health Group (LAMH)**, received approval from China's **National Medical Products Administration**.

The approved product is a variation of the local company's **HelioLiver** test, though it was developed with the same intellectual property portfolio as Helio.

"Because the IP stems from the same place and because China trial performed very well, we have a higher confidence that U.S. trial will be successful as well," Helio CEO **Justin Chen Li** told the Business Journal.

Li was honored last year at the Business Journal's **Innovator of the Year Awards** for overseeing HelioLiver's launch, growing Helio's lab space and raising an oversubscribed \$35 million Series B1. The company to date has raised more than \$165 million, up from the \$151 million it counted last September.

LAMH's version of HelioLiver tailors to

the "unique genetic makeup of the Asia-Pacific population," which "sets it apart from conventional solutions," company officials said.

"It has less to do with the genomic variation of ethnicity, and more to do with the etiology [or causes] of the disease," Li said.

In China, hepatitis B is the primary driver for high risk of liver cancer. By contrast, causes for liver cancer in the U.S. are more diverse, some of which include alcoholic liver disease and fatty liver disease as well as hepatitis.

LAMH's test aims to help some of China's 87 million people living with hepatitis B. The country's hepatitis B patients comprise about a third of the global population who are living with the disease. Chronic hepatitis B infections cause at least 54% of all cases of liver cancer worldwide, according to Helio.

LAMH's test offers early detection hepatocellular carcinoma—the most common form of liver cancer—using genomic and AI technology.

Detecting liver cancer in the early stages increases a patient's five-year survival rate by 13 times, according to Helio.

The company expects to get the FDA's greenlight for its HelioLiver test in 2024. It's planning to submit its clinical trial to the FDA by the end of the year.

The Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule,



Justin Chen Li  
CEO  
Helio Genomics

which prices medical products for health insurance issuers, Medicare and Medicaid, set the cost of HelioLiver at \$662.32.

"That was a big win for us," Li said. "Our test is favorably priced but still in the same range as competitors." ■

## Hans Keirstead: Dalai Lama, Diamandis, Immunome Project

■ By PETER J. BRENNAN

After **Hans Keirstead** won a Business Journal **Innovator Award** a year ago, he said he was in the process of selling **Aivita Biomedical Inc.**, which is developing stem cell applications to develop personalized vaccines against cancer and COVID-19.

That sale hasn't yet gone through as the private equity market nationwide dried up. Not to worry—Keirstead's previously started and sold four high-tech health companies, each to larger pharmaceutical companies.

Keirstead is keeping busy with his latest company and exploring new fields.

He led a group of six other scientists last October to visit the **Dalai Lama**, who he had met three years ago, to continue a project to discover where consciousness lies in the brain and if it can reside outside the human body.

"Given recent technical advances, the time is right for a multidisciplinary scientific exploration of consciousness and its location," Keirstead said. "The results of this project will have a profound effect on human behavior."

Keirstead has a long history as an innovator and entrepreneur in regenerative medicine, including restoring function to people with

quadriplegic spinal cord injuries.

Earlier this year, he linked Aivita with Irvine-based **TAE Life Sciences**, which is developing a new treatment for malignant cancers that affect the brain and spine.

His latest company, **Immunis Inc.**, is developing a booster shot that could help people improve their immunity as they age. The **Food and Drug Administration** has approved Immunis for a Phase 1/2a trial, which assesses the safety and tolerability in patients with muscle atrophy related to knee osteoarthritis.

In the past year, he's made 12 presentations at conferences on age-related diseases for Immunis and another 12 where he spoke about Aivita's stem cell work. In July, he gave a presentation in Geneva to the U.N.'s agency on technology on how artificial intelligence will affect healthcare.

In September, Immunis' executive advisory board attracted **Peter Diamandis**, a well-known entrepreneur who has created more than 25 companies in areas such as space, education and longevity.

Keirstead last December was appointed to the board of directors of the **Human Immunome Project**, a global initiative that combines biomedicine and artificial intelli-



Hans Keirstead  
CEO  
Aivita Biomedical

gence to get a more sophisticated understanding of human immunity and disease.

In May, he was named as CEO of the non-profit.

"The complexity of the immune system

puts the Human Immunome Project on par with the greatest scientific endeavors ever undertaken by the global scientific community," he said. "The implications and value to humanity cannot be overstated." ■

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# Ike Kavas: Harnessing AI for Success

■ By KATIE MURAR

**Ike Kavas** recently returned from an event in Zurich, where he discussed a topic that's top of mind for many employers today: the impact of generative artificial intelligence on the economy.

Generative AI is a set of algorithms used to create seemingly realistic content like text or audio, such as **ChatGPT**, an AI-powered language model.

The technology is also top of mind for Irvine-based **Kofax**, which last year acquired **Ephesoft Inc.**, a document processing firm founded by Kavas in 2010.

Ephesoft's cloud-based content capture and analytics software helps businesses classify, sort and extract data through digital document capture.

"We believe we can add value and reach to more customers with our technology under Kofax's umbrella," said Kavas, who's now senior vice president of AI and innovation of

the combined company.

Ephesoft and Kofax's technologies are expected to work together to eliminate manual, task-oriented processes in the modern workplace.

Earlier this year, Kofax relaunched its **Kofax Marketplace**, a digital hub of apps, tools and templates for advanced integration of automation software.

"Today, a major concern for our customers is the pressing need to maximize ROI on any investment in automation technology," **Bill Mariani**, VP of ecosystem at Kofax, said in a statement. "The Kofax Marketplace provides the ideal location to access in-depth learning opportunities and ready-made assets that connect easily and seamlessly with existing investments in key platform elements such as Kofax TotalAgility, RPA and more."

Users can access prebuilt solutions for business challenges and achieve automation goals in less time, Kofax said.

In an article written for **Forbes**, Kavas pre-



dicted AI software that generates content will become the norm. He cited a study indicating 33% of marketers are using AI-based soft-

ware for copywriting or content generation, with 82% reporting that content is just as good as human-generated content. ■

# Krzysztof Palczewski: Closer to Curing Blindness

■ By EMILY SANTIAGO-MOLINA

Dr. **Krzysztof Palczewski** continues to make breakthroughs in his efforts to treat eye diseases through his research at the **University of California, Irvine**.

Palczewski leads the **Center for Translational Vision Research** at the school's **Gavin Herbert Eye Institute** and his published research has been cited more than 54,000 times.

In last year's spring issue of the scientific journal **Nature**, Palczewski and his team published a study illustrating a treatment for inherited retinal disease through genomic base editing. This method uses technology to introduce a single mutation in DNA to prevent deterioration.

A more recent milestone in his venture to cure blindness was a study published in May led by Palczewski and fellow UCI researchers. The team discovered that stress resilience-enhancing drugs can be another potential treatment for age-related retinal diseases.

According to the paper's abstract, these

therapeutic drugs can make the cells in the degenerating retina stronger in dealing with "acute and chronic forms of stress" which can help in preventing causes of blindness and other diseases.

As the current director of the eye institute, Palczewski wants to make UCI the principal place for ophthalmology and eye health.

"We believe UCI can be the best place for research in the world," Palczewski said. "The one place to eliminate blindness."

Since Palczewski was awarded a Business Journal's **Innovator of the Year Award** last fall, he has contributed to at least four more published studies and articles, received more accolades and continued his efforts to educate others on his research.

In February, the doctor received the 2023 Anatrache Membrane Protein Award from the Biophysical Society for his work in membrane protein research. In June, Palczewski traveled overseas to deliver a lecture at the **University College London's (UCL) Institute of Ophthalmology** and speak at **Oxford University** as well among other stops in Europe.



Earlier this month, Palczewski was selected for the 2023-2024 Distinguished Senior Faculty Award for Research by UCI's Academic Senate for advancing the understanding of the retina and bringing "great credit to the university."

"Science and education are investments," Palczewski told the Business Journal. "How are we going to have innovation and discovery? How are we going to improve our health

systems and treatments?"

Palczewski sees his research papers as a type of public conversation to better the understanding the challenges and potential solutions to eye diseases.

"Eventually, for society, it doesn't matter whether that invention is done here or somewhere else," he said. "We want the progress—it doesn't matter who invented it." ■

# Ben Tigner: Taking Overair to the Skies

■ By KEVIN COSTELLOE

**Ben Tigner** is getting ready to take his flying taxi company **Overair** to the next level.

The company is currently manufacturing an all-electric, full-scale prototype for the **Butterfly** flying taxi program, with flights expected to begin by early next year.

"We expect that we're going to be able to get it flying around the turn of the year," according to Tigner, the company's CEO and co-founder.

The Butterfly will have a range of over 100 miles, the ability to recharge quickly between trips, and a top speed of around 200 miles per hour. It will carry five passengers and a pilot.

Getting a full-size experimental prototype aloft will be a giant step for the company, which is developing the electric-power vertical take and landing craft (eVTOL) in a 203,000-square-foot hub in Santa Ana near **Segerstrom High School**.

The test flight will take place at a site in Victorville about 85 miles from Los Angeles.

Putting the Butterfly into commercial service may be around four years away.

"We expect to be certified in 2027, so shortly thereafter we should be able to begin commercial operations," Tigner told the Business Journal.

Tigner sees a booming eVTOL market in Orange County that includes **Hynduai Motor Group's Supernal**, which has opened an engineering headquarters in Irvine (see story, page 1).

"This is going to be a big, important industry that has big economic consequences," Tigner said.

A key innovation is using slow-turning propellers that produce very little sound, allowing the Butterfly vehicle to operate in high-density areas with noise-sensitive communities.

Tigner confirmed the Overair strategy includes both selling the Butterfly flying taxis to other companies and running its own ride service.

He expects the employee headcount to



grow from 170 to over 200 by the end of the year.

Tigner co-founded Overair in 2020 with legendary **Predator** drone pioneer **Abe Karem**.

Karem is very much involved in the Overair project, according to Tigner.

Overair received \$145 million in additional funding from its South Korean backer last year. ■

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# DREAM BOAT

## Financing Yacht Construction

**FULFILL YOUR DREAM WITH THE RIGHT TEAM.**

By Laura Mandel

**“Yacht” can mean something different to almost anyone who says it or hears it. From a 440’ superyacht with global range and two helipads to a 35’ sailboat to take around nearby harbors on summer weekends, one thing all these vessels have in common is owners who prize the freedom and adventure of time spent aboard.**

In recent years, yacht brokers have seen a surge in participation and interest, driven by strong wealth creation and a sudden and powerful desire for privacy and isolation. In the most successful projects, everyone on the team shares that passion, delights in digging into the engineering and imagines cruising to the unique destinations that are only accessible to the waterborne.

“You are helping them fulfill their dream,” said Jim Mays, a senior underwriter who handles yacht financing at Northern Trust. “We build a relationship, working together to turn a dream into reality.”

The right team may mean more than a better interest rate or paring weeks from a construction schedule — it may mean the difference between launching your vessel or having the project languish in avoidable disconnects among financiers, shipyards, suppliers and surveyors.

### **OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE & OPERATING COSTS**

Yachts join aircraft and secondary homes as assets that are often owned by trusts or limited liability companies. These structures introduce specific requirements that can add complexity to plans. It’s not rare for annual operating expenses to reach more than 10 percent of the vessel’s purchase price, so funding these costs while observing the rules of a limited liability company or trust and also preserving other areas of lifestyle spending demands careful planning and attention to detail.

A trustee would be likely to plan for funding the yacht’s operation for the lifetime of the asset and would make sure sufficient liquidity is available when needed. That allocation should be considered in the context of other priorities, such as family members you wish to support, philanthropic intentions and the lifestyle you want to maintain.

A systematic, goals-centered approach to vetting your options will yield the best outcomes for your portfolio and wealth plan. Borrowing — rather than liquidating — assets can help keep your investment strategy intact by securing the liquidity you need for a yacht purchase while preserving your other goals. Bankers will look for information from you about both your boating history and financial situation.

“We are embarking on a relationship, and that requires good communication and understanding each other,” Mays said. “If we are working on a three-year project, we are going to get to know each other pretty well.”

### **BUILD THE RIGHT TEAM**

Your crew will comprise much more than the maritime industry professionals responsible for operating your boat and keeping you safe and comfortable. Depending on your ownership structure and the complexity of your plans and vessel, you may have a large team managing many elements of the project on and off the water. From the very start of any new build process, your broker will assist in everything from shipyard selection to yacht designers and the best maritime attorneys. Engaging with a skillful and experienced lender will leave you in a secure position to move forward with your dream. They will be familiar with loans of the scale of a yacht purchase or build, can tailor comprehensive credit solutions and will give guidance on other team members to involve in the process.



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*Laura Mandel is Northern Trust’s chief fiduciary officer. She is responsible for overseeing fiduciary practice and policies within Wealth Management.*



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# Stradling

## Innovative Businesses Follow Traditional Business Planning to Minimize Their Peril and Costly Surprises

This issue reflects the innovation hub that Orange County has become. Established companies consistently are creating. They have their own legal partners to guide and advise them with foresight into potential challenges, and may deftly minimize the enterprise's risk.

Entrepreneurs too are dedicating their talents and energies to new ideas in hopes of a foothold and even market disruption. All that hard work may be for naught for first-time and serial entrepreneurs alike, if they neglect to consider fundamental questions that arise when innovation takes shape and a business is formed. Prudent business planning may minimize risks and the chance of the unwanted litigation that may burden, and even challenge a business's existence.

### **What did you promise?**

Before forming a business, entrepreneurs should consider if they have any pre-existing duties to a current or former employer, or business partner. For example, does the entrepreneur owe any fiduciary duties to an existing business in the same industry as the new innovation, is the entrepreneur subject to a work for hire or employment agreement, or have any continuing confidentiality obligations to an employer?

Or, has the entrepreneur made any promises to any business or any motley group of "partners"? Perhaps, the Hollywood hit *The Social Network* and its portrayal of Mark Zuckerberg and the Winklevoss brothers does not do justice to the recurring phenomenon of "oral promises." For those who recall the movie or followed the dispute, and its considerable aftermath, Zuckerberg collaborated with the Winklevoss brothers, and others on an early social networking site in their college dorms, and when Zuckerberg later launched Facebook, the brothers claimed that Zuckerberg breached his oral promise to them to work on their project and purloined their ideas that became Facebook. The suit was an expensive lesson.

Entrepreneurs almost always have a work history before a current innovation takes shape. Innovators also often collaborate in many ways, sometimes just discussing a project with someone uninformed may assist in fleshing out ideas. Yet, before forming a business, an innovator or group should evaluate any pre-existing duties and even any seemingly whimsical "oral" commitments, and navigate through any duties to avoid the costly, growing pains or making their own dubious cinematic history.

### **Who are the owners?**

The most basic of all questions may present unexpected challenges. With news of a major company milestone, such as a product launch, investment, or transaction, an employee or long-forgotten "partner" may surface claiming an equity interest, and may even file suit to enforce that interest.

Loose promises of a piece of the business or innovation, unclear statements for about "investments" or "partnerships", and similar talk can create a host of problems, particularly where e-mails, texts or company documents have vague references to another "owner" or some form of ownership interest. Entrepreneurs should exercise care in determining the actual owners of a business, the expected contributions from each, and be vigilant in their statements to others involved with the innovation or business.

### **Where are you from – legally speaking?**

Entrepreneurs enjoy wide latitude in choosing the organizational form for a business and the state under which it is organized. Choosing to stay local, many may elect a corporation under California law, and then make a "S" corporation election for tax purposes. Others may prefer the well-developed laws of Delaware and an experienced judiciary that predictably and consistently enforces those laws. There are benefits and challenges to each form, and a business can later convert to another form.

Unless a business has a single owner, this decision requires caution when there are multiples owners or the business anticipates attracting capital (it always will). Each form comes with a default statutory framework for an organization's corporate governance, including certain provisions that a business may need to "opt in" for in its organizational documents. Often an entrepreneur may self-incorporate with off the shelf bylaws for corporations, operating agreements for limited liability companies, but these and other organizational documents are not mere formalities. Instead, they are the social contract for the business that will bind and often times supersede the default statutory rules and decisional authority. Off the shelf is often out of luck.

For example, I recently assisted a founder of a Texas-based corporation. This founder received sweat equity for his anticipated work and expertise in developing a source code for a particular technology; he had used off the shelf bylaws, but he soon found himself in a precarious position when the majority owner changed his mind on the direction of the company. The founder had no representation on the board of directors; thoughtful bylaws or other agreements could have guaranteed a board seat, or at least cumulative voting of shares for a board seat. The organizational documents could have required minority shareholder approval or super-majority approval for fundamental changes to the business. Despite years toiling for the company, the founder had no means to easily cash out his investment, but a buy-sell provision in the organizational documents could have provided an efficient way to sell his shares with a pre-determined valuation process. In these social contracts, imaging a change in the ownership or alignment of the owners (even those who are long-time friends) will assist in providing all the business owners with the protection they may desire and expect, rather than being out of luck.

### **What about DEI and ESG?**

DEI and ESG have been prevalent from the news to corporate symposiums because those initiatives reflect deeply held values and consciousness of various stakeholders and the public alike. These principles can be reflected in the fabric of the organizational agreements, along with a business's culture and policies that take shape as an organization matures. While there may always be pitfalls to certain initiatives and other considerations, these are one more issue for the entrepreneur and business owners to consider.

Experienced counsel can assist an entrepreneurs address these and the myriad of other business planning considerations, from leases and guarantees, to insurance, employment practices, policies, and incentive equity, and outside capital raises, among others, and assist the business as it grows.

**Stephen L. Ram** is a shareholder in Stradling's Business Litigation and Securities Litigation practice groups.

Steve's practice concentrates on complex business and commercial litigation in federal and state courts, including mergers and acquisitions disputes, securities fraud, derivative suits, class action defense, and contract and business tort disputes, representing a broad range of clients from startups to public companies.





## Cracking the Code: How Quality of Earnings Influence Decision-Making

A Quality of Earnings (QofE) report plays a crucial role in assessing the financial health and reliability of a company's earnings. It provides insights into the sustainability, transparency, and accuracy of the earnings reported and serves as a key tool for investors, analysts, and other stakeholders in making informed decisions. Here's why:

### 1. Accurate Financial Evaluation

A QofE report helps evaluate the accuracy and reliability of a company's financial statements. By analyzing the components of earnings, it ensures that the reported earnings are a true reflection of the company's financial performance.

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For investors, the QofE report is a valuable tool to assess the financial strength and stability of a company. It helps gauge the company's ability to generate consistent earnings over time, which is a key factor in determining its long-term value. By examining revenue sources, cost structure, and sustainability of profit margins, QofE reports empower investors to make well-informed decisions about potential investments.

### 3. Risk Management

QofE reports assist in identifying and managing potential risks associated with a company's financial statements. By scrutinizing revenue recognition methods, expense management, and asset valuation, these reports unveil any aggressive or

questionable accounting practices and help users understand the level of financial risk involved.

### 4. Due Diligence

When considering mergers, acquisitions, or partnerships, QofE reports provide an independent assessment of a target company's earnings quality. They highlight any potential red flags or discrepancies, allowing you to identify hidden liabilities or contingencies and negotiate deal terms more effectively.

### 5. Investor Confidence and Transparency

QofE reports enhance investor confidence by providing an independent assessment of a company's financial statements. This transparency fosters a healthy investment environment, attracting more investors and opportunities. QofE reports serve as a vital tool for evaluating the financial health and reliability of a company's earnings. It helps investors, analysts, and other stakeholders make informed decisions, manage risks, and access the long-term value of a company. By ensuring accuracy, transparency and sustainability of reported earnings, this report plays a crucial role in investor confidence and facilitating accurate information.

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#### Gordon S. MacLean, CPA

Gordon is a Partner and the Director of Audit Services at RJI CPAs with over 35 years of experience, including 20 years at a Big 4 firm. Gordon can be reached at (949) 852-1600 or at [gmaclean@rjicpas.com](mailto:gmaclean@rjicpas.com).



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## Spotlight: Innovative Corporate Lawyers Get Deals Done

Corporate attorneys often go unnoticed as innovators, but they hold a crucial role in helping their clients achieve their business objectives. Unlike trial attorneys who typically apply their creativity and talents within the context of a dispute, corporate lawyers, like their business clients, thrive in a collaborative and growth-oriented environment, constantly seeking unique approaches to secure successful deals and broaden possibilities and economic outcomes for all involved.



At Adams Corporate Law, we wholeheartedly embrace the spirit of innovation, consistently introducing fresh perspectives and employing creative approaches to negotiations. We excel at breaking through impasses and paving new paths to agreement, employing techniques to align the interests of diverse parties and foster mutually beneficial outcomes that expand the metaphorical pie, rather than divide it. For us, closing deals is not a mere task; it represents an unwavering commitment to delivering favorable results for our clients.

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Pictured is UCI Computer Science Master's Alum Rayhaan Shaikh (left) and John Huang, Associate Director and Site Executive Raytheon | An RTX Business (right)

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The Pacific Club has graciously hosted two UCI professional development networking events. Pictured is Joe Gatto, Pacific Club General Manager (left), Ella Dodor, UCI Computer Engineering PhD candidate (center), Lance Holman, Holman Capital President & CEO (right)

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## Medtech Leader Edwards Drives Meaningful Innovation for Patients

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More than 500,000 heart valve procedures are performed worldwide each year, many utilizing sophisticated medical technologies like those made by Edwards that enable either the repair or replacement of diseased heart valves.

Edwards Lifesciences' roots date to 1958, when Miles "Lowell" Edwards set out to build the first artificial heart. Edwards was a 60-year-old, recently retired engineer with an entrepreneurial spirit and a dream of helping patients with heart disease. With a background in hydraulics and fuel pump operations, Edwards believed the human heart could be mechanized. He presented the concept to Dr. Albert Starr, a young surgeon at the University of Oregon Medical School, who thought the idea was too complex. Instead, Starr encouraged Edwards to focus first on developing an artificial heart valve, for which there was an immediate need.

After just two years, the first Starr-Edwards mitral valve was designed, developed, tested, and successfully placed in a patient. This innovation spawned a company, Edwards Laboratories, which set up shop in Santa Ana, California – not far from where Edwards Lifesciences' corporate headquarters is located today. The spirit of innovation remains central to Edwards today. Since introducing the

first commercially available heart valve in 1960, Edwards Lifesciences has continued to meaningfully advance heart valve therapy.



Today, Edwards continues to lead the field of tissue replacement heart valves and repair products and advanced hemodynamic monitoring. Edwards' major product lines are focused on transcatheter aortic valve replacement, surgical heart valve replacement and repair and critical care monitoring.

The company invests approximately 17 to 18 percent of sales in R&D, and recent years' product growth is directly related to the outputs of Edwards' R&D. Over the last several years, Edwards has been proud to introduce several innovative products that help maintain strong global leadership positions and enabled more patients to benefit from the company's life-saving technologies than ever before.

Edwards continues to be focused on solving unmet needs and promoting transformative solutions with the power to make meaningful differences across the spectrum of healthcare – for patients, clinicians and the overall healthcare system.

## Patients are our life's work ...

At Edwards Lifesciences we are driven by a passion for patients and dedicated to improving lives.

It's about uncovering bold advancements, innovating structural heart and critical care technologies – and dreaming big to imagine brighter futures.

It all adds up to embracing the urgency to make a difference where it matters most. It's our mission for life ...

**... and life is now.**

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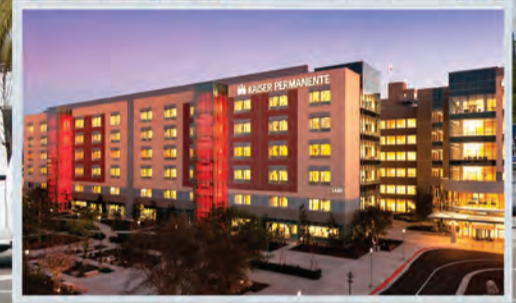


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Orange County's Center of

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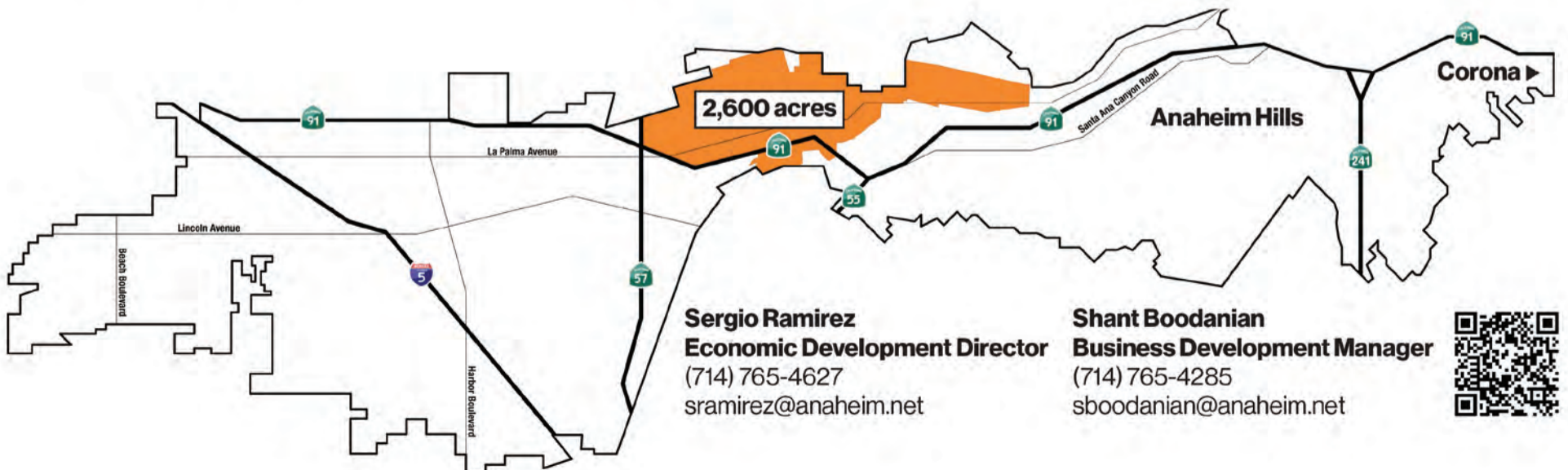


*"One out of three people working to drive our city's economy does so in the Anaheim Canyon, where we are building on a legacy of innovation that will thrive for decades to come."*

— Anaheim Mayor Ashleigh Aitken

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Economic Development Director  
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sramirez@anaheim.net

**Shant Boodanian**  
Business Development Manager  
(714) 765-4285  
sboodanian@anaheim.net





# Stem cell therapy aims to stop MS in its tracks

Photograph by Michael Der

## Jessica Reinhardt feels “reborn” after a stem-cell transplant to halt progression of multiple sclerosis.

“It’s like night and day,” says Reinhardt, 41, who is now able to take walks on the beach in Corona del Mar again, sail and travel. “My family says I’m a new person.”

UCI Medical Center is one of a handful of U.S. hospitals to offer the experimental therapy normally reserved for blood cancers to treat MS outside of clinical trials.

So far, three MS patients have undergone the procedure — called autologous hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (aHSCT) — with promising results, says Dr. Stefan O. Ciurea, director of Orange County’s only adult the bone marrow transplant program, which is part of the UCI Health Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center.

MS, which affects an estimated 1 million Americans, attacks nerves in the brain and central nervous system. Symptoms can include pain, numbness, tingling, fatigue, mood and memory issues, and even paralysis. There is no cure.

“It is one of the leading causes of disability among young people,” says UCI Health MS specialist Dr. Michael Y. Sy, who is Reinhardt’s neurologist.

It also can be very difficult to diagnose. As a teenager in New York, a bad case of mononucleosis and sinusitis landed her in a hospital. An MRI scan showed a grape-sized spot in her brain. Doctors ruled out a brain tumor but weren’t sure what it was.

“We now think that was the first sign of multiple sclerosis,” she says.

Through the years, she was plagued by headaches and other health problems. In her mid-30s, crippling leg pains interrupted

her travels in Europe. In 2018, she quit her gym because she was too tired to go.

In 2019, when she couldn’t see after LASIK surgery and her head throbbed in pain, an MRI revealed the same spot on her frontal lobe. But now there were others — on her optic nerve, on a part of the brain that allows the left and right lobes to communicate, and on her spine.

The spots, it turned out, were lesions where MS had destroyed insulating myelin layers along her nerve cells.

Reinhardt faced a grim future. Even with costly medications intended to slow the disease’s progression — which have varying rates of success — each day was a challenge.

Then she read about aHSCT, a therapy being offered for MS in Europe and elsewhere. She and her husband were making plans to travel abroad for the treatment when Sy told her that UCI Health had started a hematopoietic stem cell program. Reinhardt was over the moon.

*“ I could have the transplant in my backyard! ”*

UCI has a long history of pioneering MS research and treatments, Sy says. This partnership with the stem cell transplant program is yet another noteworthy advance.

Although aHSCT is generally only available to U.S. patients through MS clinical trials, Ciurea says recent studies have shown its effectiveness for MS.

The treatment began with daily injections to stimulate her bone marrow to produce more stem cells. Next came a four-hour process to collect her blood, filter out fresh stem cells and return the rest to her body. Powerful chemotherapy drugs then wiped out her overactive immune system.

Finally on April 7, 2022, she was infused with her healthy stem cells and spent the next three weeks in isolation while her body began to build a new immune system.

“I tell patients it’s like wiping out your hard drive and reinstalling Windows,” Sy says.

It takes about three months see an improvement, Ciurea told her.

“Literally on day 90, all of a sudden, I’m getting out of bed in the morning and I’m out gardening!”

Reinhardt now regards April 7 as her new birthday. “It’s truly a gift and I want to spend my life helping other people with MS get this therapy.”

**UCI Health**

[ucihealth.org/ms](https://ucihealth.org/ms)



# The Shea Center Corporate Engagements

## Winning Ways Your Company Can Get Involved

**Volunteer:** Whether for a company workday or as a weekly volunteer, you can make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities and enhance your own personal and professional growth.

**Sponsorship:** We invite your company to sponsor our annual fundraising events and enjoy exclusive recognition benefits and an opportunity to network with influential community leaders.

**Grants:** Provide vital financial resources through corporate grants or matching gifts to foster a culture of giving and social responsibility within your organization.

To learn more about corporate engagement opportunities, contact Robin King at [rking@sheacenter.org](mailto:rking@sheacenter.org) or (949) 244 8441 ext 132.

The Shea Center is dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities through therapeutic horse-related programs.

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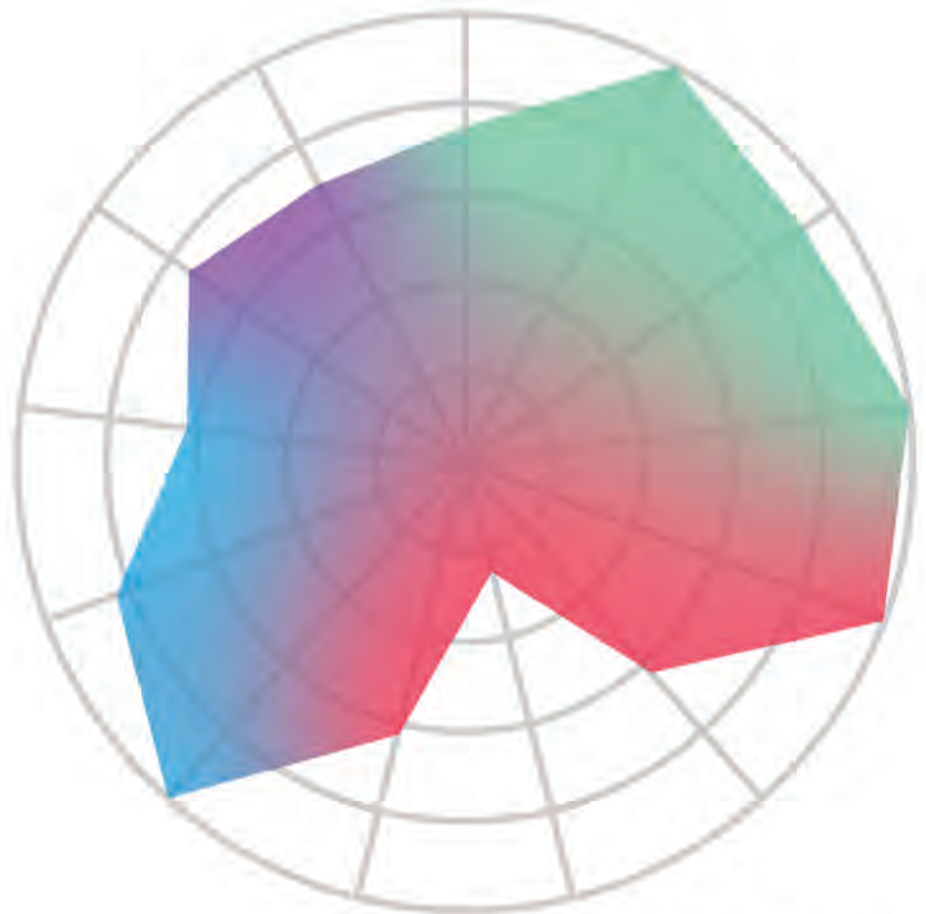
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## INSPIRING ELEGANCE

Lugano Diamonds, founded with a distinctive vision, aims to bring artistry to the forefront of all its designs. They specialize in creating one-of-a-kind pieces, meticulously crafted using exceptional materials. Each creation reflects the essence of their clients' lifestyles, celebrating their individuality and unique sense of style.

At the heart of each jewelry piece crafted by Lugano Diamonds lies a remarkable gemstone. The brand's designs are thoughtfully curated to accentuate the inherent beauty of these stones, resulting in exquisite masterpieces that capture attention. Their jewelry collection caters to a wide variety of lifestyles, offering options that range from casual luxury to elegant subtlety.

To explore more of their remarkable collection, please visit Lugano Diamonds at Fashion Island.



### TIMELESS ELEGANCE

#### *Interchangeable Multi-Colored Diamond Necklace*

Featuring almost 95 carats of multi-colored mixed shape diamonds set in 18k yellow gold, this necklace exudes undeniable elegance.



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### GOLDEN ALLURE

#### *Fancy Yellow Pear Shape Ring*

Presenting an absolute showstopper, featuring a magnificent 15-carat fancy yellow pear-shaped center stone elegantly set in 18k yellow gold.

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## The Bank for Entrepreneurs

Sunwest Bank is the bank built by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs. We offer a full service of banking and lending solutions. Our team is seasoned, and we take pride in developing long-lasting, personal relationships and prioritizing meaningful face-to-face client interactions.

Sunwest Bank opened in 1969 as Santiago Community Bank in Tustin, California, and is among the oldest banks founded and still operating in Orange County, California. The founder and first CEO, James Engbarth, gathered a small group of trusted partners to establish a local community bank to create value for the neighborhood and businesses it served and develop and grow the Orange County community area. In 1980, after over a decade of steady growth, Santiago Bank officially changed its name to Sunwest Bank.

Since our inception, our focus has always been to assist entrepreneurs in achieving the American dream. Like our founders, we are committed to creating enduring and personal connections. We deliver the best service and provide flexible, tailored solutions to our customers and businesses to support their company growth. The relationships that are developed with our bankers are what keeps our clients coming back. Our long-term and forward-thinking perspective has been our approach since we were founded in 1969.

“We are thrilled to support the OCBJ Innovators of the Year program. For 54 years and counting, we have provided companies with the funding and expertise they need to grow and scale,” said Eric Hovde, Chairman and CEO of Sunwest Bank. “Entrepreneur banking is in our DNA. Sunwest has been operating in this space for a long time, earning people’s trust and their business. Sunwest has constantly improved and evolved to meet the needs and challenges of entrepreneurs navigating today’s fast-changing economic times.”

The definitive turning point in Sunwest’s history was the financial crisis of 2007 to 2009. Because of our strong balance sheet, and long-standing record of conservative underwriting, federal regulators approved Sunwest to buy and revive five failed banks.

Sunwest Bank has since grown to a regional bank serving California, Arizona, Idaho, Utah, and Florida. Sunwest is best known for commercial real estate and SBA loans. However, we also offer solar financing, HOA (Homeowners Associations), and Property Management Banking solutions. We serve privately held corporations, family offices, small to medium-sized businesses, and real estate developers. We have and will continue to focus on providing flexible financing and lending options for entrepreneurs and businesses.

We are equipped to support businesses through all stages of growth. One way in which we continue to support innovators and businesses is through our Sunwest New Account Portal (SNAP). SNAP is a unique tool, built with the technology of a FinTech and the backing of a bank, that was created to increase flexibility. We understand how valuable time is, and with SNAP, one can easily open a business account without driving to a branch and waiting in line. SNAP allows you to open an account in minutes, create multiple accounts, add members of your business and authorized account signers, select checks, and check scanners without leaving your house or workplace.

Eric Hovde said, “We will continue to be at the forefront of embracing new technologies yet realizing that there is no substitute for human relationships and face-to-face interactions when providing excellent service to today’s and tomorrow’s entrepreneurs.”

Sunwest is unique because we pride ourselves on being a bank with a Fortress Balance Sheet. Deposits are safer at Sunwest, even during the most challenging economic conditions. Eric Hovde has said that not all banks are operated and managed equally. Sunwest Bank is run much differently than other banks because we maintain such a strong Fortress Balance Sheet, keeping almost 50 percent more capital than our

competitors. We have almost double the reserves compared to our competitors, including the big banks, and our reserves are among the highest in the industry. We possess abundant liquidity and have a meticulous and highly disciplined underwriting process.

We have always been a conservative bank that carefully preserves and protects our liquidity. Recently, we bought securities in the short term, one-year treasury bonds, and the shorter duration has enabled the bank to pivot when needed. During prosperous times, we capitalized on opportunities without succumbing or overstretching ourselves.

Because of our Fortress Balance Sheet and liquidity, we can continue lending and assisting customers, even when the markets and businesses are most vulnerable and other banks are not lending. Our exceptionally strong Fortress Balance sheet enables us to consistently aid our customers when their companies may be most susceptible. The unwavering commitment to supporting our customers is the reason we have thrived in the community banking business for 54 years.

When some banks no longer want to lend, Sunwest remains dedicated to supporting businesses’ growth to grow, allowing us to assist customers when they need it most. For example, Sunwest Bank originated over 3,500 PPP loans in 2020 and 2021, helping small businesses during and through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sunwest Bank continues to thrive, with our assets under management now exceeding \$2.5 billion. As a community bank, we value personal connections and deliver exemplary service and tailored solutions to entrepreneurs and businesses. We are a relationship-driven bank built for all economic cycles.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting businesses and customers throughout economic fluctuations. We are a financially disciplined bank that is lending and happy to work on a personalized and strategic approach for your business. We have the entrepreneurial mindset to help innovators succeed.

### Dwight Flenniken III Chief Marketing Officer

Mr. Flenniken is an entrepreneurial minded executive, focused on consumer centric digital innovation and transformation. Over the course of his career Dwight has worked in the financial sector, including banking and fintech startups. He has helped these companies develop plans to scale and grow their businesses through data insights and market driven technology.



In his nearly 20 years of marketing experience, specializing in enterprise level campaign planning, strategy & execution, team building & management, cross-channel advertising and digital marketing platform design and integration.

Prior to joining Sunwest Bank, Mr. Flenniken served as an executive for some very successful startups including Americor, Goldco, Loanpal and Quinstreet.

Mr. Flenniken graduated from California State University, Long Beach in 2002 with a B.A in Journalism, having recently moved from Huntington Beach, CA, he and his family currently reside in Park City, Utah.

# NELSON KIRKMAN

## THE YELLOW PAD SOLUTION



By Paul Nelson, Esq

A couple we will call Dean and Carly built a huge marketing empire. Their successful business entailed producing cutting-edge videos, marquee social media deliverables, and winning SEO offerings. For their efforts, the couple became multimillionaires. But personally? Things did not go as well on the marital front. In fact, their incessant bickering ruined their marriage. It even led to the collapse of what had once been a \$40 million operation.

But it was Carly's behavior in court that really brought down the house.

**During their divorce trial, Carly could not control her rage.** At the slightest provocation, she would rant and rave about how Dean had undermined her authority during business meetings, mismanaged employees, and misappropriated as much as \$10 million in company funds. Even Carly's own attorney couldn't get her to moderate her attacks.

Worse yet, it soon became clear Carly's unhinged courtroom behavior—especially her constant stream of vitriol—was getting on the judge's nerves.

When it came time for Dean's side to present his case, Dean's lawyer not only produced multiple witnesses who contradicted Carly's description of her husband's professional behavior but also submitted forensic evidence that Dean had *not*, in fact, misappropriated funds per his wife's accusations.

But it wasn't just these facts that persuaded the judge.

It was also Dean's behavior in court. In sharp contrast to Carly's outlandish behavior, Dean presented himself as a kind and considerate individual. Rather than scream or eyeroll his way through already contentious family-law proceedings, Dean conducted himself as a professional. He appeared unruffled and unemotional.

It also helped that Dean's lawyer supplied solid facts to demonstrate the veracity of his client's claims. Faced with such evidence, Carly was forced, under cross-examination, to recant many of her charges. Not surprisingly, the judge—already taken aback by Carly's antics—went so far as to penalize Carly for her misbehavior by awarding Dean much of the remaining cash the pair otherwise would have split. Carly literally paid for her misconduct.

**The moral of the story?** While courtrooms are great settings for drama, the person who literally pays for courtroom theatrics could be *you*. As Carly learned firsthand, during a divorce trial, you will be judged every moment you spend in the courtroom. This not only includes the brief time you spend on the witness stand, but also the many hours you spend sitting at either the petitioner's or respondent's table watching lawyers make their cases.

Of course, sitting in court doing nothing can be difficult, and few people are up to the task—especially when the gloves come off. When the other side says bad things about you, and witness

after witness takes the stand, it's natural to squirm or fidget. At times you might react to testimony through your body language, facial expressions, or even verbally.

But as Carly learned firsthand, negative reactions can seriously influence your case. Beyond what you say, every snort, grimace, balled fist, and yes, every eyeroll, will be seen by the judge and used to construct a mental picture of your character.

Possibly to your detriment.

**But there's hope.** A tool I use to effectively mitigate this problem is quite simple: a yellow legal pad. Before testimony ever begins, I provide my clients with a pad and pen and instruct them to write down their reactions to the testimony they hear, including points they believe I need to challenge, and questions they would like me to ask witnesses.

This not only gives my clients something to do with their hands, but it also provides a way to channel their anger, frustration, and other negative emotions in a manner less likely to upset the judge—and influence the proceedings' outcome! And it supplies me with ammunition I can use (or choose not to use) in cross-examination.

Want to set yourself up for success in your own family matter? Make sure you use a similar tool in court. It just might make all the difference between ending up like Carly—or prevailing like Dean.

NELSON  KIRKMAN  
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At LCAD, we unleash and nurture the creative expertise required to lead responsibly in the world.



Steve Brittan, President + CEO



Our Art and Design majors strategically align with business sectors in Orange County and are poised to bring value to the local creative economy.

- UCI + NIH + LCAD project to recruit and engage cancer research participants.
- John Wayne Airport + LCAD collaboration to develop branding, communication, and improve traveler experiences.
- OC Juvenile Courts + LCAD partnership to nurture creative expression through writing and storytelling.
- Vans + LCAD project to challenge current consumption/production models for clothing design and footwear.

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## Our students graduate with cutting-edge skills in these majors:

- Animation
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- Drawing MFA
- Game Design MFA
- Painting MFA



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## LCAD Alumni secure well-paying leadership roles in the most innovative companies.

Amazon	Infinity Ward	Rivian
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Asics	LA Angels	Stance
Billabong	Lexus	Taco Bell
Blind Squirrel Games	NFL	Thermo Fisher
Blizzard Entertainment	Nickelodeon	Tilly's
DC Shoes	Nike	VonZipper
Dermalogica	Obsidian Entertainment	Vuori
Edwards LifeSciences	Pixar Animation Studios	Walt Disney Animation
Fisker Inc.	Riot Games	Walt Disney Imagineering
Honda Motor Co.	RipCurl	Warner Brothers Animation



## ChatGPT is only at the beginning of the AI Revolution in Education

By Dawn S. Reese, Chief Executive Officer, The Wooden Floor

Since 2021, I have served in a cohort of community leaders, administrators and parents to provide input into the development of the **Santa Ana Unified School District's** Graduate Profile which is taking a unique approach to researching the best practices of high performing education systems around the world. Specifically, in the countries of Singapore, Finland and Estonia, they focus on student development holistically (social, emotional, and academic well-being), principal and teacher mentoring and training, as well as preparing students for higher education pathways including four-year, two-year, and CTE or Certified Technical Education professions.

The education system is at a critical juncture as we emerge from the pandemic with students facing severe learning losses, at an all-time high, due to the extended time spent in remote learning coupled with the pandemic's devastating and disparate health impact on communities in Orange County and our nation. Without remedial support and educational opportunities to improve their learning losses, most of these impacted young people may not be able to catch up. Significant interventions needed include expanded learning time, focused efforts on remedial supports for reading, language arts, and math, as well as increased technology integration into the classroom and their homes with tools such as the use of AI.

In 2018, I attended a workforce development conference by the **Orange County Business Council** and **Dr. Wallace Walrod** presented on the impact that AI would have on the skills necessary for careers in the 21st Century digital economy, also known as the 4th Industrial Revolution. Then, **The Wooden Floor's** Board of Directors and staff began exploring the impact AI will have on workforce development and the life skills required for our students to be prepared to thrive in the growing space of this new technology. At the time, researchers at the **University of Redlands** were forecasting which jobs would be eliminated in Southern California over the following 10-15 years or by 2033, and which job skills would be required to compete in a digital economy of the future. With the advancements of ChatGPT and other AI technologies introduced in recent months, the pace of innovation is moving ahead even more quickly than anticipated. Santa Ana Unified School District Superintendent **Jerry Almendarez** presented at The Wooden Floor's Annual Board Retreat this past January, and shared a quote that "In the next 10 years, we will experience 100 years of technological advances".

*My first thought was how do we prepare students for this digital transformation, at a time when some of these same students are impacted with learning losses, coupled with other socio-economic and mental health challenges?*

**We believe Dance is the Answer.™**

The Wooden Floor has a rich legacy that has been making a difference in the lives of children and families for over 40 years. As a nonprofit organization that provides holistic dance education that is strategically integrated with academics, college and career readiness, and family services, The Wooden Floor has achieved significant success in inspiring and transforming the lives of our students and empowering them to reach their fullest potential.

Through our innovative dance curriculum, our students develop the life skills and 21st Century workforce development skills which align to the 5 C's outlined by the OC Department of Education: **Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Character** and at The Wooden Floor, we added a 6th C: **Courage**. During the pandemic, our curriculum was put to the test and adapted to meet the needs of the students and families we serve. We have sought ways to encourage students' use of technology and incorporate new remote tools into our dance education classes, college readiness workshops, and performance opportunities



Students and tutors at The Wooden Floor flagship location's Hutton Education Center (April, 2023)  
Photography by Sargeant Creative. ©2023 The Wooden Floor.

through incorporating choreographers who co-create new works virtually with our students, as well as having corporate volunteers from across the nation participate via Zoom in our Career Day Panels.

**Some of our notable outcomes include:**

- **100%** higher education enrollment rate for our graduates, since 2005
- **54%** of our graduates have received their bachelor's or master's degree, since 2005, as compared to 12% of socio-economic peers\*
- **55%** of our graduates are pursuing S.T.E.A.M. degrees over the past five years (with declared majors in biotechnology, computer sciences, mechanical engineering, gaming design, and pre-med)
- **3rd, 5th and 8th grade students are exceeding academic benchmarks** from 2021-2022 in reading, language arts, and math as compared to Orange County and State of California statistics during the pandemic due to The Wooden Floor's integrated academic services and specialized tutoring programs.

\*Source: National Student Clearinghouse

The Wooden Floor knows it is critically important to continue to be innovative and adaptive to stay relevant and highly effective in our mission, too. With evolving technological advancements, coupled with the evolving needs of our students and our community, it is crucial for nonprofit organizations like The Wooden Floor to be agile in our approach and continuously seek innovative new ways to improve our impact.

As The Wooden Floor looks forward to our next 40 years, innovation will remain a key component of our success. One of our guiding principles states, "*We are pioneers...past, present, and future.*" By staying true to our mission while embracing new approaches and AI technologies for our students, and with the growing support of our community of supporters, The Wooden Floor will continue to be a leader in providing comprehensive services for young people and their families in Orange County and beyond.

To learn more about The Wooden Floor, please visit [TheWoodenFloor.org](https://www.thewoodenfloor.org)



Dawn S. Reese, Chief Executive Officer of The Wooden Floor, is a social innovator who leverages her unique blend of experience in business, technology, education, and the arts to propel young people forward. During Reese's 14-year tenure, The Wooden Floor has seen significant growth, including the opening of its second location in Santa Ana, and licensing of its model. Celebrating its 40th Anniversary, recent awards for The Wooden Floor include: 2023 Best Places To Work from the **Orange County Business Journal**, 2022 Nonprofit of the Year Award **Greater Irvine Chamber**, 2021-2022 AIM High Award **New York Life Foundation**, and 2021 **Stand Up the Arts Award** from **Ovation TV/Charter Communications**. Reese's recent honors include: 2023 **Empowering Lives Award** by **Templo Calvario**, 2023 **Sam Estes Award for Community Leadership** from the **Santa Ana Task Force**, 2022 **Orange County Visionary** by the **Los Angeles**

**Times Orange County**, and the 2020 **Women of Distinction Award** from **34th CA Senate District Tom Umberg**.

Reese serves on the Board of Directors for the **Passkeys Foundation** as Board Chair and OneOC as Audit Chair, as well as **Advisors in Philanthropy OC**, **Orange County Music and Dance**, and the **Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce**. She is on the Board of Advisors for the **Giles-O'Malley Center for Leadership - College of Business and Economics at California State University, Fullerton**. Reese is the founder of the **OC Nonprofit CEO Forum**. She began the first part of her career in management consulting specializing in the high technology sector. Currently, she is an evaluator and presenter for **OCTANE's Nonprofit Accelerator Program**.

[TheWoodenFloor.org](https://www.thewoodenfloor.org)

[in DawnSReese](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dawnreese)



# DANCE IS THE ANSWER.™

We transform the lives of young people through  
**the power of dance** and **access to higher education.**

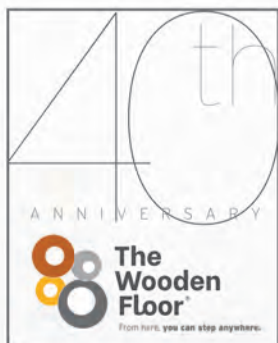
For over 40 years, The Wooden Floor has been one of the foremost creative youth development nonprofit organizations in the country. **100 percent** of our graduates enroll in higher education since 2005, as compared to about 50 percent of their socioeconomic peers.

Students at The Wooden Floor consistently academically exceed their peers nationally. Our students become change agents and beacons of hope within their own families, their neighborhoods, our community, and our world.



JOIN US IN MOVING MORE  
YOUNG PEOPLE **FORWARD.**

Find out more by scanning the QR code.



[TheWoodenFloor.org](http://TheWoodenFloor.org)

## 2023 INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEES

**Allied Universal, Irvine***Mark Mullison, Chief Information Officer*

With more than 20 years of experience in product development, information technology and global operations, Mark Mullison brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the role of chief information officer (CIO) for Allied Universal®. Mullison has contributed to Allied Universal's success by leveraging innovative solutions and driving operational excellence. He spearheaded the development and implementation of cutting-edge platforms (HELIAUS® and LISA) that have revolutionized the security industry. He has successfully managed more than \$300 million in technology solutions—from concept to operation—in over 65 countries. Mullison joined Allied Universal via the company's acquisition of U.S. Security Associates (a Goldman Sachs portfolio company) where he served as CIO. In 2006, Mullison founded Landmark Technologies Corporation, a consulting firm specializing in technology and management services for companies with global operations.

**ATTOM, Irvine***Rob Barber, CEO*

As CEO of ATTOM, Rob Barber, a 30+ year veteran in the real estate information services industry, directs the ongoing curation of the nation's premier property database and product innovation that leverages the company's data warehouse and data delivery platforms. Barber joined what was then RealtyTrac as CEO in 2015 and spearheaded the creation of the ATTOM Data Warehouse and the company's subsequent rebranding as ATTOM Data Solutions in 2016, and since then has worked diligently to solidify ATTOM's brand as the leading supplier of premium property data. Under Barber's leadership, ATTOM has successfully completed several strategic initiatives to bring more comprehensive real estate data to the marketplace and provide new data delivery solutions that make the data more widely available to a broad spectrum of companies from disruptive startups to established market leaders.

**AuditClub, Irvine***Chris Vanover, Founder, CEO & Chief Auditor*

Chris Vanover is on a mission to improve public accounting. He is a CPA with over two decades of public accounting experience in auditing, regulatory, and educational roles with international and regional firms, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, and universities in Southern California. CPA firms are experiencing a critical shortage of qualified human capital. Recognizing the challenges of attracting and retaining qualified personnel, Vanover knew there had to be a better way. He examined the operational models of CPA firms and created an innovative new auditors-as-a-service model to provide CPA firms with instant access to talent and fractional flexibility. The new firm is AuditClub, the Audit Service Center for CPA Firms. A licensed accountancy corporation based in the US and registered with the PCAOB, AuditClub provides on-demand support for audit and assurance, quality control, regulatory matters and training through a membership model. Member firms benefit from exclusive access to a team of experienced CPAs and specialists through technology-enabled and flexible month-to-month passes.

**Branded Group, Anaheim***Michael Kurland, CEO & Co-Founder*

Michael Kurland is a CEO, writer, entrepreneur, culture creator, and conscious capitalist. He is an award-winning CEO of a facilities management company and is dedicated to leading with purpose and giving back to his community. Kurland founded Branded Group in 2014 and has driven its impressive growth and cultural shift by building a talented team dedicated to excellence in customer service, community involvement, and personal growth. This has led to strong relationships with customers, vendors, and non-profit partners, as well as innovative programs and a well-respected reputation in the industry. Michael Kurland is a well-known author of thought leadership articles for online publications like Forbes, Inc., Huffington Post, and Thrive Global. He has written about topics such as leadership, company culture, social impact, and employee engagement and retention. He is also the author of his first book, "Broken to Better: 13 Ways Not to Fail at Life and Leadership."

**Buchanan Street Partners, Newport Beach***Robert Brunswick, Co-Founder and Chairman*

Robert Brunswick, co-founder and chairman of Buchanan Street Partners, a real estate investment management firm headquartered in Newport Beach, has been a dedicated supporter of Hoag since 2006. In 2017, Brunswick had a vision of catalyzing philanthropy at Hoag to drive innovation in health care and make a more significant impact on Hoag patients and the community. With support from the Hoag Hospital Foundation, Brunswick brought together committed and forward-thinking entrepreneurs, philanthropists, and community leaders to form Hoag Innovators, a group of donors with a shared vision for advancing healthcare innovation at Hoag by leveraging the power of collective giving. The group is defined by its active engagement, discretionary review, and collaborative decision-making on philanthropic investments that will make the greatest impact on patient care at Hoag but also move health care forward throughout Orange County and beyond.

**CathWorks, Irvine***Ramin Mousavi, CEO & President*

Ramin Mousavi is a dynamic executive with an outstanding history of building high-performing teams and achieving exceptional results in the medical device and high-tech industries - from developing to launching and commercializing breakthrough and transformational products. He is currently the president & chief executive officer of CathWorks, an innovative global medical device company focused on transforming the diagnosis and treatment of coronary artery diseases. CathWorks is dedicated to transforming how cardiovascular disease is diagnosed and treated. A rising star of the medical device industry, Mousavi has executive leadership and operational experience in general



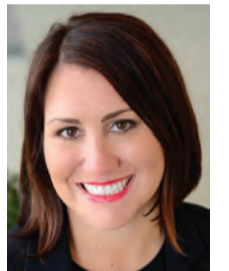
management, marketing, strategy, product development, and commercialization across multiple market segments. Prior to CathWorks, Mousavi led the patient monitoring and digital health portfolio at Baxter International. Previously, he held various leadership assignments at Edwards Lifesciences, Panasonic, and Rockwell Collins.

**Chapman University, Orange***Pradip (P.K.) Shukla, Co-Founder APIDA Faculty and Staff Forum and Associate Professor*

Dr. Shukla is an associate professor and is a co-founder of the newly established APIDA Faculty and Staff Forum at Chapman University. He was invited to serve as the Keynote Speaker for the APIDA Graduation Ceremony in 2023. He has served in leadership roles in the Southern California Indian Community with groups such as India@75 Executive Committee that put on major ticketed events at the Cerritos Performing Arts Center and IASH- Indo American Senior Heritage Group. He serves as the faculty advisor to the South Asian Students Association at Chapman University. Dr. Shukla is helping to connect Chapman University students, faculty, and staff with the Southern California Indian community. Dr. Shukla received the 1st Place Best Faculty Advisor Award from Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization out of all global chapters. Dr. Shukla served as a business reviewer for the Advanced Technology Program of the United States Department of Commerce where he reviewed business plans for federal funding support. Dr. Shukla has consulted with business firms at all stages—business plan, inception, growth, succession planning, going public, and liquidation. He has served on boards of directors of organizations.

**City of Hope Orange County, Irvine***Annette Morgan, Chief Administrative Officer*

As chief administrative officer of City of Hope Orange County, Annette Morgan delivers innovative solutions to address critical health care challenges. By helping deliver City of Hope Orange County Lennar Foundation Cancer Center and expanding the City of Hope network of advanced cancer care, she ensured local access to an unprecedented level of cancer treatments. Through development of a \$1 billion business plan to bring advanced cancer care close to home, Morgan and team relieved the burden on the 20 percent of Orange County residents who traveled outside the region for care. Morgan is now planning for the 2025 opening of Orange County's only hospital exclusively focused on treating and curing cancer. Morgan has also proactively addressed health care equity concerns by negotiating a groundbreaking contract between City of Hope and CalOptima Health. This agreement expanded local access to advanced cancer care for the one-fourth of Orange County residents relying on CalOptima. Through her leadership, Morgan is making significant strides in improving cancer care and promoting equitable access to health care in Orange County.

**Codebreaker Technologies, Laguna Beach***Cheri Tree, CEO*

Cheri Tree created a new personality assessment model based in BUYology, designed to predict buying behavior and human engagement, called B.A.N.K. She has won numerous awards, been voted entrepreneur of the year, written in Forbes, and has clients around the world. In 2019, her company, Codebreaker Technologies, created the world's first artificial intelligence powered by B.A.N.K. and written in Forbes as "the future of sales". Her company was just awarded a ground-breaking patent with innovative and disruptive technology that can integrate into any membership or login portal and automatically capture the user's personality type based on their values, giving the company the ability to better engage, retain, advertise, and monetize their relationship with the user. This will be a game changer with business intelligence and data analytics to supercharge results.

**Common Collabs, Fullerton***Brant Curtis, Founder*

Brant Curtis started a coffee extract and beverage co-packing business in 2020 despite the many challenges associated with launching a new venture during the midst of a global pandemic. Not only did he have to confront common startup obstacles like risking capital, finding reliable staff and managing operations, but he also had to deal with restrictions such as social distancing protocols, changing supplies and limited access to customers. Despite these challenges, Curtis successfully launched the business and created a presence that enabled them to reach the most notable brands in specialty coffee. His entrepreneurial spirit and courage of conviction has been an inspiration to the team who admire his love for coffee.

**CoreLogic, Irvine***John Rogers, Chief Innovation Officer*

John Rogers holds the role of chief innovation officer for CoreLogic and is responsible for the R&D. From driving new solutions that understand the impacts to the real estate economy due to climate change, to ground-breaking models that identify suitable land for affordable housing development, the R&D group tackles major housing issues and works with many clients across the housing industry to drive growth and mitigate risk on their book of business.

**CoverCrow Inc., Huntington Beach***Cassandra Caldarella, CEO & Founder*

Cassandra Caldarella is the founder and CEO of CoverCrow, Inc., a company that is devoted to helping fortify the stenography profession by helping to meet the demand for stenographic services. An accomplished freelance realtime civil trial reporter with 20 years shorthand reporter experience in California, Caldarella takes great pride in promoting the profession, cultivating students, and helping to advance realtime skills within her profession. As a student, she qualified for the California Certified Shorthand Reporter exam in two short years. After freelancing for two years doing Securities and Exchange hearings and Civil Grand Jury hearings in Los Angeles, she was hired as an Official Court Reporter for the largest trial court in the world, Los Angeles



A photograph of two men smiling. The man on the left is wearing a white lab coat, a light blue shirt, and a patterned tie. The man on the right is wearing a dark blue suit jacket over a white shirt. Behind them is a piece of medical equipment with the word "Vectra" visible on it. The background is a dark teal color.

innovators  
hoag.

# CONGRATULATIONS.

The Hoag Hospital Foundation salutes Robert Brunswick, Dr. Steven Wang, and all of the outstanding Innovator of the Year nominees for changing the landscape of Orange County through your bold, pioneering spirits.

## 2023 INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEES

Superior Court, where she floated to 30 different courthouse buildings and reported every kind of litigation possible. When she was laid off in 2012, she started doing high-profile and high stakes civil trials, privately hired by attorneys, and was compelled to offer realtime. She created a 12-week Realtime Bootcamp in 2012 that has two sessions a year at South Coast College. She also started the \$500 Why I Love Court Reporting scholarship for court reporting students.

### David Meltzer Enterprises, Ladera Ranch

*David Meltzer, Founder*

As part of David Meltzer's mission to empower over 1 billion people to be happy, the team at DME works tirelessly to create content that provides people with tools to pursue their potential. They've launched two business-focused television shows for Apple TV, a pitch show called "2 Minute Drill" and the first late-night entrepreneurial show "Office Hours", filming nine seasons collectively so far. They're also preparing to launch another investment and collectibles-focused show called "Money Talks" later this year. In addition to Meltzer's content & distribution deal with Apple TV as a featured influencer, he launched a new digital show with legendary tennis coach Rick Macci entitled "Game, Set, Life" which is currently in its second season. With recording locations at the Blue Wire studio in the Wynn Las Vegas, SoFi Stadium, home of the NFL's Los Angeles Rams and Chargers, and another new studio in Orange County already, the team will also be announcing a new location at another famed NFL stadium in the coming months, expanding their footprint to the Midwest.



### egnite, Aliso Viejo

*Joel Portice, President and CEO*

A proven leader with a history of building and growing successful businesses across the healthcare sector, Joel Portice has extensive entrepreneurial experience with software and data analytics companies. At egnite, Portice leads the company's overall operations, financial and strategic planning, and organizational structure. Prior to leading egnite, Portice was CEO of Intermedix where he led the company's growth and successful acquisition by R1 RCM. During his career, Portice co-founded IPS, Inc. and Enclarity, both of which were acquired by market-leading corporations. He went on to serve as president of Verisk Health, where he led the company's unprecedented growth prior to its acquisition by Veritas Capital.



### Eyedaptic, Laguna Hills

*Jay Cormier, Founder & CEO*

Jay Cormier is CEO and founded Eyedaptic in 2016 with the mission of revitalizing the quality of life for people with AMD (Age related Macular Degeneration). This is one of the biggest unmet needs in eye care today with over 150 million people worldwide affected, with no existing cure or therapy. AMD leads to a loss of central vision which make many everyday tasks like reading a bill or finding canned goods in a grocery store difficult or impossible. Together with cofounders, with deep technology backgrounds as well as ophthalmology retina specialists, the team set forth to use augmented reality with embedded natural vision software to accomplish this goal. After three years, working with nearly 100 patients, a successful clinical study and hundreds of hours of beta usage Eyedaptic's first product was introduced at the end of 2019. Revenue is now growing 4X per year, and Eyedaptic is helping people with vision impairments across the globe.



### Fairstream, Costa Mesa

*Kelly O'Connell, CEO*

Fairstream is a platform-as-a-service talent acquisition solution designed to reduce common barriers to inclusive recruiting. Leveraging ethical technology, community partnerships, and proven DEI methods we reduce hiring friction for employers and increase career path opportunities for those too often excluded from the workforce. Kelly O'Connell (she/her/hers) is a respected expert on the future of work, inclusive entrepreneurship, and innovation agility. She has contributed to Forbes, Women on Business, Business Insider and has spoken at countless events/conferences. With an early professional background in mergers & acquisitions & mid-career experience as an executive at one of the largest global professional services firms, today O'Connell is chasing her professional passion for bringing visibility to the connections between purpose and profit and enabling inclusive leaders to accelerate their biggest opportunities.



### Fluxwear, Santa Ana

*Kamran Ansari, CEO & Co-Founder*

As CEO and co-founder of FluxWear, Kamran Ansari identified a hole in the neuroscience market while seeking to help his ailing sister whose debilitating chronic pain resisted all traditional and holistic modalities. After five years of product development and studies, SHIFT is regarded as the world's most powerful consumer-grade, non-invasive neuromodulation device on the market. By taking chronic pain down from a nine to a two in most individuals, it improves the quality of life for those suffering from migraines/other illnesses. From a socio-emotional perspective, SHIFT reduces anxiety, promotes creativity, and improves focus. The cap's simple elegance pairs with most aesthetics. Ansari's prowess spans a broad spectrum leading to multiple academic awards. Stylistically, SHIFT earned Ansari two Muse Design Awards and a New York Product Design Award. Ansari was inducted into the National Gallery of America's Young Inventors, a group that ignites faith in students like Ansari who choose to solve real-world problems.



### GO RN, StaffGRIT, HAUTE LEGS, Santa Ana

*Vanessa Benavides, CEO & Founder*

Vanessa Benavides, the founder and CEO of healthcare startup, Go RN, and native to Orange County is a beacon of innovation and empowerment. Her 20+ years in healthcare ranges from entrepreneurship to patient care, as Benavides is a registered nurse. Her multidisciplinary background in nursing plus her keen sense of curiosity lead her to Magnet, a healthcare innovation incubator through St. Joseph's Hospital. Thus, GoRN was inducted into the National Gallery of America's Young Inventors, a group that ignites faith in students like Ansari who choose to solve real-world problems. GoRN has exponentially grown 350% from



staffing two shifts per day pre-pandemic to 700+ shifts per day in 2021 with the use of the dynamic platform. The technology grew to being utilized across Southern California to support COVID emergency response, homeless crisis management, and nationally with opportunities in acute, non-acute, and travel. The platform has simplified staffing, scheduling, and compliance. Benavides knew the revolutionary technology could impact other industries, as well. Thus StaffGrit was born in 2021. This would not be possible without Benavides' innovative mind and leadership.

### Histologics LLC, Anaheim

*Neal Lonky, Founder and CEO*

Dr. Neal Lonky is a recognized Key Opinion Leader worldwide in the prevention and management of lower genital tract disease and cervical cancer, health policy and recently, wound care. He has received numerous recognitions and awards from peers, patients, professional societies, and his Alma Mater Universities at SUNY Stony Brook Medical School and the UCLA School of Public Health. He is the author of over 60 peer reviewed publications, two books and numerous articles on cancer prevention and health policy. His role as an innovator began in the late 1980's when he patented the use of chemiluminescent light for the diagnosis of cervical dysplasia that became the scientifically proven "Speculscopy®" and later the commercial FDA cleared procedure "PapSure®". He co-founded and directed the company behind this innovation, The Trylon Corporation from 1991 through 2015. An outgrowth of cervical cancer detection, Dr. Lonky innovated minimally invasive brush technology to replace reusable metal biopsy tools. The following company, Histologics LLC has sold over 1.5 minimally invasive brush devices in the USA, to remove tissue from the body, currently in women's health and wound care.



### Hoag, Irvine

*Steven Wang M.D., Director of Dermatologic Oncology*

Dr. Steven Q. Wang is a board-certified dermatologist and fellowship-trained Mohs micrographic surgeon focusing on the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of melanoma, squamous cell cancer, basal cell cancer and other skin cancers. Dr. Wang deploys technologies to detect melanoma and other skin cancers at early stages while avoiding unnecessary skin biopsies. He uses noninvasive treatment approaches and is capable of performing Mohs micrographic surgery and reconstruction to minimize scarring. Currently, Dr. Wang serves as the Medical Director of Dermatologic Oncology at Hoag Family Cancer Institute. His clinical practice is focused only on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of skin cancers. In addition to caring for patients, Dr. Wang is actively involved in clinical and basic research with a focus on melanoma detection, photoprotection and application of artificial intelligence in skin cancer detection.



### HomeLife Brands, Anaheim

*Marshall Morris, President*

Marshall Morris is U.S. Veteran and an internet entrepreneur that has helped HomeLife become one of the top Pet Market Brands in the USA. Starting as employee #1, his efforts have build a company hitting \$20 million in revenue with 45 employees, launched close to 500 new products, done close to \$150 million in revenues to date. He is also a pioneer in the new Ai industry with their latest company PetVet.AI.



### Human Options, Irvine

*Maricela Rios-Faust, CEO*

Maricela Rios-Faust is a leader in preventing and ending relationship violence through her work as CEO of nonprofit Human Options, one of the most comprehensive relationship violence service providers in Orange County, and her leadership on partnerships and collaboratives aimed at ending the cycle of violence. As CEO, Maricela Rios-Faust brings strong strategic leadership, nonprofit management, and fundraising skills to her multifaceted role at Human Options. Rios-Faust's leadership has led to Human Options budget growth from \$4.5 million to \$7 million and doubling its presence in high need communities, increasing access to needed resources to survivors. She oversees the fiscal and programmatic direction, as well as its emergency shelter and 24-hour crisis hotline, transitional housing programs, community-based services (10 resource centers), a prevention education program and all administrative and fundraising functions. As a leader in supporting survivors of domestic violence, working to educate youth, evolving cultural beliefs away from victim blaming and shaming, training law enforcement and more, Rios-Faust has become a sought-after source of knowledge about domestic and relationship violence.



### Inspired Art Wine, Costa Mesa

*Karen Nguyen, Founder & CEO*

Karen Nguyen is a dynamic executive, entrepreneur and educator with a successful track record in corporate, start-up and non-profit environments. Using her 15+ years of experience as a marketing leader and business owner, Nguyen is passionate about implementing practical strategies that drive incremental tangible (revenue) and intangible (branding) growth through her business ventures and corporations as a corporate consultant. As a serial entrepreneur in the arts/entertainment and wine industry, Nguyen grew her first business, Inspired Art Wine, to 27,000+ customers worldwide and 250+ corporate clients since 2016. In 2018, Nguyen founded Inspired Somm, where she brings an entertaining, informative and modern approach to wine education aimed at Millennials and Generation Z markets. In the same year, Pour Fine Art launched featuring Nguyen's classic contemporary art. Clio-nominated, her work can be seen publicly at her gallery in Costa Mesa, World Trade Center, galleries, John Wayne Airport, City Hall and exhibitions internationally. In 2021, Inspired Vineyards launched a collection of art-inspired wine produced in Napa Valley. Each label is a varnished print from one of her original paintings (ranging from 4-6 feet) and tells a story of her motherland, Vietnam.



### LaneAxis Inc., Huntington Beach

*Rick Burnett, Founder & CEO*

A one-time partner in a trucking company, Rick Burnett saw the power and potential of direct connectivity to solve the myriad problems crippling freight transportation. He developed, then patented, a shipper-to-carrier direct optimization platform. He has adapted this strategy to

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## 2023 INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEES

include Web3 tech such as blockchain and smart contracts. Burnett founded a transformational supply-chain-focused SaaS company before it was fashionable and desperately needed. He knew costly and unscrupulous intermediaries such as freight brokers were rotting the business from the inside out. Burneh began filing patents around his direct connectivity platform in 2014, and was rewarded with a full patent approval in 2018. He has several more patents pending. And most of all, he has amassed a following of evangelists who truly believe in his mission to transform trucking to benefit small truckers, shippers, and ultimately the American consumer.



### LunarCrush Inc., Costa Mesa

*Dan Williams, CTO*

In 2018, Dan Williams co-founded LunarCrush, one of Costa Mesa's top private companies, and began his journey as their CTO. Prior to joining LunarCrush, Williams has been working as a 100x developer for various start-ups, CRM tools, Advertising Agencies, and more. Williams is a coder at heart and spends his free time developing tools, systems, and infrastructure to make both the companies he works at and his personal life better. In LunarCrush's initial phases, Williams built, operated, and maintained a platform that grew from thousands to millions of users. Since then, he's led a team to build a complex analytical system allowing for users to identify social trends affecting price across cryptocurrencies, NFTs, and stocks. He's helped make LunarCrush one of the fastest websites in all of Web3.



### Rove, Costa Mesa

*Nathan McDonnell, CEO*

As a Southern California native and business owner for over three decades, Nathan McDonnell has experience leading teams in premium development and large-scale sustainable energy projects. Using that experience, he and a team of green energy experts teamed up to start Rove in 2021. Rove is the first-ever full-service electric vehicle (EV) charging centers coming to the region as early as 2023. Centers are planned for Santa Ana, Corona, Costa Mesa, Long Beach, Torrance, and La Mirada. He and his team are on a mission to accelerate a future powered by renewable energy by transforming EV charging, encouraging EV ownership, and accelerating the transition to electric mobility.



### Phillips Industries / Phillips Connect / Phillips Innovations, Irvine

*Rob Phillips, CEO*

Rob Phillips is the great grandson of H.W. Phillips, who patented, manufactured and distributed the first reflective turn signal for trucks. From this, Phillips Industries was born, and has become an industry leader in the design and manufacturing of components and solutions for the commercial trucks and trailers. Phillips currently serves as CEO of Phillips Industries, succeeding his father, Bob Phillips. In addition to Phillips Industries, Phillips co-founded and serves as CEO of Phillips Connect, an innovative telematics solutions company committed to maximizing efficiency and profitability for commercial truck fleets worldwide. Phillips has since continued to push boundaries, recently launching Phillips Innovations, which brings an elevated level of safety, sustainability, driver comfort and automation to the industry. Phillips Innovations is Phillips third company, and he has more plans to expand in the coming year.



### Planned Parenthood of Orange and San Bernardino Counties, Anaheim

*Krista Hollinger, Chief Operating Officer*

Krista Hollinger joined Planned Parenthood of Orange and San Bernardino Counties (PPOSBC) as chief operating officer in December 2021. From the very beginning of her tenure, her mission was to prepare PPOSBC to absorb a likely influx of out-of-state patients seeking abortions in California, as multiple states passed laws severely restricting or outlawing abortion-starting with Texas in September 2021, and with many others following after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in June 2022. Hollinger, who previously held administrative leadership positions at UCI and St. Jude Heritage Healthcare, has built PPOSBC's Abortion Aid program from the ground up. The program, which is unlike any other in the country, helps out-of-state patients forced to travel to California for abortion care book appointments, make transportation arrangements, find accommodations, get childcare, pay for meals, and take care of any other logistical needs associated with their procedure. Under Hollinger's leadership, PPOSBC has now provided abortions for more than 400 out-of-state patients since June 2022 while continuing to expand capacity to provide quality healthcare for local patients.



### PowerTap Hydrogen Fueling Corp, Aliso Viejo

*Salim Rahemtulla, President & CEO*

PowerTap is a company holding intellectual property for small-footprint (~1,600 sf) hydrogen production and storage units and has a plan to roll-out 250 stations by the end of 2025. PowerTap recently joined with the Andretti Group, which owns and operates over 100 fueling stations across the US and delivers multi-branded fuel to some 125 independent owner-operators, to put PowerTap stations on Andretti-owned properties and distribute PowerTap to the Andretti Group's deep network of major oil companies, chain retailers, cardlock operators, and independent fueling stations.



### PrimaHealth Credit, Newport Beach

*Brendon Kensel, Founder & CEO*

Brendon Kensel is an experienced entrepreneur and operator with a deep background in building and advising high-growth companies, with a particular focus on technology and healthcare services. Kensel is the founder and chief executive officer of PrimaHealth Credit, a fintech platform that empowers healthcare providers to offer payment solutions to patients at the point of care. Previously, Kensel owned and operated a multi-office DSO where he saw first-hand how patients struggle to pay for treatment. Now he's on a mission to democratize healthcare and give as many people as possible access to care. Mr. Kensel was the President of



MediaShift, a next-generation ad tech company that monetizes WiFi networks. He led the company into commercialization and generated first-year revenue of \$7.6 million through both organic and acquisitive growth. Earlier in his career, Mr. Kensel was EVP and division president at eSynergies, a diversified digital marketing services company, and was co-founder and CEO of Salesmation, a leading rich media online advertising company that was acquired by eSynergies.

### Project Hope Alliance, Costa Mesa

*Jennifer Friend, CEO*

Jennifer Friend, J.D. is chief executive officer of Project Hope Alliance (PHA), a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending the cycle of homelessness using a long-term, site-based model of providing whole-person care for children and youth experiencing homelessness in Orange County. When Friend became CEO in 2013 after serving on PHA's Board of Directors for many years, the organization supported one school and 65 students. Under her leadership, PHA now serves more than 350 children and youth attending 43 schools across Orange County. PHA has built a nationally recognized model for ending the cycle of youth homelessness and has achieved a high school graduation rate for its students more than 20% above the national average. Friend's personal experience as a child who experienced homelessness fuels her passion for ensuring no child is limited by their parents' economic circumstance.



### Redline Detection, Orange

*Alex Parker, President*

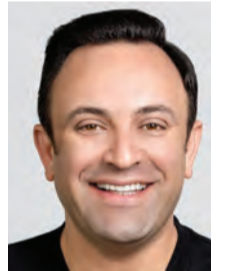
Alex Parker is the president of Redline Detection, manufacturer of innovative automotive diagnostic technology. Redline is a global leader, engineering and manufacturing award-winning products that improve emission air quality and increase vehicle performance. Redline's brilliant innovation for electric vehicles, developed in concert with major global automakers, has been adopted in 160 countries. Redline technology makes EV's safer and more reliable, extending the life of the vehicle and the positive owner experience that is fueling the swift adoption of EV's. The company, headquartered in Orange, CA, is SEMA Manufacturer of the Year and counts among its global partners General Motors, Ford, Tesla, Rivian, Jaguar Land Rover, Hyundai, Mazda, Bosch, Porsche and others. A frequent keynote speaker on emerging technology and entrepreneurship, Parker is a celebrity judge on LaunchPad, airing on The History Channel. She serves on the Deans Leadership Board at UCI Samueli School of Engineering and Parker has personally had over 100 mentees/ interns. Parker also serves on the board of The Petersen Automotive Museum incubator, sponsored by Rolex, developing opportunities for early stage automotive entrepreneurs.



### Revive, Irvine

*Michael Alladawi, CEO & Founder*

Michael Alladawi is a born innovator. A Southern California real estate veteran with a proven track record as a builder, investor, and respected home flipper, he created Revive Real Estate to share his industry knowledge and help homeowners maximize their profits when selling their homes. Alladawi's venture into real estate grew out of the US financial crisis in 2008 when he leveraged his crisis and cash management skills to move his family's investments from banks into the safe haven of real estate. When single-family homes were being auctioned off on the courthouse steps, Alladawi saw an opportunity to begin fixing and flipping houses. He then created a real estate investment fund that targeted value-oriented real estate investments and development projects in Southern California. Soon, he also began building new homes. He leveraged his experiences to create Revive, partnering with OC tech wunderkind Dalip Jaggi to develop the technology needed to scale presale renovations. Today, Revive does more than help homeowners create generational wealth. Revive often creates life-changing impact as presale renovations increase seller profits significantly.



### Smart Energy Water (SEW), Irvine

*Deepak Garg, Founder & CEO*

Deepak Garg is the founder and CEO of Smart Energy Water (SEW). A respected leader in the technology and utility industry, Garg has over two decades of experience in product development and is responsible for driving innovation, vision, and strategy at SEW. Garg has spearheaded SEW's initiatives to build innovative digital platforms that address the challenges of global sustainability and help utilities connect with people. He has successfully established high-powered technology teams, to develop the #1 Digital Customer Experience, Digital Workforce Experience, Smart AI/ML Analytics platforms that address key business challenges for energy, water and gas providers. All the SEW platforms leverage next-gen technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, IoT, to power customer and workforce experiences. Backing on scalability, modularity, flexibility, and security, SEW clients deliver award-winning experiences and set new benchmarks for the industry. Driven by Garg's stellar vision, SEW has navigated 37+ geographies to serve energy and utility companies, connecting 1.5 billion+ people and serving 22000+ Smart Cities/communities.



### Sonendo, Laguna Hills

*Bjarne Bergheim, President & CEO*

Bjarne Bergheim is the president and CEO of Sonendo, a commercial-stage medical technology company focused on saving teeth from tooth decay and improving lives. Bergheim was the company's first employee and previously served as COO. He has been a member of the board of directors since 2008. Bergheim led Sonendo through its initial public offering in October 2021, marking a significant milestone for the company's growth in the medical technology space. Additionally, he helped develop Sonendo's flagship product, the GentleWave® System, an innovative technology platform designed to treat tooth decay by cleaning and disinfecting the microscopic spaces within teeth without the need to remove tooth structure. Prior to joining Sonendo, Bergheim was a co-founder and a member of the management team of Fjord Ventures, a life science accelerator located in Laguna Hills focused on building and operating companies in the medical device, diagnostic and biopharmaceutical sectors. Bergheim was also the first employee of 3F Therapeutics, which was acquired by ATS Medical and later by Medtronic.



# Fortress Balance Sheet

**SUNWEST BANK** vs. **TOP 10 U.S. BANKS**

Tangible Common Equity /  
Tangible Assets

**8.90%**

5.66%

Tangible Common Equity /  
Tangible Assets  
(incl. Securities HTM Mark)\*

**8.90%**

4.26%

\*Excludes HTM Securities Marks from Tangible Assets and from Tangible equity, in which case it is Tax Effected at a Statutory Corporate Tax Rate of 21%

Reserves / Loans

**1.82%**

1.41%

Return on Average Assets

**1.28%**

1.04%



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**Eric Hovde**  
Chairman & CEO Sunwest Bank

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## 2023 INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEES

### Syntr Health Technologies, Inc., Irvine

Ahmed Zobi, CEO

At the core of Syntr's achievements is the development of the revolutionary SyntrFuge™ System. This processing device is designed for the microsizing of fat tissue, which is crucial for various surgical procedures. The SyntrFuge™ System, combined with the SyntrFPU 360 accessory device, ensures reproducible and high-quality output that can be safely reinjected into the body. Syntr Health Technologies has gained worldwide recognition for its innovative technology. The CEO and founder was listed on Forbes Next 1000, Syntr has won over \$450,000 in non dilutive funding from various business plan competitions including Texas MassChallenge, Rice Business Plan Competition, Baylor Business Plan Competition, UCI New Venture competition, NIH grant fundings and more. Lastly, they have received FDA clearance on their SyntrFuge System to begin the commercialization stage in Aesthetics. With a focus on technological advancements and a commitment to improving patient outcomes, Syntr Health Technologies has positioned itself as a leader in the field of body contouring and automated fat tissue processing.



### TAE Technologies, Foothill Ranch

Michl Binderbauer, Chief Executive Officer

Michl Binderbauer is chief executive officer of TAE Technologies. Born in Austria, Binderbauer emigrated to the United States and first joined TAE as chief technology officer in 1998. He is a co-inventor of many of the company's technological advances in fusion, power management, and particle accelerators. He was appointed CEO in 2018. TAE was founded to commercialize a completely safe, sustainable, non-radioactive source of carbon-free energy, capable of meeting humanity's growing energy needs without impacting the environment. TAE operates on a "money-by-milestone" basis driven by the work of more than 500 experienced employees. The company has been granted more than 1,100 patents and has built five generations of National Laboratory-scale devices, with two more in development. Over the last two decades, Binderbauer has evolved TAE into an industry leader in fusion and expanded the company's technology portfolio to include power management and energy storage solutions for electric mobility, grid efficiency, and fast charging. Together, these innovations form the backbone of an electrified clean energy ecosystem.



### Tarsus Pharmaceuticals Inc., Irvine

Bobak Azamian, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman

Bobak (Bobby) Azamian, MD, PhD, cofounded Tarsus Pharmaceuticals, Inc. with Michael Ackermann, PhD in November 2016 and has served as its president and CEO since September 2018. He has served as the company's chairman since December 2022. Since its founding under Azamian's leadership, Tarsus has established a leading team and culture and has completed successful fundraising efforts through an IPO and global partnerships. Tarsus continues to advance its pipeline, including its lead investigational therapy, TP-03 for Demodex blepharitis, which has a PDUFA date of August 25, 2023. Azamian cofounded and led two other novel therapeutics companies, Vibrato Medical, focused on wearable treatments for peripheral arterial diseases, and Metavention, focused on interventional treatments for metabolic diseases, and led both through multiple Series financings. Azamian currently serves on the Board of Vibrato Medical and previously held the role as Board Co-Chair and served as President and CMO of Metavention. Azamian began his biotechnology career holding positions at Versant Ventures and Third Rock Ventures as an investor and board observer. He also served on the board of Octane.



### TechImmune, Irvine

L'bachir BenMohamed, Co-Founder & Vice President of Research

Dr. L'bachir BenMohamed completed his Ph.D. in Immunology at the Pasteur Institute, Paris, France in 1997. In 2002 he founded the Cellular & Molecular Immunology Laboratory at UC Irvine. In the fall of 2021, he co-founded Irvine-based TechImmune, LLC a start-up biotech company where he is the vice president of Research and lead investigator. He is a recipient of several United States National Institute of Health (NIH) grants, one grant for \$3.7 million that is developing an innovative multi-antigen pan-Coronavirus universal Coronavirus vaccine funded when COVID-19 first emerged. Dr. BenMohamed filed three additional patents over the past three years one was funded recently by NIH.



### The University of California, Irvine/The Mobley Lab, Irvine

John Chaput, Professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of California Irvine, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

John Chaput is a professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Chemistry, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry and, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at the University of California, Irvine (UCI) School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. For his Ph.D. thesis, he studied the molecular recognition properties of unnatural nucleic acid polymers. Under the guidance of Chris Switzer, he designed, built, and characterized the first five-stranded DNA helix that self-assembles around a metal-nucleated iso-guanine motif. While at Harvard, he studied the evolution of functional proteins by mRNA display and developed early methods for synthesizing artificial genetic polymers using commercial polymerases. He has held independent academic careers at Arizona State University (ASU), served as a core faculty member of the Biodesign Institute at ASU, and Deputy Director of the Center for Evolutionary Medicine and Informatics (CEMI). In 2015, he moved his laboratory to UCI, where he is pioneering the next generation of diagnostic and therapeutic agents based on artificial genetic polymers (XNAs) that are biologically stable and responsive to Darwinian evolution.



### The Wooden Floor, Santa Ana

Dawn Reese, Chief Executive Officer

Dawn S. Reese, CFRE is the chief executive officer of The Wooden Floor. She is a social innovator with experience in business, technology, education, and the arts to propel young people forward. During Reese's 14-year tenure, The Wooden Floor's budget has grown from \$2.1 million to \$3.6 million and she has led growth efforts to scale its impact, both locally and nationally. Its mission is to inspire and transform the lives of young people through the power of dance and access to higher education. Since 2005, 100% of the students who graduate from

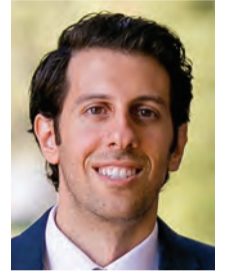
The Wooden Floor immediately enroll in higher education. Reese's recent awards include: 2023 Empowering Lives Award by Templo Calvario, 2023 Sam Estes Award for Community Leadership by the Santa Ana Task Force, 2022 Orange County Visionary by the Los Angeles Times Orange County, 2020 Women of Distinction Award from 34th CA Senate District. Reese founded the OC Nonprofit CEO Forum, and serves on the Board of Directors for the Passkeys Foundation as Board Chair; OneOC as Audit Chair; as well as a board member at large for Advisors in Philanthropy, OC Music and Dance, Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce, and The Wooden Floor.



### Titan Health & Security Technologies Inc., Newport Beach

Vic Merjanian, Founder & CEO

Vic Merjanian is founder & CEO of Titan Health & Security Technologies, Inc., a next-gen tech company dedicated to making the world a safer place. Titan HST provides seamlessly integrated software & hardware solutions in all vertical markets, including sports & entertainment, hotel & casino, education, festivals, tv & movie production, healthcare & more. In addition to custom integrations that support clients with a seamless & reliable ecosystem of security, Titan HST is designed to provide immediately accessible, reliable and comprehensive 2-way mass notification across mobile app, text message, web, email, auto-call & social media. Titan HST's patented technology reduces response times and allows clients to minimize damage to property and most importantly loss of life during emergencies. Titan HST was awarded Best Technology Innovation in Software at the 2019 High Tech Awards and Merjanian was named one of Orange County Business Journal's Directory of Influence 2022 and nominated for OCBJ's Innovator of the Year Award.



### Trinity Packaging Supply, Newport Beach

Anthony Magaraci, CEO & Founder

Anthony Magaraci founded Trinity Packaging Supply from his home office in 2010 with one goal: to disrupt the \$200 billion packaging industry. Since then, he has grown Trinity into a \$100 million company that has made the Inc. 5000 Fastest-Growing Companies in America list seven times in a row, the Inc. Best Places to Work list four times, and ranked 89th on Fortune's list of America's Most Innovative Companies 2023. Magaraci's latest innovation, SupplyStream™, is a first-of-its-kind e-commerce platform that aggregates supplier catalogs into one main catalog, and is revolutionizing the wholesale industry. Just as Uber changed the transportation industry and Airbnb changed the hospitality industry, SupplyStream™ is disrupting wholesale industries and empowering suppliers. As a philanthropist, Magaraci is passionate about giving back to the community. In 2022 alone, he donated over \$2 million to charitable causes. Magaraci holds many distinguished awards, including South Jersey Entrepreneur of the Year, Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce's 40 Under 40, and is a finalist for the Orange County Business Journal's Excellence in Entrepreneurship Award and EY's Entrepreneur of the Year 2023.



### UCI Paul Merage School of Business, Irvine

Ian Williamson, Dean of the University of California Irvine Paul Merage School of Business

Ian Williamson was appointed dean of The University of California Irvine Paul Merage School of Business on January 1, 2021, and is globally recognized in the area of human resource management. His research focuses on how organizations and communities can develop strong talent pipelines that support positive outcomes. Over his career Williamson has assisted executives and government officials in more than 25 countries across six continents to enhance operational and financial outcomes, improve talent recruitment and retention, boost innovation and generate sustainable solutions to intractable social issues. Williamson is recognized for his innovative approaches to business education research and has been published in leading academic journals and media outlets across the world and inducted into the PhD Project Hall of Fame for his efforts to enhance diversity in academia and the business world. Dean Williamson goal at the Paul Merage School of Business is to ensure that a sustainable pipeline of business talent, focused on inclusiveness and digital leadership, is created to support the economic and social well-being of the Orange County community.



### University of California, Irvine, Irvine

Shane Ardo, Professor of Chemistry, Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering, Materials Science & Engineering; Co-Director of the Chemical, Applied, and Materials Physics (ChAMP) Program; Director of Ensembles of Photosynthetic Nanoreactors (EPN), a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Energy Frontier Research Center (EFRC)

Shane Ardo obtained a B.S. Degree in Mathematics, with a concentration in Computer Programming, from Towson University. He subsequently worked as a software engineer, community college instructor, and high school teacher, and also tried out for a professional indoor soccer team. Ardo then obtained a M.S. Degree in Nutrition from the University of Maryland, College Park, and M.A. and Ph.D. Degrees in Photo-Physical Inorganic Chemistry from the Johns Hopkins University. He was also a DOE EERE Postdoctoral Research Awardee at the California Institute of Technology. Ardo has been a faculty member at the University of California, Irvine since 2013 and is currently a professor in the Department of Chemistry, with courtesy joint appointments in the Departments of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering and Materials Science & Engineering. Ardo is the Director of Ensembles of Photosynthetic Nanoreactors DOE EFRC and is co-director of the UCI ChAMP Program. Ardo oversees the Ardo Group, a diverse team of innovators and educators researching solar energy conversion, carbon capture, and clean water, and with specific expertise in photochemistry, electrochemistry, membranes, and ionics.



### University of California, Irvine, Irvine

David Mobley, Professor, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences

David Mobley, Ph.D., is a professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Chemistry at the University of California, Irvine's (UCI) School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences and the School of Physical Sciences. Since joining UCI in 2012, Professor Mobley has significantly contributed to the university's cutting-edge research, specifically within pharmaceutical drug discovery. Professor Mobley's research group, the Mobley Laboratory, develops and uses computational

Planned Parenthood of Orange & San Bernardino Counties has been providing high-quality, compassionate reproductive health care to our local communities for nearly 60 years.

In that time, we've worked tirelessly to ensure we are meeting the needs of the communities we serve, and that no one is turned away from receiving top-of-the-line care at an affordable cost, no matter their personal circumstances.

In addition to offering reproductive health care, we provide comprehensive sexual health education to our communities so they are empowered to make healthy, informed decisions about their bodies and relationships. Another core tenet of our work is to protect and expand individual rights to reproductive choice and access to family planning, including abortion.

While our work in the community has helped countless local patients throughout the years, within the past

year, we've experienced a stark increase of patients traveling to our Health Centers from other states—a direct result of the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* by the Supreme Court in 2022 which paved the way for numerous states across the country to outright ban or severely restrict access to abortion care.

Prior to the Supreme Court decision, we knew that we would likely be facing an influx of out-of-state patients, so we got to work creating systems that would allow us to manage an increase in patient volume while also being able to continue serving our local patients. We added appointment times, hired additional clinicians, and launched the Abortion Aid Program.

The program, which is unlike any other in the country, helps out-of-state patients forced to travel to California for abortion care book appointments, make transportation arrangements, find accommodations, get childcare, pay for meals, and take care of any other logistical needs associated with

their procedure all in one place through the help of a patient navigator.

Through this effort, we've been able to help more than 450 patients from across 32 states access the care they need.

I'm extremely proud to be part of an organization that is working to ensure that no one is turned away from receiving the care they need, no matter their personal circumstances, or where they come from, and I'm truly honored to be nominated for the Innovator of the Year Award.



- **Krista Hollinger**,  
*Chief Operations Officer,*  
*Planned Parenthood of*  
*Orange & San Bernardino*  
*Counties*



## CONGRATULATIONS, **KRISTA HOLLINGER**

2023 Innovator of the Year Nominee

**Ensuring high-quality,  
compassionate care for all.**



## 2023 INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEES

tools to accelerate pharmaceutical drug discovery. More specifically, the lab focuses on the interface between methods and applications and invests in assessing and improving computational methods and applying methods directly in discovery. Outside of UCI, Professor Mobley currently serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Computer-Aided Molecular Design, the Journal of Molecular Recognition, and the scientific advisory board for OpenEye Scientific Software. Professor Mobley is also the founding and managing editor of the Living Journal of Computational Molecular Science and is an Open Science Fellow for Psivant Therapeutics. In addition, Professor Mobley helped found and currently is the acting chairman of the board of directors for the nonprofit, Open Molecular Software Foundation.

**University of California, Irvine, Irvine**

Mark Steyvers, Professor, Cognitive Sciences

Mark Steyvers, PhD, is a professor of Cognitive Science at the University of California, Irvine's (UCI) School of Social Sciences and a Chancellor's Fellow. He also has a joint appointment with the Computer Science department and is affiliated with the Center for Machine Learning and Intelligent Systems. The general focus of his research in cognitive science at UCI is high-level cognition. The goal is to understand how people self-reflect, learn, and make decisions through empirical studies and computational modeling. Dr. Steyvers uses these insights on human intelligence to contribute not only to cognitive science and psychology but also advance machine learning research. Recently, in projects on human-AI collaboration, he has started to investigate how humans can collaborate with AI / Machine learning models to amplify and augment human decision-making. Dr. Steyvers has received New Investigator Awards from the American Psychological Association as well as the Society of Experimental Psychologists. He also received an award from the Future of Privacy Forum and Alfred P. Sloan Foundation for his collaborative work with Lumosity.

**University of California, Irvine – School of Medicine; GlyTR Therapeutics, Irvine**

Michael Demetriou, Professor, Neurology

Michael Demetriou, MD, PhD, is a board-certified neurologist at UCI Health who specializes in multiple sclerosis and neuromuscular disorders. Dr. Demetriou serves as director of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society Designated Comprehensive Care Clinic and Division Chief of Multiple Sclerosis and Neuroimmunology, Department of Neurology, University of California, Irvine (UCI) School of Medicine. He joined UCI in 2001 after completing his M.D., Ph.D. and Neurology residency at the University of Toronto and postdoctoral fellowship at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, Canada. Dr. Demetriou is a leader in the realm of healthcare innovation. He is a member of the Clinical Trials Task Force and Immuno-Oncology Translational Network for Cancer Moonshot. He also is the associate director of the T and K Executive Committee at UCI's Institute for Clinical and Translational Science and co-founder of GlyTR



Therapeutics Inc. Among his many achievements, Dr. Demetriou was selected as the National Multiple Sclerosis Society Research Volunteer of the Year and an Orange County Physician of Excellence, as chosen by the Orange County Medical Association.

**University of California, Irvine – School of Social Sciences, Irvine**

Megan Peters, Assistant Professor, Cognitive Sciences

Megan Peters is an assistant professor in the University of California, Irvine Department of Cognitive Sciences. Prior to joining UCI in March 2020, Peters was an Assistant Professor at UC Riverside in the Department of Bioengineering. Previously, she was a post-doctoral researcher in the psychology department at UCLA, which is where she received her Ph.D. She is also a Cooperating Researcher in the Department of Decoded Neurofeedback at Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute International in Kyoto, Japan, and is a Fellow in the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research Brain, Mind, & Consciousness program. She began her scientific career as a lab manager and research associate at the University of Southern California. In her role at UCI, she conducts cognitive science, psychology, and neuroimaging research using humans. She is interested in how we make decisions, specifically how we interpret sensory signals that enter our brains through our sensory organs, e.g. the eyes and ears; she also studies how we "metacognitively" evaluate whether we performed well on a task, how we think about our own thoughts, and how that might pertain to our ability to be conscious beings.

**ViridiSTOR, Tustin**

Terry Mullin, CEO

Terry Mullin is an active innovator and business builder in Orange County. He has formed and lead teams in market leading companies that have brought first in class software and hardware to the market. Within his latest venture, ViridiSTOR, Mullin has launched a new era in compact content management systems to deliver information to the over one trillion dollar event, conference, and tradeshow industry. His innovations not only make sense, but reduce monetary costs and environmental costs. At the same time, Mullin has innovated and patented other products including an oral irrigation system that will aid millions in the recovery from oral surgery. Mullin has other patents pending in the area of wireless networking, retail management, and sustainable products. Mullin stays active within the community volunteering instructing audio engineering to middle and high school students in addition to instructing Project Management practices based upon his book "The Project Management Paradox."

**Wave Neuroscience, Newport Beach**

Fred Walke, CEO

Wave Neuroscience, Inc; a translational biotechnology company that has innovated breakthrough technologies called Magnetic e-Resonance Therapy (MeRT) and Synchronized Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (sTMS), and Sonal personalized Braincare. These technologies utilize computational neuroanalytics and brain imaging to customize treatment protocols with the aim of restoring optimal neurological function. These modalities represent a form of personalized precision-guided medicine that has been researched or is currently in clinical trials with premier institutions such as US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), US Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), Uniformed Services University Health Sciences (USUHS), the Henry M Jackson Foundation, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the University of Southern California (USC) Center for Neurorestoration, the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) - David Geffen School of Medicine, Stanford University School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania - Perelman School of Medicine, Brown University - Warren Alpert School of Medicine, and the Texas A&M Institute for Bioscience and Technology, among others. Wave is chartered as a Delaware Corporation doing business in California. Wave is capitalized by a handful of investors that are all US born citizens.

**West Hive Capital, Irvine**

Kyle Gorman, Principal

Kyle Gorman took his construction management background and his passion for real estate and deal making and created West Hive Capital in 2020-his latest and most exciting venture. His career has traversed a variety of industry submarkets, including his earlier years as a financial analyst for investment sales, to commercial real estate brokerage, to program management for national retail brand expansions that lead to construction management of new developments and large-scale interior renovations, and eventually entering the industry of CRE development. Gorman has received a nominations for Entrepreneur of the Year and Innovator of the year by OCBJ in 2020. He was honored with a the 50 under 40 Award and in 2022, and Inc. Magazine ranked SCGWest No. 307, one of Gorman's previous companies, in their annual edition of the 5000 fastest growing companies in the United States.

**West Hive Capital, Irvine**

Brandon Lehman, Principal

Brandon Lehman is an industry award-winning entrepreneur. His background in engineering and management has proven essential in the development of the internal streamlined systems and processes of the company. Gorman leverages more than 14 years of experience in the development industry to lead the company's project development and operational efforts. After retiring from professional BMX Racing in 2004, Lehman earned a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from Arizona State University. Since then, his career has involved numerous facets of the development business throughout a variety of different submarkets. His diverse career has made him a top expert to oversee and manage entire multi-location rollout programs from design conception to completion for national brands. He is an active participant and sponsor of the local branch of the charity Habitat for Humanity as well as various other charity organizations throughout Orange County and Arizona. He holds a General Contractor's License in multiple states and is generally involved during the design and construction phases, focused on the goal of Building Better Communities.



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# INNOVATOR

of the YEAR AWARDS

# Congratulations 2023 Nominees

**Allied Universal** / Mark Mullison  
**ATTOM** / Rob Barber  
**AuditClub** / Chris Vanover  
**Branded Group** / Michael Kurland  
**Buchanan Street Partners** / Robert Brunswick  
**CathWorks** / Ramin Mousavi  
**Chapman University** / Pradip (P.K.) Shukla  
**City of Hope Orange County** / Annette Morgan  
**Codebreaker Technologies** / Cheri Tree  
**Common Collabs** / Brant Curtis  
**CoreLogic** / John Rogers  
**CoverCrow Inc.** / Cassandra Caldarella  
**David Meltzer Enterprises** / David Meltzer  
**egnite** / Joel Portice  
**Eyedaptic** / Jay Cormier  
**Fairstream** / Kelly O'Connell  
**Fluxwear** / Kamran Ansari  
**GO RN, StaffGRIT, HAUTE LEGS** / Vanessa Benavides  
**Histologics LLC** / Neal Lonky  
**Hoag** / Steven Wang  
**HomeLife Brands** / Marshall Morris  
**Human Option** / Maricela Rios-Faust  
**Inspired Art Wine** / Karen Nguyen  
**LaneAxis Inc** / Rick Burnett  
**LunarCrush Inc.** / Dan Williams  
**Phillips Industries / Phillips Connect /**  
**Phillips Innovations** / Rob Phillips  
**Planned Parenthood of Orange and**  
**San Bernardino Counties** / Krista Hollinger  
**PowerTap Hydrogen Fueling Corp** / Salim Rahemtulla

**PrimaHealth Credit** / Brendon Kensel  
**Project Hope Alliance** / Jennifer Friend  
**Redline Detection** / Alex Parker  
**Revive** / Michael Alladawi  
**Rove** / Nathan McDonnell  
**Smart Energy Water (SEW)** / Deepak Garg  
**Sonendo** / Bjarne Bergheim  
**Syntr Health Technologies Inc.** / Ahmed Zobi  
**TAE Technologies** / Michl Binderbauer  
**Tarsus Pharmaceuticals Inc.** / Bobak (Bobby) Azamian  
**TechImmune** / Dr. L'bachir BenMohamed  
**The University of California, Irvine/The Mobley Lab** /  
 John Chaput  
**The Wooden Floor** / Dawn S. Reese  
**Titan Health & Security Technologies Inc.** /  
 Vic Merjanian  
**Trinity Packaging Supply** / Anthony Magaraci  
**UCI Paul Merage School of Business** /  
 Dr. Ian O. Williamson  
**University of California, Irvine** / Shane Ardo  
**University of California, Irvine** / David Mobley  
**University of California, Irvine** / Mark Steyvers  
**University of California, Irvine - School of Medicine;**  
**GlyTR Therapeutics** / Michael Demetriou  
**University of California, Irvine -**  
**School of Social Sciences** / Megan Peters  
**ViridiSTOR** / Terry Mullin  
**Wave Neuroscience** / Fred Walke  
**West Hive Capital** / Kyle Gorman  
**West Hive Capital** / Brandon Lehman

## Luncheon & Awards Program

September 8, 2023  
 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
 Tickets\*: \$185  
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**Kurt Busch**  
 Co-Founder  
 and CEO  
 of Syntiant Corp.

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