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40
FORTY

South Florida
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South Florida
**BUSINESS
JOURNAL**

Business Journal's 40 Under 40 winners exemplify achievement

Welcome to the Business Journal's inaugural 40 Under 40 Awards – honoring 40 trail blazing individuals under the age of 40 who have achieved career success and given back to the community.

We received nearly 300 nominations, mainly on our web site, southfloridabusi-

nessjournal.com. Narrowing the field was a difficult but enjoyable task for the judges, the Business Journal's publisher and editorial team. The criteria focused on the nominee's position, responsibilities, career accomplishments and community service.

To help reflect the motivated and colorful personalities of this dynamic group, honorees were asked to show items that represent their passions in life. We hope

you enjoy reading about what drives these honorees as much as we enjoyed learning about them.

Honorees were recognized with a gala award ceremony on June 18 at the Design Center of the Americas in Dania Beach. Look for coverage of the event in next week's edition.

Special thanks to our staff members who helped put together this section: editorial coordinator Brenna Mello, who oversaw

the nomination process and edited the responses; photographer Mark Freerks, who spent three full days capturing our honorees visually; graphic designer Jason D'Auria, who designed the section's cover; and Stacey Shervan, our design editor, who laid out the section.

We'd also like to extend a special thanks to our sponsor, Nova Southeastern University, for partnering with us for this special section and event.

CINDY BALDWIN

Principal
ACAI Associates

Baldwin considers herself the University of Miami's biggest fan.

- **Age:** 38
- **My company:** Full-service architecture firm that delivers innovative, functional, sustainable and cost-effective design solutions.
- **Education:** B.S. in communications, University of Miami, 1993; LEED AP, 2007; certified general contractor, 2008
- **Career track:** Started as an intern reporter for WBOC news in Salisbury, Md., 1992; marketing account representative for Robert Holtzman; marketing director for development companies: Simon DeBartolo, CocoWalk and Michael Swerdlow Cos.; marketing director, Lindt Chocolate; marketing director, EDSA; joined ACAI in 2003 as director of marketing; promoted to director of operation in 2005; promoted to principal in 2008.
- **First job:** Worked in a little beach shack renting jet skis and sailboats in the Keys at 13.
- **Yardstick for success:** Success, to me, isn't about material possessions, wealth or titles. To be successful, you must feel and believe you are. It's that simple.
- **Biggest mentor:** My parents.
- **Best advice received:** Don't let emotions rule your management style. Find the balance between your head and your heart. My dad always says to make sure you can wake up and look at yourself in the mirror and be proud of who you are and what you are doing. If you can't, don't do it.
- **I attribute my success to:** My sense of judgment and the courage to make decisions.
- **Guilty pleasure:** I really love to go fishing.
- **Favorite movie:** "The Usual Suspects"
- **Favorite books:** I loved the "Harry Potter" series. My favorite management book is "It's your Ship" by Capt. Michael Abrashoff.
- **One word that describes me:** Energetic
- **In a movie, I'd be played by:** Cameron Diaz (She can be goofy and I can be, too!)
- **Pet peeve:** Incompetence
- **I'd like to have lunch with:** Gale Butler, a true lady. She is a wonderful businesswoman who has given so much of herself to our community. She is someone I have always respected and admired for her grace and style.
- **Favorite Web site:** I Google everything! I am addicted to Google!
- **Hot topic in my field:** Sustainability



ASHLEY BOSCH

Managing member
BLOK Urban Development LLC

Bosch loves to play golf.

- **Age:** 38
- **My company:** Develops and manages real estate
- **Education:** B.A. in marketing and political science, Florida State University, 1994; J.D., Florida State University School of Law, 1997
- **Career track:** Started in construction as a laborer in 1986 for Rodriguez Development; assistant project manager, PNR Development; assistant project manager, Related Group of Florida in 1999; named project manager in 2000; named senior project manager in 2001; founded BLOK in 2003
- **Ultimate career goal:** To add value to the local communities we are actively involved in by developing or redeveloping urban core areas and submarkets with sustainable developments and a focus on mixed-use products
- **Biggest mentor:** I have been blessed to have various mentors throughout my life, but if I had to choose, it would be my parents – doctors Pedro and Stella Bosch – for instilling a solid fundamental base for me to build upon and for always being by my side and supporting all that I do, while providing objective and practical advice along the way.
- **Best advice received:** The deal is in the dirt. Maintain a solid perspective and do not bite more than you can chew. Always identify and understand your exit strategies.
- **Most important lesson learned:** You can never be too liquid. In the real estate world, ultimately, cash is king.
- **Fantasy job:** Professional golfer
- **Favorite movie:** "Star Wars"
- **Favorite restaurant:** Café Vialletto
- **Favorite vacation spot:** Greek Isles
- **Favorite book:** "A Confederacy of Dunces," by John Kennedy Toole
- **One word that describes me:** Passionate
- **Most frequently played artists on my iPod:** U2, Dave Matthews Band, Coldplay, Grateful Dead, Beatles
- **I'd like to have lunch with:** Warren Buffett
- **Favorite Web site:** www.cbssportsline.com
- **Hot topic in my field:** Loosening of credit by financial institutions



CHRISTOPHER BURGIO

Sales agent
Seitlin Risk Management and Insurance Services

Burgio bikes, runs and swims three times a week, and plans to complete an Ironman triathlon next year.

- **Age:** 30
- **Education:** B.S. in finance, University of Central Florida, 2002
- **Career track:** Financial planning intern at First Union Securities; sales consultant at Carnival Cruise Lines; sales agent at Seitlin
- **First job:** US-1 Fitness Gym – I started dusting and vacuuming five nights a week in sixth grade. Eventually, I was teaching self-defense and karate classes.
- **Ultimate career goal:** Top 10 percent in industry
- **My yardstick of success:** The number of client referrals I get, because that is the ultimate compliment for doing a great job.
- **Best advice received:** Save more than you spend.
- **Worst advice received:** What's another beer?
- **Most important lesson learned:** The harder I work, the luckier I get. When I worked at Carnival, I made it a point to be one of the first people in and the last one to leave. I was the top producer of my training class, and someone said that I got lucky. I guess he was right.
- **Fantasy job:** NFL quarterback
- **Guilty pleasure:** Toll House chocolate chip ice cream sandwich
- **Favorite movie:** "Rocky IV" – Rocky overcame all obstacles and single-handedly stopped the Cold War.
- **Favorite book:** "Good to Great," by Jim Collins
- **One word that describes me:** Enthusiastic
- **In a movie, I'd be played by:** Dustin Hoffman (the younger version, of course)
- **Most frequently played artists on my iPod:** U2, Radiohead, Journey, Pearl Jam, Beatles, Aerosmith
- **I'd like to have lunch with:** Warren Buffett
- **Favorite Web site:** www.wsj.com
- **Hot topic in my field:** Insurance rate regulation and hurricane season



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CHAD OPPENHEIM

Founding principal, Oppenheim Architecture + Design

Oppenheim is pictured with his 7-month-old son, Hendrix.



- **Age:** 38
- **My company:** Design, architecture, urban planning and interiors
- **Education:** B.Arch., Cornell University, 1994; independent studies, Harvard University, 1997
- **Career track:** Worked during high school for Jay Measley Associates; worked all around the world during university, building an "earthship;" worked in Japan on fellowship; designer at Arquitectonica before starting own business in 1999.
- **First job:** Designed house for parents at 7 years old
- **Biggest mentors:** My parents
- **Fantasy job:** Design cities/ecosystems that are 100 percent sustainable or actually produce more energy/resources than used. We are almost there.
- **Favorite movie:** "The Fifth Element" – because love can really save the world and, of course, those Gautier costumes.
- **Favorite vacation spots:** Aspen and Harbour Island
- **Favorite book:** "The Fountainhead," by Ayn Rand. I read it every few years to keep myself in check.
- **One word that describes me:** Passionate
- **Most frequently played artists on my iPod:** Danger Mouse, The Grey Album, where he mixes Jay-Z's Black album with the Beatles' White album.
- **In a movie, I'd be played by:** Brad Pitt (He has a lot of experience acting like an architect.)
- **Pet peeve:** Mean people
- **I'd like to have lunch with:** Jay-Z. I love the way he is vertically integrated.
- **Favorite Web site:** www.deathbyarchitecture.com
- **Hot topic in my field:** Renewable/sustainable design

CATHY PARETO

Founder and President, Cathy Pareto & Associates

The bull represents Pareto's work – and the fact that she's stubborn and determined.



- **Age:** 37
- **My company:** Is an independent, fee-only registered investment adviser offering financial planning and portfolio management services.
- **Education:** B.S. in finance, Florida International University, 1995; certified financial planner coursework and board exam, College for Financial Planning, 2003; executive M.B.A., Florida International University, 2006
- **Career track:** Assistant branch manager at Wells Fargo Financial; marketing assistant at Investor Solutions in 1997, and worked my way up to senior adviser and eventually managing partner by 2007; started my own firm thereafter.
- **First job:** Gymnastics instructor
- **In 10 years:** Growing a family, expanding my business and mentoring the next generation of business leaders.
- **My biggest mentor:** Karla Arguello
- **Best advice received:** Never stop learning or pursuing higher education.

- **Most important lesson learned:** Get things in writing! Sometimes blind faith in people is just plain naïve.
- **I attribute my success to:** My desire to be independent and self-sufficient.
- **Fantasy job:** Rock star
- **Guilty pleasure:** Popcorn and chocolate-covered raisins
- **Favorite movie:** "The Godfather"
- **Favorite restaurant:** Perricone's
- **Favorite book:** "Jonathan Livingston Seagull"
- **One word that describes me:** Determined
- **In a movie, I'd be played by:** Julia Roberts (I wish)
- **Most frequently played artists on my iPod:** Beatles, Madonna, Timbaland, Justin Timberlake
- **Pet peeve:** Poor customer service
- **I'd like to have lunch with:** Oprah Winfrey
- **Favorite Web site?** www.wsj.com
- **Hot topic in my field:** Regulatory oversight and transparency

ELIOT PEDROSA

Shareholder, Greenberg Traurig, P.A.

Pedrosa loves the Statue of Liberty and what it represents.



- **Age:** 34
- **Education:** B.A., summa cum laude, in sociology and anthropology, Florida International University, 1995; J.D., Harvard Law School, 1999
- **Career track:** Office assistant, Law Offices of Gregg R. Schwartz, 1994; office manager, Law Offices of Gregg R. Schwartz, 1995-1996; associate, Greenberg Traurig, P.A., 1999-2003; staff attorney, Division of Enforcement, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, 2003-2004; associate, Greenberg Traurig, P.A., 2004-2006; named shareholder, 2007.
- **First job:** Stockroom at Office Depot
- **The turning point or defining moment in my career:** My first jury trial in 2000. After that, I knew I had chosen a career that I love.
- **Biggest mentor:** Cesar Alvarez
- **Best advice received:** My father told me that living in the U.S. meant all I had to do was work hard, and I could accomplish anything. He was right, as he has been in all of the advice he has given me.
- **Most important lesson learned:** Success means more than having a productive career.

It means leading a balanced and meaningful life, devoted to family and community.

- **I attribute my success to:** Never being afraid to take responsibility.
- **Fantasy job:** U.S. ambassador to a free and democratic Cuba
- **Guilty pleasure:** Ben Stiller movies
- **Favorite movie:** "Ben-Hur"
- **Favorite book:** "Atlas Shrugged," by Ayn Rand and "The Revolutionary Generation," by Joseph J. Ellis
- **One word that describes me:** Persuasive
- **Who would play you in a movie?** My friend and fellow FIU alumnus Danny Pino, who currently stars in the CBS drama "Cold Case" and the play "Havana Bourgeois."
- **Pet peeve:** Tardiness
- **I'd like to have lunch with:** Bill Gates
- **Favorite Web site:** The Sayfie Review
- **Hot topic in my field:** International disputes

JORGE A. PLASENCIA

Chairman and CEO, República

Plasencia shows an ad for his father's República Bank, which inspired the name of his company.



- **Age:** 35
- **My company:** Is a national branding, advertising, digital media and communications company.
- **Education:** B.S. in administration, Barry University
- **Career track:** Started as an intern at Spanish-language radio station WAQI; promotions director, WAQI/WRTO; marketing director, WQBA AM/FM; marketing and special events director, SBS; director of Hispanic marketing, Florida Marlins; VP, Estefan Enterprises; VP of marketing, corporate communications and public affairs, Univision Radio; VP and operating manager, Univision Radio.
- **Ultimate career goal:** I'm living it.
- **My biggest mentor:** My father
- **Best advice received:** Live with integrity; all else will fall into place.
- **Most important lesson learned:** If you don't take risk, you won't move onward and upward.
- **I attribute my success to:** Passion and perseverance
- **Guilty pleasure:** Cuban food
- **Favorite movie:** "The Bucket List"
- **Favorite restaurants:** Michy's and Prime 112
- **Favorite book:** "Finding Mañana," by my friend Mirta Ojito
- **One word that describes me:** Trustworthy
- **Pet peeve:** Disloyalty
- **I'd like to have lunch with:** Warren Buffett
- **Favorite Web site:** Drudge Report

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