



FUTURE 15

& Young Professional Awards

Thursday, February 27, 2025

5 - 8:30 p.m. | Oneida Casino Hotel

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About Current Young Professionals:

Current Young Professionals is a program of the Greater Green Bay Chamber that works to engage, develop and retain young talent in Greater Green Bay. Current provides an opportunity for individuals to participate in professional development, social networking and community engagement opportunities within Greater Green Bay.

Current created the Young Professional Awards in 2007 as a way to honor those who advance our mission by profiling best practices that could be adopted by other local individuals and organizations. Additionally, Current sought to recognize area young professionals in our community who are achieving noteworthy accomplishments and contributing to the overall quality of life in Greater Green Bay. All finalists are recognized and recipients awarded on night of Future 15 & Young Professional Awards.



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- ✓ **Northeast Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship (NEWYA)** -- Career pathway development, dual credit opportunities, and career planning for students.

About the Awards

FUTURE 15

Current Young Professionals (CYP) created the young professional awards in 2007 as a way to honor those who advance its mission by profiling best practices that could be adopted by other local individuals and organizations. Additionally, CYP sought to recognize local young professionals in Greater Green Bay who are achieving noteworthy accomplishments and contributing to the overall quality of life.

These honorees are currently influencing the growth, prosperity, and quality of life in Greater Green Bay and demonstrate the ability to positively impact the area in the future through professional accomplishments and community involvement.

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

The Young Professional of the Year is selected from the pool of Future 15 recipients. This award is presented to an individual with a demonstrated commitment to Greater Green Bay through civic and business involvement, especially during the past year. The individual will possess values consistent with those of Current Young Professionals, including an unwavering responsibility to the community through involvement with local organizations that elevate the overall quality of life in Greater Green Bay and our ability to attract and retain young talent.

Future 15 awards
presented by:



Young Professional
of the year award
presented by:



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Christine Bekyir, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

Christine advocates for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and is dedicated to creating meaningful change both within her organization and throughout the community. As the lead representative for her employer's partnership with We All Rise and the African American Resource Center, Christine secured her organization's sponsorship for the Juneteenth Celebration the past two years. She also recruited colleagues to volunteer at the event, ensuring that the volunteers shared a commitment to equity and justice as champions of culturally responsive community engagement. Christine collaborated with other departments to create an engaging display that highlighted high-wage career paths to spark discussions about opportunities.

Christine was selected to serve on the Dream Core Team, a cross-functional committee that evaluates and works to close equity gaps in teaching, learning and student affairs. As one of the few committee members not in a formal leadership role, she was chosen for her expertise in DEI and community advocacy. She held the role with distinction until the committee paused for re-

imagining. She currently serves as co-chair of her employer's Women of Color Employee Involvement Group where she provides mentorship to colleagues looking for ways to excel in their careers while advocating for professional development funding and cultivating the next generation of leaders.

Christine displays community leadership as co-chair of the Brown County MLK Jr. Celebration Committee, helping to plan and execute the 30th annual MLK Celebration. She also serves on the Board of Directors for Lovin' The Skin I'm In, an organization focused on empowering Black and Brown girls in our community. Christine's dedication to youth extends to local schools where she volunteers as a mentor and facilitates workshops. One recent Vision Board workshop she organized for 4th-grade students at Chappell Elementary School inspired them to envision bold futures.

Her five-year vision for the Greater Green Bay community includes increased support for education, greater diversity in local government and school systems administration, and more accessible opportunities for diverse small business owners to thrive.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Erin Collar, NEW Water

Throughout her career, Erin has consistently sought ways to grow both professionally and personally, striving to “stretch her rubber band” and make a positive impact in her community.

As co-chair of the Committee for Appreciation and Recognition of Employees for the past six years, Erin has led initiatives to acknowledge and celebrate staff, fostering a positive workplace culture. She organizes company-wide events and an annual Awards Program that recognizes outstanding staff contributions. These efforts have significantly boosted morale and engagement within the organization.

Through a partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Green Bay, Erin spearheaded an annual camp to equip youth with essential skills in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM). As captain of the STEAM Superheroes Camp, she has empowered more than a hundred children to explore career pathways in environmental stewardship, particularly in water.

Erin leverages her visual communication skills to further amplify community impact. She was part of a team that led a Pollution Prevention Initiative Campaign that resulted in engaging videos, flyers, and social media graphics to raise awareness about protecting Northeast

Wisconsin waterways. This initiative was highly successful in enhancing public understanding and earned positive recognition from the community to boost the organization’s brand reputation.

Outside of the office, Erin served as a community leader in the development of an accessible dock for the 4K Program at the Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary. The project is not only Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, but it also enhances educational opportunities for local children and families. Erin also leads donation drives to support non-profits and school districts in Brown County. She gathers non-perishable foods, clothing and diapers to make a tangible difference for those in need. An active member at her church, Erin is a service helper that organizes events throughout the year.

The education, inspiration and engagement of residents to protect our waterways is central to her vision for the future of Greater Green Bay. She believes collaboration and partnerships will be critical in building momentum, because “We are all stronger together.”



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Taylor DeBroux, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Bay & Lakes Region

The adage, “grow where you’re planted,” can be used to describe Taylor’s professional journey. She entered the non-profit world 13 years ago while she was a student at St. Norbert College. She stayed at the Boys & Girls Club and advanced from Program Assistant to Senior Director of Continuous Improvement. She calls the diverse experiences and perspectives gained during her tenure her superpower, allowing her to truly understand the needs of the individuals served in the community while also better informing her on how to advocate for change within the organization.

Taylor’s ability to create practical, sustainable solutions has been a driving force in the success of numerous initiatives, including a recent organizational merger in 2023. In addition to serving as the project manager for integration, Taylor led or supported the work of multiple sub-teams focused on policies & procedures, data management, community partnerships, communication protocols, information technology and programming.

Serving as a leader in talent development and training within the organization, Taylor helped design a professional development strategy that includes

structured on-boarding for new hires, continued education requirements, and individualized development plans. Her ability to lead young talent within the organization and serve as a role model for others earned Taylor recognition by Insight magazine as one of the 2024 40 Under 40 Young Professionals.

She partners with the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay’s Civic Scholars program to offer students experience in the non-profit sector through semester-long internship placements and serves as an academic mentor for local teens.

Taylor takes pride in working local elections as a poll worker. She has served as an Election Inspector for years, because she believes in the power of voting and that everyone deserves to have a voice regarding decisions that impact them. Taylor specializes in voter registration and has helped hundreds of people complete the registration to become eligible voters. She also volunteers at several other organizations and community events in Northeast Wisconsin including the Greater Green Bay YMCA, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Literacy Green Bay, St. John’s Homeless Shelter and CollegeReady.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Charm Der, Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin

Charm intentionally creates positive change and fosters inclusive environments where equity drives outcomes instead of individual demographics. Throughout her career, she has led transformative initiatives in diverse industries from healthcare to manufacturing, driving change on HR and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) teams. As Vice President of Human Resources at Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, Charm has been instrumental in creating a culture of compassion, innovation and employee well-being. One of her significant achievements was leading the development of a comprehensive employee engagement strategy that modernized HR processes, launched an engaging intranet platform, revamped talent management practices, and strengthened community partnerships—all within one year. These initiatives led to increased employee satisfaction and improved employee data for decision-making and compliance.

Her leadership extends beyond the workplace. Charm actively contributes to several initiatives personally and on behalf of her employer. She participates in community focus groups, volunteers, contributes to giving campaigns and lends her knowledge and expertise in panel discussions. Charm serves on the advisory board of the Schreiber Institute for Women's Leadership through University of Wisconsin - Green Bay, where she mentors and empowers women through networking and professional development programs

in collaboration with other leaders. As the Health Equity & Culture subject-matter expert on Wello's Community Well-Being Measurement Committee, she works to ensure equitable, culturally responsive community health initiatives. Additionally, Charm is part of a grant committee facilitated by the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation that is focused on addressing homelessness, where she evaluates proposals and advocates to fund housing, job training and mental health services.

Her passion to empower young professionals motivated Charm to co-create a DEI Community of Practice (CoP) for leaders from historically marginalized communities. Through this initiative, she provides mentorship and fosters connection among aspiring DEI and social justice professionals. She is also actively involved in programs that support mental health and career development for young professionals in Northeast Wisconsin through the NEWAC chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., partnering with organizations like NAMI and the National Cares Mentoring Movement.

Looking to the future, Charm envisions a Greater Green Bay where accessible workforce development opportunities and affordable housing are prioritized, with a focus on equitable, collaborative community solutions that support all individuals.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Abby Farragh, Breakthrough

Abby is a dynamic leader with a passion for fostering authentic relationships. Known for her ability to build trust and create a culture of inclusion, she brings her whole self to work every day and encourages her teammates to do the same. She plays a key role in driving cross-functional initiatives that have a lasting impact on her organization, including the development of the Client Presentation Playbook and a "product playbook," designed to improve client interactions and scale the business responsibly. Abby was selected to participate in her organization's Operational Excellence Strategic Initiative for the next three years, where she is shaping positive change and promoting employee development. She worked with a team to help Feeding America streamline food deliveries to pantries across the state and partnered with Truckers Against Trafficking to bring the Freedom Drivers Project to Green Bay.

She co-chairs her organization's EPIC (Employees, Planet, Impact, Community) Committee, which leads volunteer efforts, sustainability initiatives and charitable donations. Abby helped establish the annual Volunteer Week at her organization, encouraging team members to

volunteer for non-profits in Green Bay and the Fox Cities.

Abby considers it a privilege and responsibility to mentor young professionals in the community. In her role, she helps Client Account Managers who recently graduated college grow and succeed by providing feedback and sharing best practices. She also has spoken to business students at St. Norbert College and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay about her career journey, through *Women in Business* events.

She mentors a Little through the Big Brothers Big Sisters business program and has been a board member for the Wisconsin Doulos Association since 2022, helping raise funds and supporting the organization's mission. She graduated in the Leadership Green Bay Class of 2024, and her team installed Little Libraries at Encompass locations filled with culturally diverse books that families can read together.

As a working mother of three, Abby advocates for a community where families have equal access to wellness resources and lower barriers to affordable, flexible childcare, believing it can be achieved if everyone - employers, local government, and the community - comes together.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Christopher Ledvina, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

Christopher has overseen the creation and implementation of more than 10 national certificate programs and workshops in his current role at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. He has created, facilitated and instructed training programs for local and national organizations on topics ranging from leadership and time management to change management and conflict resolution. In addition, Christopher gives presentations on the future of professional development, empowering leaders in municipal government and adaptive leadership principles for new leaders.

Recently completing his Ph.D. in Global Leadership and Change, Christopher has taught career development courses at the university level, helping students navigate their career paths and transition into the professional world. In a previous role, he was instrumental in connecting students with internships and job opportunities through partnerships with over 100 organizations in Northeast Wisconsin, ensuring they have the resources to thrive in a dynamic workforce.

Christopher spends time outside of work furthering community development. He has volunteered over 300

hours for a local non-profit's professional development committee, creating valuable learning opportunities for professionals throughout Northeast Wisconsin. Hundreds of people have attended workshops that he planned on topics including Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), well-being in the workplace, being comfortable with change, and personal accountability. As a leader within the organization, Christopher guides the next generation of committee members and prepares them to create high-quality opportunities to meet future professional development needs. He also has spent the past five years as a scholarship reader and helped dozens of local students gain access to thousands of dollars in funding for their learning.

The vision of Green Bay as a thriving community where lifelong learning is central to both personal and professional success drives Christopher and his work. He believes in the power of local solutions to solve global challenges and is committed to helping individuals and organizations find their place in a rapidly changing world. His work is focused on educating and empowering others to find their own path forward amid challenges and uncertainty.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Kathryn Marten, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

In her nearly five years at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay in the Cofrin School of Business, Kathryn has collaborated with colleagues on campus and organizations in the Green Bay community to create multiple experiential learning opportunities for students to improve student retention, academic success and workforce preparedness.

One of Kathryn's most notable contributions has been leading the creation of a mentoring program that pairs first-generation college students with alumni and local professionals. This program has significantly boosted the retention rates of those being mentored and strengthened the relationship between the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and the broader community. She also developed an undergraduate research program that allows faculty to hire paid student research assistants, providing access to transformative learning experiences for more students and improving equity in participation. Kathryn leads an ongoing four-year assessment of High Impact Practices that has gained attention from fellow higher education professionals and researchers around the state and throughout the country.

Kathryn has received several awards for her work including the 2022 Community Partnership Award in Business from the Cofrin School of Business at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, the 2023 Innovation Champion Award from WiSys, and multiple invitations to speak at national webinars for Mentor Collective.

Kathryn serves on the Advisory Board for the Center for Civic Engagement at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay which leads programs to teach students about Green Bay, cultivates their curiosity, and encourages civic engagement. She graduated with the Leadership Green Bay Class of 2023 and gained a deeper understanding and appreciation for Greater Green Bay. Her group built an outdoor classroom for Howe Elementary to provide additional learning space for safe, fun, unique lessons. A proud Wausau native, Kathryn also helps her family care for and lead annual services in a historic chapel located at the base of Rib Mountain. She recently researched its history and compiled her findings in a book to be shared as part of a revitalization effort.

She recently finished her first semester as a student in the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Doctorate of Education in Applied Leadership program.

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**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Dareios Moore, Wello

Dareios focuses on food system strategy and community engagement in his role. He has made significant contributions to local food access and sustainability through initiatives like farm-to-school and farm-to-institution programs. Using resources from the University of Wisconsin and the University of Michigan, Dareios organized Apple Crunch initiatives with Provident Health Foundation to promote local food awareness.

Dareios oversees his organization's largest food system project which supplies fresh, local produce, meats, and eggs to resource centers and food pantries. He created a Facebook group to support food deliveries by offering tips on food preparation and sharing culturally diverse recipes designed to reduce food waste and build community connections. In addition to these efforts, he helped establish a partnership between WIC, his employer, and the SLO Farm Cooperative to launch a WIC Farmstand that makes healthy, local food more accessible to families in need. The initiative was successful with plans to expand it next season.

He leads the Farm to School Task Force, serves as treasurer of the Wisconsin Farmers Union board, and is a member of the NEW Small Farmer Scholarship committee where he helps provide financial support to BIPOC and new farmers

in sustainable agriculture. His advocacy extends to policy and funding, where he has engaged with public officials on farm-to-school initiatives and assisted community partners in securing grants. These experiences have equipped him to drive systems of change and demonstrate the power of "big vision, small steps."

Beyond his work in food systems, Dareios empowers young professionals and promotes community engagement. He has created promotional videos for local non-profits including JOSHUA, We All Rise: African American Resource Center, and Third Space, showcasing their missions and giving young professionals a platform to amplify their voices. He tutored students in Green Bay and Oneida during the pandemic to help improve literacy rates and educational outcomes. He owns a software company that promotes civic engagement by providing them with a tool to make informed decisions and understand the power of their vote.

Looking to the future, Dareios envisions a more connected, inclusive, and resilient Greater Green Bay with expanded access to fresh local food and increased voter engagement. He also hopes to create financial products that allow people around the world to access markets and promote financial literacy.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Tom Murphy, Associated Bank

A Senior Infrastructure Engineer at Associated Bank, Tom has played a pivotal role in driving both technological innovation and operational efficiency. His expertise was crucial in migrating nearly 5,000 employees to a new email and instant messaging platform, a project completed ahead of schedule and under budget with minimal disruptions. Another standout achievement was leading the unstructured data migration during the acquisition of a \$3 billion bank, ensuring business continuity and compliance with regulatory standards. These successes, alongside his consistent "exceeds expectations" performance reviews year after year, demonstrate Tom's ability to deliver complex projects with precision and leadership.

Tom is an elected official, representing nearly 17,000 residents as Trustee for the Village of Bellevue. He tries to make decisions that are in the best interest of the entire community, especially young professionals, by advocating for diverse and attainable housing options, and expanded safe pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure. He is a strong proponent of initiatives that attract and retain young professionals, understanding the role that attainable,

accessible housing plays in fostering talent retention and economic growth. Tom mentors both junior employees in his professional life and emerging leaders within the community, guiding them toward leadership roles.

Tom's investment in the community can be seen in the numerous community-based learning and leadership programs he has been and is currently enrolled in including Bellevue's Citizens Academy, Leadership Green Bay, the Brown County Sheriff's Office Citizen Police Academy, Wello's Bike/Pedestrian Safety Training program, and the Green Bay Area Public Schools Ambassador Academy. He has volunteered countless hours with local organizations, earning the President's Volunteer Service Award on multiple occasions for over 100 hours served annually. He finds time to give back all while balancing a full-time job and raising three children.

Looking to the future, Tom aims to leverage his role as an elected official to advocate for initiatives that enhance the well-being of Greater Green Bay while fostering an inclusive, connected community that supports residents' evolving needs at every stage of life.

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**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Mai Nu Vang, Green Bay Area Public Schools

Mai promotes cultural awareness, fosters meaningful connections, and is dedicated to empowering youth as a dynamic leader and community advocate in Greater Green Bay. Focused on uplifting the Asian community, Mai has created and grown multiple programs that serve as cultural hubs for students and professionals alike. As a teacher, she helped create a new Asian Club that immerses more than 60 students each year in Asian culture through activities and events like AnimeCon, Crab Rangoon Family Night, and a Pop-Up Asian Snack Shop. She also advises another Asian Club, guiding them through successful fundraisers, such as egg roll sales, to support impactful trips and team-building events. She is on the planning committee for the APIDA Summits hosted by her employer to inspire students to think about future careers.

In the community, Mai serves as a board member and secretary of an Asian Professional Group. She is involved in the Events Committee and has helped create and maintain a successful speaker series that connects professionals at different stages of their careers to share

their insights. Mai serves on the planning committee for various community events including Hmong American Day and Hmong New Year.

Mai has been recognized, nominated and received awards for her work and contributions. She received the 2023 Madison360 Top 40 Most Influential Asian American Leader award and the 2024 Insight Publication's 40 Under 40 recognition.

Mai founded and continues to manage a Hmong Dance Academy that provides a safe space for youth to preserve their culture, develop leadership skills, and foster sisterhood. She recently established a non-profit organization focused on elevating Hmong youth through academics, athletics, cultural preservation and the arts called Maiv Passion Foundation, Ltd.

Mai envisions a future where youth development, cultural awareness, and community collaboration drive progress. One of her goals is to launch a summer music festival that highlights artists, groups, bands, dance teams, etc. in the Asian community. She hopes to meet a need and fill a gap in the community by providing programs and events that are meaningful and well-organized.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Lindsey Petasek, Soles4Souls

Lindsey once viewed leadership as a fixed concept that required leaders to be the loudest in the room, the center of attention, and decorated with awards. She tried to conform to those standards for years and failed before realizing who she is as a leader through confidence and self-awareness.

A transracial adoptee who moved to Green Bay in 2009, Lindsey's journey toward self-identity has been shaped by her deep commitment to making a difference in the lives of others. Throughout her career, she has worked behind the scenes to create inclusive spaces and elevate marginalized voices, all while balancing personal challenges and evolving roles.

She has raised nearly \$2 million in funding since becoming a grant writer in 2021 and secured grants to bring a youth program to Green Bay that has had a positive impact on other local communities. Although she never formally worked in a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Lindsey has integrated DEI into every job. She has worked with the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay to increase access to leadership programs for Latinx girls,

co-created a guide to further board diversity for non-profits, and led training on cultural humility for colleagues. Lindsey helped found NEW Asian Pacific Islander and Desi American Professionals (APIDA) and volunteers with many local non-profits including Lucky 7 Dog Rescue and the Greater Green Bay Women's Fund.

Lindsey points to Project Pandemic Puppy as one of her proudest moments. She wanted to do something about the rising number of local dogs being surrendered to rescues due to behavioral issues formed during the COVID-19 pandemic. She led a team to create a plan that involved training recent adopters to solve the problem proactively. Lindsey wrote grants to obtain funding and received financial support from the Green Bay Packers Foundation and The Canary Fund.

Now established in Greater Green Bay, Lindsey looks for ways to pay it forward and pass the baton believing, "that the best leaders know when to invite others to the table or give up their chairs for someone else to have an opportunity."

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Abby Farragh

Breakthrough is thrilled to celebrate Abby Farragh, a Future 15 recipient and an integral part of our team! Thank you, Abby, for all you do for Breakthrough and the Green Bay Community.

Congratulations, Nominees!

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**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Madelyn Prailes, Howe Community Resource Center

Madelyn's unwavering commitment to driving positive change in Greater Green Bay is reflected in the significant contributions she has made during her career to empower and enhance the quality of life for families in Brown County.

She created the Leadership HCRC program with a tailored curriculum designed specifically for underserved caregivers in the community. Funded through the PAT Challenge Grant, this program equips participants with essential leadership skills that empower them to advocate for their families and become influential leaders within their communities. The inaugural class graduated in December 2024, and participants built a strong, supportive network that they can tap into in the future.

Madelyn is also an active member of the Every Child Is Ready to Read Action Team through Achieve Brown County. She collaborates with local stakeholders to improve early literacy and set the foundation for lifelong learning and success among children in the region. Her commitment to education extends to mentoring first-generation female college students through the Mentor Collective at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay where she provides guidance and support as the

students navigate their academic journeys.

She is involved with the Schreiber Institute for Women's Leadership and Current Young Professionals and volunteers at annual events through The Salvation Army including Toys for Tots and Help for the Homeless. She invites family, friends and colleagues to join her in the collective spirit of service.

Madelyn graduated with the Leadership Green Bay Class of 2024 and recently joined the Wisconsin Women's Network Policy Institute. She also received the Emerging Leader Alumni Award from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay for the positive difference she has made in the community.

As she looks to the future, Madelyn hopes to continue improving the lives of Brown County children and families while expanding her advocacy efforts to further support women's economic mobility, challenge traditional leadership paradigms, and inspire collective community action. Through mentorship, collaboration, and strategic leadership, she will continue striving to make Greater Green Bay a vibrant community every individual feels empowered to lead, advocate, and contribute.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Sam Schwartz, Paramount Physical Therapy & Training

Sam strives for excellence as a dedicated physical therapist specializing in orthopedics and sports medicine. His pursuit of knowledge keeps him at the forefront of evidence-based practices to ensure his patients receive the highest standard of care. Beyond his clinical responsibilities, Sam has designed and implemented a bi-weekly mentorship program for his colleagues to foster an environment of continuous learning while improving patient outcomes and professional satisfaction.

As the Director of Operations, Sam has shaped the culture within his organization. His focus on leadership development and employee well-being has resulted in a culture of positive accountability and open communication. Leadership training with Initiative One has created a supportive, family-like work environment, where staff feel valued. Sam serves as a clinical instructor at multiple universities including Bellin College where he is also an adjunct faculty and promotes the development of the next generation of healthcare professionals through hands-on experience.

One of Sam's proudest achievements is hosting

an annual 5K race as a celebration of fitness and community spirit. He founded a local running club to create a supportive environment for runners of all levels. His goal was to foster a sense of community while encouraging healthier lifestyles. Sam is in the process of transforming the running club into a non-profit organization with a vision to offer scholarships for local high school runners and create fundraising initiatives that make running accessible to all, regardless of financial background or physical ability. Outside of running, Sam is invested in the success of local students in the Howard-Suamico School District. He has an interest in school policy and participates in the community-driven group, Leadership HSSD, created to provide guidance and insight to the district on current and future initiatives.

Looking ahead, Sam envisions a vibrant Greater Green Bay community that serves as a hub for wellness, inclusivity, and outdoor engagement that everyone can benefit from regardless of gender, physical ability or financial status. He hopes to create a thriving environment where activity, mental well-being, and community connection are accessible.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Tiffany Woelfel, Amundsen Davis

Tiffany is an accomplished attorney, legal researcher and writer with a strong reputation both within the legal community and communities across Northeast Wisconsin. With a career that began as a federal judicial law clerk, Tiffany honed her legal writing skills, ultimately developing a reputation as a strong legal researcher and writer. Her expertise was recently recognized when she was entrusted as the primary drafter for a brief to be filed before the United States Supreme Court. Tiffany's work on a case before the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals also earned high praise from the judges, who commended the quality of the research and writing in the briefs. Beyond her writing, she prides herself as a responsive and caring attorney, who works hard on behalf of her clients and who strives to help ease the stress of litigation.

In addition to her legal work, Tiffany is deeply committed to giving back to her community. She volunteers for and supports numerous organizations, including Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, Women's Fund, and the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center. Her contributions have earned her recognition as one of Insight Publication's 40 Under 40 and a Future 15 recipient through the Fox Cities Chamber

of Commerce. Tiffany's consistent involvement in local fundraisers is a testament to her reputation as someone who can be relied upon to support her community, and she is proud every time she runs into someone at a charitable event and hears, "I thought I'd see you here."

Tiffany's passion for mentoring the next generation of lawyers is evident in her roles within the legal community. As a former director and president of the State Bar of Wisconsin's Young Lawyers Division, she worked to expand professional development opportunities for young lawyers across the state, particularly in communities outside of Milwaukee and Madison. Tiffany has also mentored associates and interns within her firm and serves on the Board of Directors for the Eastern District of Wisconsin Bar Association.

Looking ahead, Tiffany is committed to fostering greater collaboration and community-building. She envisions a future where local communities work together rather than compete to promote the region as a great place to live, work and raise a family.



**FUTURE 15 RECIPIENT
& YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Travis J Vanden Heuvel, The KHROME Agency

One of the most significant professional milestones for Travis was having a book he co-authored reach #1 on Amazon's bestseller list. A dedicated business executive, storyteller, and community advocate, he has spent his career amplifying the voices of organizations and individuals making positive change. He focuses on impact-driven narratives that inspire action and build meaningful connections. A recognized leader in his field, Travis was named to Insight Magazine's 40 Under 40, a prestigious honor acknowledging both his professional achievements and his commitment to community engagement. Additionally, Reviews and Trends Magazine named him a Top 25 Publisher & Media Executive, highlighting his dedication to using storytelling as a tool for transformation.

Travis has collaborated with more than 35 non-profit organizations, each with their own story and mission. Through marketing campaigns, community projects, and collaborations, his contributions help raise crucial funds and build awareness for underserved populations. With more than 1,000 hours dedicated to volunteering, Travis has held various board roles and has been instrumental

in raising over \$2 million through grant writing and donor outreach to benefit local organizations including Literacy Green Bay, MyTeamTriumph, and Willow Tree Child Advocacy Center. He is also an author, editor, and publisher-of-record for more than ten books.

Through initiatives like Your Move Green Bay and the Greater Green Bay Talent Task Force, Travis works to create opportunities for career growth and community involvement to ensure that young leaders are empowered to shape the future of the area. He mentors young professionals and promotes the region as a destination for emerging talent. He regularly visits St. Norbert College, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College to speak with college students about the career options available to them in Greater Green Bay. Travis also presents to local high school students to inspire them and get them to start thinking about their futures.

Looking toward the future, Travis hopes that Greater Green Bay will thrive with inclusivity, opportunity and engaged young professionals who recognize their power to shape our community.

About the Award

Presented by:

Nicolet
NATIONAL BANK

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to a local business owner who exemplifies and holds a true commitment to Greater Green Bay through their demonstrated business and entrepreneurial accomplishments. Consideration includes but goes beyond financial success by evaluating the individual's positive impact on the community as an entrepreneur.



**YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Tarlton Knight, The Tarlton Theatre

Tarlton formed his company with a dream of transforming an aging cinema into the center of arts and culture in downtown Green Bay. He purchased the historic property that is now The Tarlton Theatre in 2018 with the support of the City of Green Bay and got to work creating a portfolio of affordable art, music and film programming for the community.

Just two years later, the COVID-19 pandemic threatened Tarlton's growing business, and his dream of supporting local performers through The Tarlton Theatre nearly disappeared. He was forced to close the theatre doors as part of shutdowns and suddenly found himself struggling to pay the bills while keeping his dream of entrepreneurship alive. A critical turning point for his business, Tarlton decided to sacrifice his own pay to become a full-time volunteer. He reinvented his original business plan into one that incorporated more strategic partnerships and community visioning. This allowed him to not only survive but thrive once the pandemic restrictions were lifted.

The Tarlton Theatre is home to the Green Bay Film

Festival, Green Bay Jazz Orchestra, and Green Bay Jazz Fest. It is also the official downtown extension of The Weidner through a fine arts and cultural partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. In 2023, Tarlton celebrated the property being placed on the National Register of Historic Places while also unveiling a new, smaller music venue to feature local, original bands.

Tarlton does not plan on slowing down any time soon. This year, he plans to open Green Bay's first food truck park at his new outdoor music venue. He is also consulting on the creation of an official festival for the City of Green Bay during the 2025 Draft. He spends time volunteering with local community organizations and serving on various boards, but you can still find him at every concert and show hosted at The Tarlton Theatre giving an introduction, welcoming guests, and thanking the community for their support of his business and vision.



**YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Josh Kozlowski, Nature's Best Floral & Boutique

One motto defines the way Josh lives his life and runs his business, Nature's Best Floral & Boutique: "Be the good you want to see in the world." From delivering flower bouquets to hundreds of shut in seniors during the holiday season through the Adopt-an-Elder Program to donating sympathy tributes for families struggling financially after losing a child or loved one, Josh looks for ways to give back to others through his work.

His journey as an entrepreneur started in a high school classroom. An introduction to horticulture and floriculture sparked Josh's interest and curiosity, motivating him to learn more in his free time. He read books and watched hours of tutorial videos until he was the one teaching his teacher. It was not long before he put his knowledge and creativity to the test through hands-on experience working at a floral shop in Oconto Falls.

After graduating from high school, Josh joined one more floral shop before deciding he wanted to start his own business. He invested time creating his own style while working out of his home, and he quickly attracted customers. What started as flowers for a single wedding turned into flowers for 42 weddings. Today, Nature's Best Floral & Boutique provides flowers

for more than 190 weddings each year, plus large-scale corporate events amongst their day-to-day deliveries.

Next to starting and growing a successful business before turning 25, one of Josh's proudest accomplishments was paying off his start-up debt in two years. He made it a priority to eliminate debt and operate financially independent of credit cards. Turning this goal into a reality reminded him that there were no limits to what he could achieve regardless of his age.

Josh credits social media for his growth and positive momentum. He uses Facebook live videos to connect with people authentically on a personal level. He strives to meet people where they are by providing goods and services that have the "wow" factor and unique twist without breaking the bank. He is excited about the future of Nature's Best Floral & Boutique and has more ideas in the works for how he can further support the community that means so much to his business.



**YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR
OF THE YEAR FINALIST**

Aisha Umar, The Black Orchid Catering

The value of food goes beyond just nourishment for Aisha. From a young age, she noticed how it connected people and how sharing a meal created a sense of community. Those memories inspired her to co-found her business, The Black Orchid Catering, with a vision of a Greater Green Bay where everyone feels connected, supported and proud of a shared community built together.

An entrepreneur with a strong desire to give back to her community, Aisha developed a business strategy rooted in a deep respect for the people around her. She measures her success in listening carefully to her customers and believes strongly in the power of community collaboration. That can be seen in the evolution of her menu at The Black Orchid Catering. Aisha started with traditional recipes reflecting her background and heritage. Today, the menu features a selection of Midwestern dishes alongside more culturally inspired cuisine in response to feedback she has received. She has learned to stay true to herself while honoring the preferences of her customers. She makes it a priority to offer personalized consultations for every event she caters

to make sure the food reflects the heart of the customer's vision.

What makes The Black Orchid Catering stand out is Aisha's quiet commitment to helping those in need. She donates dinners to local women's shelters, prepares meals for the community fridge through Rooted In, and gives free meals to staff at a hospice organization where she has volunteered for years. To her, these are small acts of kindness to brighten someone's day because it's the right thing to do.

Aisha also goes out of her way to support other local suppliers, vendors and entrepreneurs. She believes in a ripple effect that when one business thrives, the whole community benefits. By building a network, sharing resources, and lifting each other up, she hopes to create a stronger economy and community for all.

Aisha is excited for the future and hopes to leave a lasting mark on the place she calls home. Through The Black Orchid Catering, her mission is to create moments where people from all walks of life feel welcome and valued.

About the Award

Presented by:



NEXT GENERATION BEST PLACE TO WORK

This award is presented to a business that demonstrates a commitment to the development of young professionals, adapts work-life friendly policies, values generational differences, and institutes attraction and retention initiatives for young talent.

The AmeriLux Family of Companies

The AmeriLux Family of Companies operates with a core philosophy: "We are in the people business." This commitment to people—customers, partners, and team members—is the foundation of the company's success. As AmeriLux continues to grow, its dedication to attracting top-tier talent and empowering team members to reach their full potential remains stronger than ever.

AmeriLux believes that every lasting relationship, whether personal or professional, must be mutually beneficial. The company treats each team member as an individual, recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. By working closely with team members, AmeriLux ensures their personal and family needs are met. The company offers flexible scheduling to foster relationships that prioritize work-life balance.

Family comes first at AmeriLux. Team members are encouraged to attend family commitments, offering leave for doctor appointments, recitals, and sporting events. AmeriLux promotes a healthy workforce with on-site healthcare services for team members and their families. Those on the healthcare plan can use the services as needed without cost, while others receive several free visits annually.

AmeriLux is committed to hiring and retaining

exceptional talent. New hires meet with CEO, Kurt Voss during a welcome breakfast to gain exposure to the company culture. Personalized attention during onboarding ensures that team member's voices are heard, and any concerns are addressed. After six months of employment, team members are enrolled in AmeriLux University—a culture program to reinforce company values and promote relationship-building.

AmeriLux's utilizes a unique "hiring in reverse" approach ensures that team members find the right fit within the organization. Open positions are first evaluated internally, allowing team members to explore different departments until they discover a role that brings fulfillment. This focus on internal mobility supports both personal growth and long-term success, creating an environment where team members are empowered to thrive and find the position that makes them the most fulfilled.

By fostering a people-first culture, prioritizing work-life balance, and supporting personal and professional development, AmeriLux creates a dynamic and supportive environment for its team members, driving the company's continued success.



**NEXT GENERATION BEST
PLACE TO WORK FINALIST**



**NEXT GENERATION BEST
PLACE TO WORK FINALIST**

Discover Green Bay

Discover Green Bay is dedicated to fostering a positive work-life balance that empowers employees to thrive personally and professionally. The organization allows employees to manage their work schedules around family and personal commitments by offering flexible scheduling and remote work options. Regularly organized team-building events and outings get employees out of the traditional work setting to strengthen relationships, reduce stress, and gain knowledge of community assets.

The organization plays a key role in bringing major community events to Greater Green Bay, including the 2025 Draft. Employees are encouraged to promote and support these events. The Visitor Center staff have a passion for sharing Green Bay's unique story, and employees are encouraged to contribute to the storytelling with their own experiences as ambassadors for the region. Employees also can hit the road and spread the Green Bay story through their Mobile Visitor Center that visited more than 60 local and regional events, meeting visitors where they are in our community.

To encourage understanding between employees of all ages, each employee can shadow and learn from more tenured team members to share guidance and wisdom about the travel and tourism industry. Discover

Green Bay also empowers younger employees to bring new ideas and supports change and growth in ideas at all levels. This collaboration paired with flexible communication practices that meet the preferences of different age groups creates space for open dialogue and allows all employees to feel valued and heard.

An inclusive workplace culture helps employees connect, share experiences, and advocate for interests within the organization. Discover Green Bay promotes a sense of belonging for all employees by prioritizing all aspects of diversity including race, gender and LGBTQ+ representation. This approach ensures that the organization is reflective of the larger community and attracts young, diverse talent.

Discover Green Bay places a strong emphasis on cultivating leadership within an internal talent pool by providing ample opportunities for career growth and development through workshops, seminars, and mentorship sessions. Employees are also encouraged to take on new projects and responsibilities that align with their professional interests to grow their skillset.



**NEXT GENERATION BEST
PLACE TO WORK FINALIST**

Fox Communities Credit Union

An intentional culture model at Fox Communities Credit Union underscores the organization's commitment to being a "life-friendly" employer. From generous paid time off benefits to offering many positions that are hybrid or fully remote, Fox provides flexibility to team members.

Fox offers Caregiver Leave, recognizing the need to be present with family during times of great joy and times of illness. Additionally, a unique bereavement leave policy ensures team members can grieve and honor loved ones, regardless of relationship or legal status, in a way that makes sense to them. The financial institution works with their team members facing unexpected challenges and navigating hard personal situations. An internal Family Fund allows those experiencing financial hardship to afford necessary living expenses through a highly confidential process and opportunity to request funds. Those funds do not have to be repaid and are designated to alleviate some of the burden for team members and their families.

The organizational value to "Pay it Forward" celebrates and encourages team members extending a helping hand into their local community. In 2024,

Fox sponsored more than 25 events with volunteer opportunities for team members in the Green Bay area. Every team member receives eight hours of volunteer time off annually, and 32 team members serve as volunteer ambassadors to support the organization's volunteer initiatives. In 2024, more than 320 team members contributed over 9,300 volunteer hours to more than 290 nonprofits in Northeast Wisconsin.

Fox trains team members and leaders using RightPath to promote a greater understanding of self, others and team dynamics. Since 2023, 215 team members from 14 teams have participated. The financial institution encourages belonging and inclusion for all through compassion and understanding, offering regular unconscious bias training as an investment in the growth and development of team members.

Leaders are trained to support team members through two coaching models that foster open communication, active discussions and planning for career growth. Fox gives team members the tools they need to succeed in their role while also taking time to hear their dreams, goals and aspirations to better support them on their path to get there.

FUTURE 15 RECIPIENTS & YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR FINALISTS

Christine Bekyir
Northeast Wisconsin
Technical College

Erin Collar
NEW Water

Taylor DeBroux
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Bay
& Lakes Region

Charm Der
Family Services of
Northeast Wisconsin

Abby Farragh
Breakthrough

Christopher Ledvina
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

Kathryn Marten
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

Dareios Moore
Wello

Tom Murphy
Associated Bank

Mai Nu Vang
Green Bay Area Public Schools

Lindsey Petasek
Soles4Souls

Madelyn Prailes
Howe Community Resource
Center

Sam Schwartz
Paramount Physical Therapy
& Training

Tiffany Woelfel
Amundsen Davis

Travis J Vanden Heuvel
The KHROME Agency

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR FINALISTS

Tarlton Knight
The Tarlton Theatre

Josh Kozlowski
Nature's Best Floral & Boutique

Aisha Umar
The Black Orchid Catering

NEXT GENERATION BEST PLACE TO WORK FINALISTS

**The AmeriLux Family
of Companies**

Discover Green Bay

**Fox Communities
Credit Union**

**THANK YOU TO OUR
SUSTAINING PARTNERS**



WE LOVE WINNERS.

Congratulations to Future 15 & Young Professional
Awards Nominees

Thank you for your positive impact
on the Green Bay community.



CONGRATULATIONS
**FUTURE 15 & YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
AWARD RECIPIENTS**

