

**PUPUSA LOVE**  
LA FLOR RESTAURANTS

**LET THERE BE LIGHT**  
FINDING WINTER CHEER

**MEDIA MOVES**  
WHO'S WHERE NOW

# Sacramento

MAGAZINE



**NOTABLE  
BUSINESS LEADERS  
IN 2021**

## Business



**NICOLE SERRES**  
President  
Star Staffing

Nicole Serres started her career as a receptionist at a local staffing firm. At Star Staffing, which she joined in 2009, she has helped grow the firm from three to seven offices and increased revenue 800 percent. Serres is the author of the book *From Receptionist to Boss: Real-Life Advice for Getting Ahead at Work*. She has written about business and career advice for Forbes, The Washington Post and Entrepreneur.

**BEST ADVICE RECEIVED:** You'll never get to second base with your foot still on first.

**MOST INSPIRING PERSON:** Sara Blakely

**WHY I CHOSE THIS WORK:** Originally it was to have an office role and feel professional. Now I choose it because of the positive impact we make every day in people's lives and the community.

**FEW PEOPLE KNOW:** I have 14 goats!



**SCOTT SYPHAX**  
CEO  
Syphax Strategic Solutions

Scott Syphax heads Syphax Strategic Solutions, a management consulting company focused on health care, real estate and financial services. He is chairman of the Nehemiah Community Foundation and sponsor and founder of the Nehemiah Emerging Leaders Program. During Syphax's tenure as CEO, his work has been studied by the Milken Institute and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He is a director of the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco.

**TOUGHEST CHALLENGE:** Making sure that my daily calendar reflects who and what I say I value in my life.

**WHY I CHOSE THIS WORK:** Nothing matches helping others achieve their version of the American Dream.

**FEW PEOPLE KNOW:** My speaking style was inspired by seeing Charlton Heston in *The Ten Commandments* when I was a child.



**ALEX BROWN**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Genovese Burford & Brothers

Under Alex Brown's leadership, Genovese Burford & Brothers has grown from about \$500 million in assets to nearly \$3.5 billion. He led the design, implementation and adoption of trading, client reporting, financial planning and investment research technologies. Brown is the board chair for the James B. McClatchy Foundation and a board member of the Roseville Area Chamber of Commerce. He is both a certified financial planner and a CPA.

**TOUGHEST CHALLENGE:** The 2008 financial crisis. It was hard not to feel the emotional burden clients were experiencing.

**WHY I CHOSE THIS WORK:** I enjoy numbers and helping people. As a financial adviser, I get to enjoy both.

**PANDEMIC'S TOUGHEST ASPECT:** Not being able to be in the same room together. At our firm we believe we are better together, and we look forward to having the team together again.



**SAMUEL HON**  
CEO/President  
First Corporate Solutions, Inc.

Hong Kong native Samuel Hon has more than 15 years' experience in organizational culture change, strategic planning and marketing management. Apart from his CEO role, he provides executive coaching and leadership program facilitation to help leaders and teams unlock their potential. Hon served two terms as president of the American Advertising Federation-Sacramento and has won more than a dozen marketing and design awards.

**BEST ADVICE RECEIVED:** Practice self-care so that you can take care of others.

**FEW PEOPLE KNOW:** Being the first in my family to attend college, I saved up to pay for my younger brother's college tuition in my late 20s.

**PANDEMIC'S EFFECT ON ME:** Focusing more on what really matters in life

**PANDEMIC'S TOUGHEST ASPECT:** Not being able to travel and see family and friends overseas



**JEREMY PERKINS**  
CEO/Founder  
Precision Medical Products

Jeremy Perkins left a lucrative job to start his own medical device company, risking everything (including his life savings) to start a company out of his garage. After three years, his startup was the No. 1 fastest growing company in the Sacramento region, producing a blood clot prevention device that helps more than 150,000 patients annually. Today, Precision employs 250 employees in 41 states.

**MOST INSPIRING PERSON:** Tyler Smith, CEO of Sky Slope

**PANDEMIC'S EFFECT ON ME:** Taught me the importance of time with my family

**PANDEMIC'S EFFECT ON BUSINESS:** We saw a 47% decline in sales in the second quarter of 2020.

**TOUGHEST ASPECT OF PANDEMIC:** Funding got tighter.

**BUCKET LIST:** Backpack Italy



**SCOTT ROBERTSON**  
Chief Community Banking Officer  
Tri Counties Bank

Scott Robertson oversees a network of Tri Counties Bank branches throughout Northern and Central California, as well as the 24/7 call center, direct banking sales group, home mortgage sales team, and Tri Counties Advisors investment services. Since he joined the bank, the company has more than doubled in size and now has more than \$7 billion in assets, making it the largest community-based bank in the region.

**EDUCATION:** Sacramento State University, University of Virginia

**HOBBIES:** Announcing high school football games; golf

**MOST INSPIRING PERSON:** My wife, Michelle, has shown me what it means to truly serve others and put the needs of others first.

**BUCKET LIST:** As a family, we have a goal to visit all 30 major league baseball ballparks. We have 10 more to go.