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These 20 emerging South Florida leaders promise a bright future for all

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These 20 emerging South Florida leaders promise a bright future for all, combining their savvy, successful business acumen with community-minded thinking.

If passion and creativity are critical to success, South Florida's future as a culturally rich metropolis is in good hands. That's the takeaway from 300-plus nominations for the 2014 Miami Herald 20 Under 40 class of emerging leaders.

Those chosen as honorees share a strong bond with the area; many grew up here, and all embrace the diverse culture. Unlike prior generations of leaders who often sought to climb corporate hierarchies, these emerging leaders are self-starters who are creating their own niches, then influencing the larger community.

The 2014 awards are made possible by support from CityYear, whose executive director, Saif Ishaq, was honored in 2010. Says Ishaq, "City Year is committed to unlocking the potential of the students we serve through the transformational service of our AmeriCorps Members. We felt it only right to highlight what emerging leaders are doing in our community, especially to showcase to our students what they can accomplish in the future."

The 20 leaders under 40 honored today are making a difference in the technology, entrepreneurial, arts, law and real-estate communities. They are involved in multiple projects and find a way to balance business passions with community service in a region where ingenuity and diligence can make a significance difference.

Ernie Hsiung, who moved to Miami from San Francisco, recognizes South Florida's unique opportunity. Hsiung has helped organize the tech community, bringing together bright minds to work toward improving the way governments operate: "A lot of us have started to realize the amazing things we can start here and the demand for it. What's great is that we are able to run with it."

Savvy young leaders like Hsiung and Xavier Gonzalez are working to position Miami as a global technology hub. Zalmi Duchman, founder of The Fresh Diet; Wifredo Fernandez, co-founder of The LAB Miami; and business owners Jon Sastre, Fabiola Fleuranvil and Tom D'Eri highlight South Florida's position as an entrepreneurial hotspot. Scott Cunningham, Kareem Tabsch and Emily MacDonald-Korth are working through the culture-sphere to enrich the region. Elisa D'Amico, Alison Smith and Jane Muir are using legal careers as the basis for change. Rebecca Fishman Lipsey, Robin Scott Martin Jr., Jessica Kizorek and Francesca Menes are working in the nonprofit sector to improve life for many who often are voiceless. And Nitin Motwani, Jose Antonio Hernandez-Solaun and Manny Antonio Varas are literally reshaping our earth.

Even as they stand out for combining business acumen with community-minded thinking, most are making time to mentor the generation below them.

Clearly, this is a group of doers who put into practice the leadership philosophy of Fabiola Fleuranvil: "When I see a problem, I fix it. I don't wait for someone to tell me about the problem." Already recognized leaders, expectations are high for what this talented group of up-and-comers can accomplish.

The 2014 Miami Herald 20 Under 40 class are:

P. Scott Cunningham (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655945.html>)

Elisa D'Amico (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655757.html>)

Tom D'Eri (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655776.html>)

Zalmi Duchman (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655803.html>)

Wifredo Fernandez (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655872.html>)

Rebecca Fishman Lipsey (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655964.html>)

Fabiola Fleuranvil (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655899.html>)

Xavier Gonzalez (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655908.html>)

Jose Antonio Hernandez-Solaun (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3656079.html>)

Ernie Hsiung (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655831.html>)

Jessica Kizorek (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655926.html>)

Emily MacDonald-Korth (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655952.html>)

Robin Scott Martin (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3655982.html>)

Francesca Menes (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3656009.html>)

Nitin Motwani (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3656019.html>)

Jane Muir (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3656039.html>)

Jon Sastre (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3656045.html>)

Alison Smith (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3656052.html>)

Kareem Tabsch (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3656096.html>)

Manny Angelo Varas (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article3656119.html>)

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Fabiola Fleuranvil, 32, center, Zalmi Duchman, 34, left, and Wifredo Fernandez, 28, are three of the 20 winners the Herald's "20 Under 40." | CARL JUSTE/MIAMI HERALD STAFF
