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THE BUSINESS JOURNAL TRENDSETTERS

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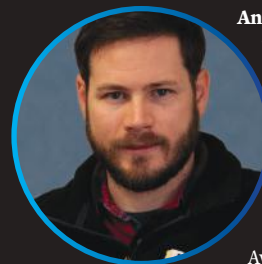


The 2018 Trendsetters Awards winners. From left, Katie Day, Jahdiel Torres-Caba, Dr. Lance Miller, Maggie Rice, Andrew Weglinski, Danya Landis, Kendra Carter, Esther Ruth Holland Rhoades, Baby Rhoades, Alona Florenz, Travis Kumph, Elana Baron

Group Photo by: Bill Gnade



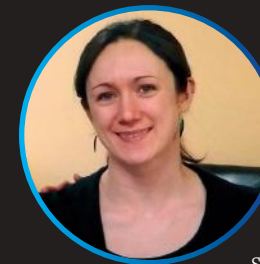
Susan Newcomer was the workforce development coordinator for the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce prior to her retirement and is highly active in the community through volunteerism and civic engagement. She continues to be involved with the chamber through her facilitation of its Leadership Monadnock Program.



Andrew Madison is the Source Protection Specialist for Granite State Rural Water Association and works with communities throughout the state to help them protect their drinking water supplies. He has been a resident of Keene for four years and in that time has served as Keene YPN's president for two of them in addition to serving on the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce's Programs Committee, and the City of Keene Conservation Commission. Madison is also an avid hiker, skier, and fly fisherman. He was awarded a Trendsetter Award in 2017.



Yves Pacifique Gakunde is a doctoral candidate in Environmental Studies Program at Antioch University New England. His research interests fall into ecosystem services, climate change adaptation and mitigation, community-based conservation; and natural resource management. He chairs the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Program at the City of Keene and works on various other projects administrated by the City of Keene. He is a member of many organizations including The Keene Elm City Rotary Club, the Regional Network for Conservation Educators in Albertine Rift (countries including Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, and Uganda), the Network for Botanists in Africa, and the Rwandan Association for Nature Conservation. Gakunde is the co-founder and the advisor for the Monadnock Rotaract Club (a club of young professional Rotarians) and is also among the organizers of the TEDx Keene event. He is one of the 2017 Trendsetters and recently was awarded a Paul Harris Award by the Keene Elm City Rotary Club for his "Service Above Self." Gakunde enjoys sharing his knowledge, serving his community and he only wishes there were more hours in a day so he can serve more. If he can't be found, a high probability is that he is watching a good movie while having a glass of wine and lots of chocolates.



Nikki Sauber has worked at Monadnock United Way (MUW) since 2015, first serving as Administrative Assistant and now as an Impact Coordinator. She supports local human service nonprofits to work collectively to address the region's most challenging social issues. Outside of her work at MUW, Nikki serves as the president of the Keene Young Professionals Network and a lead organizer of the annual TEDxKeene event. Sauber received her MS in Environmental Studies, with a concentration in Advocacy for Social Justice & Sustainability, from Antioch University New England in 2014. She lives with her dog and partner in a cabin in the woods of Nelson, New Hampshire. Sauber received a Trendsetter Award in 2017.

SELECTION PANEL

Behind-the-Scenes Talent

BY KEVIN PEARSON / PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL MOORE

Behind any finished product, there's almost always a lot of hard work.

Katie Day knows that. As communications and marketing manager at MoCo Arts in Keene, much of her effort is trained on spotlighting the work being done behind the scenes.

MoCo Arts, a nonprofit arts education organization that offers dance, theatre and multi-arts camps for children ages eight months to 18-plus years, provides year-round arts education as well as dance and theater productions for the public throughout the year.

"I really enjoy giving audiences a different look on what we do," Day, 30, says. "Because it's really easy to see that final pose of a show, and that's your only image ... but what a lot of the public doesn't see are the hours and hours of rehearsal that the kids are putting in so many weeks out of the year."

Day herself works behind the scenes to bring that process to light. She promotes MoCo's classes, performances and programming while managing all content on the organization's website, managing all the social media accounts and working to develop relationships with the media.

She also does design work for posters and print ads and manages the marketing for MoCo's \$5 million capital campaign, "MoCo Moves: Building MoCo Arts' Future."

The money is to fund a new MoCo Arts facility, which is rising on Roxbury Street in the city and expected to open later this summer. The two-story center will feature three full studios, a dedicated 200-seat black box theater, parking and offices. The building will be 17,000 square feet, compared to MoCo Arts' current 7,700 square feet on Railroad Street, where it has operated for more than two decades.

In September, at the official groundbreaking for the new MoCo Arts building, Day was visibly ecstatic.

"This is a re-energizing moment for the project," said Day on the site before the groundbreaking. That moment, that chance to breathe in the reality of the project, she said, was special.

Day grew up in the Bangor, Maine, area. She had always been fascinated with photography and film, so she decided to major in media studies with a focus on production at the University of Southern Maine in Portland. While studying, Day worked on many freelance video projects on campus, such as recruitment videos for the track and field team, and while doing so, she discovered she had a passion for visual storytelling.

After college, she was hired first as a video editor and then a news-cast director at WGME CBS 13 News in Portland. She describes it as a "mission control" job, responsible for coordinating graphics, microphones, and the position of the video camera and all that goes into a successful early morning daybreak news show. She's glad for what she learned there, but Day decided it wasn't what she wanted to do for a long-term career.



At that time, Day's then-girlfriend, now wife, Emily, was also living in Portland but had been coming to Keene every summer to teach at MoCo Arts' C.A.K.E. summer camp. And in 2013, Day decided to give it a try herself. Bringing her particular skills to the camp, Day introduced a class at C.A.K.E. — news where the kids are the journalists and they learn how to write stories and interview and report what's going on in camp to the rest of camp. Working with six or seven kids at a time, Day says many kids really enjoyed the experience, coming back year after year.

Day hadn't always worked with kids, but she loves it now.

"I really appreciate the fact that even though I work on the admin team for the organization I still have relationships with so many of the kids who take classes and come to the camps," Day says.

Katie is a dream colleague," Marty Hennem, artistic director of theatre and C.A.K.E. at Moco Arts, wrote in Day's Trendsetter nomination letter. "She is fully invested in our organization and the community at large and is always looking for ways to strengthen both. She knows how to amplify MoCo's message across all media platforms. She has a unique gift for bringing the 'visual story' alive."

Popping into classes to take photos and videos, Day says the kids

all know her. She can walk through the hallway at 4 p.m. and say "hi" to pretty much everyone.

"I think it's really important to maintain relationships with the kids so I can better share their story with the community," Day says.

So, when the full-time position for marketing manager opened, Day felt like it was meant to be. With a pretty full schedule now, Day still manages to teach a C.A.K.E. news class in the summer.

When she came to Keene, Day was looking for more ways to get more involved with the community, and when she heard about the Historical Society of Cheshire County's project to digitally archive thousands of old photos, she signed up right away.

"I really like old pictures and really like the history you can learn from those pictures," Day says. "That's perfect. I get to sit there and look at old pictures all day — I love doing that."

Day says she really liked seeing how things used to be in the region compared to how they are now. She thinks about how the MoCo Arts building used to be a machine shop, a car dealership and probably an old railroad outbuilding or repair shop back when the street was a railroad track. She's mindful of the posterity of photos and how



Katie Day spends about a third of her time at MoCo shooting stills and video of the students: here during a rehearsal for *Les Miserables*

so much memory and emotion can be attached to them.

But when it comes to visual storytelling, Day is drawn as much to new technologies as old. When Emily asked for help with a production of "1984" at Vermont Academy, Day jumped on it. They wanted a large projection of the face of Big Brother on the backdrop; Day said "no problem" and made it happen.

Day is immersed in the world of arts and drama now, but it wasn't always that way. The most theatre experience she had was in the 5th-grade

play when she played, as she tells it, a "really tall Oompa-Loompa" in "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory."

She says she was more of a team-sport kind of kid, but really appreciates being able to help children in the region find all kinds of options to explore what they love. Growing up, Day didn't have a program like MoCo that offered so much opportunity in the arts.

"When I first came to MoCo and was working the summer camp, I was blown away," Day says. "If I had been exposed to a program like this when I was a kid, who knows what I would have taken to." ■

Kevin Pearson a staff writer with *The Keene Sentinel*.

C&S Wholesale Grocers joins *The Business Journal* in congratulating the 2018 Trendsetters!

We are proud to honor our own Alona Florenz, with appreciation for her strong leadership and significant contributions in business and our community!



Alona Florenz
VP, Corporate Development

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