For the first time in California’s history on May 10th, The Admin Awards held its first gala in Silicon Valley, marking its official national rollout. The Silicon Valley Admin Awards recognized administrative excellence in nine award categories at the Santa Clara Marriott and celebrated the administrative profession. Over 500 Silicon Valley area professionals gathered at what many described as “The Academy Awards for Admins” to cheer on program finalists and celebrate administrative excellence.

Among the nine awards presented was the program’s most prestigious award, The Colleen Barrett Award for Administrative Excellence, which elevates the professional who embodies the “spirit” and proficiency of nationally renowned (former) admin, Colleen Barrett, President Emeritus of Southwest Airlines. During Colleen’s four-decade career at Southwest, she rose from secretary to Herb Kelleher, the airline’s founder, to President and CEO of the legendary, award-winning airline - all the while maintaining her “Corporate Secretary” title as it was the role at Southwest that made her the proudest. Colleen personally selects the recipient of this award, which is reserved for the career administrative professional whose competence, employee advocacy, exceptional customer service and passionate dedication best exemplify the Administrative Profession. The 2016 Colleen Barrett Award was presented to Debbie Gross, whose career at Cisco began in 1991 when she became the Executive Assistant to John Chambers, Senior Vice President at the time and continued working together for over two and a half decades as Chambers climbed to CEO and Chairman with the help of what he describes as a “true business partner.” Debbie’s service and influence has expanded beyond Cisco and into the lives of countless administrative professionals who Debbie has served through the administrative organization she co-founded, The Silicon Valley Catalyst Association. This Association provides ongoing education, inspiration and support to fellow administrative professionals in the Valley.

Congratulations to all of The 2016 Silicon Valley Admin Awards winners and a very heartfelt thank you to our community of program sponsors, event partners, judges, nominators and invaluable advisory board members who made this inaugural program a huge success. We could not have done this without you. And last but not least, thank you to the thousands of area administrative professionals doing outstanding work on behalf of your organizations and communities. Without you, there would be no reason to celebrate.

See you next year!

Sunny Nunn
Founder & President
The Admin Awards

As the daughter of a career secretary, I grew up watching the phenomenal impact my Mother, Jeannette Castellano, had on the companies she served throughout her lifelong career as an executive secretary.

So in 2012, after realizing there wasn’t an awards program anywhere in the country (maybe even the world) that publicly recognized the invaluable contributions of administrative professionals, I created The Admin Awards in my hometown of Dallas, Texas. The response was overwhelming - confirming what we had always suspected - a recognition program honoring administrative professionals was LONG overdue.
THE ROOKIE OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Rookie of the Year Award celebrates an administrative assistant or receptionist, new to the administrative profession (career as an admin started less than three years ago), who has demonstrated the greatest potential to excel. This award honors professionals who are starting their career as an administrative professional, have reentered the workforce as an admin or made a career change to an administrative role.

WINNER: AL-HUSEIN N. MADHANY Facebook

Al-Husein N. Madhany is the Executive Assistant to the Chief Information Officer at Facebook. He serves on the advisory board of C-Suite Executive Support Professionals, a national organization that helps expand the scope of the administrative assistant role into a strategic business partner one, through education and coaching.

With advanced degrees from Harvard, Georgetown, and the University of Chicago, Al-Husein has consulted internally to inspire employee volunteerism, community service and good corporate citizenship.

The Community Champion Award is awarded to the administrative professional who best demonstrates a commitment to serving others in their community and works internally to inspire employee volunteerism, community service and good corporate citizenship.

WINNER: ELIZABETH VEAZIE SAP

With 10 years of experience as an executive assistant in the software industry, Elizabeth is a seasoned professional strongly focused on employee engagement activities. A recipient of a Siebel Core Value award, Elizabeth has dedicated herself to community service and giving, working with non-profit organizations that support children and women’s initiatives.

Elizabeth has continued her work as a volunteer ambassador at SAP hosting volunteer activities, coordinating donation drives and advocating for funding to support the causes dearest to her heart. The relationships and skill set that she’s developed through volunteering has directly benefited SAP and her immediate team. Elizabeth speaks with such passion and conviction about the impact of helping others. She inspires everyone around her and motivates her colleagues to volunteer by orchestrating countless service opportunities.

In 2013, Elizabeth one out of a 150 SAP volunteer ambassadors in North America to be nominated to attend the Nation’s most important Volunteering and Service event in Washington, D.C. The event, hosted by NGO Points of Light, had more than 5,000 attendees from across the US. Elizabeth’s husband has threatened to send her to a 10 step program, soon after she was given a notepad, which read “Stop me before I volunteer again.” When she is not volunteering she enjoys cycling, cooking, tending to her organic garden and free range chickens.

We have a stellar admin team at Plantronics and we are so proud of our loyalty category finalist, Doris Lara.

Congratulations Doris!
**THE ACHIEVER AWARD**

Sandy LaBreec is the Executive Assistant to the Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary at NetApp Inc. (NASDAQ: NTAP), a Fortune 500 data management and storage provider. Among other things, she manages all communications, meeting minutes, global travel and calendaring for the General Counsel. Sandy also handles all administrative functions for the company’s Board of Directors. She is charged with managing all documents for omnibus and committee meetings, timely and accurate distribution of critical materials, scheduling, and coordination of Board activities. Sandy is also a licensed Notary Public.

Sandy’s experience as an Executive Assistant spans from early stage start-ups to the world’s largest companies. Prior to NetApp, she held positions at L39, Boeing, Narus, Eidos, Capcom, and Panasonic. In all of these roles, Sandy demonstrated her expertise in executive management. She has earned commendations from CxOs and Board members alike through multiple fundraising efforts and two successful venture-backed exits. At Narus and Boeing, she was responsible for coordinating and interfacing with discreet aspects of the defense and intelligence communities. Sandy takes pride in helping her executives and their teams realize potential by making their jobs easier and providing recommendations to improve and change key processes.

**WINNER: SANDY LABREC** NetApp Inc.

**FINALISTS**

- Jennifer Flinn
  - Satellite Healthcare

- Mary Garcia
  - Scout from University of California

- Norma Munoz
  - Maxim Integrated

- Janet Roberson
  - Juniper Networks

**THE LEADERSHIP AWARD**

Melissa is the Senior Executive Assistant to the Executive Vice President & General Manager of Juniper Development and Innovation (JDI) at Juniper Networks. In this role, she supports the JDI Team in driving strategy, development, and business growth for Juniper’s entire portfolio.

Melissa’s tenure of 10 years at Juniper Networks has contributed to her extensive knowledge of the business and operational procedures. She manages complex calendars, travel, expenses and correspondences. She also partners with cross-functional administrators, business leaders and external customers.

Melissa is a natural leader and consummate business professional. Her peers commend her for her commitment to strengthening Juniper’s administrative community. Melissa loves to share knowledge and is a gifted mentor — she continuously inspires and encourages her fellow administrative professionals to achieve their highest potential.

Melissa Acuna co-founded and leads the ACouncil (Admin Council), which she has done since 2009. She also currently leads the Admin Learning and Development committee, which offers and promotes training to all new administrative hires in the company.

Melissa rolled out the Travel Smart Initiative, a travel cost saving program that saved the company $1.5M. In 2012, Melissa received the first Juniper Networks Administrative Excellence Award for going above and beyond her role.

**WINNER: MELISSA ACUNA** Juniper Networks

**FINALISTS**

- Dawn Adams
  - Santa Clara Valley Medical Center

- Sheena Bassard
  - Flex

- Pennie Bepristis
  - Hitachi Data Systems

- Kristy Huynh
  - Satellite Healthcare
The Spirit Award celebrates the administrative professional who consistently exhibits a positive, spirited outlook and exudes good energy that rubs off on everyone around them. Their can do attitude and overall spirit is contagious and uplifting, drawing people to them on good days and bad.

**WINNER: NIKKI EDWARDS**

Nikki Edwards is the Executive Assistant to Simon Segars, CEO of ARM, the UK-based company whose processors enable 95% of the world’s smartphones. She believes helping others on a daily basis is the most fulfilling type of work in life and describes her work supporting ARM’s CEO as a true dream job.

Her influence in the organization extends beyond the office of the CEO as she is also an invaluable member of the US Management Team in its ongoing efforts to streamline and enhance internal processes.

Prior to joining ARM, Nikki supported the SVP of Products and Services and VP of Global Services for Flexera Software. Preceding Flexera, Nikki provided executive support in the Financial Services industry – serving 6 years at PwC and Edward Jones combined; both listed as FORTUNE Magazine’s “100 Best Company’s to work for”.

Nikki is a graduate of Webster University where she earned a Master of Business Administration. She earned her Bachelor of Science with concentrations in both Finance and Marketing from William Woods University on an athletic scholarship.

In her spare time, Nikki enjoys playing soccer, a sport she has long been passionate about for its lessons in teamwork, collaboration and fitness.

**FINALISTS**

- INGRID FALK  
  Duff & Phelps  
  Symantec Corp.

- SUSAN NYSTROM  
  Susan Riddle  
  Bay Federal Credit Union  
  Cris Sanchez  
  Flex

**The Above the Call Receptionist Award**

The Above the Call Receptionist Award honors the RECEPTIONIST who goes above and beyond the call in delivering an exceptional first impression and serves internal and external customers with professionalism, enthusiasm and care, leaving a lasting impression with all they come into contact with. (*NOTE: Nominee must spend 50 percent or more on average of their time daily fielding/handling phone calls in order to qualify for this award.)*

**WINNER: JORDAN PATTERSON**

Jordan Patterson joined Palo Alto Staffing as a temporary Office Coordinator. With over 5 years of administrative, marketing and corporate social media experience she was converted to a permanent employee within sixty days.

With an outgoing personality and organized work ethic, Jordan has been responsible for greeting everyone who walks through the door and calls in. She works with the conference calendar, screening resumes and maintaining the corporate social media accounts and website. Jordan has helped with the success of our social media growth and internet foot print.

Jordan’s determination and loyalty to her job has earned her more responsibility. She helps with the onboarding, filing and submissions of new employees.

She has the ability to use discretion and sound judgment in every task, respecting highly confidential materials and projects. Her willingness to always learn and eagerness to take on more tasks is the key to her success.

Prior to this role, Jordan served as a District and Marketing Coordinator for Baker Management Company for 4 years.

Jordan looks forward to continuing her growth with Palo Alto Staffing.

**FINALISTS**

- MARIA GERONIMO  
  Zara Medal  
  Synopsys

- EMON MOJADDIDY  
  Sap  
  Sue Stuart  
  Aedis Architects

**AVAYA CONGRATULATES**

CC WOOLFOLK  
Finalist for Colleen Barrett Award for Administrative Excellence

JAYSON FORMAN  
Nominee for Leadership Award

**AVAYA ADMIN FINALIST**

CONGRATS ISMAEL CORTEZ!  
YOU DESERVE IT!

def all of us at European Paving Designs

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THE LOYALTY AWARD

The Loyalty Award is presented to the fiercely loyal administrative professional who has a 10 year or greater history of effective service to their current organization in an administrative role, and consistently demonstrates tireless dedication and commitment to supervisors, employees and customers.

WINNER: GINA FARRUGIA ORTEGA  
EFI

For over 24 years, Gina has provided critical support to Electronics for Imaging (EFI) as executive assistant to senior leaders including the CEO, board president, and SVP of Sales and Marketing. She is a highly organized professional communicator who acts as liaison between the CEO and his senior management team, as well as working with stakeholders and executives from customer and partner companies.

As EFI grew from a staff of 100 with five customers to a worldwide company with 3,000-plus employees and hundreds of thousands of customers, Gina has provided consistency and most importantly, demonstrates the adaptiveness and flexibility to implement new systems to stay ahead of the pace in this rapidly growing company. Gina’s biggest asset is her ability to anticipate needs and ward off issues. She has an innate ability to work out details amidst chaotic conditions, which helps her team stay organized and on track.

Gina is solely responsible for managing the day-to-day work in the company’s executive suite, which includes all domestic and international travel for executives who are on the road 50% of the time or more. In addition to remote scheduling synchronization, Gina serves as public face for EFI’s CEO and deftly sets up contingency plans and trouble-shoots to ensure the executive team’s logistics are effective and efficient. She is a member of the Executive Assistants Organization and resides in the East Bay.

FINALISTS

MELODIE DUNLAP  
Brandenburg Properties

SUSAN KRUESER  
ABD Insurance & Financial Services

DORIS LARA  
Plantronics

QUYNH TRAN  
Ravenswood Family Health Center

THE OFFICE MANAGER AWARD

The Office Manager Award recognizes the Office Manager or Office Assistant who effectively handles a wide range of administrative responsibilities in the workplace ranging from administrative support to managing office facilities and everything in between. This award is reserved for the administrative professional that wears many hats and enjoys the challenge of serving an organization’s diverse office administration needs.

WINNER: CHARMAYNE CORMIER-CRAVEN  
HGA Architects and Engineers

Charmayne Cormier-Craven is often referred to as the Administrative Assistant “Extraordinaire” or “Lady with Many Hats.” She has over 13 years of administrative experience in the Commercial Architecture Industry, beginning her career as a receptionist and the welcoming face at Reel Grobman & Associates which is now HGA Architects and Engineers.

During the merge she was instrumental in the transitioning from Reel Grobman to HGA, including coordinating new signage, supporting HR by assisting in benefit enrollment, supporting the IT department with upgrading the telephone and computer systems, and taking on a support role to assist the Project Manager during the build out and installation of the video conferencing center.

Through hard work and preservation over the years, Charmayne has expanded her responsibilities to Vendor Presentation organizer, Event Coordinator, Tier one IT Support, New Hire Orientation, Contracts Administrator, and Staffing Coordinator Assistant by developing presentation organizer, Event Coordinator, Tier one IT Support, New Hire Orientation, Contracts Administrator, and Staffing Coordinator Assistant by developing weekly staffing projection reports. In addition, she is the point of contact for facilities and office security requirements even making sure the company car is maintained.

When she is not sprinting around the office multitasking and putting out “fires”, Charmayne unwinds by mountain bike riding, scuba diving, painting, or wine tasting with her family and close friends.

FINALISTS

TERRY CHRISTIANSEN  
El Camino Hospital

ISMAEL CORTEZ  
European Paving Designs, Inc.

TANYA DE LA CRUZ  
Moreland School Dist.

MIMY WRASPIR  
Lattice Engines

A Great Culture Is Made From Great People

Organizations around the world turn to Hitachi Data Systems for help adapting to the rising digital economy, relying on our proven, integrated portfolio of IT systems and services. Data is what we do. We’re proud that we are trusted by more than 80% of the Fortune Global 100.

HDS.com
The Colleen Barrett Award For Administrative Excellence is the Admin Award’s most prestigious award. This coveted award is presented to the admin who best demonstrates the qualities listed below, many of which enabled Colleen Barrett’s rise from legal secretary to President and Chief Operating Officer of Southwest Airlines and contributed to the company’s legendary corporate culture and extraordinary success. These qualities are: high proficiency, must share the same values as their organization, must be passionately committed to their organization’s cause or purpose, must demonstrate a passion for legendary customer service both internally and externally, and must have a heart for employee advocacy — making sure the company always does right by its employees.

**WINNER: DEBBIE GROSS**

Cisco Systems

Debbie Gross, CEA, has over 30 years of experience in the administrative field. She joined Cisco Systems in March, 1991 as the executive assistant to John Chambers, then Senior Vice President of Worldwide Operations. As the company has grown from $1.2 billion in annual revenues to $46 billion, her responsibilities have grown together with Chambers’. In 1995, when Chambers became President and CEO, Debbie Gross assumed the lead role leading Cisco’s broad 1000+-person administrative team.

She is considered a leader in the promotion of Cisco administrative programs that include the creation of the Administrators Leadership Council (ALC) which focuses on initiatives for the Cisco global administrative community. This includes Rewards and Recognition, Career Development, Mentorship, and process and policy improvements. She is a member of the California UCSC Extended Campus Board for Curriculum Development, and is a Guest Lecturer for the Administrative Professionals programs there.

She was born and raised in Jackson, Miss. Loves golfing, mountain biking and karaoke singing on the weekends.

**FINALISTS**

ELIZABETH ORLIN

Flex

SUSAN WEBB

PwC

CC WOOLFOLK

Avaya

**CONGRATULATIONS TO**

SANDY LABREC

FOR BEING NAMED AS A FINALIST IN THE 2016 SILICON VALLEY ADMIN AWARDS!

**Congratulations to Shawna Harvel & Norma Munoz**

Finalists for the 2016 Silicon Valley Admin Awards

Thank you to all of Maxim’s global administrative team for your support!

Our proud list of nominees: Catherine Clemente, Shawna Harvel, Vickie Jette, Lisa Milanes, Norma Munoz, Kevin Rumley, Sarah Talerico, Marbella Valencia, Le Vu, Kristy Wolk

Be Bold • One Maxim • Reach Higher • Be the Difference