

DENVER METRO
ADMINAWARDS®

P R E S E N T S

Live!
GOOD
AS
GOLD

A REGIONAL CELEBRATION OF
ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE

SEPTEMBER 26 | 7 PM
VIA LIVE STREAMING

NATIONAL PARTNER

Southwest 

Official Airline Partner

PREMIER
PARTNERS

 **Robert Half**®

BONJOUR 
BAKEHOUSE

COMMUNITY
PARTNER

 **Tandem Resource Solutions**

GOOD AS
GOLD
SPONSOR



A LETTER FROM THE ADMIN AWARDS FOUNDER



It truly takes the effort, commitment and heart of many to make a program like the Admin Awards possible during typical times, but during times like “these”, we are deeply aware that our program would not be possible without our incredibly loyal staff, Advisory Board, Sponsors and Partners – and equally important, the business community that trusts us to provide meaningful recognition to one of their most beloved employee groups.

An amazing evolution has led us to this fifth annual 2020 Denver Metro Admin Awards Live! An Unstoppable Celebration of Administrative Excellence.

As the world turned inward earlier this year, the executive community went the opposite direction. Business leaders began reaching out to us inquiring about our 2020 programs, eager to show their appreciation and celebrate. They also validated what my intuition was telling me: The recognition of the Administrative Professionals at the core of our program is far more important than the physical, in-person events.

Very early on, we were reminded that companies were depending on their Admins to keep everything together, to make the impossible seem effortless and to do it all with skill, enthusiasm and heart. In the can-do spirit of the Denver Metro Area Admins we honor, we put our hearts and minds into creating a special experience that we hope makes you feel connected, inspired and joyful.

And since we announced our plans for Admin Awards Live! 2020, I have been overjoyed at the outpouring of enthusiasm and love for these amazing professionals. So many busy people took the time to express gratitude through their words and actions. Our collective efforts really do change lives for the better.

So here we are. Our first virtual Denver Metro Admin Awards Gala. I am incredibly thankful the stars have aligned to bring us all together for this celebration. The technological innovation that allows us to be together, but safe, the many Sponsors and Partners who contributed their resources to make this evening special and most importantly, the faith, heart and determination this unique business community has demonstrated through all of today’s challenges.

2020, with all its challenges, has shown us that the Administrative Community is stronger than ever and companies are united in their determination to ensure their Admins are properly appreciated and cared for. This unstoppable spirit continually inspires us and makes us better people.

So, pat yourselves on the back. This amazing evening would not be possible without each and every one of you!

With appreciation,

Sunny Nunan
Founder, CEO & Proud Daughter of an Executive Secretary
Admin Awards

2020 ADVISORY BOARD

Debi Richards

Turning the Corner
Executive Assistant / Office Manager

Rachel McNerney

Whiting Petroleum
Executive Business Analyst &
Executive Assistant

Jean Wallace

KPMG LLP
Executive Assistant

Adela Pena

Leprino Foods Company
Office Administrator and
Executive Assistant

Nicole Valdez

The Monroe Group / Steele Properties
Executive Assistant to the
Principal Owners

Rena Scott

Discovery Natural Resources
Executive Assistant to the CEO

Kari Mertz

Mozilla
Executive Assistant

Alyssa Swantkoski

Adswerve, Inc.
Executive Assistant

Kara Washburn

Eagle Automation
Executive Assistant to the CEO

Monica Eads

Alliant Insurance Services, Inc.
Executive Assistant -
RE & Hospitality

Teri Kiss

Visa
Executive Assistant

Natalie McGinnis

Ball Corporation
Executive Assistant

Amy Cler

Red Bird Farms
Board Chair & Executive
Assistant to Owner

Anna Roberson

Gaylord Rockies
Events Administrative Assistant

Amanda McKenzie

Dept. of Veteran Affairs
Executive Assistant

2020 JUDGES

Colleen Barrett

Southwest Airlines
President Emeritus

LaTonya McPherson

InnovAge
Executive Assistant

Pam Gerber

Fibroid Free
CMO

Sherry Parsons

Cisco
Retired

Kelly Southern

Denver Museum of
Nature & Science
Executive Assistant to the
President & CEO

Seva Kouremetis

BDO
Office Services Supervisor

Windy Roundtree

Liberty Global Executive
Assistant to the SVP,
Investor Relations

Delta Emerson

Can You Hear Us Founder,
Principal

Jay Allen

CXO.org
Founder & Chairman

Tamie Peterson

CXO/HR100/EA100
Office Manager



WINNER



Ashley Sparhawk

GLOBAL DOWN SYNDROME FOUNDATION,
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT & GRANTS PROGRAM MANAGER

{ THE COLLEEN BARRETT AWARD FOR
ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE }

As the Executive Assistant and Grants Manager at Global Down Syndrome Foundation, Ashley Sparhawk seamlessly multi-tasks across every area department and delivers a high volume of work, all while helping manage the executive's calendar and hefty deliverables. No matter how heavy the load gets, Ashley is always pleasant, supportive, and moves everyone forward. She is the entire company's go-to for, well, everything! A motivated self-starter, Ashley took it upon herself to study online to become proficient in editing contracts, engaging in government correspondences and briefing protocols, and project management. It doesn't go without notice throughout the organization that Ashley is always willing to go the extra mile for the Global Down Syndrome Foundation and for the people with Down syndrome that the organization serves. She has eagerly taken over the Global Membership Grants Program and enrolled in related courses and now brings excellent resources to the table. After she became Grants Manager, Ashley doubled the number of applicants and grants provided and streamlined the application process. The Global Down Syndrome Foundation's mission is to significantly improve the lives of people with Down syndrome through research, medical care, education, and advocacy. Ashley's work truly reflects corporate values—a strong work ethic, pride of work, managing work and stress with grace, leadership, teamwork, best practices, and making a tangible and significant difference for the people the company serves. During the pandemic, Ashley has been managing more than 300 emails per day and countless phone inquiries, helping people who are food insecure and in need of other necessities. She has become a vocal advocate and liaison for children and families the organization serves, connecting them with pro bono lawyers for legal services and with medical professionals for life-saving care. Ashley has also been instrumental in growing the Be Beautiful Be Yourself Fashion Show, the largest fundraiser for people with Down syndrome in the world. She takes the lead on ensuring there are smooth logistics and happy celebrities and fashion show models. Her passion, compassion, loyalty, intelligence, and hard work have touched the lives of more than 25,000 people with Down syndrome. Her passionate commitment to the Global Down Syndrome Foundation allows the organization to successfully deliver its mission, vision, and goals.

FINALISTS



Bonnie Azevedo
Moye White LLP



Lori Lucero
Ball Corporation



Colleen Barrett: Servant Leader and Superstar

When The Admin Awards was launched in 2012, we sat down with Colleen Barrett to ask her for her thoughts and experiences on the administrative profession. Her answers from that September interview, edited for brevity; are below:

What did you like most about being a secretary?

I like to serve so you have to start there. I loved to solve problems. And I loved to

give exemplary or positive customer service delivery on behalf of whomever I was working for. Life is all about relationships... you have an opportunity in the administrative group to form more relationships than probably any other position—even much higher up on that so-called ladder because you are very often that first point of contact with the outside world or the customer... life is just one big grassroots campaign as far as I'm concerned.

What did you like the least?

I didn't like anything that was routine. I loved to master projects, but, for example, filing was only interesting to me because I loved to be able to find anything that anyone was looking for... I've never liked rote work. (But) there's some that goes in every job no matter what position you're in.

What was the most challenging aspect of serving Herb Kelleher?

Being a nanny for 45 years for a man who has always thought he was 17 regardless of any year that was added to his personal calendar!

He was a great servant leader. He loved life and you almost couldn't be around him and not catch that love of life and love of people.

And the best aspect?

It was truly feeling his egalitarian spirit and appreciating the fact that he valued my judgment and thinking as a team member.

Did you ever think you would rise from Secretary to President and COO of Southwest Airlines?

Quite honestly it wasn't something I wanted, and I never wanted to be COO—and I made that very clear to the Board—that isn't my strength. My strength is customer service and people and everything that touches people, and, honestly, being President and COO wasn't my favorite position at Southwest...my favorite position was Executive Vice President-Customers. Customer to us means employees, passengers, and shareholders, so I could really touch everything. I could touch every department. And as President... I had to do a lot more external things... I did them... I can't say I hated them... (but) I like to get down and dirty and really roll up my sleeves.

What advice do you have for Admins?

Love. Everybody. Just love. It's a word that corporate America doesn't use very much... always remember where you came from — so that you know how far you've come... I don't think most of us start out thinking we're going to be the President of the United States or the CEO of a company... and I think... be humble and appreciate what you get. To me psychic satisfaction is 10 times more important than pay or title. Be authentic. Be real. Remember who you are.

“Be authentic.
Be real.
Remember
who you are.”

WINNER

{ THE ABOVE THE CALL AWARD }

**KATIE WATTS****KPMG, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT**

In only one year at KPMG, Katie Watts has made an incredible impact in the Denver office, joining a longstanding team of Executive Assistants. This speaks volumes about her skillset, keen intuition, and impressive ability. She quickly became a valuable member of the team, and her leadership qualities were evident from the start. Katie's can-do attitude lifts her team members who readily admit she makes them look good. Each day, she handles multiple details for a variety of KPMG professionals without missing a beat. In addition to her role as Executive Assistant to the Office Managing Partner at KPMG, Denver, Katie goes out of her way to participate in additional important and value-added ways. Among her many roles: Denver tickets administrator to coordinating office/client tickets for Pepsi Center and Rockies tickets, Denver portal administrator to keep the local site updated with helpful information,

culture champion to spread the word about innovation and diversity within the firm, and a tireless volunteer for the KPMG Business School. She often participates in last-minute reports projects for audits and develops training opportunities for KPMG professionals. Katie is inclusive in all efforts and rallies the team to participate in training and educational opportunities, always making the sessions entertaining and fun. Katie is the very definition of exceptional service and keeps the company at the forefront in all she does. She approaches her role with integrity, excellence, and courage, and inspires the same values in her peers.

FINALISTS



Jana Reffel
Ball Corporation



Kristina Saly
Leprino Foods Company



Sue Seewald
Alliant Insurance
Services, Inc.



Bonnie Veller
FMI Capital Advisors

WINNER

{ THE ACHIEVER AWARD }

**KARA ERLICH****KPMG, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT**

Kara Erlich is an Executive Assistant to several KPMG LLP partners and supports the Financial Audit Practice. She shows up each day full of energy and has become a role model within the office. When you see her coming down the hall, you can't help but smile. She will stop everything to see how she can help, going above and beyond her responsibilities and always looking for new opportunities that exercise her strategic thinking skills. Kara brings KPMG values and KPMG's Heads Up Thinking to life. From onboarding and training new Executive Assistants and planning events and conferences to fostering a sense of camaraderie and taking the lead in new technology training, she does the right thing the right way. Always striving to achieve the next level in whatever she takes on, Kara remains levels above expectation. Creative. Positive. Innovative. Courageous. Leader. These are all ways Kara has been

described by her colleagues. She is constantly looking for additional ways to be involved and further the work of KPMG. She has become a critical and trusted team member of the Financial Services team and has become a leader in the Lean in Circle. If there is a new direction, a new tool, or a new technology that has never been implemented before, Kara has it covered. Her colleagues love that that Kara "uses her Jersey" to get the job done and reports, "Kara is someone everyone can count on. She is truly the glue that holds the whole team together and who keeps the practice running smoothly. She is the epitome of a rock star!"

FINALISTS



Regina Cardenas
HSS Inc.



Endsley Eggert
HeartHero



Sara Krcha
Skupos



Whitney Loftesnes
Convercent



Congratulations to Jessica Putney, Sue Thielen
and all the Denver Admin Award finalists!

At Robert Half, we help professionals find meaningful careers and companies find the talent they need to be successful. Turn to us for expertise in staffing accounting and finance, technology, administrative, legal, creative and marketing positions.

Denver • 1.303.296.1010

roberthalf.com

rh Robert Half®

© 2020 Robert Half International Inc. An Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/Disability/Veterans. RH-0520



**CONGRATULATIONS
ON YOUR NOMINATION
ALEXIS FREDRICKSON**



FINALISTS



Angela Beale
CU Denver



Susan Loseke
Children's Hospital
Colorado



Gaby Stephenson
Visit Colorado Springs



Stacey Stone
P2 Energy Solutions

THE ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

WINNER

CHRISSY ALLEN

WASTE MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR (OFFICE MANAGER)

Loyalty and longevity are the first two words that come to mind when describing Chrissy Allen, who began her career with Waste Management 22 years ago and has been with the same district throughout her tenure. She oversees four operations support members who collectively support over 290 employees. When one thinks of a sustainable, healthy company culture, Chrissy comes to mind. She has been instrumental in creating this culture, thanks to her positive attitude, accountability, tenacity, consistency, and influence. She remains one step ahead of whatever needs to be addressed. She knows every employee by name, is the first to welcome new team members, and easily adapts to many leadership styles. She has been quick to take on extra responsibilities, including project management. In addition to her duties as Office Manager, she also oversees \$300 thousand in facility maintenance and has helped stabilize the budget for several years. Her contribution to the community and to the health of employees is one of her greatest passions. She coordinates donations for multiple organizations, including local emergency and law enforcement, and organizes nonprofit food and clothing donations. She also organizes company-wide wellness programs, including an annual 5K event and stress management courses. She is quick to think of ideas and organize events to boost company morale, with barbecues, breakfasts, and gifts, and orchestrates donations for team members in need. The best way to describe Chrissy's importance to the hauling site is this: "She is the company's heartbeat."



FINALISTS



Rebecca Collier
KeyBank



Melanie Meredith
Noble Energy



Paige Olivier
Colorado Oil & Gas
Association



Krystal Schledwitz
Whiting Petroleum



Tara Thorne
Cisco

THE LEADERSHIP AWARD

WINNER

SUE THIELEN

ROBERT HALF, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

Sue Thielen is the District Administrative Coordinator for Robert Half, the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm. Sue joined the company in 2002 as a staffing support professional and has been promoted several times into roles with increasing responsibility, including lead administrator, district operations specialist, and zone operations coordinator. During her 18 years with the company, Sue has become an undeniable asset. She continually seeks new opportunities within the company to grow her career and to benefit the organization. Sue is always first in the office—or these days online—and eager to take on new challenges and projects, always with a positive attitude. She is a master meeting planner, travel coordinator, and calendar manager. A natural leader and mentor, Sue believes you should do something to improve yourself each day. Because of her, team members hold themselves to a higher standard and won't settle for good enough. She always puts her best effort forward in everything she does, and this mindset is emulated by those around her. During the difficult times of the COVID-19 pandemic, Sue faced new challenges and excelled as a key leader. With the entire company transitioning to a remote work environment, Sue rallied the administrative staff and implemented new ways to support the teams while making sure employees had remote functionality at home. While working remotely, she even coordinated and executed three planned office relocations with ease and is now spearheading and overseeing the reopening of the office. Sue has been working tirelessly to ensure all health and safety protocols are implemented to bring employees safely back into the office where, no doubt, she will continue leading the way.



FINALISTS



Amy Fountain
AdCellerant



Jenny Hutson
PetDine



Etwanda Johnson
P2 Energy Solutions

THE SPIRIT AWARD

WINNER

RENE GARCIA

JANUS HENDERSON INVESTORS, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Rene Garcia exemplifies the spirit of positivity. For 17 years, Rene has been part of the Janus Henderson Investments team where he always offers a warm smile when greeting fellow colleagues. Rene brings a spirit of teamwork to the company with his helpfulness, generosity, and charity. He prioritizes building relationships, developing connections, and creating opportunities for others. He is the first person to lend a hand—or his phenomenal surround-sound speaker—to make company events memorable. No matter what task is at hand, it's a guarantee Rene is the first to arrive and last to leave to ensure every detail is taken care of. Rene epitomizes the spirit of ingenuity and is always eager to learn new technology and train others. Throughout remote officing, he has enthusiastically brought the company's global team together through weekly QuarantEAM activities, where team members reminisced about favorite concerts, swapped recipes, tested their ab strength with plank challenges, and dressed in baseball attire for virtual happy hours. In a time of uncertainty, he has lifted spirits with joy and positivity while fostering an environment of inclusivity and connection. At the office, Rene leads the culture committee, organizing the annual cookie exchange, potlucks, and fun surprises. Outside of work, he donates his time to charity to deliver supplies to those in need. Colleagues note that Rene's admirable spirit of humility means he would never expect an award, as he is always willing to step aside so others may have the spotlight. But today, it is his turn to be honored for his infectious spirit.



FINALISTS



Laura Pals
HSS Inc.



Jessica Putney
Robert Half

THE LOYALTY AWARD

WINNER

CHERIE HARRIS

MERCY HOUSING, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT / RECEPTIONIST

For two decades, Cherie Harris has dedicated her skills, time, and attention to the Mercy Housing community. There are many times company executives have wondered if Cherie would leave the nonprofit industry, and they are always relieved to know that she has stayed. She takes it upon herself to provide exceptional assistance and service to all departments within the organization and supports residents and individuals looking for housing by being a friendly first point of contact when they call Mercy Housing's corporate office. She is a true champion for affordable housing with a tireless commitment to serving Mercy Housing. In short, she is a wonderful ambassador for the organization. Cherie also oversees the intern program by providing support, training, and direction to Mercy Housing's high school students, so they gain useful skills to apply in their careers. Beyond mentoring, she also makes sure the students, most of them from disadvantaged backgrounds, have snacks and the tools they need for success while working. Cherie is caring and resourceful, always happy to offer help no matter the task. Her quick wit, attention to detail, and loyalty to the organization endears her to colleagues. She has weathered many changes within the organization and is the company go-to for historical facts. A self-starter, she takes it upon herself to seek ways to better herself and learn new skills. Not only is Cherie the rock of the team at Mercy Housing, she is also the rock at home where she devotes her time outside of work to care for her son with special needs.



WINNER**{ THE OFFICE MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARD }****SARAH BARRETT****CANNA ADVISORS, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT / OFFICE MANAGER**

It wasn't easy finding the right person for the Executive Assistant/Office Manager job at Canna Advisors, but once Sarah Barrett came along, the search was over. When HR called for Sarah's references, they were told she was "money" and that she should be hired immediately so that she wouldn't get away. So, Sarah "Money" Barrett was hired, and the rest is history. Today, she is the glue that keeps the company together and running smoothly. Sarah ensures the various company departments are working effectively and in sync, and because of her, the company culture has never been stronger. Canna Advisors' sales processes have improved because of Sarah, thanks to her coordination efforts with the sales team to implement more structure around the CRM platform, and she leads efforts to create more internal SOP's to define and

refine internal processes. In the midst of a global pandemic and while working remotely, she trained the entire company on how to use the new phone system and improved internal communication with the implementation of Slack. Whenever it's time to volunteer, Sarah is first to sign up. She also participates in an Administrative Assistant group to learn ways to be even more effective in her role and has taken several industry certification courses to understand more about the business Canna Advisors serves and supports.

FINALISTS

Marisa Cucuzzella
Global Down
Syndrome Foundation



Alexis Fredrickson
Gebhardt Emerson
Moodie Bonanno



Karen Helmsin
Whiting Petroleum



Cynthia Papin
Discovery Natural
Resources



Kayla Sparks
Liberty Oilfield
Services

WINNER**{ THE ROOKIE OF THE YEAR AWARD }****AMBER SMITH****NATIONAL CORPORATE HOUSING, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT**

Amber Smith is the face of National Corporate Housing. The moment any employee or guest walks into the lobby of National's headquarters, they are greeted with Amber's luminous smile a warm welcome. Each day, she seamlessly assists with a wide variety of projects across multiple departments, all while sharing her creativity, positivity, and dedication. She often volunteers to help with tasks outside of her scope of responsibility, adding value to any team she joins. Amber excels at customer service, organization, and managing details, making her work look effortless, although everyone at the company knows it's not. In addition to her daily responsibilities, Amber founded and co-chairs the company's diversity and inclusion committee, leading the way on how National Corporate Housing can become a better, more inclusive organization. During her speeches, she has moved

colleagues to tears and has changed hearts and minds about important racial issues, all while instigating change within the company and in her community. To put it simply, Amber is an incredible human being, at work and throughout the community. Whenever someone needs help, she always finds a way to say yes--a shining example of a team player who always goes above the call.



Amanda Letcher
Ripple Effect Consulting



Barbara Rivera
KPMG

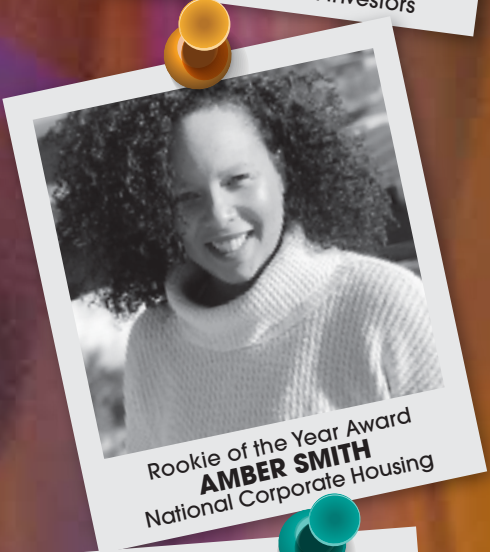
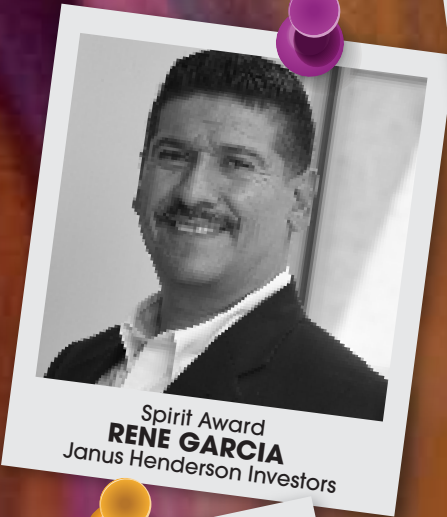
FINALISTS

Janus Henderson
— INVESTORS —

CONGRATULATIONS**RENÉ GARCIA****Spirit Award Finalist for the 2020 Denver Admin Awards**

Thank you for continually exemplifying a spirit of teamwork, positivity, generosity and charity.

CONNECT WITH US AT [JANUSHENDERSON.COM/CAREERS](https://janushenderson.com/careers)



The Denver
Metro
**ADMIN
AWARDS**
Proudly
Congratulates
The 2020
Winners

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

NATIONAL PARTNER



Official Airline Partner

In its 45th year of service, Dallas-based Southwest Airlines continues to differentiate itself from other air carriers with exemplary Customer Service delivered by more than 49,000 Employees to more than 100 million Customers annually. Southwest proudly operates a network of 97 destinations across the United States and seven additional countries with more than 3,900 departures a day during peak travel season. With 43 consecutive years of profitability, Southwest is one of the most honored airlines in the world with an emphasis on performance and productivity, the importance of its People and the communities they serve, and an overall commitment to efficiency and the planet.

PREMIER PARTNERS



COMMUNITY PARTNER



GOOD AS GOLD SPONSOR



A well-deserved spotlight for a job well done.

KPMG is proud to shine a spotlight on **Katie Watts**, **Kara Erlich**, and **Barb Rivera** and congratulate each of them for being named finalists in the **2020 Denver Metro Admin Awards** and making a difference in the lives of all those they support at KPMG.

kpmg.com



© 2020 KPMG LLP, a Delaware limited liability partnership and the U.S. member firm of the KPMG network of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Cooperative ("KPMG International"), a Swiss entity. NDP119104

THE ADMIN AWARDS IS
PROUD TO PARTNER WITH



Thanks for all you do to make our events a success!