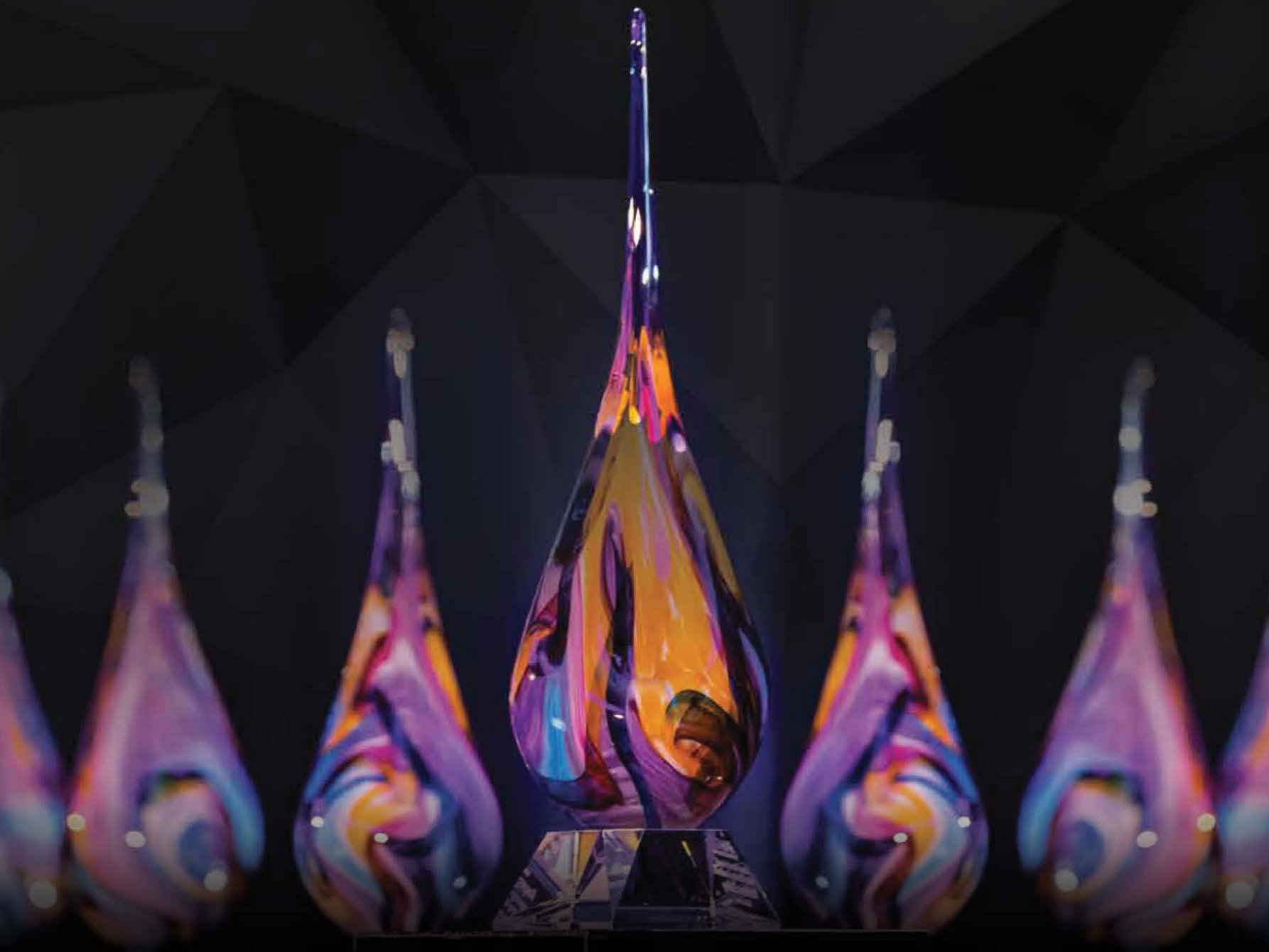


# ADMIN AWARDS®

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# A LETTER FROM THE ADMIN AWARDS



The 2022 Denver Metro Admin Awards Good as Gold Gala marks a milestone with so many reasons to celebrate. This evening is a return to our in-person format after two long, but tremendously gratifying years of being virtual. After arguably one of our generations' most cataclysmic events, we are back, celebrating the amazing spirit, heart and expertise of the country's intrepid Administrative Professionals.

As I reflect on the evening and attending my first Denver Metro Admin Awards Gala, I feel compelled to identify the common denominator, the thread that runs through this honorable endeavor to celebrate the most important group of professionals. It's generosity.

The generosity of the amazing Denver Advisory Board. These passionate Admins, who already shoulder the burden of their intense jobs, family obligations and life's curveballs, spent hours of their own time advancing our mission to ensure that every Admin doing excellent work has the opportunity to be recognized through the Admin Awards program. They are our VIP's, and many of them also volunteered to help us set up and work the Gala. We love them dearly.

The generosity of extremely busy Executives and teams positively impacted by their Admins' great work, who take time out of their busy schedules to write thoughtful nominations and participate in all the activities, like the Tribute Video, to ensure that their Finalists and Admins feel their support and admiration through their generous contribution of time and resources.

The generosity of our independent Board of Judges, including the legendary Colleen Barrett, who volunteer many hours to evaluate nominations and determine our Finalists and Winners. They take it seriously and agonize over their decisions as they go through the process.

The generosity of our Sponsors, who not only provide critical funding that enables the Admin Awards to thrive, but all the additional things they do "just because" they believe so strongly in our mission and the value of Administrative Professionals. From helping us raise awareness, and nominating, to providing major prizes, they reach well beyond their own business interests in their many contributions. We are so fortunate to have a strong family of long-term Sponsors who demonstrate their passion in so many unique ways.

Most importantly, Administrative Professionals are generosity personified! It shouldn't surprise us that their very nature inspires generosity in all who are impacted by them. Though it is likely not written into any job description, Admins are inherently generous with their time, hearts, and actions. Every day, we encounter Admins with amazing credentials who are prime candidates for being nominated and who are much more focused on having their peers recognized than they are on themselves. It inspires us to see Admins who are eager to see one of their peers in the spotlight. This attribute of generosity is no more pronounced than with Administrative Professionals and it motivates us every day!

From the entire Admin Awards organization, congratulations to this year's Finalists and Award Winners, you all deserve your time in the limelight! And thank you to everyone who made this evening possible – the Denver Advisory Board, the Board of Judges, busy Executives and their teams and our wonderful Sponsors. We are forever grateful for the copious amounts of generosity that bring us together and enable us to honor and celebrate Denver's Administrative Professionals!

Sincerely,

**Leslie Shelton**  
VP, Strategic Partnerships

## 2022 JUDGES

**Amy Wicklund**  
Director of HR-West/East Coast  
Guaranteed Rate

**Apryl Rupp**  
Sr. Global Director, People & Culture  
Compassion International

**Jared Ruger**  
Human Resources Manager  
Ball Corporation

**Michelle Ibarra**  
Assistant to Chief of Staff  
Aurora Public School

**Sarah Barrett**  
Chief of Staff  
Canna Advisors

**Leah Campau**  
Sr. Executive Assistant  
The North Face

**Shannon Patterson**  
Director, Human Resources  
Charter Communications

**Windy Roundtree**  
Executive Assistant  
Liberty Global

**LaTonya McPherson**  
Office Manager & Senior  
Executive Assistant  
InnovAge

**Mackenzie Santana**  
Administrative Projects Coordinator  
Centura Health - Avista  
Adventist Hospital

**Nichollette Graf**  
Senior Executive Assistant/Site  
Office Manager  
Fidelity Investments

**Molly Smith**  
Academic Director, Organizational  
Leadership and Strategic Human  
Resources Programs and Teaching  
Assistant Professor  
University of Denver

**Sherry Parsons**

**Kathy Cannon**

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**Adela Pena**  
Office Administrator  
Leprino Foods Company

**Bonnie Schutz**  
Tandem Resource Solutions



# WINNER



## COLLEEN BARRETT AWARD FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE

### ALYSSA JOHNSON

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, NFP

Alyssa “AJ” Johnson is Executive Assistant, Financial Institutions Group, at NFP Corporation — but perhaps it’s more accurate to describe her as a master juggler. An expert EA, she deals with numerous C-Suite executives and adeptly handles all matters that arrive at her desk, from managing calendars for the team to helping coordinate eight different offices. In fact, earlier this year, she was tasked with taking a raw space and turning it into a functional office, flawlessly handling the multitude of responsibilities from beginning to end. She consistently demonstrates NFP’s people-first culture — she offers help and mentorship to everyone from junior associates and interns to the those at the highest levels of the organization. And she’s equally committed to her owning learning and self-improvement, even working to become a licensed insurance broker, which will only increase her already astronomical value to the company. AJ is a champion for NFP and the work the company does. It’s no wonder her colleagues say they couldn’t do any of it without her.

#### FINALISTS



Amber Newberry  
Corporate Travel  
Management



Shannon Wilke  
Aramark



Kitt Zanotto  
United States Olympic and  
Paralympic Committee

## 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.”**

- Colleen Barrett



## LEADERSHIP AWARD

WINNER



## AMBER NEWBERRY

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, CORPORATE TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

As Executive Assistant to the Chief Operations Officer at CTM, Amber Newberry has proven herself a talented, fearless negotiator, culture creator, inefficiency disruptor and game changer. In her role, she's handled everything from a 6,000-square-foot remodel of the CTM office building and implementation of a new travel and expense program for 3,500 employees to organizing events and conferences for more than 100 personnel and initiating a companywide "Birthday Buddies" program to help underprivileged children in the Denver community who often do not receive gifts for their birthdays. She gladly

accepts more responsibility, having supported everyone from the CEO/President, CMO, CFO and COO. No matter what time of the day or night she's called upon to help, Amber responds with an unfailingly professional and positive attitude to ensure leadership has exactly what they need. She always provides feedback to her peers in a caring, constructive manner — one of many reasons she is known as the kind of leader, and human, others aspire to be.

## LOYALTY AWARD

WINNER



## BECKY TOLIVER

OFFICE ASSISTANT, REAL CAPITAL SOLUTIONS

Becky Toliver is Office Assistant at Real Capital Solutions, where she has spent the past 29 years solidifying her reputation as positive, dedicated, hard-working employee. That dedication became even more apparent during the pandemic when Becky came to the office every day to support her colleagues — ensuring her daily tasks were completed so that they could perform their jobs without interruption and even helping to process distribution checks to investors. Becky, who was born with cerebral palsy, is constantly displaying her ability to go far beyond expectations, not only in work but in life. At one point, she decided to

complete the 1K Coleman for the Cure walk with her crutches and all — then took a wrong turn and ended up doing the entire 5K. Becky brings that type of determination and tenacity to everything she does for Real Capital Solutions. She's always up for a challenge, and never considers any task too big or small for her to tackle.

## FINALISTS



Jamie Bell  
Uplift Internationale



Jeanne Bolt  
Radiology Imaging Associates



Diana Hall  
Real Capital Solutions



Mary Heffernan  
Transamerica



Jessica Putney  
Robert Half



Ellejay Schliebe  
Robert Half

## FINALISTS



Mark Abbott  
WTW



Katherine Browne  
Robert Half



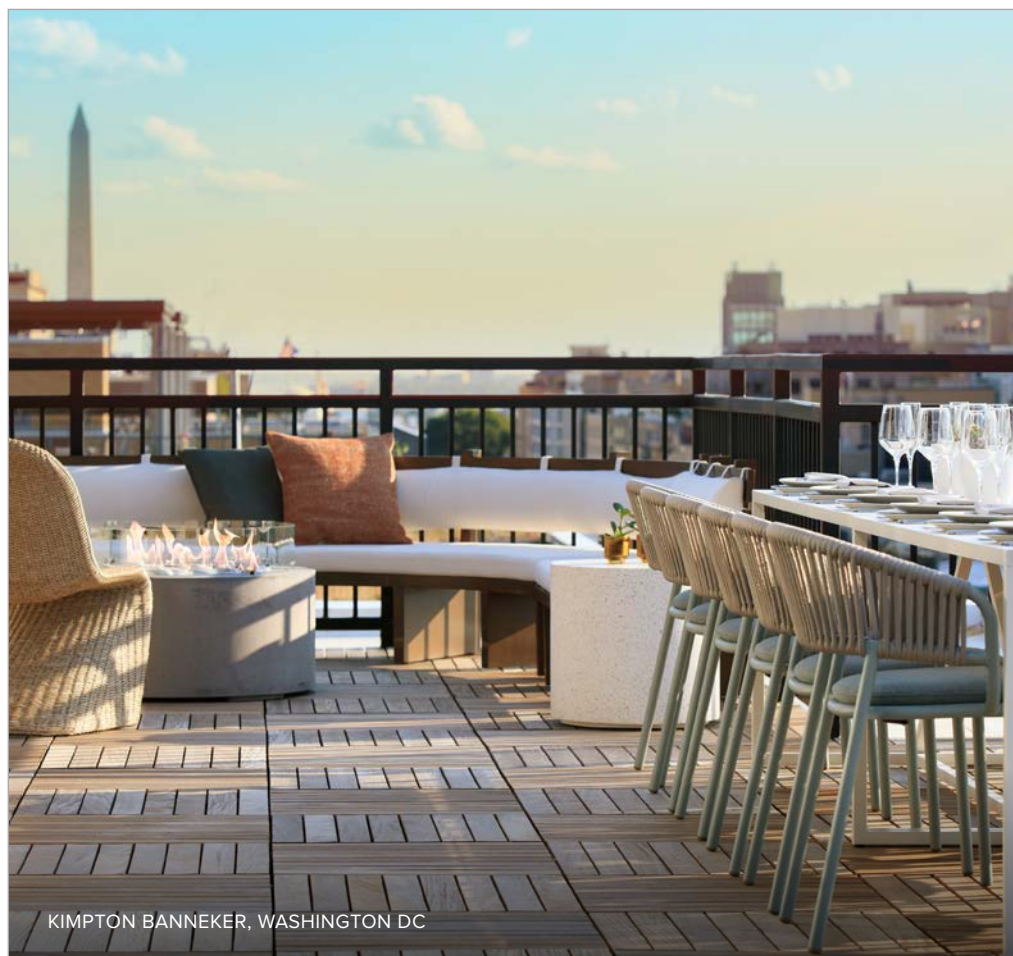
Joy Delos Reyes  
Optimal Home Care Inc.



Elizabeth Portugal  
Robert Half



Tracy Spiegel  
Griffiths Law



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## ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

WINNER



### CANDY ROMERO

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, DENVER DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

Candy Romero is Executive Assistant for the City and County of Denver Department of Public Health and Environment — although she's better known as the "glue that holds the office together." In her role, she supports the behavioral health team and the HIV resources team, and is dedicated to the department's mission, ensuring everyone and everything is always taken care of. She's known for radiating kindness,

selflessness and compassion, and she is committed to providing executives and coworkers with a powerful platform for recognizing and understanding the needs of their specific programs, as well as highlighting the importance of the work that occurs within the organization. Additionally, she showed her steadfast loyalty during the pandemic by coming to the office in person to ensure operations were not disrupted while much of the office was deployed to help with COVID services. Candy always goes above and beyond to make sure everyone within the department — and those they serve — are fully supported.

## FINALISTS



**Diana Altermatt**  
City and County of Denver -  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment



**Carol Congdon**  
United States  
Anti-Doping Agency



**Tina Lucero**  
Ball Aerospace &  
Technologies



**Karen Maricle**  
City and County of  
Denver, Denver



**Lori Sassali**  
AllHealth Network



**Kaitlyn Teubner**  
Optimal Home Care Inc.



**Kristie Webber**  
Filevine

## ACHIEVER AWARD

WINNER



### SELENA VELETA

TEAM LEAD, SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO.

Selena Veleta is Team Lead in Southwest Airlines' Station Services Office, where she is responsible for oversight of the administrative staff who work to serve internal customers. The SSO is the pulse of the Denver Station — and Selena is the pulse of the SSO. She is a pillar of support and knowledge who approaches her numerous important tasks with a "can do" attitude and works each day to elevate her team. Selena is an impactful leader who takes action and invokes action from

those she works with by listening and giving ownership. As she's worked her way up through various SWA administrative roles, she's demonstrated an internal drive to always do more and do it better — and leave things better than she found them. Selena's passion for her work, her team and the company as a whole is powerful, contagious and authentic. Without fail, she leads with an open ear, an open heart and an open mind.

## FINALISTS



**Beri Anderson**  
City and County of Denver -  
Denver International Airport



**Erica Breitenstein**  
Griffiths Law



**Jennifer Hauser**  
Vivos Therapeutics



**Josephine Iacabone**  
Aramark



**Lauren Litogot**  
Optimal Home Care Inc.



**Jennie Ott**  
Anuvu



**Gracy Weil**  
Southern Land Company

## SPIRIT AWARD

WINNER



### SHANNON GIBSON

PRE-ADMISSIONS AND CARE TEAM LEAD,  
OPTIMAL HOME CARE INC.

Shannon Gibson is Pre-Admissions and CARE Team Lead at Optimal Care, and while she possesses an outstanding professional skillset, it's her kindness that truly distinguishes her as one of a kind. Whether it's decorating employees' desks and offices for their birthdays or coordinating with her team to celebrate their wins and help them learn from their losses, she's unwaveringly committed to supporting others. She goes above

and beyond her job description to help with company events and frequently picks up extra shifts to provide coverage for the team. Shannon often brings treats to the office for a quick "pick me up," sharing cookies and snacks from Trader Joe's and bringing in donuts for National Donut Day. She plans spirit days for the office, with several of these celebratory days serving to raise funds for local animal shelters, women's shelters and veteran organizations. Shannon truly is a ray of light to the office and the larger community.

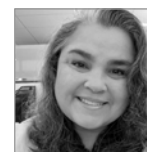
## FINALISTS



**Kristine Acevedo**  
Piper Sandler & Co.



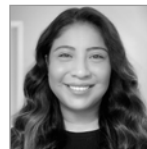
**Holly Baumkratz**  
Culinary Software  
Services, Inc.



**Sharleen Bollig**  
Denver Health



**Carrie Brown-Coats**  
Robinhood



**Brenda Chacon**  
JP Morgan Chase



**Ramzi Diab**  
Optimal Home Care Inc.



**Lynda Dooley**  
The Tendit Group



**Dotty Durney**  
People2.0



**Clarita Fiesta**  
Colorado Global Schools



## ABOVE THE CALL AWARD

### WINNER



## JENNIFER RYLATT

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR, CITY OF DENVER

As Administrative Coordinator for the City of Denver, Jennifer Rylatt often says to be great at her job is to be “invisible” — something she expertly achieves through her behind-the-scenes work that allows her colleagues to shine. And it's those some colleagues who believe her extraordinary talents deserve illumination. From jumping in to cover three vacant full-time positions so staff felt fully supported to identifying waste and determining a more efficient process for mailing, Jennifer constantly proves why she is an invaluable asset to the city, its employees and its citizens. Further, she took the initiative to organize monthly administrative get-togethers with Admins from across the city as a way to build rapport and trust and to serve as resources for each other. In those meetings, Jennifer always brings enthusiasm, authenticity, and structure to the group, with her humor, positivity and energy serving as an inspiration to her fellow Admins. She is the ultimate professional whose many incredible qualities are impossible to overlook.

## FINALISTS



**Ruth King**  
Presbyterian Church of  
Broomfield



**Heather Morrow**  
Innovage



**Michelle Poeschl**  
Optimal Home Care Inc.



**Jean Sanchez**  
Aramark

## GOOD AS GOLD

### BEST DRESSED WINNER



**ERICA BREITENSTEIN,**  
GRIFFITHS LAW

## GOOD AS GOLD

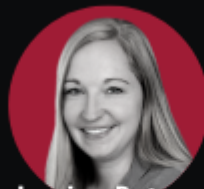
### TEAM SPIRIT WINNER



**SOUTHWEST AIRLINES**

## GREATNESS RECOGNIZED

Congratulations to our amazing  
Robert Half admins and all the  
Denver Admin Awards finalists!



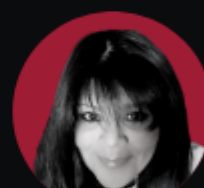
**Jessica Putney**



**Katherine Browne**



**Ellejay Schliebe**



**Elizabeth Portugal**

**Robert Half**

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AWARD

## FINALISTS

## WINNER

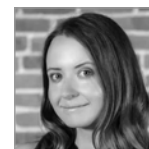


## MORGAN GOURGUES

INVESTMENT BANKING ASSISTANT, PIPER SANDLER &amp; CO.

As an Investment Banking Assistant at Piper Sandler, Morgan Gourgues exemplifies what it means to be a team player. Examples of her strategic partnership across the company are practically endless — she used her knowledge of the industry to help senior bankers seamlessly integrate into the Senior District Group team; helped open the Utah temp office, where she set up the office space and trained administrative staff once they were hired; and she continues to build and maintain relationships with clients. She is the face of Piper Sandler's SDG educational sessions, Q&A sessions and resource lunches, which

include guest speakers, internal educational courses and networking with consultant groups. Morgan is always willing to share knowledge, whether that means answering technical questions, organizational leadership questions — or questions about where to find the best local BBQ spot for catering a lunch. She unlocks incredible value for the business through her positive attitude and determination to complete every task efficiently and collaboratively.



Rachel Elias  
The True Life Companies



Whitney Hixon  
Piper Sandler & Co.



Gabby Hunt  
Cardinal Group  
Companies



JaNet Hurt  
CU Denver School of  
Education and Human  
Development



Paige Olivier  
Colorado Oil & Gas  
Association

*Congrats to our  
finalists!*

DIANA HALL  
&  
BECKY TOLIVER

REAL | CAPITAL | SOLUTIONS



*Diana Hall*  
CATEGORY OF  
LEADERSHIP



*Becky Toliver*  
CATEGORY OF  
LOYALTY

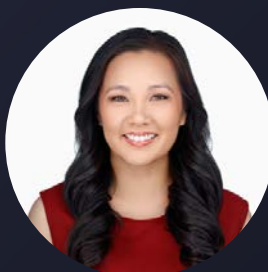
## CONGRATULATIONS

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MARY HEFFERNAN  
2022 ADMIN AWARDS FINALIST

  
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Tendit Group is proud to congratulate  
Lynda Dooley on being a Spirit Award category finalist at the 2022  
Admin Awards!

 TENDIT

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## ROOKIE OF THE YEAR AWARD

## FINALISTS

WINNER

**BRENDA SILVA-RAMIREZ**PROGRAM STAFF ASSISTANT, DENVER DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

Brenda Silva Ramirez is Program Staff Assistant for the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment, where she's already proven herself a perfect fit. She has a warm, inviting personality that enables her to connect with everyone who walks through the doors, while also possessing a laser focus that has allowed her to make significant improvements to tasks such as maintaining all COVID-19 records for the department. It's an immense project, but Brenda has persevered, working her way through all the records retention policies, gaining an understanding of the current system and devising the best way to move forward. Brenda exemplifies the City and County of Denver's STAR values (Service to Customers, Teamwork, Accountability and Ethics, Respect for Self and Others, Safety) by greeting all internal and external stakeholders with a smile and by taking part in numerous committees, meetings and trainings. She consistently demonstrates outstanding administrative qualities — qualities that grow greater each and every day.

Eisen Danielle Fiesta  
Colorado Global SchoolsStaci Savas  
Downtown Denver  
Partnership

“NEXT TO EXCELLENCE  
IS THE APPRECIATION OF IT.”

— William Thackeray



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