

The New Establishment

Ambitious, hard-working and visionary, these up-and-comers sacrifice time and energy to make the most of opportunity. The New Establishment Tallahassee's Future Leaders Take Charge Today

American novelist Henry Miller once said, "Every moment is a golden one for him who has the vision to recognize it as such." The hard part, of course, is acquiring that vision. Some people seem to be born with it, while for others, vision takes a lot of effort — and perhaps a few lessons learned the hard way — to attain the necessary perspective.

The following 16 individuals are up-and-coming young Tallahassee professionals who have learned to take advantage of those golden moments. Ambition, work ethic, the ability to communicate and a vision for the future are key ingredients that have contributed to their success.

Having sacrificed their time and energy to make the most of opportunities, they — and our community — can look forward to a great future of leadership. {mospagebreak title=Terrie Ard} THE VP | Terrie Ard

Tallahassee native Terrie Ard loves her job.

As senior vice president of Moore Consulting Group, a successful public relations firm, the 32-year-old has the opportunity to be a part of something new — a new product, a new client, a new project. She has been instrumental in getting new accounts and providing top-of-the-line strategy and counsel for all client campaigns.

"With my role as vice president, I impact the people's lives here and a lot of the people that come to this agency," she said.

Ard began her college life at Florida State University considering a degree leading to the fields of dentistry or nursing.

While in college, she worked 30 to 40 hours a week for the Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce, assisting with membership and communications when she realized she was having more fun with communications than with the chemistry to physiology classes she had already taken.

"So I reevaluated my whole first year of college that I spent time and money on," she said, "and decided to take the communications route — and (it was) probably one of the best decisions that I made in my life."

After graduating in 1997, Ard went to work at Moore Consulting Group as an account executive but left for a stint at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, promoting the seafood and aquaculture industry in the department's marketing division. Four years later, she returned to Moore Consulting, where she was promoted to vice president in June 2003 and senior vice president in August 2006.

"I learned so much from Karen (Moore, president of Moore Consulting Group)," Ard said. "She's an amazing woman, and so much of who I am has come from learning from her — having the opportunity to work with her every day and her giving me the freedom to do the things that I've done here."

Recently married, Ard said she believes in working hard and playing hard.

"I try really hard to find balance, but I don't think I am there yet," she said.

Her office is her second home, and she looks forward every day to helping her team reach its goals. As a member of the management team, she helps provide the direction, strategy and vision for the growing firm. She also wants to share her knowledge of communications with future generations.

"I get a lot of satisfaction from (teaching) and doing it well and thinking of new ways to teach someone something that I truly love," she said. — Erica Bailey {mospagebreak title=Dr. Wayne Batchelor}

THE CARDIOLOGIST | Dr. Wayne Batchelor

Growing up in Canada, Wayne Batchelor dreamed of becoming a hockey player — but it wasn't until the latter part of high school that his interest in being a physician peaked. Batchelor's mother, a retired nurse — along with an affinity for math and science — led him to pursue medicine.

"She definitely had an influence on me," he said. "I saw what she did and . . . she used to describe the impact she could have on people, on patients, one at a time."

Batchelor's education began with Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, for undergraduate work, then on to the University of Toronto for postgraduate training, where his interest in cardiology began. From there he went to Duke University in North Carolina for three years, completing a master's degree in clinical research and a fellowship in interventional cardiology. Batchelor met his wife, Zan, at Duke, and they were married at the university's chapel before returning to Canada.

Three years later, the Batchelors returned to the Southeast. In 2002, an opportunity came up in Tallahassee at Southern Medical Group.

"My parents spend a good portion of their time in Florida, too," Batchelor said. "They're snowbirds . . . and so this was also a way for us to be a little closer to them."

Batchelor, 40, spends most of his time doing cardiovascular procedures at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital or seeing patients in his office. He is a member of the TMH Medical Staff Executive and chairs several hospital committees. He serves on a National Task Force for the American College of Cardiology that is currently studying ways to expedite the treatment of heart attack patients. In addition, he was recently asked to serve on the Executive Steering Committee (The VICTORY Trial) of a large national study that is looking at a gene-based approach to screening and treating African Americans after heart attacks.

"Our ability to treat heart disease is better than it has ever been," Batchelor said, "but there still exists huge voids where there remain areas of opportunity. I want to be a part of the investigative efforts, to try to understand how we can improve outcomes in the next decade."

Batchelor also is a Clinical Assistant Professor of medicine at Florida State University's College of Medicine.

"I'm really proud of Tallahassee and Florida State University for having landed this medical school," he said, "and hopefully over time, as things mature with the school . . . there might be opportunities to expand further into post-graduate medical education."

Free time? Batchelor spends it with his wife and two daughters, Nadia, 6, and Samia, 4. He is athletic but admits that in Tallahassee, "finding ice is hard. I've torn up Skate World a few times . . . but I just don't get into hockey much any more." — Erica Bailey{mospagebreak title=Susie Busch-Transou}

THE PHILANTHROPIST | Susie Busch-Transou

Ostensibly, Susie Busch-Transou is in the beer distribution business in Tallahassee, but her real work has long been in local charities.

Growing up in St. Louis as part of the Anheuser-Busch beer dynasty — her father, August Busch III, is chairman of the board — she was taught that successful companies always turn part of their largesse back into the community. When Busch-Transou and husband, Tripp Transou, moved to Tallahassee a decade ago to run Tri-Eagle Sales, she brought that family tradition with her.

"I've been honored to work on a number of (issues) to make as much of a difference as I can," she said.

Before coming to Tallahassee, the 41-year-old Busch-Transou worked for the family business, first in the entertainment and theme park division,

then as president of the creative communications subsidiary. In the mid-1990s, when a rare ownership opportunity came up with Tri-Eagle, she and her husband decided to buy the business and move to Tallahassee.

Now, "Tallahassee is our home," said Busch-Transou, a mother of three. "There are so many wonderful people here. The people are what makes this community as special as it is."

While Tripp Transou runs the day-to-day operations of the wholesale distributor, Susie Busch-Transou has taken on the job of turning the success of Tri-Eagle into wider success for Tallahassee. That has included a little bit of everything over the years, from helping to fund the Women's Pavilion at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital to serving on the Florida State University Board of Trustees to sponsoring the annual "Celebrate America" Fourth of July event at Tom Brown Park. In between those jobs, she also served as a mentor to a teenage girl from Gadsden County.

"There are so many different ways for a company to be involved in the community," she said.

Busch-Transou now is working on her biggest challenge yet as chairwoman of the current fundraising campaign for the United Way of the Big Bend. She is in charge of helping the local chapter reach its largest-ever fundraising goal —

\$7.4 million by February.

Says an unfazed Busch-Transou: "I have a tremendous responsibility to do the best job that I can do."
— Tony Bridges

THE DEVELOPER | Carlton Dean

Whether it was a lemonade stand, a car detailing business or working as a disc jockey, Carlton Dean was his own boss throughout his youth. So it was no surprise that when he graduated from college, Dean didn't turn to the classified ads to find a job.

"I had owned businesses already, and I knew that I didn't want to work for anybody," he said.

The path he chose would eventually lead to the founding of two companies: Southland Commercial and Dean Development.

Dean, a 32-year-old Tallahassee native graduated from Leon High School in 1992 and from Florida State University in 1996 with a bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management. Dean had been exposed to real estate and development from an early age with his father and mentor, Bob Dean, and felt it might be a good fit for him.

"My father, had done a lot of development, so I had been around it," he said. "When I got out of college, I decided commercial real estate was what I wanted to focus on and I had an opportunity to talk to Everitt Drew at SouthGroup Properties, and he was gracious enough to put me to work for him." Everitt is one of the most respected real estate brokers in town and is now president of the St. Joe Land Company after they acquired SouthGroup Properties in 1999.

In 2002, Dean left Advantis, formerly SouthGroup Properties, to form Southland Commercial, a commercial real estate brokerage firm, with business partner Francis Rentz. It was there, Dean said, that he acquired a taste for development. In 2003, he started Dean Development with his brother, Wilson, to capitalize on opportunities they saw in the market.

"Our strategy is that we're a niche company," he said. "We try to focus on small opportunities. We like to see the light at the end of the tunnel before we go into the tunnel, I am not smart enough to predict the real estate market all the time — we want to be smaller, quicker, lighter."

Dean said that they are not interested in expanding throughout the state — there are plenty of opportunities right here in their own back yard.

"I feel like I-10 has the potential to be similar to the I-4 corridor in Orlando over the next 20 years," he said. "We live in a unique place. There's not very much developable land, and most of it happens to be around us."

Dean is planning to expand his personal life; he will be getting married in December to April Brueckhiemer, a local Tallahassee native.

"I'm on the cusp of a new chapter in my life, and I'm looking forward to it. I'm not getting any younger and I'm not growing any more hair," he quipped. — Mackenzie Turberville

THE PUBLISHER | Patrick E. Dorsey

The announcement that publishing giant Gannett Co. was acquiring the Tallahassee Democrat and several other newspapers in a corporate swap in August 2005 caused fear and trepidation throughout the paper's staff and sent a ripple of unease through the community.

On the same day the deal was made known, it was announced that 37-year-old Pat Dorsey — trained as an accountant, with a 12-year career at the chain focused on finance — would become the Democrat's president and publisher.

After the announcement, former Democrat managing and executive editor Walker Lundy summed up his fears of putting his beloved paper in the hands of a bean counter: "This feels like one of my early loves has gone off and married an accountant."

More than a year later, Dorsey admits he and particularly his wife, Kecia, got a pretty good laugh out of that crack.

Dorsey considers himself ready, willing and able to address the challenges that face the Democrat in particular and the

newspaper business as a whole.

“I got here because I don’t think like an accountant,” he said.

As part of the management team that analyzed the deal for Gannett, Dorsey said he got a very good schooling in the Tallahassee market before he arrived and learned much about the community during a cordial transition with retiring publisher Mike Pate.

Newsroom purists might shudder when Dorsey refers to the Democrat as “the product,” but it reflects his commitment to go beyond the daily paper and ink when dispensing news and include such things as Web-based and niche publications.

“People are consuming more media, not less — it’s just a time of change,” Dorsey said. “People want that news and information . . . We’re going to put it on any platform you’re going to be comfortable with.”

Dorsey is presiding over changes that are obvious, such as revamping the Tallahassee.com Web site to include video, audio and more photos. Other changes, such as installing a computer-to-plate composing system, are behind the scenes. By the time he finishes up his second year, Dorsey said the company will have invested about \$2 million in upgrades.

While moves from Virginia to Arizona to Brevard County to here have enhanced Dorsey’s Gannett career so far, “my plans are to stay here for a long while,” he said. In addition to his wife, his family includes three children, 10-year-old Connor and 8-year-old twins Griffin and Makenna. — Rosanne Dunkelberger

THE RESEARCHER | Greg Dudley

Greg Dudley received a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Florida State University in 1995 and a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the renowned Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2000. Since then he has taught classes, been published in academic journals, and received numerous awards and grants.

Hard to believe chemistry was about the last thing on his mind when he started college.

“I went to college, like so many other people, with an aversion to chemistry,” Dudley, 32, said.

When he decided to enter pre-med, Dudley was forced to enroll in the dreaded course. However, a couple of good teachers opened his mind to the discipline.

“They’re the ones who really got me turned on to chemistry,” he said.

Now Dudley runs a laboratory at FSU devoted to researching natural and organic cures, then finding a way to efficiently reproduce them synthetically. The goal is to reduce the cost and increase the effectiveness of these medicines so that they will be widely available to those who need them. FSU has a strong track record in this regard; think Taxol, the breast-cancer drug that has helped save the lives of thousands of women. Taxol was first synthesized by FSU chemistry Professor Robert Holton — Dudley’s mentor.

Dudley currently is concentrating on two natural compounds: artemisinin to treat malaria and roseophilin to treat cancer.

“Chemists have made synthetic roseophilin in the past. They just haven’t done it well enough to make it practical,” Dudley said.

His work with artemisinin to create a malaria treatment may seem inconsequential here in the United States, but Dudley said the disease still is very prevalent in underdeveloped nations — with estimates of more than 1 million people dying each year, most in sub-Saharan Africa — and that drugs to treat the disease are very expensive.

Dudley said his lab has four to five years of work left on both compounds, and after that, he will go where his curiosity takes him.

“In an academic lab, we’re going to be following our interests, as long as they’re productive,” he said. “Doing chemistry research is something I enjoy, and the fact that I am free to pursue problems that I feel are important is exciting. I’m very lucky.” — Mackenzie Turberville

THE POLITICIAN | Andrew Gillum

While most students were thinking about exams and papers, Andrew Gillum was thinking about the next stage of his life.

So, at age 23, while still a senior at Florida A&M University, he became the youngest person ever elected to the Tallahassee City Commission in 2003.

Politics wasn't Andrew Gillum's first career choice; when he was a kid, he wanted to be a pediatrician. After realizing math and science weren't his forte, he set his sights on becoming a lawyer.

So, why politics?

"I've always been involved," the 27-year-old Gillum said, "from student government in middle school, high school, coming into Florida A&M University and being involved in student government. But little did I know that those experiences were really preparing me for something much bigger."

Gillum served as FAMU's Student Government Association president in 2001-2002, advocating for many issues — including affirmative action,

tuition and housing ordinances — that affected his fellow students.

The transition into city government was natural; he felt that he could deal with the many issues that affect our community.

"That was really my motivation behind running for office . . . (the) opportunity to talk about some things that I thought (were) important," he said.

Those include issues that concern young professionals, such as jobs and housing, as well as finding ways to get people to vote.

Gillum's abilities have been recognized both locally and nationally. He was elected to another four-year term in 2004 and was featured in *Ebony* magazine as one of "The Fast Track 30 Leaders Who Are Under 30." He also serves on the board of directors of the Black Youth Vote Coalition and is a member of the NAACP.

One of seven children, Gillum credits his large family for his drive and motivation.

"You have to fight for what you want," he said. "No one's rolling over, no one's giving anything to you; the supply is short, the demand is great, and you just have to carve out your path."

For now, Gillum's outlook on public service is that "if there's a void and you feel that you have the skills and ability to fill it, then you step up to the plate." But he adds that he won't be doing this forever — his next goal is to pursue his dream of becoming a lawyer by attending law school. — Erica Bailey

THE ENTREPRENEUR | Lucas Hewett

Lucas Hewett fondly looks back at his childhood in Miami and relishes the sense of entrepreneurship his father — a State Farm insurance agent and small-business owner — instilled in him.

"I spent the summers working at my dad's dive shop . . . That's actually where I got into sales," said Hewett, 29, the senior director of the Tallahassee office of GVA Advantis, a worldwide leader in commercial real estate brokerage and management. "I was 10, 11, 12 years old, working at the boat and dive shows, selling scuba equipment . . . That served me well."

A philosophy major in college, today Hewett is "100 percent responsible" for all company operations in Northwest Florida, including property management, brokerage and construction. The company currently lists \$155 million worth of property, and GVA Advantis clients include the St. Joe Company — one of the largest landholders in the state.

In college he was urged to become a professor, but Hewett decided against it, concluding that there was more money to be made outside of the ivory towers of academia.

Still, "I think I'm a frustrated teacher inside," he said. "And I find that even my sales approach tends to be more philosophical and teaching."

"Philosophy teaches you to read, write, think and speak. Those are good skills for business," he said.

"I find myself talking about ethics a lot," he said. "Honesty and ethics are a huge part of (my business philosophy), and I find myself preaching that over and over, and just being generous with people — more than just fair or what's right, but being generous. I really feel like it just comes back to you, especially in a small town."

Hewett said he's not quite at the summit of his career.

"I've always been a quick study, so I think my velocity can be pretty high, but I think I'm in the early phases of my career," he said. "I think, give me 20 years and I'll be back teaching somewhere in my spare time."

In his spare time today, Hewett likes to spend time with his family and indulge in a couple of other activities.

"I've got a couple old (motorcycles)," he said. "I don't play golf, but I get the same kind of Zen experience . . . I'm also kind of a pop culture fan. And I still read my philosophy books a lot . . . Those kinds of diversions are nice." — Jason Dehart

THE VOLUNTEER | Nicole Hobbs

As president of the Junior League of Tallahassee, Nicole Hobbs has found her niche in Tallahassee.

The 35-year-old Ohio native moved here in 1991 to go to Florida State University, studying elementary education. She met her husband, Brian, and decided to make Tallahassee her home. In 1999, she was a new mom and was looking for a place to volunteer and to meet new people, so she decided to join the Junior League of Tallahassee.

Hitting the ground running, Hobbs served on several committees, eventually becoming community vice president, funding vice president, representative for the Brehon Institute, a place that offers help with at-risk families, and, last year, president-elect. She took over as president in May 2006.

"My main focus and my theme for the year is 'Girls Just Want To Have Fun,'" Hobbs said. "I want to promote volunteerism (and show) that we can have fun while we do it."

The Junior League of Tallahassee is a nonprofit organization of women, typically between the ages of 23 and 45, who are committed to improving the lives of children in the community. Since 1960, the Junior League has logged more than 5,000 volunteer hours and contributed more than \$80,000 annually to the community.

To continue helping the community, Hobbs wants to improve on membership satisfaction and retention.

"I'm trying to find new ways of volunteering in the community, doing new projects, finding innovative ways, and also addressing the changing membership," she said. "It's not just stay-at-home moms now . . . Our membership is all young, new professionals. It's evolving and changing."

For Hobbs, being active in the community has allowed her to really get to know Tallahassee.

"When you're in the League and you see the difference we can make and what a wonderful community we have, it's amazing," Hobbs said.

Outside of her duties as president, she is the mother of three boys, ages 9, 5 and 2, and is actively involved at Maclay School. She hopes to remain active in the Junior League and eventually would like to get involved in teaching.

Her Junior League work has introduced her to parts of Tallahassee she otherwise wouldn't have known about.

"It's opened a lot of doors for me and enlightened me to lots of places in the community that definitely I could be of assistance with," she said. — Erica Bailey

THE TEAM BUILDER | Kim Howes

Hard work and determination.

They're a pair of assets that have served Kim Howes well, from her days on the high school newspaper to her quest for college scholarships, then on to a successful career that has led to her current position as vice president for corporate accounts and marketing at Rowland Publishing.

Serving as right-hand woman to company President Brian Rowland, Howes has helped guide the publishing company through a period of unprecedented growth, with annual revenues more than doubling during her two-and-a-half-year tenure.

She is responsible for production of Rowland's three lifestyle magazines — Tallahassee Magazine, Emerald Coast Magazine and the newly launched Bay Life Magazine — as well as shepherding the firm's other

publishing projects from conception through completion. At the same time, Howes is the company's go-to administrator for customer service.

Her approach is hands-on, and her secret for success has been tenaciousness coupled with a detailed knowledge of day-to-day company operations.

"Give me a set of circumstances or a problem and I can figure out three possible solutions," Howes said. "But I need to know how the details work to make the big-picture decisions."

However, that philosophy doesn't necessarily equate with micromanaging.

"It's all about getting the right team around you and keeping 'em happy," she said.

Howes, 32, moved to Tallahassee with her mother and brother when she was 12. Her work ethic developed, she said, while watching her mother struggle and ultimately succeed as a single working parent.

"My mother instilled a lot of values and confidence," Howes said.

At Lincoln High School, she was on the newspaper staff three years running - editor her senior year. Determined to help pay for her college education, she sought out scholarships and ultimately was awarded several, including an essay contest that netted her \$16,000. She worked at the Tallahassee Democrat during her college years and, as a senior, worked as an information supervisor at the Atlanta Olympics. After stints at the newspaper and the Florida Credit Union League, she moved on to a "new challenge" working in public relations. She ultimately served as the Director of Domestic and International Public Relations for VISIT FLORIDA before joining Rowland in 2003.

Howes met her husband, Tim, the summer before she started at Florida State University (she studied public relations, communications and marketing). They have a 4-year-old son, Benjamin, and are expecting a second son in February. — Rosanne Dunkelberger

THE GOVERNMENT GO-TO GUY | Vince Long

Chances are, if it happens in Leon County government, Vince Long had a hand in it. As deputy county administrator for Leon County, the 37-year-old Long works hand-in-hand with his long-time boss and mentor Pawez Alam, the County Administrator, to implement the County Commission's highest priorities. He took the position in 2000 and has helped organize and accomplish tasks such as the change to a charter system of government in 2002 and the county's takeover of emergency management services in 2004.

During his famously long workdays, Long can be found meeting with state officials, university representatives and community members of all walks of life on a seemingly endless range of issues. Long is at home in his office spending many hours each day buried in documents, plans and budgets of all types. These days most of them have to do with the County's proposal to provide health care to the poor and underinsured in Leon County — another project that he has taken on with familiar passion and purpose.

Long graduated from Citrus High School in Inverness, and earned a Masters of Public Administration degree from Florida State University in 1995. In 2003, he graduated from Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government's Institute for Senior Executives in Local Government.

As an Adjunct Professor in the Masters of Public Administration program at FSU, he is committed to developing young professionals for the challenges of local government. "I am fortunate to have the opportunity to teach some of the brightest MPA students anywhere at the Askew School, as well as surrounding myself with talented young professionals at the County. The importance of this work deserves the most competent people that can be attracted to any profession," he said.

He said he is motivated when he is able to see the fruits of his labor firsthand.

A proponent of planned growth, Long organized the first Leon County Smart Growth Summit, held last June. The hope is to bring the development community together to make long-term plans for smart growth in the area.

He said he enjoys spending quality time with his wife and three children and wants to coach as much youth sports as he can. Professionally, he wants to continue to step up to the challenges of Leon County.

"I feel a real sense of responsibility with the opportunities I've been given," Long said. "I plan on making my time in Leon County count for something." — Mackenzie Turberville

THE PASTOR | Ron Miller Jr.

While playing on scholarship for basketball at Florida State University, Ron Miller Jr. realized his purpose in life one night while attending a campus ministry meeting.

“God called me into ministry when I was 21 years old, it was like he had a full-time calling on my life,” Miller, 37, said.

At an age when indecision usually reigns supreme, Miller immersed himself in the ministry. More than a decade later, he has helped bring athletic training, mentoring and public service to the community — along with a bold message for the people of Tallahassee.

“The challenge,” he said, “is to prove that God is real.”

Although Miller’s church, Every Nation Tallahassee, is relatively young, church attendance has grown during the five years he has served as senior pastor, attracting people — many of them young — from different denominations, as well as different levels of faith and dedication.

Miller spreads the word of Every Nation via a plan he calls the “4 C’s of Tallahassee.”

“Our desire is to reach out to the campuses because they are our future leaders, the community because we want to see our families healthy and strong, commerce because we desire to see business men and women serving God in their professions, and the capital because we believe God has given Tallahassee an important leadership role in the state and the world,” he said.

With ministries on the local college campuses, Miller aims to help students alleviate the stresses that accompany becoming an adult.

Through his involvement in local schools, a Web log and a monthly radio show, Miller always tries to keep the public informed and involved with the church. He also has helped groom the “athletic arm” of the church, Champions for Christ.

“Through this program, college and professional athletes are targeted to help them realize their strengths and give guidance in their lives,” Miller said.

His mission in community involvement includes hands-on efforts in several outreach programs. “Refuge of Love” is a social-service program helping to meet public needs for free — from job placement to language classes, free music lessons and sports-specific training. In addition, the Corey Simon Success Center, located on Tallahassee’s south side, reaches out to youngsters with socioeconomic disadvantages.

“This being my home, I don’t want to just do church — I want to serve the city,” Miller said.

Miller’s ministerial efforts are shared by his wife, Cindy, who also serves the church as a senior pastor. In addition to their work with the church, the Millers also share responsibilities as the parents of three young children. — Jessica Stasiw

THE DEVELOPER | Jason Naumann

Some people might look at Jason Naumann and consider him pretty successful. After all, his real estate company, The Naumann Group, did more than \$100 million in sales volume in 2005, just five years after it was founded.

But Naumann, 32, said he’s just getting started.

“I’m very happy with where our company is currently, but I just know that there is so much more that can be accomplished,” he said. “I feel as if we have just now finished laying our company’s foundation so that we can soon begin to really build upon it for the future.

“We have been very blessed, and want to grow an organization that not only benefits the consumers, but everyone who is a part of the team,” Naumann said. “Our staff and agents have been a key ingredient to our success, and without them the company would not be where it is today.”

Naumann said he comes from a long line of real estate entrepreneurs, but he wanted to try new things.

“I decided to go away to college so that I could expand my horizons and see what else was out there for me,” he said. “I was interested in marketing and thought that was the direction I was going to take.”

But, he said, God had other plans.

Waiting tables in his sophomore year at Florida State University, a customer, Teresa Turner — of Turner Heritage Homes — recognized that his personality could sell and suggested a career in real estate. He quit waiting tables that week and went to work for Turner.

Naumann said he would put in 60- to 70-hour weeks straight through the last two years of college; later, he left Turner Heritage Homes and went to work for developer and builder Robert Parrish. At 22, Naumann was selling and managing the townhome community of Maclay Hammock.

Naumann started The Naumann Group Real Estate Inc. in 2001 and finally had something of his own.

“I was given the opportunity to sell BrackenChase communities, which allowed us to create entire communities based on the demands of the consumer,” he said. “My goal has always been to create places people want to live by asking what they want in their neighborhoods, and helping to create just that.”

The Naumann Group currently has six full-time employees, five offices and 17 selling agents. — Jason Dehart

THE BUILDER | Jay Smith

Growing up, Jay Smith did odd jobs for his grandfather and father’s company, Ajax Building Corp., on weekends and during the summer. Little did he know at the time that one day he would become vice president of the company, which now has offices in seven Florida cities.

Smith said that the opportunity to join the family business, which the late J.B. “Block” Smith started in 1958, was always there, but that no one pushed him.

“It wasn’t something that my family said I had to do,” Smith, 32, said.

In his position, Smith oversees the day-to-day operations for all of North Florida for the company, which has been named as one of the Top 200 private companies by Florida Trend magazine.

After Smith graduated from the Maclay School in 1992, he went to the University of Florida and earned a B.S. in business. While there, he worked in Ajax’s Gainesville offices.

Smith decided to return to Tallahassee and continue the family legacy at Ajax. He began as a project engineer in 1997, and by 2004 he had worked his way up to the position of vice president.

“It’s an honor to have this unique opportunity to step into an executive role in something my father and grandfather started,” Smith said.

Ajax is involved in commercial construction and construction management throughout the Southeast, generating revenues of \$152 million in 2005. Specializing in education, health care and correctional facilities, the company recently completed Florida A&M University’s new recreation center and currently is constructing Florida State University’s \$60-million chemistry building.

Smith said he believes Leon County has done a good job of balancing smart growth with preserving our historic structures and landscapes.

“As a city and a county, we should learn from similar areas in the state and see what they have done right or wrong,” he said.

Outside of the office, Smith has found time to serve on several boards and committees of professional and charitable organizations. He and his wife, Bri, have been married for seven years and have two daughters, ages 4 and 2.

Smith said he’s proud of the legacy Ajax has in Tallahassee and around the state, and that he looks for that tradition to grow and continue.

“In the family-business world, for a business to last into the second generation is great, and now we have successfully beaten the statistics to make it into the third generation,” he said. “Ajax will continue to prosper, and hopefully we will see a fourth generation with one or both of my daughters in the business.” — Mackenzie Turberville

THE REGULATOR | Katrina Tew

Like many women her age, Katrina Tew, 33, is working full time while planning her wedding. But unlike any women her age, Tew is a member of Florida's Public Service Commission.

An expert in such complex matters as electric industry restructuring, the telecommunications industry and nuclear energy matters, Tew is the youngest member of the statewide board that develops regulatory policy for issues involving energy, water and telecommunications.

Growing up, she never envisioned herself working for the Public Service Commission.

"I didn't think I wanted to grow up and become a regulator," she said.

But when she applied for and got a job, she began to realize how much she loved policy work.

"After I got here, I grew more and more interested in these issues," she said. "I saw a lot of opportunities to try and make Florida a better place."

Tew worked her way up from researching issues surrounding the electric industry to serving as the Public Service Commission's primary liaison on all nuclear energy matters. She started managing the State Liaison Section of the commission's Division of Policy Analysis & Intergovernmental Liaison. State and local government agency personnel who needed her expertise on utility-related policy issues would consult with her. Tew then served as chief adviser to two Public Service Commission members before being appointed herself by Gov. Jeb Bush for a four-year term beginning in January of this year.

Although being a commissioner "is tougher because I'm now directly accountable for our decisions and there (are) more restrictions on what I can say and do in this role, it's rewarding to be able to effectuate needed changes and to promote good public policy outcomes," she said.

One program Tew is actively a part of is the Florida Lifeline/Link-Up initiative, which allows low-income consumers to apply for reduced telephone rates. "We are always trying to get the word out," she said.

When she's not working, Tew loves to travel, especially in Florida.

"There's still a lot of Florida I haven't seen . . . there's so much history here," she said.

Tew also recently started mentoring a student at Godby High School with the Take Stock in Children program and, of course, planning her wedding to Kevin McMurrian, field director for the Suwannee River Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America. — Tabitha Yang

THE DYNAMO | Jaimi Wacksman

Barely topping 5 feet tall, Jaimi Wacksman hardly looks intimidating. But there is a lot of personality and drive packed into that small package.

Wacksman's resume includes organizing a stupefying number of public-service projects that would make a lesser person go crazy. Currently, the 32-year-old serves in leadership positions with the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross, the Sunset Rotary Club and the United Way, just to name a few.

Her specialty is planning large events. Wacksman admits her talent for getting people together goes back to her college days, when she would invite friends and co-workers over after work.

"At 3 o'clock in the morning, I would be cooking and entertaining," she said.

It was her husband, Jim Wacksman, who suggested channeling her energies toward organizing big charitable events. At his suggestion, she served as chairwoman of the Night of Champions for Kids Incorporated in 2003, a night that honors Children's Champions nominated by the public for being outstanding child advocates.

"One of the biggest compliments from that night was when (Brian Rowland, president of Rowland Publishing) came up to me and said, 'You've brought this event up four notches.' Wow. Coming from him, that was a big compliment."

Wacksman also has served as chairwoman for numerous other events, including the annual Sunset Rotary Winefests I, II, III and IV, and Bids for Kids 2005, sponsored by Tallahassee 25. All this is in addition to working as communications director for NewspaperClips.com, the company her husband started in 1998 as a way to provide relevant news clips to businesses and organizations. The company has come a long way since then.

"We started in little Tallahassee, Florida, and we've expanded to 14 different states," Wacksman said. "We've experienced tremendous growth, which has been great."

Although she grew up in Naples, Fla., Wacksman claims Tallahassee as her home.

"I think it's a beautiful place to live . . . and I find that the people are very warm and accepting," she said. "I really love it." — Tabitha Yang

The Network

As an intern at VolunteerLEON in 2003, Amanda Phillips was tasked with creating a project to benefit the community.

Her idea: Bring a small group of volunteers together for a one-time Young Professionals Community Forum. After the event, a small group continued to gather and realized that there was an opportunity to create something new. And from that, the Tallahassee Network of Young Professionals was formed.

Starting out, their main goal was not to be labeled as a social club. "We wanted to be known as a meaningful contributor to the community and also offer benefits to the young professionals," said

Melissa Hayes, the organization's president.

The group's survey has revealed that with Tallahassee's reputation as a college town and the seat of government, a lot of young professionals might think the city has nothing to offer them. "There (are) so many things here that young professionals love about Tallahassee or could love about Tallahassee but they don't know that they exist," Hayes said, "so we're just about opening doors and connecting those people to their interests."

With that in mind, the Network's goal is to make Tallahassee a place that young professionals want to live, work, play and stay. A fee-based membership, modeled after other young professional organizations, has been recently started. The Network is trying to make the membership — which costs \$25 per year — more attractive by working with local businesses to offer discounts and provide more member-specific information, like job boards. The group now has 130 paid members attracting new people primarily through word-of-mouth.

Every year, the Network sends out an e-mail survey to gauge the public's opinion about the young professionals community. Once the data is collected, they hold a forum where community leaders and young professionals can get together and discuss those issues.

They have ongoing professional development workshops in subjects such as home buying, finance or investing, as well as social events. Signature events include a "535 Happy Hour" the first Wednesday of every month; "Deck the Halls," an annual holiday social and art sale; and a scavenger hunt that introduces local attractions to teams of young professionals.

"If we can identify a new professional or a young professional … outside the college scene we can plug them into where they can go to eat, fun things to do, where they can meet friends, then they're more likely to stay than someone who's just sort of wandering around with no help or no guidance," Hayes said.

Visit their Web site, networkyp.org, to learn more about the events, read the survey and get involved in Tallahassee. — Erica Bailey

You Know You Grew up in Tallahassee When...

The following nostalgia trip made the e-mail forwarding rounds a few months ago. We were unable to discover where this gem originated, but it makes for an enjoyable stroll down Memory Lane.

- You remember the Tiger Sharks, the Thunder and the Scorpions, and you still have a hockey puck from one of the games.
- You used to stop at a Sing Store or Suwanee Swifty for an Icee.
- You know every canopy road.
- Your mom shops at the Farmer's Market, Market Square or Tomato Land.
- You've never seen the Prince Murat sign completely lit.
- You remember King Love.
- You call Momo's, Decent Pizza and Gumby's before Domino's.
- You've shopped at Kevin's Sporting Goods (you had to have a Browning jacket).
- You went to St. Teresa, Lake Ella, Alligator Point, Wakulla Springs, St. George, Apalachicola and Panama City every summer and called those places "The Coast."

- You have giggled about the suggestive appearance of the New Capitol (and remember school field trips when they took you to the top and you tried to find your house).
- You hate the flyover.
- You survived FAMU homecoming . . . and the Kappa Luau.
- You've eaten at East Side Mario's, Jim & Milt's Bar-BQ, Barnacle Bill's, The Mill Bakery, Eatery and Brewery, Noble Romans Pizza, Buckhead Brewery, Paradise, Posey's, Angelo's, Barnaby's, and Mom and Dad's (and you miss The Mill because they had the best muffins on the face of the Earth).
- You used to love the Junior Museum and refuse to refer to it as the Tallahassee Museum of History and Natural Science.
- You ran in the Jingle Bell Run or the Turkey Trot.
- You played sports at Forest Meadows, Millers Landing, Winthrop Park, Levy Park, Messer Field, Tom Brown Park, Capital Park or Myers Park.
- You have gone on a date to Lake Ella (or your grandmother took you there to climb on the big, uprooted tree and feed the ducks).
- You saw shows at the Thunderdome, Floyd's, Cow Haus, and The Moon (and thought you were so cool cause you knew someone – or everyone – in the band).
- You've watched the fireworks at Tom Brown Park (and didn't care if you were dripping with sweat).
- You drive through Dorothy B. Owen Park every Christmas (and pronounce it "Oh-vin," not "Uh-vin"!)
- You went to a birthday party in the caboose at McDonald's on Thomasville Road.
- Skate Inn had an East and a West.
- You can remember Leon always beating Lincoln in football.
- FSU football games were for walking around looking for your friends.
- You remember Mugs and Movies, The Varsity, Capitol Cinemas, Northwood Mall, Turtle's Record Store, The Record Bar and Good Times Pizza.
- Killlearn Lakes was way out of town.
- The Old Sing Store (Thomasville Road) was where the Leon people went, the New Sing Store (the Killlearn store) was for Lincoln people.
- You went to Camp Indian Springs.
- You love the North Florida Fair.