

who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who



Janice Sanada

Amy Smith

Alex Karel

Eric Kern

LRS Architects announces that **Janice Sanada** has been named president, effective January 14. Sanada succeeds Trish Nixon, who has served as president since 2019 and will remain with the firm, transitioning her focus toward talent development and the ongoing professional growth of LRS teams. Additionally, Nixon will continue to lead the Multi-Family Housing Studio.

Sanada joined LRS in 2003, was named principal in 2013, and became managing principal in 2021. In her new role, she will lead the execution of the firm's long-term strategic goals, guide day-to-day operational alignment, drive team development and champion design excellence across studios, while maintaining continuity for clients and project teams.

The leadership transition is part of the firm's succession and strategic planning, creating additional capacity for growth initiatives and innovation while preserving the firm's core values and leadership style. With Sanada

overseeing operational and strategic responsibilities, Nixon will be able to invest more time in mentoring, professional development programs and cultivating emerging leaders across the firm.

Sanada brings more than 30 years of experience and deep expertise leading complex projects, with a focus on senior living and life plan communities, including independent living, assisted living, memory care and nursing environments. A University of Oregon graduate, she is a LEED Accredited Professional and a licensed architect in Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Maryland, Arizona and Texas. She is also a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), Society for the Advancement of Gerontological Environments (SAGE), and the International Code Council Health Care Committee.

LRS Architects also announces the promotion of **Amy Smith** and **Alex Karel** to principal and **Magda Gerencer** and **Eric Kern** to associate, effective in January 2026.

Smith is a registered architect and LEED AP who joined LRS in 2002. With over two decades at LRS and a primary focus in senior living, Smith brings extensive design technology expertise and a deep understanding of designing spaces centered on the end-user experience. Drawing on her background at LRS, Smith mentors designers and coordinates stakeholders to ensure every project achieves the highest standards of functionality, compliance and long-term value. She excels at balancing design considerations with technical requirements throughout the design process, ensuring all projects meet the highest standards of functionality and compliance. Smith received her master of architecture from Washington State University and a bachelor of arts in architecture from Portland State University.

Karel is a registered architect who has been at LRS for over a decade, and his interests include emerging design technologies and new tools to support the design process. His background includes projects in the firm's commercial, office, retail, entertainment and civic sectors for clients in Oregon, Washington, California and Alaska. Karel leads by empowering teams to deliver innovative and efficient design solutions. His broad, multi-sector experience enables him to guide projects with clarity and adaptability, ensuring high-quality outcomes across diverse building types and client needs. His notable new construction, expansion and renovation projects include more than 20 prestigious auto showrooms, as well as county and federal buildings, religious buildings and commercial buildings. Karel received a bachelor of architecture degree from the University of Oregon.

Gerencer is a seasoned project manager and LEED AP BD+C who joined LRS in 2014. With over 30 years of experience in architecture and leading diverse projects across the Pacific Northwest, Gerencer has established herself as a trusted advisor on projects ranging from large-scale master planning to specialized industrial facilities. Gerencer has managed an impressive portfolio of high-profile projects spanning Oregon, Washington and California. She is committed to creating accessible housing solutions that contribute to economic development, public infrastructure and community vitality across the region. Gerencer received her master of architecture and Urban Planning from Warsaw University of Technology.

Kern is a registered architect and has been at LRS for over four years, contributing to the firm's project delivery and design excellence. Kern has distinguished himself through his expertise in drawing production and consultant coordination, playing an integral role in the firm's Bend office. During his time at LRS, Kern has provided oversight on a multitude of projects from multifamily to affordable housing, car dealerships to hotels, and office buildings. A University of Colorado Boulder graduate and former designer at GL3 Architects, Kern brings both technical precision and a thoughtful design sensibility shaped by his international upbringing in England and Australia, cultivating a unique perspective on how cultural context and spatial design influence human interaction.

The **Deschutes Land Trust** announces its 2026 cohort of Emerging Conservationists of Central Oregon (ECCO). The second annual ECCO cohort includes 25 individuals from throughout Central Oregon who bring a wide variety of skills, expertise and passion for conservation to the Land Trust.

Emerging Conservationists of Central Oregon, or ECCO, is a Land Trust program that works to engage millennials and connect early- and mid-career professionals with opportunities for community leadership growth. ECCO

members donate 10-15 hours of their time a year and serve for one year with an option to extend their service for an additional two years.



Derek Donovanik

Kathleen Quinney

Lindsey Galloway

Susie Browne

Susan Harrison

Greg Weilert

Tim Rusk

Lindy Levinson

Central Oregon nonprofit **Heart of Oregon Corps** welcomes four new members to its Board of Directors this year.

Derek Donovanik of First Interstate Bank brings deep financial experience, supporting Heart of Oregon Corps' long-term sustainability. **Kathleen Quinney** from the Bend Chamber offers valuable insight into regional business needs and workforce development. **Lindsey Galloway** of Abbott contributes business expertise and a passion for human services, while **Susie Browne** of Washington Federal Bank adds extensive experience in banking, community investment and fiscal stewardship.

Heart of Oregon Corps also confirmed its 2026 board officers. **Susan Harrison** begins her second year as Board president, joined by **Greg Weilert** in his second year as vice president. **Tim Rusk** enters his fourth year as Board treasurer, providing continued financial leadership. The organization also shares that **Lindy Levinson** of Hayden Homes, after serving a year on the Board of Directors, has stepped into the role of Board secretary, bringing a fresh perspective along with demonstrated leadership, thoughtful engagement and strong organizational skills to the officer team.

These volunteer leaders will play a critical role in guiding Heart of Oregon Corps through an important year ahead, as the organization prepares to open the region's first youth workforce development campus in fall 2026 — expanding opportunities for young people to build skills, careers and lasting connections in Central Oregon.

The **Central Oregon Symphony** announces its Winter Concert Series, a perfect way to warm the season with inspiring orchestral performances. This year's series is especially meaningful as it marks Maestro Michael Gesme's final winter at the podium, celebrating his artistic leadership and lasting impact on Central Oregon's musical community.

A highlight of the concerts will be performances by the 2025 Young Artist Competition winners:

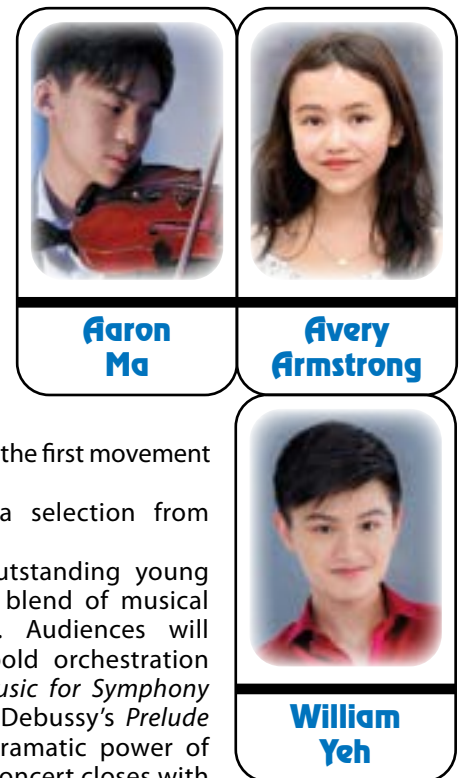
- **Aaron Ma**, violin, performing the third movement of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor
- **Avery Armstrong**, piano, performing the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3
- **William Yeh**, violin, performing a selection from Bruch's Scottish Fantasy

In addition to showcasing these outstanding young soloists, the program offers a vibrant blend of musical voices across time and geography. Audiences will experience the rhythmic drive and bold orchestration of Yasushi Akutagawa's *Finale from Music for Symphony Orchestra*, the dreamlike sensuality of Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, and the dramatic power of Beethoven's *Lenore Overture No. 3*. The concert closes with Arturo Márquez's *Conga del Fuego Nuevo*, an irresistible celebration of rhythm and Latin American spirit.

This concert series will take place at Mountain View High School on February 14 at 2pm and 7:30pm and again on February 15 at 2pm, with a livestream option available.

A newly awarded \$2,187,923 grant to **Central Oregon Community College** from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education — one of just 22 such grants designated for colleges and universities nationwide — will be used to develop short-term certificates for manufacturing technology with regional workforce needs in mind.

More Who's Who Next Page ▶



Aaron Ma

Avery Armstrong

William Yeh

who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who

Who's Who
Continued from previous page

The award comes from the agency's Supporting Capacity-Building for High-Quality Short-Term Programs grant division, and will help COCC create new stackable short-term certificate pathways, seven in all, that are aligned with skill specifications from local industry. Among the new certificates: entry level fabricator, structural steel welder, CNC (computer numerical control) operator and industrial maintenance.

Several Central Oregon employers will be integrated into the process — impacting curriculum design and internship development, among other things. Industry partners include Outback Manufacturing, BasX Solutions and Nosler.

Beyond designing new credentials and reinforcing relationships with workforce partners, the funds will support hiring faculty and staff, purchase equipment and technology, and improve data systems for Pell eligibility and student outcome tracking; the new certificates will meet new federal Workforce Pell Grant requirements. The trainings will be backed by a range of student support systems, such as career counseling, financial aid navigation and job placement assistance.

COCC has worked with local nonprofit agencies Economic Development for Central Oregon and Redmond Economic Development to facilitate the involvement of area employers.

The grant comes as COCC is preparing to fully remodel its existing training center at the Redmond campus, adding more than 13,000 square feet of workspace. Classes and labs will continue during construction; completion is

expected as early as winter term 2027.

The award period began January 1 and runs to the end of 2029. Anticipated outcomes include the enrollment of 250 students in the new certificate programs, with at least 85% of students completing one certificate and 30% completing multiple certificates. Additionally, 75% of completers are anticipated to enter manufacturing jobs, with some 34 students expected to complete industry internships, across seven different employers.

Bend Chamber welcomes **Emily Boyd** as government affairs manager. Boyd's work is guided by a simple but powerful goal: to uplift others. Her experience across political, nonprofit and literary spaces has shaped a deep commitment to community, collaboration and advocacy.

Born and raised in Eagle, Colorado, Boyd developed an early passion for politics that led her to study political science at the University of Colorado Boulder (Go Buffs!). She went on to gain experience in Washington, DC and San Francisco, California before returning to Colorado in 2018 to work on political campaigns. Between campaign seasons, Boyd embraced life as a ski bum — an adventure that ultimately led her to meet her husband, Matt.

In 2022, she and Matt made the intentional leap to Bend, arriving sight unseen, and quickly fell in love with the community. She is grateful for the opportunity to call Bend home and to contribute to a place that so strongly values connection and quality of life. Outside of work, you'll find Boyd snowboarding, paddleboarding, walking the canal trail with her dog, Ragtag, or happily immersed in a good book.



Businesses Serving Community

BOTTLEDROP

The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative (OBRC), operator of the BottleDrop network, recently announced that it distributed a total of \$75,000 to support 12 nonprofits providing food assistance to Oregonians during the 2025 holiday season. In total, \$21,360 was donated by customers, and OBRC's

Emergency Fund matched all donations made through January 1, 2026, plus contributed additional funds to round out the total amount. Central Oregon's NeighborImpact and The Giving Plate were among the nonprofits that each received \$6,250 from this fundraising event.

who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who

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