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NAI Cascade Commercial Real Estate welcomes **Grace Googins** as the firm's new property management administrative assistant, adding to its commitment to responsive service for commercial property owners and tenants across Central Oregon.

In her role, Googins supports the property management team through day-to-day coordination, responsive communication and administrative support. She works closely with tenants, property owners and internal team members to help ensure operations run smoothly, accurately and efficiently, with a strong focus on service and follow-through.

Googins brings a well-rounded background in administrative operations, marketing and real estate. She's highly organized and quick to step in where support is needed, helping keep processes moving and day-to-day details on track. Known for being dependable and easy to work with, she emphasizes clear communication, strong follow-through and building solid working relationships across the team.

Googins also reunites professionally with Hailey Groh, having previously worked together. Their established working relationship strengthens communication, coordination and overall team efficiency, contributing to a seamless experience for clients and reinforcing NAI Cascade's collaborative culture.

Charlotte Kreitlow	Chad Steinhauer	Mackenzie Blackburn	David Allen
Staci Ballard	Sage Dunaway	Abbie Sherwood	Alex Wells

Kernutt Stokes announced its latest employee promotions: **Charlotte Kreitlow**, CPA, to senior virtual accounting services manager; **Chad Steinhauer**, CPA, to senior manager; **Mackenzie Blackburn**, CPA, to manager; and **David Allen**, **Staci Ballard**, **Sage Dunaway**, **Abbie Sherwood** and **Alex Wells**, CPA, to senior associates.

Kreitlow is a University of Oregon graduate and works out of the firm's Eugene office. Steinhauer holds bachelor of science degrees in both accounting and economics from the University of Oregon; he works in the Eugene office. Blackburn is an Oregon State University graduate working from the Eugene office and has been with the firm since 2020.

Dunaway joined Kernutt Stokes in 2024 and is a graduate of Pacific University; he works in the firm's Bend office. Ballard has been with the firm for three years, is an Oregon State University graduate and works from the Corvallis office. Sherwood is an Oregon State University graduate, works in the Corvallis office and has been with the firm for three years.

Allen is a Pacific University graduate; joining the firm in 2024, he works at the Eugene office. A University of Oregon graduate, Wells joined Kernutt Stokes in 2023 and works from the firm's Lake Oswego office.

The **Family Access Network** (FAN) welcomes two new team members, **Alex Fico** and **Shelby Cala**. Fico joins the team as the grants coordinator, focusing on grant writing, board support and donor database management. Cala joins as outreach coordinator, focusing on community building, marketing and communications.

With a bachelor's degree in communications from Virginia Tech and a background in nonprofit and federal work, Fico brings a passion for supporting positive change in her community. She is excited to serve Central Oregon families and believes that children are at the center of building a more resilient and equitable future. In her free time, Fico enjoys backpacking, rockhounding, reading and hanging out with her two cats.

Cala joins the team with a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of South Florida and has worked within the non-profit space and public sector since 2012. She is excited to put to use her background in fundraising, event planning and community outreach to serve FAN and the Central Oregon

Alex Fico	Shelby Cala

Community. Cala enjoys spending time with her family – rockhounding, hiking and exploring the PNW.

John Vale, who lives just outside Sunriver, was recently honored at the prestigious Lake Oswego Art Fair with a blue ribbon for his work and achievements. Vale, owner of Copper Moon Artisan, has been working with copper, wood and stone for four years and has been an artist now for 34 years. His work reflects the beauty of the wildlife here in Central Oregon. His art was gifted by Oralee and Harry Hamilton to the Sunriver Nature Center, displayed in the lobby. Copper Moon Artisan has been attending the Sunriver Art Fair for several years and is a patron of the Sunriver Women's Club.

His work through the years has evolved from stone garden art to three-dimensional wall art. He owned two galleries, one garden art gallery in Lake Oswego in the 1990's and one gallery in St. Augustine in the early 2000s. He has spent many years working with sand carving stone and has created unique copper patinas. He loves the beauty of nature here in Central Oregon, which reflects in his work.

Kathi Barguil	Emily Alejandra Chávez Romero	Shana Falb	Aixa Willoughby-Warren

The **Latino Community Association** (LCA) welcomes four extraordinary women to its board of directors this summer. Each member will serve three years guiding LCA in its mission to empower Latino families to thrive in Central Oregon.

Kathi Barguil lives in Bend and works with Mixte Communications as communications director for the Warm Springs Power & Water Enterprises. She previously served as the community relations manager at the City of Bend. She is a first generation Colombiana who has been a valued partner with LCA and the LCA Advocacy Committee.

Emily Alejandra Chávez Romero lives in Redmond and serves families across Central Oregon through the Juntos program at Oregon State University. She has also organized community events, including the 2025 Downtown Bend Día de Muertos celebration. With her mother and little sister, she has volunteered at LCA's Mexican Consulate events and Latino Fest. As a first-generation Mexican immigrant, she brings a personal understanding of the experiences and challenges that are central to LCA's mission.

Shana Falb lives in Bend and serves Deschutes County supporting community partnerships and engagement for Deschutes County Health Services. She previously served as the program coordinator for the Family Law Facilitation Program at the Deschutes County Circuit Court. She is bilingual and has deep connections to the Latine community.

Aixa Willoughby-Warren lives in Redmond and serves the Central Oregon community as the labor trafficking coordinator with the Anti-Trafficking Project, a program of J Bar J. She is a proud Boricua (Puerto Rican) and has been a community partner with LCA in her work. In her role, Willoughby-Warren focuses on creating culturally specific resources and works with LCA to bridge gaps and connect clients to the local Latine community.



PHOTO | COURTESY OF LIVING WELL WITH DEMENTIA SISTERS

Living Well With Dementia Sisters recently received a \$17,000 donation through the Werner Legacy Fund, made possible by this year's Mob Out Fundraiser. The check presentation, held at Centennial Park in Sisters, brought together care partners from the organization's Sisters and Redmond support groups, board members, volunteers, friends and supporters.

The Werner Legacy Fund was established by **Jill Cummings** to honor her

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parents and the values of compassion, generosity and community they lived every day. Cummings presented the donation, which will directly support Living Well With Dementia Sisters' programs for people living with dementia and those who love and care for them.

The funding will help the organization continue providing education, support, connection and respite throughout the community.

Debbi McCune, Bill Kelly and Sandy Reilly expressed their gratitude to everyone who has volunteered, attended a support group, shared the organization's mission, made a donation, encouraged a family, or supported Living Well With Dementia Sisters. They noted that the generosity shown through the Mob Out Fundraiser and the Werner Legacy Fund reflects the compassion, dedication and generosity of the community and helps ensure no one has to face the dementia journey alone.



PHOTO | COURTESY OF BEND CHAMBER

On June 24, the **BendNEXT Foundation**, alongside friends, supporters and colleagues, celebrated the second cohort of the NEXTUp Leaders Program. Over five months, this group of rising leaders learned, collaborated and strengthened their leadership skills together.

Throughout the program, respected Central Oregon leaders and subject-matter experts shared practical tools, real-world insights and guidance to help participants strengthen their leadership. Through interactive discussions and peer engagement, participants built meaningful professional connections and expanded their cross-sector networks.

These graduates are now equipped with a stronger set of leadership tools and a broader fabric of connections and have walked side by side with their organizations to outline the next steps in their careers. The NEXTUp Leaders Program supports the mission of the Bend Chamber and BendNEXT Foundation by investing in local talent and strengthening the organizations that help Bend thrive.

The NEXTUp Leaders Class of 2026 are **Anne Birky**, Bend-La Pine Schools; **Nicole Browning**, Merete Hotels; **Lindsay Buccafurni**, Central Oregon Community College; **Rachel Cotton**, U.S. Bank; **Meah Cukrov**, Riley Wigle CPA; **Trevin Davis**, HDR Inc.; **Bola Gbadebo**, Bola Films; **Camryn Guzman**, US Bank; **Kirsten Habermann**, Riley Wigle CPA; **Jeremy Hansen**, OSU-Cascades; **Rob Johnson**, Bend-La Pine Schools; **Nathaniel Kavanaugh**, U.S. Bank; **Rachel Kenney**, OSU-Cascades; **Rio Lingelbach**, Old Mill District; **Ciea Palmer**, RealPage; **Gabriela Peden**, Better Together Central Oregon; **Maile Ryan**, Morrison-Maierle; **Daisy Sarfo**, Latino Community Association; and **Dak Shepherd**, U.S. Bank.

Special thanks to U.S. Bank for its title sponsorship of Bend Emerging Talent programming and commitment to supporting this community's rising leaders through the NEXTUp Leaders program. We are also deeply grateful to the subject matter experts who shared their knowledge and insight with the class. They are **Erik Berglund**, founder, The Language of Leadership; **Kristi Runberg**, nurse manager and leadership development consultant, St. Charles Health System; **Brittania Wright**, organizational development consultant, St. Charles Health System; **Su Embree**, founder of Saute, cofounder of The Script and former owner of DHM Research; **TJ Murphy**, owner, Hite Digital; **Jenn Kovitz**, community engagement and government affairs manager, Hayden Homes; **Cyrus Mooney**, business development manager, City of Bend; and **Morgan Schmidt**, executive director, Red Cross of Central and Eastern Oregon.

This year's **Sunriver Art Fair** commemorative poster will feature *Autumn on the Deschutes* by **Maia Leisz**. Leisz paints in oil on canvas, building contemporary impressionist landscapes and seascapes through expressive brushwork and a luminous color palette. She works from direct observation — light as it falls on water, the shift of color on a hillside before the shadows move, the particular stillness of a crisp autumn day on the Deschutes.

Leisz is new to the Sunriver Art Fair, but a veteran of fairs across the West. She lives and paints near Sandpoint, Idaho.



AUTUMN ON THE DESCHUTES BY MAIA LEISZ

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