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40 Under 40

She had the vision to see, fill a niche

Darya Bronston

President
DKB Resources

Darya Bronston, 39, is a self-made success story. She's not an engineer, but she founded a successful small business in the tech sector focused on helping research and development teams create products.

Bronston started Santa Barbara-based DKB Resources in 2000 in response to what she saw as unfilled niche in the printed circuit board industry. The small firm can provide hardware design from circuit boards to complete systems, circuit layout services



and even farming out the fabrication and assembly of projects.

"Our niche is if customers have a product they want to create, they can call us and we can create a product for them, or they can say, 'Here's what we have – can you make a product for us?'" she said.

Though Bronston's business is small, she has big customers: NASA, Teradyne, Northrop Grumman, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology and Raytheon have all tapped DKB's services. Her firm worked on the camera circuit board that sent photographs of Mars back from NASA's Mars rover, and on the cruise board that guided the rover to the red planet.

She doesn't have a technical background, but she's thrived in the business by taking care of customers and working to get the most from her small-but-dedicated team.

"I'm not an engineer," Bronston said. "This has come out of hands-on learning in the business."

What was your first job?

Babysitting at age 12.

What are the top two attributes of a good leader?

Communication skills — listening and talking — closely followed by creativity and dedication, closely followed by integrity and vision. I know that equals six qualities; for me there aren't just two attributes.



Up-and-coming leaders take center stage

Forty Under Forty has a special place in the Pacific Coast Business Times' editorial calendar.

Our annual look at the region's up-and-coming leaders marks the turn into fall, the busiest time of year for many businesses. The Business Times is no exception, particularly since we publish our Top 25 Book of Lists, our biggest special section in late December.

But 40 Under 40 also has a special place in the annals of the Business Times because when we launched it nine years ago, 40 under 40 marked our first venture into the high-risk, high-reward business of events. Although the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks were fresh in everybody's mind, our awards dinner attracted a huge audience and the rest, as they say, is history.

This fall we already are making plans to celebrate 2010, which marks our 10th anni-

versary as the region's weekly business journal. Including the Class of 2000, we have now honored 360 young leaders from San Luis Obispo, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.



HENRY DUBROFF
Editor

Our alumni include Andy Chou, class of 2001, president of Northern Trust's offices in Santa Barbara and Montecito. In politics, we've been fortunate to have identified several rising stars, including State Sen. Abel Maldonado and Santa Barbara County Supervisor Salud Carbajal.

In technology, entrepreneurs Klaus Schausser, class of 2001 and Andreas Von Blottnitz, class of 2002, built Expertcity, now a unit of Citrix Online. Former Software.com CEO John D. MacFarlane, class of 2002, is CEO of Sonos.

To create the 40 Under 40, we solicit nominations at our events, through advertising and other announcements looking for profession-

als and business owners who live and work principally in the Tri-Counties. We have two basic requirements — you must be under 40 years of age to enter and you can only be honored once.

Our staff selects the final honorees based on three criteria: professional accomplishment, community involvement and outside recognition of those accomplishments.

Forty Under Forty was produced by Special Reports Editor Jim Logan and the profiles were written by Business Times staff and correspondents. The cover was designed by Advertising Graphic Designer Ashley Dunsmore.

Finally, I would like to thank our sponsors, Wells Fargo and the United Way organizations of Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. They will be joining us as we salute this year's class of 40 Under 40 at the Topa Tower Club in Oxnard on Oct. 19.