

SC&RA's 2021 '4 Under 40' class is aiming high and thinking ahead.

Pride and determination

As SC&RA and the industry continue to address the persistent workforce challenges that defined the better half of the last decade, young leaders within the Association leave their mark on the present while cultivating their own careers and evolving the path forward for the industries they work within.

This year's "4 Under 40" class shows the insight, the vision and the wherewithal synonymous with SC&RA leadership over the decades. And by way of learning from those that came before them, they represent a productive future being designed and delivered in real-time, by a generation more than willing to lead the way.

A calling

Harrison Smith is a Field Manager with Ralph Smith Company (RSC), and earned a Bachelor of Science in construction management from Weber State University in 2011. He also acquired an E-100 Contractor License from the State of Utah in 2015. Smith leads the craft-training team at RSC and has thus far trained ten individuals to qualify for their Utah Class A CDL.

"I take these individuals and train them from having no commercial driving knowledge to being successful drivers with our company," he said. "This has helped to combat the labor shortage and continues to help our company grow."



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HARRISON SMITH, Field Manager, Ralph Smith Company

In addition to spending many hours ensuring the health and safety of RSC employees, Smith also participates in the Utah Trucking Association Safety Council, the AGC Highway Board of Apprenticeship, the SC&RA Leadership Forum and other endeavors that advocate for recruitment and growth within the industry.

For Smith, it's not just a career, it's a calling. "Every day, I show coworkers and customers that trucking is amazing and the life-blood of our nation," he emphasized. "I teach people to treat truck drivers with respect and gratitude. This positive attitude helps me recruit drivers into our fleet because we are well-respected and hold ourselves to a high standard."

To be recognized for his efforts by the Association, said Smith, further validates his hard work. "Since attending my first meeting in 2012, it's been a continuation of working in the industry I love, and pulling people into it. I've always wanted to make what we do in trucking appealing, and this recognition proves that it's all paying off. Turning apprentices or new people to the industry into truck

drivers and helping them to develop careers is one of my biggest, most rewarding goals in life. You can't buy a driver, but you can build a driver."

No substitute

Beth Kolar, Territory Representative & Product Trainer at LGH USA, can certainly relate to loving the career trajectory she's on and doing everything she can to develop it accordingly.

A 2009 graduate of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, with a Bachelor of Science in economics, Kolar moved from the LGH Chicago headquarters in 2016 to Northern



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California in order to spearhead their expansion in the state and bring the LGH mission to life. Since then, she's implemented a threefold strategy built around adaptability, communication/customer service and education.

"In addition to the product and safety training I provide customers, I am also a member of the LGH National Training Team," she pointed out. "Throughout the past twelve months, I was able to convert my typically in-person onboard training week into a virtual class so that LGH could continue spring-boarding new hires into the field. Beyond that, with LGH employees spending more time in front of a desk, I conducted numerous training sessions including rigging product-focused training sessions."

Challenges being what they are, Kolar's move to California represented the biggest career challenge of her life – though, once establishing herself, she's overcome additional obstacles. "The cost of living, a new customer base among strangers and, especially, coming into the market as a young, female, non-engineer that nobody had ever heard of – trying to convince senior/tenured foreman/laborers/tradesmen/project managers that what we

had to offer was worth their time." Ultimately, she's learned to treat those challenges as opportunities. "It's a chance to educate myself or another, a chance to grow a relationship, be memorable, to turn a negative into a positive. This notion has sustained me to this day. There is no substitute for perseverance or shortcut for growth. New businesses don't begin the game with a 'handicap score' but we can all do hard things. You just have to continue to see the opportunity – and not the problem."

Humbling experience

Craig McGraw, VP of Sales & Marketing at Trans American Trucking, knows a little something about making the most of opportunity.

A 2005 graduate of Seton Hall University with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, he went on to earn a University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business Leadership and Management Certificate in 2018. One of McGraw's proudest career moments came just a year later.

"Since I first started working at Trans American in 2005, I was looking forward to the day where I would earn the right to take on the responsibility as a leader with a team under my wing,"

he acknowledged. "That day came in January 2019, when I was assigned the role of VP of sales and marketing. I was thrilled that my tireless effort traveling the country and world doing sales and building relationships within the industry was recognized, and I've been happy to serve since."

Service is nothing new to McGraw – as he also spends his time involved in community organizations like: the YMCA of Greater Monmouth County, New Jersey; Seton Hall University's Presidents Advisory Group; the National Police Defense Foundation; Team Walker Jersey City, NJ; and the Railway Industrial Clearance Association.

He also recognized that being honored by SC&RA as a 4 Under 40 member places

him in a distinguished group. "This is a humbling experience for me, and I'm proud to be a part of it. The thing that excites me about the future of my career is working with my fellow colleagues in the industry to come up with solutions to the everchanging issues that affect all of us."

Well-positioned

Justin LaPoten, Vice President at Lift Source Machinery, LTD, echoed McGraw. "I look back at this group since it was started and see leaders that I really admire from some of the top companies in the industry."

Since graduating with a business administration degree from Texas Christian University in 2007, majoring in finance, LaPoten, like his colleagues in the 4 Under 40 class, has become one of those leaders – helping to grow LSM since joining by focusing on diversification, developing relationships and creating flexible financing solutions to meet customer needs.



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One particular point of pride for LaPoten is the fact that he represents the fourth generation of his family to be involved in the heavy machinery industry. "I went to ConExpo in 2017 because it sounded like a fun bonding event with my future father-in-law, and I wanted to learn more about what he did," he indicated. "It was there that I got hooked after walking around the grounds and seeing all of the impressive equipment. More importantly, I enjoyed and respected the people I met."

To that end, LaPoten firmly believes relationships form the backbone of the work he takes such pride in. "This industry has brought me extremely close to my family and has also given me a new family that I enjoy speaking to daily – the crane and rigging family."

It's what keeps him excited about both the present and the future of the industry he's made a career within. "I have boundless enthusiasm for the future of LSM. And with the government contemplating a trillion-dollar infrastructure spend, we're well-positioned to attract the next generation of leaders and skilled labor into this industry."