

# REPORT ON BUSINESS

MAGAZINE

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## FEATURES

### Top Forty Under 40

**The ninth annual selection of the brightest achievers on the rise**

Friday, April 30, 2004

By Andre Mayer, Matthew McKinnon, Christopher

This is a magazine that chronicles corporate Canada's highs and lows, and business was on a roll last year. Once a year, however, we also get to cast a much wider net. The ninth annual selection of Canada's Top 40 Under 40 reminds us that innovation and success come in many different forms.

Once again, the honorees were selected by a panel of 31 business and community leaders (see page 84) assembled by The Caldwell Partners International, the first and largest executive search firm in Canada. Caldwell received more than 1,400 nominations. The panel then rated nominees on five criteria: vision and leadership, innovation and achievement, community involvement, impact, and growth and development strategy.

The honorees come from many fields, and from across the country. They include Bay Street hotshots such as CIBC investment banker Dan Daviau; Alberta oil patch winners such as Paramount Energy Trust president Susan Riddell Rose; and achievers who are about as far from the corporate mainstream as you can get, such as Gregor Robertson, co-founder of Vancouver-based juice maker Happy Planet, and medical researcher Proton Rahman from St. John's. All have inspiring stories.

To nominate someone for next year's Top 40, please call 1-800-688-5540 or visit <http://www.top40award-canada.org>.

#### Eric Schneider, 39

President and CEO, Redwood Custom Communications Inc., Toronto

South African-born Schneider departed from his roots in accounting and in sales and marketing to found Redwood Custom Communications in 1998. An adjunct to Britain's Redwood Publishing, his company is now North America's largest custom publishing agency, producing direct-mail magazines for clients such as General Motors and Kraft. Redwood publishes more than 70 million copies of its magazines a year.

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Something caught his eye: "I used to love watching thirtysomething," Schneider says, referring to the popular 1990s TV show. "I don't know how old I was at the time, but I was just looking at the work environment, which was an ad agency, and thinking, 'That's quite cool.'"

Love your reader: Schneider strives to create content that satisfies marketing objectives, but also makes good reading. He says Farm Inc., which is targeted at professional farmers, would interest any food consumer. "The way we typically talk internally is with respect to two clients: the reader and our [paying] client. We can't be dismissive of either. That means sometimes we push back with our sponsor client on a certain issue."

**David Ossip, 37** President and CEO, Workbrain Corp., Toronto Ossip's first job was at CIBC, doing "absolutely nothing," he says, for the first three weeks. Then he peeked over his cubicle and showed a staffer a Lotus command, which helped reduce a year's work on a data-exporting project "to about two minutes." The bank declared Ossip a genius (he argues otherwise) and put him to work analyzing profitability models. Ossip envisioned a program to help CIBC improve the way it gathered and used its customer data. He developed a prototype and sold it to his bosses, and his compensation financed a Harvard MBA. Next, he built his own labour management software and a company, Business Machine Interfaces, to develop and market it. He sold BMI to a Japanese company in 1996, then consulted while waiting out a non-compete clause that expired in 1999. Ossip promptly launched Workbrain, a software company that helps large corporations deploy and manage their workforces. Its first three clients were British Airways, the Tennessee Valley Authority (North America's largest public utility) and Russell Athletics. Revenue climbed from \$16.8 million (U.S.) in 2002 to \$33.8 million (U.S.) in 2003; last December, the company launched Canada's first tech IPO in three years.

On emigrating from South Africa to Toronto at age 12: "My parents liked the weather in Canada. I think they were on drugs when we came here."

On Workbrain's corporate culture: "Our hockey team has the best uniforms [blue, orange and white, with Workbrain's swirling logo on the chest], but we're zero for eight. It's a real tragedy."

**Allan McLeod, 34**

President and CEO, Tribal Councils Investment Group of Manitoba, Winnipeg

"I'm busier than a one-legged butt-kicker today, if you can picture that." In addition to his duties with TCIG, which manages long-term investments for 52 of Manitoba's 63 First Nations, McLeod is chairman of Anishinabe Mazaska Capital Corp. (Manitoba's first capital corporation for aboriginal people); president and CEO of

First Canadian Health Management Corp. (a national medical claims processing service for aboriginal people) and Arctic Beverages Ltd. (the world's only aboriginal-owned Pepsi bottler); and managing director of Rupertsland Holdings Inc. (an investment consortium consisting of TCIG and its counterparts from Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories). Little wonder that he recently asked for "a bit of a reprieve" from Kingston's Queen's University, where he is pursuing an executive MBA (via remote study).

Strong, silent type: TCIG's assets doubled over the past two years, to somewhere between \$35 million and \$45 million. McLeod closed another whopper this spring (he says the deal is much bigger than 2003's acquisitions combined), but wouldn't spill specifics. "I'm a firm believer in keeping quiet about investments until we get them done."

movin' on up: McLeod was a management intern during TCIG's earliest days. The group moved into a Winnipeg office tower in 1990. "After the gold doors close, you're looking at everybody wearing their Gucci shoes and Armani suits, and you're going, Holy smokes, I don't belong here. Since that time, we've broken down a lot of paradigms. We're out here trailblazing."

**Dr. David A. Jaffray, 37** Head of Radiation Physics, Princess Margaret Hospital; Associate Professor, Department of Radiation Oncology, University of Toronto  
Jaffray is a senior scientist at the Ontario Cancer Institute and a principal in the image-guided therapy lab at Princess Margaret. His team pioneered an imaging system that augments a medical-linear accelerator--a five-tonne, room-sized device that is used for radiation treatment of cancer. Before, treatment was accurate within about a centimetre; now, a therapist can narrow the affected area down to two or three millimetres. The difference reduces the complications of radiation therapy--used on about half of cancer patients--and makes the treatment viable for more varieties of the disease. "Basically, we can visualize targets and direct treatment in one step," says Jaffray.

Picture This: The new technology uses a form of body imaging called cone-beam computed tomography. Old methods pictured one cross-section of an affected area; the new technique generates 1,024 images at once, providing an up-to-the-minute 3-D portrait of the patient's interior. A British company has adopted and commercialized the technology, and hospitals in the U.S. and Europe can already buy it. It will be available in Canada soon.

Farm Boy: Jaffray was one of 10 children in a farm family. "You learn fast that no one takes care of something for you--if you want something done, you do it yourself."

**Patrice Gervais, 39**

President and Chief Executive Officer, Dinec

Inc., Louiseville, Que.

Gervais founded Dinec, a furniture manufacturer, in 1991 with three employees and a 3,200-square-foot plant. Now Dinec has a 200,000-square-foot facility and a staff of more than 350. First-year sales totalled \$645,000; last year they topped \$40 million.

**Fast Furniture:** Dinec creates made-to-order furniture in just 28 days. Customers visit one of nearly 1,000 affiliated retailers and choose from a remarkable variety of options--think 3,600 colour combinations--to custom-design their piece. "We make what the customer wants," says Gervais. The company's specialty is dining room sets, but Gervais is expanding this year to include bedroom suites: "We want to move on to the rest of the house." **Play Ball:** Gervais played pro baseball for the Pittsburgh Pirates' farm organization for two years in the late 1980s. Now he's a shortstop in Quebec's highest-level adult amateur league, competing against some players in their early 20s. He's keeping up--he says his batting average is above .300. Dinec is also the team's main sponsor--not that he would ever pull rank on the manager: "The coaches, they know if there's someone better, they should move me. We're there to win." In business as in sport.

#### **Michel Bissonnette, 37**

Executive Producer and Vice-President,  
Creative, Zone3 Inc., Montreal

Bissonnette and three partners started Zone3 in 2000 by buying out part of a television production company. Since then, revenues have more than doubled as Zone3 has made a name for itself in Quebec, in Canada and beyond. Much of that rapid success is due to a distinctive lineup of socially conscious yet entertaining programs, such as the YTV schoolroom sitcom *Mental Block*. "I'm in charge of all the growth of the company," says Bissonnette, "and you have to create new shows if you want to grow." Since its inception, Zone3 has produced a total of 115 TV shows, more than 700 live shows and concerts, and 36 music CDs. Last year, the company shot its first feature film, based on its popular series *Dans une galaxie pres de chez vous* (*In a Galaxy Near You*). The movie opened in theatres in Quebec on April 9. Being located in Montreal is a bonus in many ways, says Bissonnette. Production costs are relatively low and there's a large pool of talent able to work in both French and English, which is important for a firm building an international reputation. That talent is attracted by the "family spirit" of Zone3, he adds. "We wanted to make [Zone3] a creative zone where...all the people are really in charge of their own projects."

**Savoir-Faire:** "A good idea is a good idea, no matter if it is in French, Italian or English."

**Shane Bourbonnais, 37** Executive  
Vice-President, Clear Channel Entertainment  
Canada, Vancouver

If your favourite band is coming to town, Bourbonnais is probably the man organizing the tour. Two years after he started at Clear Channel in 2000, the company's Canadian music group was on the verge of being shut down. Now, after "refocusing" on big concerts and clients, it has roughly half the market for major tours in Canada, promoting about 160 concerts in 2003. One of the biggest was the Concert for Toronto last June, held simultaneously at SkyDome and the Air Canada Centre, with video feeds back and forth. It was a pick-me-up for the city during the SARS epidemic, with acts including Avril Lavigne, the Barenaked Ladies and Diana Krall. "We put that show together in less than three weeks," says Bourbonnais, "and it went off without a hitch." Bourbonnais, whose wife, Michele, died of cancer in October, 2001, also organized a Vancouver benefit concert staged a year later. The event raised \$1.75 million for cancer research. Michele, he says, "taught me about courage and bravery." As for the future, aside from personal goals--Bourbonnais is building a "dream house" in the mountains of B.C.--he wants a bigger slice of an even bigger live music market. New major concert venues are opening soon in Victoria and Winnipeg; he hopes to get the lion's share of bookings. The company is also pondering more European-style outdoor music festivals across Canada.

Focus, Focus, Focus: "We really started sticking to the bigger acts and blue-chip clients. That worked a lot better for us--we weren't running around so much."

#### **Gilbert Palter, 38**

Managing Partner and COO, EdgeStone Capital Partners, Toronto

Palter says he's generating "top-quartile, if not decile, North American returns for private equity investors" during a time when most venture capitalists are still hurting from the tech crash. Palter focuses on "later-stage private equity, as opposed to early-stage venture capital." EdgeStone (née Eladdan Capital Partners) typically invests in mid-market private companies across several industries, including tech. Assets under management have climbed from \$50 million in 1999 to nearly \$1.4 billion today.

Off his meds: Palter considered becoming a doctor--like his father--but realized he was "too much of an entrepreneur and a capitalist to work in an increasingly socialist system." He studied economics and computer science instead, followed by stints with Morgan Stanley in New York and London, then an MBA from Harvard. Palter worked for McKinsey & Co., Clairvest and Smith Barney before founding Eladdan in 1996. His earliest backers included members of the Reichmann family.

One man's trash...: One of EdgeStone's first big deals was Browning Ferris Industries, a solid-waste disposal company. Within two years, BFI's annual operating profit almost doubled, and when BFI went public as an

income trust, EdgeStone realized a return of more than 400% on its invested capital. Hair Today: EdgeStone owns about 70% of common equity in the Hair Club for Men and Women. "It's another example of seeing potential in a business that could engender cocktail-party jokes," he says. "Solid waste isn't the sexiest business in the world, but we saw real potential in BFI. Same thing with hair replacement and restoration." Palter broadened Hair Club's focus from just men to include women and children. Operating profits have almost doubled in the year since the change.

#### **George Gosbee, 34**

President and CEO, Tristone Capital Inc.,  
Calgary

Tristone is an investment banking firm with a twist--its partners know as much about oil and gas as their clients. Gosbee, who began his career with the respected Calgary investment firm Peters & Co., founded Tristone four years ago after listening to industry kvetching about bankers' lack of technical know-how. Who taught him to be so receptive? His wife, Karen. "I should write a book about what my marriage has taught me about business," says Gosbee. "My wife's helped me become a better investment banker."

Take My Wife's Advice, Please: Tristone Capital now has a large share of the market for oil patch acquisitions and divestitures. The latest blockbuster deal was the January sale of El Paso Oil and Gas Canada Inc. to Britain's BG Group PLC, a transaction worth about \$500 million.

A Touch of Marx: Gosbee favours an almost Marxist compensation scheme: All nine Tristone partners get equal year-end bonuses. "It makes people work for the interests of the company rather than the individual," he says. "Our biggest motivator is peer pressure." Recreation Is Profit: Gosbee also co-owns a heli-skiing company in the B.C. Rockies. "It's just great stress relief." The bonus: "It actually makes money."

**Martine M. Irman, 39** Senior Vice-President/Vice-Chair, Global Foreign Exchange and Money Markets, Trade Finance and Cash Management, TD Securities, Toronto

Traditionally, banks have profited from foreign exchange because their analysts and traders have more expertise and more information about currency markets than their customers. Irman has spearheaded efforts to provide TD's corporate, institutional and individual clients with advice, strategies and technology to better manage issues such as currency and interest rate risk. In some cases, clients can execute trades themselves, on-line.

The More things Change...: "Currency exchange is a mature product. It's one of the oldest marketplaces; it's been around for thousands of years. People once traded salt

for gold; now it's dollars for euros. And our success comes from staying ahead of the curve, using new technology to link buyers with sellers. It's a fantastic market. It runs 24 hours, and every day is different."

**Turmoil Is Good:** The recent troubles of the U.S. greenback have kept Irman's groups busy. "Any move is a good move for us, to the extent that it's an opportunity to provide advice to our clients."

#### **Hana Zalzal, 40**

President and Founder, CARGO Cosmetics Corp., Toronto

A graduate of civil engineering from the University of Toronto, Zalzal completed her MBA at York University, worked in engineering at Bell Canada and as a financial analyst at Molson Cos., then founded CARGO in 1995. The private company makes professional cosmetics and accessories. Its retail clients include the Bay, Macy's in New York and Harvey Nichols in the Middle East.

**Cosmetic-ology:** "Everybody asks what civil engineering has to do with make-up, and I'm still trying to come up with a punchline," says Zalzal. "I wanted to use both sides of my brain at the same time. I've always had a passion for fashion and make-up, so the two things just kind of merged. In a sense, this job is both very analytical and creative."

**Keep it real:** CARGO has largely shunned advertising. "[CARGO] is about self-expression," Zalzal explains. "It's not about unattainable images of perfection. It's make-up as a tool of expression for enhancing the way you look, rather than altering it."

**Dr. Prabhat Jha, 38** Canada Research Chair in Health and Development, and Director, Centre for Global Health Research, University of Toronto/St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto

Two key individuals--Dean David Naylor at the U of T's faculty of medicine and Dr. Arthur Slutsky at St. Michael's Hospital--recruited the Winnipeg-raised Jha from the World Health Organization in 2001. Jha now leads a new unit that specializes in large-scale statistical studies. The goal of these endeavours is to improve the health of impoverished people worldwide. Lately, he's been tracing the spread of HIV and the consequences of smoking. "My friends joke that I'm professionally obsessed with sex and death," he says. Smoking and AIDS are among the few killers still increasing worldwide. "Life expectancy rose more in the last 40 years than in the previous 4,000," he says. "Now the challenge is to extend the benefits of public health to the poorest populations."

**Medical Mercator:** Much of Jha's work focuses on India, where he spends a quarter of his time. One study of deaths among 43,000 Indian males, published in August, 2003, provided strong evidence that smoking

causes tuberculosis deaths. Now he's gearing up for a \$12-million survey to study mortality among a sample of six million Indians over six years. "Learning how people die is important for a country, because that's how you decide where you spend money on public health," he says. "So this will provide a road map for health care in developing countries."

### **Isabella Pain, 36**

Inuit Affairs Officer, Voisey's Bay Nickel Co.,  
Nain, Labrador

"This is the most beautiful place on earth, as far as I'm concerned. There are hills and mountains in the north, and ice on the water. We have a blue, blue sky." Pain was born and raised in Nain, on Labrador's Atlantic coast. Thirteen years ago, she came home from St. John's Memorial University (BA, political science) and joined the Labrador Inuit Association's land-claims negotiation team. Since 1977, the LIA had been fighting Ottawa for ownership of almost 73,000 square kilometres of land and 44,000 square kilometres of sea.

Pain was named co-chief negotiator in 2000, and led the team that brokered a resolution last year. (Ratification is still pending.) The final, fast-tracked talks took place in St. John's almost daily--"we had some breaks on weekends"--for nearly two years.

When it rains...: While still talking out the land claim, Pain took the lead on LIA negotiations over Inco's Voisey's Bay nickel project. She secured an agreement that includes involving Inuit in environmental monitoring and digital map-making of the landscape. "I don't see myself as a hero. I am a member of a team that had a job to do and did it."

The art of the deal: "I've always been a mediator. Some of these things you learn naturally--you have to listen, to know what the other side wants and what they need, and to know what you need. And you have to come up with creative ideas to make it a win-win situation for everyone."

### **Marc Kielburger, 27**

Executive Director, Leaders Today and Free the Children, Thornhill, Ont.

How's this for a résumé? Kielburger did his undergrad at Harvard and took courses at the John F. Kennedy School of Government; he graduated magna cum laude. Next up: a Rhodes scholarship that snared him a law degree from Oxford.

All in the Family: In 1995, his younger brother Craig, then just 12 years old, founded Free the Children, which works in Canada and the developing world to help free children from exploitation and teach them to bring about positive change in their lives. In 1999, the pair co-founded Leaders Today. "We train young people so they have the skills and confidence to go out and change the world." That entails linking students with public-service opportunities, and running a

three-day leadership training seminar called Volunteer Now in seven school districts across Canada. He's adding three more next year, and hopes to expand to the United States.

Any Regrets?: Nope. "Most of my friends from Harvard are working on Wall Street. They're making good money but they hate their jobs. And I'm living my dream."

Most Recent Dinner Party: The night before his Top 40 interview, Kielburger was one of about 120 invitees at a gala dinner in Ottawa thrown by Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson and the Prime Minister's Office to honour UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

### **Michael Moskowitz, 33**

President and General Manager, PalmOne Canada, Mississauga

If there's a Palm in your hand, odds are good Moskowitz put it there. Starting in 1996, when he was hired as national sales and marketing manager for 3Com Canada subsidiary Palm Computing--which in 1999 became Palm Canada, an independent, publicly traded company that was renamed PalmOne Canada last year--Moskowitz has been the engine that powers the sale of this country's 1.4 million Palm handhelds.

Pocket rocket: Moskowitz carries a Treo 600 by Handspring, a Palm competitor acquired by his company last October. The combination PDA, e-mailer, web browser, digital camera, MP3 player and gaming platform is "closer than you might think" to an all-in-one solution to the digital detritus currently littering your belt line. He'd be tickled if you bought one.

Strictly business: PalmOne's challenge is to expand from handheld provider to a "converged, truly wireless mobile computing platform," he says. The company is going after that goal through partnerships with top wireless carriers.

Desk accessories: Moskowitz worked for Sony of Canada and Sharp Electronics after completing his MBA at Dalhousie University. His employer prior to Dal? Rubbermaid's office-products division, where his focus was also on the future: He implemented a company-wide desktop publishing system back when personal computing still felt like a brave new world.

**Frank Geier, 39** President, GFS Canada Group, Richmond, B.C.

Food service companies supply restaurants, hospitals, airlines and other institutions with, well, supplies--everything from food ingredients to cutlery. In 2002, Gordon Food Service, a privately owned U.S. firm, completed a round of Canadian purchases that created a national giant with more than \$1 billion in annual revenues. At the helm, Gordon placed Frank Geier, president of B.C.'s Neptune Food Service, and charged him with knitting together the new outfit.

**It's Not Me, It's My Staff:** It'd be hard to find an executive more loyal to his workers. Given the choice of decreased profitability or layoffs, Geier accepted the hit on the company's net income, crimping profits by 15% in two consecutive quarters in 2002. "I tend to side with the employees," says Geier. "So when we hit a tough spot, we try to take the hit as a business rather than laying people off." The payoff? Loyalty is one of the ingredients that has helped GFS increase its market share and easily exceed its 2003 objectives.

**My American Neighbour:** Geier has the United States in his backyard--literally. He lives with his wife and two daughters south of Vancouver in Tsawwassen, B.C., on a lot that backs onto the U.S. border.

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**David Sugarman, 35**

CEO, Billy Bee Honey Products Ltd., Toronto

Sugarman joined the honey maker as a manager of corporate development in 1992, eventually ascending to VP of that department. In 2000, he drifted off to co-found the merchant banking group Succession Capital Corp. But Sugarman returned to Billy Bee two years later as CEO, while remaining an adviser and equity partner at Succession. Over the past eight years, Billy Bee's annual sales have increased by more than 500%, and they now total more than \$50 million.

**Sweet satisfaction:** Sugarman's idea to use only plastic containers, starting in the mid-1990s, has had some unexpected environmental benefits. "Restaurants across

Canada have taken our squeeze beehives and they're using them for sauces and different things," he says. "Every restaurant I go into, if I get a peek into the kitchen, I'll see our containers being reused."

Enough time in the day: As if he didn't have enough on his plate, Sugarman continues to supplement his education. "I'm currently doing the final level of my chartered financial analyst [CFA] degree," he says, "just for fun."

**Stéphane Gonthier, 37** Vice-President Operations, Eastern Canada, and Corporate Secretary, Alimentation Couche-Tard Inc., Laval, Que.

Gonthier's employer operates convenience stores under several monikers, including Couche-Tard, Mac's and Circle K, and it runs Dunkin' Donuts franchises in Quebec. Gonthier, who has a law degree and an MBA, handles the division that oversees Quebec. Despite having 578 locations and a staff of 5,772, he hasn't been afraid to take chances, including an initiative to tailor store design to local demand. Sales have climbed by about 20% at affected locations.

Greetings, Mr. Bond: More than 300 Couche-Tard stores also have gas stations. To track regional changes in fuel prices, Gonthier created a data gathering centre that resembles a spy-flick war room--big, illuminated maps and fast computers. "Gas is a commodity--you can lose thousands of litres [of sales] because of a price difference of a fraction of a cent," he says.

"Sloche" Fund: Under Gonthier's supervision, Couche-Tard executed an unusual, in-your-face promotional campaign to launch the Sloche frozen beverage. The goal was to create what Gonthier calls a "total consuming experience" for teens and tweens. "We said it was sugar and water--no vitamins--and we turned that into a selling point," he says, not without pride. "The marketing was very rude and offensive."

#### **Dr. Proton Rahman, 38**

Associate Professor of Medicine, Memorial University, St. John's

A doctoral graduate of Memorial in 1990, Rahman then studied rheumatology and genetic epidemiology at the University of Toronto, returning to Memorial in 1999 as assistant professor of medicine. Concurrently, he became staff rheumatologist at St. Clare's Mercy Hospital in St. John's. In 2000, he also became chief scientific officer of Newfound Genomics Inc., a biotech firm that is studying the gene structures of Newfoundlanders, to learn more about obesity, diabetes, arthritis and inflammatory bowel disease. (Newfoundland is suitable for this research because its population is quite homogeneous.) In 2003, the Atlantic Innovation Fund awarded Memorial \$3.2 million to create a database of patient records in order to track the efficacy of various treatments. Rahman is the principal investigator.

The handle: Rahman's proper first name is Al-Amin, but his parents called him Proton because he was scientifically-minded from a young age. The name stuck.

Healthy attitude: Rahman developed arthritis of the spine at the age of 17, "which probably shaped what I wanted to do as a career," he says. "Just seeing what doctors and nurses do--as well as allied health professionals--I had an appreciation for it." Nothing much slows him down, though. "I'm a big sports addict," he says. "I love to run."

#### **Dr. Ted Sargent, 30**

Associate Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Nortel Networks-Canada Research Chair in Emerging Technologies, University of Toronto

In his role as Nortel Networks-Canada Research Chair, Sargent studies the interaction of photons (light particles) and semiconductors. His 20-member research team has created designer nanocrystals made of lead sulphide for use in an "agile optical network." The goal is to use light to vastly speed up internet networks. These nanocrystals--also called "quantum dots"--could yield a variety of other uses, from improving your computer's processing power to the advent of spray-on video surfaces. Sargent was named one of the Top 100 Young Innovators in MIT's Technology Review Magazine last year, and has advised various start-up companies and venture capitalists on nanotechnology.

Dot matrix: Sargent's innovations could be useful in diagnostic medicine. "Quantum dots [when used in the infrared, the part of the colour spectrum invisible to human eyes] could allow you to peer inside somebody, without any surgery," he says. "They would allow you to see a real-time movie of how cells move around in your body, and where a tumour is, or where it could emerge."

Colouring his view: Finger-painting as a four-year-old foreshadowed Sargent's career path: "I was fascinated with the hugeness of the spectrum, and I was also fascinated by the possibility that there were colours beyond it."

#### **Luc Sabbatini, 40**

Executive Vice-President, Astral Media Radio Inc., Montreal

Sabbatini began his career at Telemedia Corp., skipping to RadioPlus and then to the TVA Group before joining Astral Media's radio division in 2000. Astral is one of Canada's largest media companies, with holdings in radio, television and outdoor advertising, and annual revenues of almost \$500 million. Sabbatini oversaw the company's acquisition of 14 radio stations from Telemedia Radio Inc. in 2002. That brought its total stations in Quebec to 16; they reach an average of about 3.8 million listeners a week.

Fresh every day: What keeps radio vital in the internet age? "Passion," says Sabbatini. "It is a very dynamic medium. It's a day-to-day business. It's a fast-paced business, and it has a sense of urgency. As one of my VPs of programming says, in radio you're like a baker: You make fresh bread every morning."

Making waves: Sabbatini's goal at Astral "was to dynamize radio," he says. "Because of our size and our leadership, we're now pulling the market. Everybody's looking at us--the advertisers, the agencies, other radio stations. We're making the trends."

#### **Donna Lindell, 36**

Vice-President, Corporate Communications,  
Manulife Financial, Toronto

Lindell (née Morrison) became the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's manager of publications in 1989. Neat trick, considering she was a Carleton University journalism student at the time. "I had business cards," she says. "I'd leave class and hop on a plane to go to a meeting."

Talking points: In 1995, Lindell quit the Chamber, left Ottawa and moved to Toronto. She spent three years at the PR firm Strategic Objectives, then shifted to Manulife's corporate communications department in 1998. The insurer was in the midst of demutualization, and the following year it launched the largest Canadian IPO up to that point. "There was a lot to learn, a lot to prove and a lot to get done." Lindell's promotion to VP followed the IPO and placed her in charge of a department of eight; she managed fallout from last year's failed takeover of Canada Life and helped write the script for Manulife's megamerger with John Hancock.

Better living through symmetry: Two years ago, an executive coach helped Lindell realize that work was ruling her life. In response, she reconnected with university friends and enrolled in improv acting classes. "I needed balance to get a better sense of who I was as an individual. I'm a whole new person now." When a former client suggested Lindell attend an art exhibition, she went, bought two paintings for her office--and said yes when the artist asked her for a date. They married last September.

#### **Susan L. Riddell Rose, 39**

President and COO, Paramount Energy  
Trust, Calgary

A graduate of Queen's University's geological engineering program in 1986, Rose began her career as a geological engineer at Shell Canada. She took on a similar role in 1990 at Paramount Resources Ltd., the company founded by her father, Clay Riddell. Rose was appointed chief operating officer five years later. In 2002, Paramount converted itself into an income trust. Last year, its profit soared to \$52.4 million from \$7.4 million in 2002, chiefly due to higher natural gas prices and prudent hedging.

Familial ground: Clay Riddell is Paramount's chairman and CEO, but Rose says working for her father has never posed a psychological burden. "After I left Shell and went over to Paramount, I had an easier communication pipeline [to the top], but I would say there's been no added pressure. We're accountable to our unitholders, we're accountable to our employees, so all those drivers are just as important as being accountable to my dad."

Patience is a virtue: If you want to succeed in the oil and gas business, you have to learn to wait. "Adaptability and perseverance are two very good qualities for this job," says Rose.

#### **Patrick Wilson, 35**

President, Blue Water Agencies Ltd.,  
Dartmouth, N.S.

Originally from Alberta, Wilson moved to Nova Scotia to attend Dalhousie University, where he received his BComm in 1992. After working for Great-West Life and the Bank of Nova Scotia, he purchased Blue Water Agencies in 1998. The private company is the largest ship chandler in Atlantic Canada, providing everything from food to engine supplies. Under Wilson's aegis, Blue Water expanded into services for offshore oil rigs, including cleaning, catering and spare parts. The company won its first contract with the Canadian navy in 1999, and has since kept the navy well-stocked for NATO deployments to foreign lands.

Laissez faire: "My personal management style is very hands-off," says Wilson. In other words, "Have the best people in the role, and then empower them to get the job done."

All aboard: Blue Water was an official supplier of food provisions to 70 vessels in the 2000 Tall Ships competition in Halifax Harbour. "Everybody who works here has some involvement with ships, whether it's ex-navy or the supply business," says Wilson. "To participate with Tall Ships was a real excitement."

#### **Paven Bratch, 40**

Founder and CEO, e2e Consumer Direct, Mississauga  
Nurturing customers is a full-time job for Bratch--and they're not even his customers. He contends that his e2e Consumer Direct (e2e is techspeak for "end to end") is the only company in North America that can manage other companies' customer relationships from start to finish. "There are companies that manage your website or your database, or run your electronic communications or your direct communications, or plan strategy," he says, "but there's no other company that manages the whole thing." E2e's Intellimaxx software can take customer information and use it to co-ordinate a full-court press of communications, including advertising, opt-in e-mail, contests and promotions, as well as shipping goods. Customers can even be on the move--in 2003, Bratch ran the first national marketing campaign carried by all of

Canada's major cellphone providers. That sounds appealing to client companies, but the customers, Bratch says, only respond if they're offered something worthwhile:

"Always, it's what you offer, and if you're trusted."

The Bottom Line: "What we want to do is increase [clients'] sales and increase profits, as opposed to winning awards."

**Darin McLean, 38**

President, Atlantic Mobility Products,  
Bedford, N.S.

McLean graduated from Dalhousie University with a BComm in accounting in 1988, and later earned his CMA. For several years, he climbed the food chain at Lawton's Drug Stores, rising to manager of general accounting. It was all warm-up: In 1996, he connected with Mickey MacDonald, who was, at the time, both a full-time firefighter and chief executive of the cellular retailer DownEast Communications. MacDonald hired McLean as DownEast's comptroller.

"Mickey had lots of entrepreneurship to share," McLean says, "and felt I had the talent to run his business. It worked out pretty good for both of us." no kidding: McLean spotted a dearth of local suppliers and guided the 1998 birth of AMP, the telecommunication mobility wholesaler that's now a 46/46/8 partnership between MacDonald, Aliant and McLean. AMP started with one client, three employees and a few hundred products (cellphones, pagers and the like); respectively, those numbers have jumped to 350, 68 and more than 2,000. McLean opened a full-service repair shop and instituted a policy of face-to-face client contact every six weeks or better. Retailers noticed: Last year's volume was five times greater than 1999's.

**Jillian Buriak, 36**

Professor of Chemistry/Senior Research Officer, University of Alberta/National Institute of Nanotechnology, Edmonton

Buriak is a chronic overachiever--99% on her high school science exams wasn't good enough. She got her first degree at Harvard, a faculty position at Purdue University in Indiana in 1997, and last year she was given the American Chemical Society Pure Chemistry Award, the highest award for scientists aged 35 or under. Now she's back in Canada doing specialized materials research and helping to drive the new science of the very small: nanotechnology, where something the width of a human hair is 100,000 times too big. "The chemistry involved is really fundamental and it's a lot of fun," says Buriak, "but there's really not a line between the basic science and applications." One application she's helped develop is a way to do biological analysis on a microchip. Usually, the first go-around at such technologies is extremely expensive and takes specialized knowledge; Buriak's goal is to make it cheaper and easier for

non-chemists.

Small Pleasures: "I work with the neatest tools and toys to build things. . . it's a combination of art and science."

**Dr. Peter B. Dirks, 38** Assistant Professor, University of Toronto; Pediatric Neurosurgeon and Scientist, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto

The son of two doctors, Dirks has run a research lab at the Hospital for Sick Children for five years. In 2003, he published one of several leading studies that helped establish two things: Brain tumours have stem cells, and those stem cells cause tumour growth. As Dirks explains, "For years it's been thought that all the cells in a tumour divided, and grew the tumour. Actually, we found the growth comes from only a small fraction--these stem cells gone haywire."

The UPSHOT: Dirks's discovery is helping to disseminate a new way of thinking about cancer cell growth, affecting both the study and the treatment of a disease that is a leading cause of cancer death among children. For example, his research could explain why brain tumours in general don't respond to chemotherapy. Even if chemo kills 99% of the cancer cells, it might miss a key stem cell.

So What Do You Do For Fun?: (long pause)  
"I don't really have recreation time. What time I do have I spend with my three children." He also tries to keep up with pro hockey and world cup rugby, a carryover from the five years he played rugby at Queen's University, where he was an Ontario all-star.

**Catherine A. Booth, 39**

Vice-President, Capgemini, Toronto

Booth has an undergraduate degree in engineering and a master's in management. Both disciplines, she says, are "in the blood"-- her father is also an engineer and he runs his own company. "I had a good grounding in the tech side. I also had a good grounding in the business side, and I was looking to put the two together," she says. That happened when Booth joined the management consulting arm of Ernst & Young in 1995. Within three years, she was a partner. In 2000, she became a vice-president after Ernst & Young sold its consulting operation to Capgemini, a public company. Her main job now is long-term: implementing technology strategies for one of her firm's largest clients, a major Canadian retailer. The program includes building a new distribution centre and overhauling purchasing operations. She likes the lasting relationship. "They know they can count on you again and again," she says.

The W Thing: As a young engineering student and then an information technology consultant, Booth made her mark in an almost all-male world. Now that's changing: "Many of my clients are women; many of the people on my team are women. I truthfully don't see an imbalance any more."

**Bruno-Marie Béchard, 39** Rector, University of Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke, Que.

Béchard is a mechanical engineer who gave up his job in the aeronautics industry in 1992 and started teaching at the University of Sherbrooke. Nine years later, at 36, he was named to the university's top job. He certainly stands out in the grey-bearded world of university administrators. "Sometimes I get mistaken for the student representative," he says. Under his guidance, the university has expanded, formed strategic alliances with other educational institutions in the region, and earned a nationwide reputation.

super size: A soon-to-be-published study suggests that the Pole universitaire Sherbrooke--which brings together nine area schools and hospitals--has contributed an economic impact of about \$1 billion a year, and has created nearly 20,000 jobs. The university has more than 30,000 students, including about 10,000 at a campus in Longueuil, south of Montreal, even though it received little publicity until recently. As well, The Globe and Mail's 2003 University Report Card ranked Sherbrooke as Canada's third-best university overall.

New Horizons: "I needed to play a role that would make me think I had changed society in the key area of education--for the better, of course."

**Dale S. Wishewan, 35**

President and CEO, Booster Juice, Edmonton

Wishewan has a BSc from Portland State University and used to run a car-security firm. In 1999, he made a sharp turn and founded Booster Juice. The company--a franchiser for bars that serve fresh juices and smoothies--now employs 1,500 people across Canada, and has about 85% of the market.

Smart eater: Did Wishewan's parents have to nag him to eat healthily as a child? "No," he says. "I've always enjoyed food in general, and I don't remember ever turning up my nose at peas or green beans."

Hot deal: Booster Juice recently signed its first overseas deal--to open 50 stores in Saudi Arabia over the next five years. "I would have picked out 30 other countries before any in the Middle East," he says. Still, "the fact that there's no alcohol [allowed] there, the weather's very hot and there's no competition--this is a great opportunity."

**Gregor Robertson, 39**

Founder and Chairman, Happy Planet Foods, Vancouver

Robertson ran Glen Valley Organic Farm in B.C. from 1990 to 1997. He co-founded Happy Planet with high-school buddy Randal Ius in 1994. The company processes, bottles and distributes all-natural fruit juices and smoothies across Western and Central Canada and the western United States, to

coffee bars, corner stores and supermarkets, including Starbucks and Whole Foods. Happy Planet now has 55 employees, and Robertson estimates that North Americans consume 80,000 bottles of its beverages every week.

Unclouded mind: Robertson worked on a farm in the late '80s. One day, as he was spraying the crops, a wind reared up and soaked him in herbicide. "I was planning on being a doctor," Robertson recalls, "but when I got stuck in a cloud of Roundup [a herbicide], I put the connection together: why organic farming was critical to good health and nutrition, and why it was important for the environment."

Key to staying active: "Just by its nature, there's an element of activism in the business," Robertson says. His company's many outreach programs include delivering unsold drinks to local food banks. "That whole base of activism is about connecting our brand to more people and then doing the right thing with our abundance--sharing our success. Ultimately, though, the business comes first, and we have to run it well or we won't be able to do more good things."

Activism in the Blood: "I'm a Bethune, so my ancestor Dr. Norman Bethune is a huge influence. He dedicated his life to what he believed in."

#### **Michael Hanley, 38**

President, Alcan Bauxite and Alumina/Senior Vice-President, Alcan Inc., Montreal

In 1998, after a stint as CFO of Quebec's Gaz Métropolitain Inc., Hanley accepted the job as director of finance at Alcan with the hope that he could move into management. That has helped him to learn about its global operations. Alcan CEO Travis Engen handed Hanley his current gig in 2002. Hanley now runs one of Alcan's six business units; his fief encompasses the mining and refining of the raw materials that eventually become everything from pop cans to ultralight mountain bikes.

Go East: To accommodate market-driving China's voracious appetite for aluminum--demand for aluminum in that country grew 25% in 2003--Hanley is planning a round of growth, including a new bauxite mine and alumina refinery in India. There's also the expansion of an Australian alumina refinery, slated to cost about \$1 billion (U.S.). His family's expanding too: Hanley's wife is pregnant with the couple's second daughter.

Karaoke Power: Hanley spent much of 1999 and 2000 in Korea, where he helped supervise two plant acquisitions. He also impressed his colleagues with his karaoke performances. "Karaoke is like a sport there--they practise at home," says Hanley. What was his song? "Sweet Caroline by Neil Diamond. It's my wife's name."

#### **Jamie Brown, 37**

CEO and Executive Producer, Frantic Films Corp., Winnipeg

Movie magic--the dazzling visual special effects that jazz up adventure flicks--has been money magic for Brown. Since he was recruited to take the helm at Frantic in 2000, revenue has climbed sevenfold (to \$4 million last year), and the staff has increased from 12 to 66. Brown started out as a lawyer, but segued into television in a series of steps. Frantic hired him to be its idea man. At the time, the company was only doing effects, but Brown started producing entire shows, including the back-to-the-19th-century reality series Pioneer Quest.

he's game: "We're still looking at the tip of the iceberg in terms of the work we can get," he says. One company goal: using its software to crack the video game business.

### **John Armstrong, 35**

Founder and President, Armstrong Partnership Ltd., Toronto

Ask Armstrong for his most priceless moment and you get two. The first--one he's re-created in a campaign for a major credit card--was 10 years ago, when he hung out the shingle for his own integrated marketing company. "You never start up your first company again," he says, "so that was pretty priceless." The other was about two months later, when he realized that a firm that put together all types of marketing, from contests to coupons, advertising to websites, could actually succeed. Corporate clients were looking beyond traditional advertising, and he caught the wave.

All staffed up: He now has 50 full-time employees and 60 part-timers, several blue-chip clients in Canada--including MasterCard and Hills Pet Nutrition--and a growing U.S. client list.

### **Fiona Brinkman, 36**

Assistant Professor, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.

As a kid in Mississauga, Brinkman was "quite the little computer geek," but she went into biochemistry because she loved both the beauty and complexity of living things. Cut to 2004, and she's back using high-powered computers to study the DNA of living creatures. This new field is called bioinformatics, and she says it's doing for biology what the periodic table did for chemistry--bringing order out of chaos. "In biology, there's a lot of complexity, but underneath the complexity is order," she says. Brinkman's special interest is infectious bacteria and viruses, with the aim of developing new life-saving drugs. One of her major successes was creating the world's most precise computer-based tool to pinpoint which targets on the surface of an infectious agent might be the most accessible for treatment by drugs or vaccines. She also leads a multinational group that created a database of the genome of a soil-based

bacterium called Pseudomonas--it's one of the most commonly studied pathogens.

**Fight On:** Many bacteria are getting stronger, says Brinkman. "We're literally going back 100 years [to the days before antibiotics]."

**Jeff McFarlane, 33**

President and CEO, IT Xchange, Oakville, Ont.

McFarlane left the University of Toronto midway through a BComm program. "I didn't have enough time left in the day for classes. The division of the company I was running was doing \$9 million to \$12 million in revenue." He was in charge of a computer remarketing business at Triathlon Computer Leasing, and later at MFP Financial Services. He left MFP in 1996, long before its leasing shenanigans with the City of Toronto.

**Reboot:** MFP laid off all but a few of McFarlane's local staff after he left the firm. Most of them quickly rejoined him at his new venture, IT Xchange, a distributor of used personal-computer products. "Within a week of leaving MFP, I had my garage full of inventory from IBM's factory outlet," he says. It didn't stay long--revenues climbed by about 20% annually, and the company has earned a profit every year. XChange did business in 62 countries last year.

**Recycle:** ITX thrives on "good-enough computing," supplying corporations with used hardware that, although dated, has no trouble running current software. When customers upgrade, ITX will buy their old equipment and replace it with something newer. "The only time we're exposed is when people are indecisive," says McFarlane. "As long as they make a choice one way or another, we're okay."

**Dr. Shamir Mehta, 39**

Associate Professor of Medicine,  
Interventional Cardiologist, McMaster  
University and Hamilton Health Sciences,  
Hamilton

Mehta is a modest man, shy to admit that his first research study was the equivalent of a grand slam. He was project director of the so-called CURE trial that tested a blood-thinning drug called Clopidogrel in patients with unstable angina and acute heart attacks; it involved nearly 13,000 patients in 28 countries. A sub-study's findings, presented in 2001, showed a 31% reduction in death, heart attack and stroke as a result of long-term therapy--making Clopidogrel the most effective oral blood thinner since aspirin. Mehta is also co-leader of the so-called CREATE trial, now in its fourth year, which is testing low-cost and potentially lifesaving therapies among more than 15,000 heart-attack patients in China and India. "Research requires a huge dedication. You have to work nights and weekends. It takes many years of training, lots of experience, hard work and time. I'd say 99% is hard work, 1% is luck."


Taking the long view: Since 2000, Mehta has been an assistant professor of medicine and director of the coronary care unit at McMaster University Medical Centre. "In clinical work, you can treat one person and feel good about it [immediately]. With research, you have the potential to affect the lives of many thousands of patients."

**Dan Daviau, 39**

Co-Head, Investment Banking and Head, Technology, Media and Telecom Investment Banking, CIBC World Markets Inc., Toronto

Being co-head of the investment banking group is Daviau's biggest job. That involves managing 180 people, planning strategy and keeping CIBC World Markets No. 1 in equity underwritings--selling new issues of shares and trust units for companies. But the fun part of his job is running the 20-member technology, media and telecom group. "I'm dealing with clients, taking them public, helping them buy and sell each other," he says. "You become a fundamental part of their strategy." The bigger job, of course, is where the bigger dollar figures are. CIBC World Markets led 114 equity underwritings last year, about 35% of all the deals in Canada (and about twice the value and twice as many as CIBC's nearest competitor). In the TMT group, he's part of a fast-paced world where companies grow quickly and really count on good advice from their banker. "You're adding material value to the company," he says.

to chill out: Daviau likes to take "a subset" of his five children--ranging in age from 1 to 13--on canoe trips into places such as Ontario's Quetico Provincial Park.

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