Alumni

Young Lions

Spring 2016

The *Chronicle of Philanthropy* named four Columbians to its inaugural “40 Under 40” list, which recognizes extraordinary contributions to the nonprofit and social-enterprise worlds:

Data scientist Bob Filbin ’12GSAS was honored for his work with the Crisis Text Line, a nonprofit hotline that operates entirely by text. Filbin had learned that text requests took up a disproportionate amount of time at traditional crisis-counseling centers; using data analysis, he was able to identify those frequent texters and encourage them to get help. More than eleven million text messages have been exchanged since the nonprofit was founded in 2013.

Donnel Baird ’13BUS was recognized for his company Bloc Power, which retrofits buildings in low-income neighborhoods with energy-efficient equipment.

Philanthropist Liesel Pritzker Simmons ’06CC is known for making a social impact not only through giving, but through economic empowerment. An heir to the Hyatt Hotels fortune, she is the founder of the Blue Haven Initiative, which has invested $50 million in social and environmental causes.

Ommeed Sathe ’00CC is a pioneer in the field of “impact investments” — investments that try to create social good in addition to financial returns. As a vice president at Prudential Financial, he oversees a $500 million portfolio. Prudential plans to increase the amount of money it invests to one billion dollars by 2020.

Twelve Columbia alumni, two faculty members, and five students were featured in *Forbes* magazine’s annual “30 Under 30.” The list, edited by Caroline Howard ’01JRN, recognizes six hundred innovators across twenty different industries, from science to social entrepreneurship. This year’s alumni winners include:

Amanda Gutterman ’13CC, Media

As a cofounder of *Slant*, a website that offers its writers a share of revenue, Gutterman is changing the way freelancers get compensated for their work.

Jordana Kier ’14BUS, Retail and E-commerce

Kier’s direct-to-consumer, subscription-based company Lola, which sells hypoallergenic organic-cotton tampons, has raised $1.2 million in less than a year.

Shana Knizhnik ’10CC, Media

A law clerk on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, Knizhnik is the woman behind the popular “Notorious RBG” Tumblr, which celebrates America’s favorite dissenting Supreme Court justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg ’59LAW. This past October, Knizhnik published a best-selling book based on her blog.

Stephanie Korey ’15BUS, Retail and E-commerce

Korey ran the supply chain at high-profile startups Warby Parker and Caspar before launching her own luxury luggage company, Away.

Christopher Lorn ’10CC, Marketing and Advertising

An analytics whiz, Lorn has developed digital campaigns for companies like Samsung Mobile and Purina through the digital agency Big Spaceship. He recently joined Philip Morris International.

Roy Moran ’12LAW, Law & Policy

Moran has a job that would make any twelve-year-old jealous: lead counsel at FanDuel, the wildly successful fantasy-sports website.

Heben Nigatu ’14CC, Media

Nigatu is the cohost of BuzzFeed’s popular new podcast *Another Round*, which has attracted guests like Hillary Clinton and New York City First Lady Chirlane McCray, and which boasts several hundred thousand subscribers.

Rami Rahal ’09SEAS, Venture Capital

Rahal founded his venture-capital firm Blue Cloud Ventures at the age of twenty-five; it has since raised more than $65 million, largely by investing in subscription-software companies.

Chelsey Roebuck ’10SEAS, Education

Roebuck’s nonprofit Emerging Leaders in Technology and Engineering (ELiTE) helps people generally underrepresented in these fields gain access to educational opportunities like summer camps, school programs, and e-learning.

Jerelyn Rodriguez ’11CC, Education

Rodriguez’s nonprofit The Knowledge House, which she founded in her native South Bronx in 2014, has sent more than three hundred young people from low-income communities into careers in technology and entrepreneurship.

Anna Stork ’11GSAPP, Social Entrepreneurship

Stork’s company LuminAID provides inflatable solar-powered lights to partners like Doctors Without Borders and ShelterBox for use in natural disasters.

Michael Tannenbaum ’10CC, Finance

As a vice president at financial startup SoFi, Tannenbaum helped raise one billion dollars in investment, the largest ever for a financial-tech company.



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