

With Teaming Talent



Alex Booth VCBO Architecture

Rachel McKenzie TSA Architects

Jeff Seliger Hadco Construction

Rhett Butler Skyline Electric

Dynamic young professionals bring a stealthy mix of attitude, passion and skill to Utah's A/E/C market.
Profiles and photos by Brad Fullmer

Brett Goodman BHB Structural Engineers

Tyler Whipple Industrial Supply

Eric Stratford R&O Construction

Winn Lindsey Kilgore Construction

EDITOR'S NOTE: Each autumn, UC&D profiles young professionals working in Utah's A/E/C arena, people who have been recognized by co-workers and others in the industry as having made a significant impact in their respective field at a relatively young age – the next generation of leaders. This year's mix includes two architects, a structural engineer, a GC business development director, two heavy/civil contractors, an electrical contractor, and a regional sales manager.

Jeff Seliger, 41
General Superintendent
Hadco Construction



Now more than 20 years into his construction career, Jeff Seliger has learned over time that he must rely on others to get projects done on time, rather than rely exclusively on himself.

Seliger, who turned 41 on October 19, is the General Superintendent for Lehi-based Hadco Construction, a 500-employee heavy/civil firm that specializes in all aspects of building infrastructure for residential subdivisions. He is renowned

for his ability to tie up loose ends on a project and make sure even the most minute details get tended to properly – a skill that comes in handy when managing 125 workers in the firm's Development Division (the others are Trucking, Residential, TM Crushing, Concrete).

"Jeff has the ability to see in front of himself and he's instinctively a doer," said John David Hadfield, President of Hadco. "He can't stand to have anything undone. In the past he may have done something himself, but he's learning now how to manage vs. do."

Seliger started working in construction while still at Mountain View High School in Orem through the school's work release program, first as a hod tender for a brick mason, then for a small excavation firm for 2.5 years. He realized that a long-term career was unlikely where he was at and sought employment elsewhere, bouncing around for nearly a year before answering a classified ad in 1997 to work at Hadco. More than two decades later, it's proven to be an ideal fit.

"I knew there were good things going on here when I first started," said Seliger. "John David is a really smart guy and I knew there would be a future here. I didn't just want a job, I wanted a career, and moved

around a little bit to find that place."

He began as a heavy equipment operator digging/backfilling basements and hooking up utilities (sewer, water, electrical), and gradually worked his way up to pipe foreman (five years) and superintendent positions. As the firm has grown – Hadco reported revenues of \$80 million in 2016, up \$17 million from the previous year – so has Seliger's responsibilities. Where he and the firm's chief estimator used to be able to manage all of Hadco's projects, now Seliger manages five superintendents, each of whom has 2 to 8 jobs running at once, depending on scope and type. Beyond subdivision projects, commercial office and multi-family developments are two other busy markets right now for the company.

"Our bread and butter is subdivisions because we're really good at them," he said. "But we have to be able to do other work, whether it's municipal, UDOT, curb and gutter, asphalt paving."

This time of year is always hectic as crews ready for the coming winter season.

"It's getting to be crunch time on some projects as we try to get hard surfaces on all projects we've committed to, before it gets too cold," he said. "Between November 1 and Thanksgiving we fight to get done what we need to do." >>

Rhett Butler, 40
Vice President
Skyline Electric



On the west wall of Rhett Butler's office hangs a picture of virtually every current Skyline Electric employee, with his desk situated so that it faces the array of photos. The wall serves as an ever-present reminder to focus on employee welfare first, and worry about financial gain later.

"I want this to be personable – I want individuals to feel like part of a family and not just a number," said Butler, who has been with the firm since 2001 and has a stake in the company with three other majority owners. "They have families, they have wants, needs and aspirations. I'm going to give them every benefit of the doubt and the tools they need to be successful."

"WE HAVE A GREAT LEADERSHIP TEAM AND RHETT IS A BIG PART OF THAT. HE'S DRIVING US TO SET OUR BAR HIGHER AND ACHIEVE GROWTH THROUGH QUALITY. HE'S GOT A GREAT VIEWPOINT AND HE'S BEEN INNOVATIVE WITH OUR OPERATIONS." - ZANE HUFFMAN, PRESIDENT, SKYLINE ELECTRIC.

A native of Grantsville, Butler grew up in the construction industry; father Bob was a union carpenter and specialized in home remodels, and grandfather Farrell Butler was an electrician. Their influence led him to enroll in the Utah Electrical JATC program in 2001 and begin his career at Skyline.

"My father said electricians have got it made – they're the first ones on the job and the last ones to leave, so there is a lot of job security," he said.

Butler was brought into the office full-time in 2006 as a Project Manager and Estimator, learning the ropes from Todd Schaffer, one of the principal owners. During the recession, the firm actually fared pretty well, which Butler attributes to a couple of notable projects it landed at that time, one a \$12 million contract for the Central Weber Sewer Treatment Plant in November 2008.

"It gave us a good base to ride it through until 2011, and we've been able to grow from there and put ourselves in a good position going forward," he said. Skyline is working on one of its largest projects ever – the Central Utility Plant for the Terminal Redevelopment Project at the Salt Lake International Airport, a \$30 million joint-venture contract with Superior Group of Columbus, Ohio.

"They've been a great partner thus far and we're hoping we can do more work there; there are several bid packages still to be let," he said. "It's our first-ever joint-venture. We're certainly capable of doing a job of \$30-plus million, but it's nice to

spread the risk."

Butler is active with the Intermountain Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) – he's in the midst of a two-year stint as President, and also serves on NECA's Apprenticeship Training Committee.

"Students who go to college can have \$100,000 in debt when they graduate," said Butler. "In this industry, if they're good with their hands, the avenues are wide open. When apprentices are done (with JATC program) they'll be making \$35 an hour, with full coverage health insurance and a pension fund. It's a no-brainer."

"We have a great leadership team and Rhett is a big part of that," said Zane Huffman, President of Skyline Electric. "He's driving us to set our bar higher and achieve growth through quality. He's got a great viewpoint and he's been innovative with our operations."

At the end of the day, Butler also wants you to know that he gives a damn. He chuckles at the reference to the iconic 1940 movie 'Gone With the Wind', whose lead character of the same name (played by legendary actor Clark Gable) utters one of the most revered lines in cinematic history to love interest Scarlett O'Hara: "Frankly my dear, I don't give a damn." Butler credits his maternal grandmother's love of the movie as part of the inspiration for his first name.

"I actually say that quite often...people I talk to in the industry will say, 'well, do you not give a damn?' And I say, 'well frankly, I do give a damn'," he laughed. "It's kind of my mantra."

Winn Lindsey, 40
South Area Manager
Kilgore Construction



Winn Lindsey's career in the heavy/civil construction arena started out without much fanfare – he admittedly "just kind of fell into construction" – but he now finds himself in a key role for Kilgore Construction, overseeing roughly 100 employees in the firm's Pleasant Grove office, which opened in March 2017.

A native of Brigham City and graduate of Box Elder High School in '96, Lindsey spent a summer roofing houses at age 17 and discovered he had a general interest in construction and working with his hands. He attended Utah Valley University, graduating with a Master in Construction Management in '04, and worked his way through school with a prominent local heavy/civil firm. He spent the first dozen years of his career working in both aggregates/materials and construction.

"(Construction) interested me because you get to see something being accomplished," said Lindsey. "I started out as a materials tester running gradations, sampling aggregate materials...I was pretty much a glorified laborer." He spent five years in sand and gravel learning the nuances and particulars of the field, before deciding he needed to branch out and gain more experience with the construction side of the heavy/civil industry. Making that transition forced him out of a comfort zone, but proved highly beneficial for his career trajectory.

"It was seriously hitting the reset button on my career – it's been great," said Lindsey. "The experience I had on the sand and gravel side gave me a solid foundation and I'm grateful for that. We deal with materials every day so really understanding aggregates is invaluable."

In April 2014 Lindsey joined Kilgore

as a Project Manager, quickly proved his mettle, and was promoted to South Area Manager in May 2015. He oversees all construction and estimating activity on projects from Lehi to Sevier County. His ability to relate to people and utilize his interpersonal skills has been a boon in his current role. >>

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“He’s humble enough, smart enough to know that he doesn’t know everything, and he draws on the strengths of those around him,” said Mike Alter, COO of Kilgore Companies. “(Workers) excel in different areas, so Winn creates a team environment where he can get the best out of the group and get the best (project) outcome, whatever it might be.”

Work has been brisk this year – Lindsey estimates that 2017 revenues for his office will be up 8-10%, with a solid backlog of public and private work on the books heading into 2018.

“Business is booming, we’ve seen phenomenal growth in the past three years,” he said. “UDOT work has been solid for us and there has been a lot of private development work and city/municipal work. We try and stay balanced between private and public. 80% of our work is self-performed, so we’re staying busy.”

Eric Stratford, 38
 Director of Business Development
 and Preconstruction Services
 R&O Construction



A dozen years into his career at R&O Construction of Ogden, Eric Stratford has worked in a dizzying number of positions – Project Assistant, Project Engineer, Estimator, Business Development – each one born out of different circumstances. The diversity has proved invaluable, giving him a more complete understanding of the development and construction process.

“Essentially I’ve worked in almost every single department,” said Stratford, “I’ve enjoyed the different aspects of each job.”

In some respects, that jack-of-all-trades ability mirrors his experience growing up in a construction family. His father, Scott, owns SC Stratford Construction of South Ogden and is a past-President of the Northern Wasatch Homebuilders Association and he expected his sons to learn how to self-perform virtually all aspects of custom home building.

“He taught us how to frame, finish work, concrete, tile, electrical, plumbing – we grew up doing it all. It was fun,” he said.

And though it wasn’t a stretch for Stratford to assume he would end up working in construction, he admitted that it wasn’t until midway through a two-year LDS Church mission to Boston before he made that realization.

“They were remodeling the (Longfellow Park) chapel next to Harvard (University) and I remember walking in and just the smells of the wood and the new construction hit me,” he recalled. “I was thinking, maybe I’d like to do construction.”

After earning a Construction Management degree from Weber State University, Stratford interviewed with R&O and was hired on in May 2005 as a Project Assistant, initially for a condominium project in Burbank, Calif., which soon

morphed into a Project Engineer role. For eight months he worked Monday and Friday in the Ogden office and mid-week on the project site, sharing a small apartment with the project manager, and also now company President Slade Opheikens, who was directing the project.

After it was done, Opheikens felt Stratford should learn estimating, which he thrived at for two-plus years. He loved the competitive nature of estimating, likening bid day to ‘game day’. “It’s an adrenaline rush...you’re trying to find angles on how you can beat your competition. It’s knowing a job inside and out, building it in your head.”

The recession prompted a move to R&O’s business development team, a transition made during an interesting – albeit not great – economic period.

“I remember nobody had anything

going,” he recalled. “The beauty of that, as a new business developer, is that I’m making cold calls left and right to people I have no idea who they are, and they don’t have anything going on, so they’re willing to sit down with me. I went on tons of lunch and office appointments – if it had a pulse, we chased it.”

Stratford has proved his value over the past eight-plus years, and is now a member of R&O’s Executive Committee.

“Eric took over this role much sooner than anticipated when our past leader, Dale Campbell, unexpectedly passed away,” said Opheikens. “Eric has completed a departmental total makeover, despite a steep learning curve. He recognizes the value of relationships and balances them with the challenges our operations team faces. He is the right man for the job.” >>



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Alex Booth, 37
Associate Principal
VCBO Architecture



"ONCE I DOVE INTO THE WORLD OF ARCHITECTURE, THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK. ARCHITECTURE GIVES ME THE ABILITY TO POSITIVELY AFFECT THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE AND IT'S NOT SOMETHING I TAKE LIGHTLY." – ALEX BOOTH

Jeanne Jackson, a Principal at Salt Lake-based VCBO Architecture, is emphatic in her praise of co-worker Alex Booth, who she said is "the best young architect I've worked with."

Kudos aside, Jackson added, "what we found about Alex is he had great skills in design right away, and he started working with me on the design of an elementary school and a high school and just excelled. We try and see what people's interests are and make them happy, but we also have to look at where we need help. Alex is great working with our K-12 clients."

Booth's career path to architecture began rather inauspiciously. After graduating from Olympus High School he enrolled at Salt Lake Community College, working his way through school as a diesel mechanic, with the intent to study accounting so he could potentially take over his father's practice. As fate would have it, Booth enrolled in an Architectural Design class at SLCC led by Kevin King, and immediately he became enthralled with the design profession.

"Kevin has an infectious personality that fosters creativity and experimentation," said Booth. "Once I dove into the world of architecture, there was

no turning back. Architecture gives me the ability to positively affect the lives of thousands of people and it's not something I take lightly. Every building is like a child in that it is unique, and being able to see that creation come to life is a remarkable feeling."

Booth's professional career began in 2002 at Flores-Sahagun and Associates Architects, where he worked for five years while studying at the University of Utah College of Architecture (2003-07), earning a Master of Architecture in 2007. In February 2008 he was hired on at VCBO.

"I felt like to become a great architect I needed to work on large projects and was drawn to VCBO because of its portfolio," said Booth. "It was an adjustment going from a firm of three people to one with 95 so I was a little hesitant, but I've loved it."

His experience includes working in markets such as K-12, Higher Education, Commercial/Office, and Religion. He has designed projects at the University of Utah, Utah State University, Weber State University, Dixie State University and Westminster College, temples for the LDS Church in Rome, Italy and San Salvador, and K-12 projects for Davis, Jordan and Canyons school districts.

One of his current projects, the new 400,000 SF, \$75.8 million Farmington High School for Davis School District, will open in August and promises to be one of the most innovative schools in Utah.

Booth said DSD officials desire a school for 'future learning', something quite different in function and form. It will include different-sized classrooms, flexible learning spaces, teacher offices and collaboration

spaces, amphitheater lecture stairs, a composites lab, open flow library space, and multi-level dining spaces.

"The client brought a vision of innovation and ingenuity to the project that allowed us to design a truly unique school, said Booth. "This high school is focused entirely on providing teachers and students as much flexibility as possible to adapt and change with education over the next 50 years."

Tyler Whipple, 36
Regional Sales Manager
Industrial Supply



To say the inventory list at Salt Lake-based Industrial Supply is vast would be a severe understatement – try 50,000 items on the shelf totaling more than \$11 million. As Regional Sales Manager, Tyler Whipple is expected to know the phone book-thick sales catalog like the back of his hand.

"It's like the Yellow Pages, if anyone still

knows what that is," he quipped. "It's insane, actually. Our remodel and addition a couple of years ago allows for that (quantity) from a logistics standpoint."

He oversees eight field sales representatives that cover a large geographical area of the Intermountain region, including Northern Utah, Northeast Nevada (Elko), Southwest Wyoming (Jackson, Evanston), and Northeast Wyoming (Gillette). Much of this territory spans huge swaths of land where mining and energy development (oil, natural gas, etc.) is king. These remote jobsites are often miles away from any type of store, making Industrial the go-to source for everything from power tools to coffee filters. The number one selling item? Bottled water.

"It overtook AA batteries for No. 1 (by volume)," said Whipple. "We try and take the pain points out of what our customers do and make it easy for them to get things. Bottled water is an example of that. We'll deliver pallets and pallets of water for a construction site with a thousand workers. Some places they can't just send somebody to Smith's or Wal-Mart to grab three pallets of water. Even locally (urban areas) we have big manufacturing facilities or jobsites that order a pallet a week."

All perceptions aside, as important as hammers, drills and saws are to a construction worker, it's the little things that keep a project on schedule.

"Boxes of coffee," he laughs, citing one of the more 'critical' supplies. "(Lack of) some things would shut down a jobsite."

Whipple has been with Industrial since hiring on in August 1999, two months after graduating from West Jordan High. His high school buddy worked in the warehouse and spoke highly of the 101-year-firm, its work culture, and the opportunity for long-term success.

Over 18-plus years, he's run the gamut on job titles – Driver, Counter Manager, Outside Sales, Inside Sales, Safety Specialist – spending 2-3 years at each position. It's given him great perspective on how the company operates and what co-workers are dealing with day-to-day. He's appreciated the chance to progress and learn new things.

"The nature of this company...it is what you make of it," said Whipple. "Just because you're throwing boxes or driving a delivery truck, that doesn't mean you can't someday have a leadership position or an opportunity to grow within the company. I recognized that pretty early and have stuck it out. You can walk around and see a lot

of people who started the same time I did, and have made a career out of working with customers and serving the industry."

Whipple has family and friends in the construction industry. His wife Stephanie has worked in accounting at Sandy-based Layton Construction since 2001, and his mother Linda worked in administration >>



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at Salt Lake-based Jacobsen Construction, before passing away in 2002 from lymphoma. Whipple had his own scare with cancer; he was diagnosed with melanoma in April 2012 at age 31, one month after his second child was born.

“You never forget that diagnosis,” he said. “I had my ear rebuilt five years ago. I had it; I dealt with it. It’s not something you take lightly.”

He very much enjoys the relationships he’s built with clients and says he relates to the hard-nosed, hard-working spirit of this industry.

“We’re all sort of blue collar people at heart, and our industries are very blue collar. We may not be swinging the hammer, but we feel the same urgency to perform. These are our type of folks.”

Rachel McKenzie, 35
Project Manager
TSA Architects



Shortly after designing the Northpointe Medical Center in Tooele, Rachel McKenzie tore the ACL in her left knee in a skiing mishap. Her experience as a patient (even though it was at a different facility) reinforced her passion for healthcare design and its technical demands.

“When I was on that project I learned about the complexities of designing OR’s (operating rooms) and got a taste of healthcare guidelines,” she said. “When I became a patient...it just clicked at that point. From a patient perspective I appreciated the design effort we put into

(Northpointe). I better understood the space. As I was going under (for surgery) I was thinking about the mechanical systems and other different aspects. It was interesting.”

McKenzie joined TSA Architects of Salt Lake City in March as a Project Manager, and is one exam shy of becoming an Associate of the firm, something she hopes to complete soon.

After graduating from high school in San Antonio (she lived in Bountiful from ages 4-14), she attended BYU-Idaho in 2000 and took some pre-architecture courses (drafting, CAD) before transferring to the University of Utah’s School of Architecture, earning a Masters in 2007.

Even as a child she knew she had a creative interest in spaces and room layout, but initially felt her business management acumen was stronger than her design expertise and unsure how that would translate into a career.

“I would play with Barbie’s, but it was more like master planning their houses,” she laughed. “Same with Lego’s. I just thought it was a hobby of mine. But the more I got into it, I realized I could do architecture and use my management skills. The project management role fits my personality well, and I get to have a creative outlet as well.”

During her time at the U, she worked as a front-end manager at a Winegar’s grocery store in North Salt Lake, which she said was great for developing customer-service and management skills.

Prior to joining TSA, she worked for JSA in Salt Lake City, designing hospitality projects and high-end custom homes primarily. A move to Richardson Partnership threw her into “the deep end” of project management, as she designed credit unions, the Gold’s Gym/VASA Fitness transition, and various medical facilities.

She recently completed design of Rocky Mountain Care Mountain View, a new 51,000 SF skilled nursing facility in Heber slated to open in Summer 2018. She’s also been working on the design of what she called the “patient room of the future” at the Orthopedic Trauma and Surgical Specialty (OTSS) Unit at the University of Utah, a project currently awaiting funding.

“Rachel is an integral part of the team

at TSA and through her cheerful, steady, professional demeanor helps to define the culture of the firm,” said Tracy Stocking, TSA President.

Brett Goodman, 34
Principal, Engineer Lead
BHB Structural Engineers



Working as a framer building million dollar custom homes over a couple of summers steeled Brett Goodman’s desire to pursue structural engineering as a career, and he’s quickly established himself as a savvy designer that enjoys testing boundaries of form and function.

Take for example two projects at the University of Utah – the Jon M. and Karen Huntsman Basketball Facility and the Cleone Peterson Eccles Alumni House. On the former, completed in 2015, Project Designer Jeremy Krug of Kansas City-based Populous Architects charged Goodman to design a unique cantilever feature that extended out from the building. Krug asked how far the structure could extend and was initially told 20-25 ft., Krug countered with 35, Goodman raised it to 40.

“It was this dynamic of him wanting to push the envelope, and I was going to push it right back at him,” said Goodman. “We ended up doing about a 50 ft. cantilever (38 in. steel member) and tapered wide flanges so at the very end it was eight inches deep.”

On the Alumni House (slated to finish in Spring 2018), Goodman said a 30 ft. steel section of roof is only six inches thick, which is rather unique. “It’s great being

able to work on something that scale and make it into something sleek and clean.” He also prides himself on coming up with practical, cost-effective solutions that still meet the architect’s design intent.

On the Barker Park Amphitheater Expansion in North Ogden, Goodman worked with architect Method Studio of Salt Lake on the design of a complex, curved roof section and came up with a cost-effective solution that met the design intent.

“The curved roof shape will use a classic metal deck that is fabricated to bend so we get a complex shape with stock material,” said Goodman. “We’re trying to find economical ways to do it, to get that cool shape and keep it in budget. If we’ve spent all the money on the structure, the building ends up with cheap finishes, so we try hard to get the money out of the structure. Nobody wants to pay for an extra steel beam.”

“Brett has a passion for finding creative structural solutions to architectural design challenges,” said BHB President Chris Hofheins. “He finds great

“BRETT HAS A PASSION FOR FINDING CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN CHALLENGES. HE FINDS GREAT SATISFACTION IN HELPING TRANSFORM A DESIGN CONCEPT INTO REALITY...”
- CHRIS HOFHEINS, PRESIDENT, BHB.

satisfaction in helping transform a design concept into reality with economical and builder friendly solutions.”

A native of Salt Lake, Goodman graduated from Hunter High School in 2001 and worked for Arden Hess Construction (his uncle) as a framer. He enjoyed the dynamic nature of custom home building, particularly when the homeowner would walk into a room and demand immediate changes to what had been originally designed, a sort of on-the-fly ‘design-build’ approach.

“You’d watch homeowners come in and change the (design) as we were building it,” he recalled. “It got me my first taste of what construction is, what putting

a building together is. Since my uncle was the general, we did all those little tasks to keep the job going and interfaced with all the trades. That’s what really solidified structural engineering (as a career) in my mind. I like construction, but I really wanted to do design.”

Goodman graduated from the University of Utah in 2006 and quickly landed at BHB, finding himself immediately drawn to the firm’s client-focused approach, overall company culture, and the vision of the owners.

“It was a good fit for me,” he said. “BHB is all about growth and pushing each other. We have a strong client focus and that was ingrained in me from day one.” ■

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