



LM 40 History & Culture Day Speaker Bios

*Thank you to our speakers for generously donating their time
and expertise to support Leadership Missoula*

Mike Heisey, Co-Owner, Bonner Mill Site

Email: mikeh@bonnerproperty.com

Sara Smith, CFO, ALPS

Email: sdsmith@alpsinsurance.com

After a marketing/management degree from UM, moved to Denver with Target in their leadership development program. While working retail, achieved MBA from University of Colorado. Spent a short stint at a coalbed methane exploration company in Denver before moving to Missoula. Worked at MT Rail Link before finding ALPS in 2003. Became the controller in 2007 and CFO in 2008. Serving is part of my ethos so I regularly serve on various boards. Currently the treasurer for MTB Missoula, President Elect for the MT Society of CPAs, and newly appointed director for the Women of Winter, a non-profit seeking diversity in snow sports. Level 3 certified ski instructor with PSIA and maintain relationships in that space as a potential retirement gig.

What speaker(s) inspires you? Scott Galloway, Steven Dubner

What Podcasts are you currently listening to? Pivot, Smartless, Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend, Economics of Everyday Things, Freakeconomics

What book(s) are you currently reading? Building a Second Brain, Think Faster Talk Smarter

Please list any volunteer opportunities within your organization or those you serve that may be available.

- 1) MTB Missoula – always looking for volunteers and board members
- 2) Garden City Harvest – volunteers and board members

Grant Kier, CEO, Missoula Economic Partnership

Email: gkier@missoulapartnership.com

Grant Kier provides executive leadership for the Missoula Economic Partnership, working for a diverse and resilient economy in the Missoula region. In his tenure, Grant has worked with the board, staff, and the community to redirect organizational goals, strategies, and programs toward accelerating solutions to the region's most pressing economic challenges. In that time MEP has served as the community's COVID economic relief and recovery lead, supported growing small businesses, and advanced efforts to understand and address a range of issues from housing affordability to childcare availability.

Prior to joining MEP as staff in 2018, Grant served as a board member of the organization for 7 years, or the latter half of his nearly 15 years working as the executive director of the Bitterroot Land Trust in Hamilton and later Five Valleys Land Trust in Missoula. Grant serves on a number of boards and advisory committees including the Montana Economic Developers Association, UM's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, Montana's Headwaters Tech Hub, Missoula Downtown Association, and Zero to Five Missoula. When not working, Grant is enjoying Montana's great outdoors--most likely with his wife, Bex, daughter, Flynn, and dog, Tilly.

Mike Braun, Director of Employer Partnerships/Wine Importer - Accelerate Montana / VenturePlanet Imports –

Email: Michael.braun@umontana.edu

Mike spent a decade in industry, in publishing, media and marketing, including start-ups. He was also Director of a boutique investment bank, working with corporate and private equity clients. In this capacity, Mike raised over \$150 million in capital towards leveraged build-ups. He subsequently spent 15 years teaching business model design, strategy and corporate turnaround at UM's College of Business. Mike left his tenured faculty position in 2021 to dedicate himself to workforce development with Accelerate Montana, where he works directly with employers on custom corporate training initiatives. Mike is also one of two licensed wine importers in Montana, importing unique varietals from Italy. You can find his wines At the Good Food Store. Mike is Swiss and Italian by birth. Topics: Employee Acquisition, Retention, Training and Development.

What speaker(s) inspire you? Yuval Noah Harari

What Podcasts are you currently listening to? Lex

What book(s) are you currently reading? History of Modern Art

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Emerging Leadership workshops

Communication and Conflict Management Workshops

Bill Caras, Owner, Caras Nursery & Landscape

Email: Bill@CarasNursery.com

Caras Nursery's partnership with "the Garden City" goes back over 100 years. In 1896, The Missoula Nursery was established in our current location in Orchard Homes. James K. Caras, a Greek immigrant, later purchased the nursery in 1920 and integrated it into his existing downtown business, Garden City Floral. His sons came into the business following World War II: George ran the floral shop and James S. ran the nursery. After splitting up in the 1960s, James S. eponymously re-named the nursery and set about expanding operations and growing landscaping into a major portion of the business. James S.'s son Bill came on board in 1977. The years under Bill's ownership have seen a tremendous amount of building expansion and land improvements to make Caras the unparalleled destination it is today. Caras Nursery is part of the fabric of Missoula and through Bill's leadership we remain heavily involved in the community. The Missoula City Council honored James K. Caras (and really all immigrants) who helped build Missoula by naming the main downtown park "Caras Park". This legacy inspires us as we look ahead to the next 100 years.

Matt Cavanaugh, President, Five Valley Restoration and Cleaning

Email: Matt@FiveValleysRestoration.com

Matthew Cavanaugh was born and raised in Sidney, MT. He moved to Missoula in 2000 to study business management at the University of Montana. Matt's career in the restoration industry started with a company called Restorx of Montana when he was a freshman in high school. Over the next 10 plus years he worked for multiple restoration companies in different roles before starting Five Valleys Restoration & Cleaning in 2008, where he currently serves as the President of the company.

Over all the years in the restoration industry, Matt has attained many different certifications and achievements. He currently serves on the Grizzly Scholarship Association Board, The Sigma Chi Fraternity Beta Delta Building Foundation, the Sigma Chi National Risk Management Foundation, and is the President of the Missoula Building Industry Assoc. Over the years he has coached in the youth hockey, baseball and football communities.

Matt is married to the beautiful Trisha (Roth) Cavanaugh and has 4 beautiful children, Adalyn (16) Reilly (13) Sayler (4) and Maya (1).

What speaker(s) inspire you? Jamie Kern Lima, Dr. Henry Cloud

What Podcasts are you currently listening to? Griz Fan Podcast, The Jocko Podcast

What book(s) are you currently reading? Walt Disney's Bio

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- 2) Ronald McDonald House of Western Montana

Christy Vick, HR Manager, Daily's Premium Meats

Email: christy.vick@dailysmeats.com

I am currently the HR Manager at Daily's Premium Meats. I have been with Daily's for 9 ½ years. I started in logistics and unexpectedly found my way into the HR role. Here we are 4 ½ years later. Last year I finished my MBA. It was a very exciting milestone for my own personal development. Before my time at Daily's, I owned my own design and décor business, worked in the floral and wedding industry, and had some time in the commercial cleaning world. I am currently a member of the Missoula Chamber Board. In my personal time I am blessed to have my husband of 29 years, my son and daughter-in-law, my daughter and the coolest 2 ½ year old grandson anyone could ever ask for. We round out our family with our completely inappropriate and wild Golden Doodle named Hazy and our newest member, Stout the Schnoodle.

I have led many leadership initiatives throughout my career. The one that I learned the most from came from an experience that involved my daughter when she was 10 years old. I was heading up the décor for the annual dance recital stage. My daughter would be dancing on that stage. I gave her the reigns on the design and was her "assistant". The greatest lesson I learned was from my 10-year-old daughter. If you are a great leader, you can trust those on your team to execute the task with the same expectations and pride that would have been accomplished had you done it yourself. Every aspect of this terrified me and how it would affect my business and the image I had worked so hard to protect. She blew it out of the water and exceeded everyone's vision and expectations.

Andres Burrington, Director, Product Marketing, onXmaps

Email: andrew@onmaps.com

A proud University of Montana graduate and dedicated outdoor enthusiast, Andrew Burrington has spent over a decade driving growth and innovation in the tech industry. With a strong background in startup growth within the software space, Andrew currently leads Product Marketing for the onX Backcountry product. Beyond guiding new product strategies, he is committed to mentoring emerging talent within the company and championing stewardship initiatives. Through partnerships with organizations like the Outdoor Alliance, Access Fund, and Leave No Trace, Andrew actively supports trail cleanup projects and public lands access, reflecting onX's dedication to the outdoor community.

What speaker(s) inspire you? Simon Sniek, Martyn Cagan

What Podcasts are you currently listening to? Lenny's podcast, My First Million, Master of Scale, How I built this.

What book(s) are you currently reading? Indistractable, Fall in love with the problem not the solution

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