

ENR California

ENR 2023 California & Northwest's Top Young Professionals

By Greg Aragon



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Each year, a group of dynamic and enterprising young professionals under the age of 40 are recognized by ENR California and ENR Northwest for their leadership and service. This year, 20 individuals are selected from California and Hawaii while 10 are tapped from Washington, Oregon and Alaska.

A panel of volunteer judges evaluated nominees based on experience, education, career accomplishments and leadership, as well as community service and involvement. They are Mannie Barnes, Guy F. Atkinson Construction; Michael Boomsma, Cordoba Corp.; Ryan Gallagher, MKN;

Ginger Kelly, retired - formerly at RIM Architects; 2020 ENR Top Young Professional Wendy MacLeod, Turner Construction Co.; and 2019 ENR Top Young Professional Ronny McPherson, HDR; Carly Avery, Howard S. Wright; 2022 ENR Top Young Professional Diego de Veyga, Flatiron; and Lauren Nunnally, Swinerton.

ENR thanks our judges for their time and hard work and congratulates our regional winners.

This year's group of 30 up-and-comers found their calling in architecture, construction and engineering by following unique paths. They have ascended in their respective companies, impressing superiors and inspiring peers, and have demonstrated hard work and passion for their chosen fields. Those selected also have led large teams through multimillion-dollar projects, broken ground with new innovations and delivery methods, championed the growth of women and minorities in construction and helped create a more sustainable future.

They also found time to give back—volunteering for industry activities, contributing to other communities, and displaying a great level of compassion for others.

Raven Adams

Sustainability leader is responsible for stakeholder engagement

36, Sustainability Manager

Granite Construction

Watsonville, Calif.



Adams leads Granite's sustainability program and is responsible for stakeholder engagement, strategy and communication. Since 2019, she has managed the production of Granite's award-winning annual sustainability reports, which have distinguished the company as an industry leader. Her work in the field includes serving as chair of Granite's sustainability committee as well as holding leadership positions in industry groups focused on the topic. Adams has a bachelor's degree in psychology and neuroscience and a JD with a focus on environmental and natural resources law. In both cases, she was an extremely high achiever, graduating second in her class at Colby College and seventh in her class at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. As an undergraduate, she won awards for leadership and academic achievement, was inducted into PhiBeta Kappa, graduated summa cum laude and was selected to present her honors thesis at the 2008 meeting of Society for Neuroscience in Washington, D.C.

Emanuel Alvarez has had an active role leading safety programs on more than \$3.2 billion in rail transit projects.

have allowed him insight into different industry systems, project delivery practices and organizational and business operations. Wong now sits on multiple client account management teams, helping shape strategies for AECOM's high-profile clients. As part of AECOM's early careers recruitment and development process, he contributed to the West region transportation group graduate onboarding and development program and is a founding member of the global young professional forum, which connects staff worldwide. To continue his growth in the industry, he is currently studying for an MBA.

Erik Wright

His love of building help led him to co-found his own company

38, Principal

Precision Construction Services

San Luis Obispo, Calif.



Wright co-founded Precision Construction Services with two rock climbing friends in 2013. He oversees the construction division and has been project executive on the first rocket-landing facility on the West Coast at Vandenberg Space Force Base, the world's first hyperloop tunnel for SpaceX, the 880-acre Pismo Preserve in San Luis Obispo County, the first steel fiber-reinforced concrete transit tunnel in the U.S. for The Boring Co. and many other projects. In March 2022, Precision was named onsite contractor for the Missile Defense Agency at Vandenberg. With his love for building, he used the state of California's Horatio Alger scholarship for disadvantaged students to study construction management at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in South Africa. After building a school, a stadium and a factory in South and East Africa, he returned to California and became a lecturer on sustainable development and a vice president at Hilyard Concrete Construction before founding Precision.

Abdul Aziz Zoua started Giroux's innovation committee, implementing 360-degree photo documentation, creating a labor hour database and using artificial intelligence to create a custom model to detect scratches on framing of glass systems.

Abdul Aziz Zoua

Responsible for the planning and execution of major glazing projects

38, Project Executive for California

Giroux Glass Inc.

Los Angeles



As a young boy in Syria, Zoua's love for construction grew as he worked for his father's construction company, which focused on glass systems and architectural metal. Zoua's professional path started in Saudi Arabia with ARTIC as a precast production engineer. He then worked for Seele group GmbH as a QA/QC senior engineer, supervising glazing, curtain wall and skylight installations. When he came to the U.S., his dedication paid off when he became a citizen and began working in his new country. In 2015, he joined Giroux Glass as project manager, responsible for planning and execution of major glazing projects, including Academy Museum of Motion Pictures and the Donald Dungan Library (named a 2021 ENR Best Project). Zoua is also forward thinking and started Giroux's innovation committee, where he implemented 360-degree photo documentation, created a labor hour database and is using artificial intelligence to create a custom model to detect scratches on framing of glass systems.

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Greg Aragon is a freelance writer from Los Angeles, who writes about construction around the Golden State.

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