Evolution Missions Pushed By Need 
Fueled Honorees’ Innovations 

BY PAUL CLOERY

It just always works out this way. It’s never intended but a theme always emerges as the nominations for the annual *NPT Power & Influence Top 50* come in and are discussed. Two trends quickly emerged for 2019. There is plenty of innovation popping in the Pacific Northwest and need is evolving missions into initially unimagined domains throughout the nation.

The most intriguing element is a push for 360-degree services. The realization that the three basic needs of shelter, food and healthcare should be a bundle is materializing in the work of foundations and rank-and-file charities. Affordable housing is being obtained or built in communities, even in areas of perceived wealth.

Nonprofit executives are also proving that Washington is the innovation capital of the country. Actually, it’s the other Washington, as in Washington State. Oregon also checked in with honorees. The Pacific Northwest makes up 10 percent of the honorees for 2019.

The 50 leaders highlighted in this 22nd annual *NPT Power & Influence Top 50* have distinguished themselves as initiators and leaders. An important criteria of the list is that the honoree must be a working day-in, day-out executive.

The 2019 honorees were selected from a group of roughly 300 top executives. A committee of NPT staff, contributors and a few executives plugged in to executive movement were involved in the selection process. This is not a lifetime achievement award. The executive must have had an impact during the previous 12 months.

There is quite a bit of turnover in this year’s roll call. There are 15 new honorees on the 2019 honor roll and one executive is returning to the list after a short hiatus.

The fine china will be rolled out for honorees and their guests as they are feted in Washington (the other one) next month during the annual *NPT Power & Influence Top 50 Gala* at The National Press Club. One of the honorees will receive the NPT Innovator of the Year award.

Turn the pages and discover why these executives are molding the way nonprofits change the world.
Douglas B. Ammar
Executive Director
Georgia Justice Project
Atlanta, Ga.

Nobody has to tell Ammar about the impact of the 1994 federal crime bill. He continues to be a leading voice in preventing recidivism through understanding that service needs to be transformational not transactional. His success record of focusing on re-entry and the impact of a criminal record should be a national model.

Abdullah Antepli
Chief Representative of Muslim Affairs
Duke University/Duke Divinity School
Durham, N.C.

Antepli is one of the most prominent Muslim leaders in higher education. He co-founded the Muslim Leadership Initiative (MLI) at the Shalom Hartman Institute. It is a historic effort to bring Jews and Muslims together to learn about each other. It is critical for these nonprofit communities to engage and MLI is getting that done.

Ana Marie Argilagos
President
Hispanics In Philanthropy
Oakland, Calif.

Argilagos is the complete package. An expert on global networks, she has been an educator, federal government official, foundation innovator and now philanthropic leader in a population segment that is growing rapidly. She is an expert on sustainability, as well as issues along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Fred Blackwell
Chief Executive Officer
San Francisco Foundation
San Francisco, Calif.

The San Francisco Foundation was a mess before Blackwell. Not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing. He's not only has he repaired it but he is now focused on fixing the rest of the city, starting with the essentials such as affordable housing.
James Firman  
President & CEO  
National Council on Aging  
Arlington, Va.

If you have not heard his talk on the illusion of scarcity and the economics of abundance, stop reading this and go here: https://bit.ly/2WxjI7L. Now that you’re back, he’s making a difference in reversing the concept that interventions for older Americans were designed for impact, not scale. He is the leader when it comes to reframing age in an era of a just society.

Brian Gallagher  
President & CEO  
United Way Worldwide  
Alexandria, Va.

Gallagher continues to find ways to generate income for the national organization while putting resources in the field. United Way launched its own workplace giving suite at a time when such giving is regaining its popularity as an employee engagement and retention tool. He understands structural employment has changed and is adapting the UW network to it.

Stephanie Klasky-Gamer  
President & CEO  
LA Family Housing  
Los Angeles, Calif.

The new LA Family Housing campus is a sparkling achievement. Klasky-Gamer leads an organization where it is stability first on the journey to permanent housing. What’s remarkable is the community acceptance of the work. She is a respected affordable housing expert who makes homes, even if it’s just for a little while. This is a national model.

Helene D. Gayle  
CEO  
Chicago Community Trust  
Alexandria, Va.

Gayle has been quoted as saying “A big part of leadership is just being comfortable with the fact that some decisions really are only yours.” Substitute fearless for comfortable. She is putting her theories on the power of collective action to work in Chicago. Her career has been attacking seemingly intractable situations using the guiding principle of see the whole board.

Paul Gionfriddo  
President & CEO  
Mental Health America  
Alexandria, Va.

Gionfriddo is the leader in changing not just minds but regulations on mental health issues. His “B4Stage4” might be the most influential initiative in changing perceptions of mental illnesses from a public safety to a public health frame. The use of social media and games for early intervention is standard-setting.

John H. Graham IV  
President & CEO  
ASAE/The Center for Association Leadership  
Washington, D.C.

The credentialing and certification of professionals by organizations such as associations is under attack and Graham is having nothing of it. Roughly 50 states have targeted programs that adopt and enforce their own ethics codes and procedures. He’s a leader of the Professional Certification Coalition to ensure organizations can continue credentialing professionals.

Jonathan Greenblatt  
National Director & CEO  
Anti-Defamation League  
New York, N.Y.

Let’s start with opening an ADL office in Germany funded by Volkswagen. While leaders at other anti-hate groups are being marginalized or fired, Greenblatt remains a fearless advocate for blocking hate speech on every platform. It’s not by accident social networks are scrubbing their sites and corporations are holding anti-bias training.

Neal Keny-Guyer  
CEO  
Mercy Corps  
Portland, Ore.

One of the founding members of the new Global Emergency Response Coalition, Keny-Guyer’s strategies for circumventing authoritarian regimes to get food to starving people is nothing short of miraculous. People, literally, are alive because of his ideas of sourcing and networks. He knows the risks too well with one staffer recently killed doing the job.

Lisa Hamilton  
President & CEO  
Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Baltimore, Md.

It is unusual for a newly appointed CEO to make this list but Hamilton has been around the block a few times. She led development of seminal research in the Race for Results report. She is pushing funding that ensures a community has a framework for entrepreneurship to eradicate generational poverty. It’s all about data analysis, research and policy solutions.

Jacob Harold  
Executive Vice President  
Candid  
Washington, D.C.

He was key to pulling off the unprecedented merger of GuideStar with The Foundation Center. Harold is a social change strategist. His essays have been used as course materials at Stanford, Duke, Harvard, Wharton, and Oxford. Harold refuses to let nonprofits act in isolation against complex problems, “spinning reinvented wheels,” as he would say. It’s about transparency and focusing impact.

Scott Harrison  
Founder & CEO  
charity: water  
New York, N.Y.

Harrison sure knows how to make waves. His idea to give staff bonuses of donated Uber stock raised eyebrows. He’s separately raising money so he can tell other donors that 100 percent of their money is going to program. He is a walking marketing and program machine to whom other nonprofit leaders should pay close attention.

Eileen R. Heisman  
President & CEO  
National Philanthropic Trust  
Baltimore, Md.

Heisman has always been about partnerships and is using that keen instinct to combine donor-advised funds (DAFs) with mainstream giving. She is working with some of the nation’s top fundraising agencies to bring the concept to kitchen table giving conversations. She is also a sought-after international speaker on the topic of DAFs.

Susan Desmond-Hellmann  
CEO  
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
Seattle, Wash.

It could be argued Desmond-Hellmann pushes the foundation to do more than most governments when it comes to reducing disease, hunger and inequity. The Bill & Melinda Gates Medical Research Institute should have big pharma looking over its shoulder. The good doctor is also hip deep in the privacy and data implications of Facebook and other social networks.

Melanie L. Herman  
Executive Director  
Nonprofit Risk Management Center  
Alexandria, Va.

You’ll have to excuse Herman if she speaks in abbreviations such as LAX or LGA or IAH. There is no doubt she is the most in-demand expert in the nonprofit risk field, spending more time in airports than is reasonable. Herman helped to craft the risk plans for some of the nation’s largest nonprofits while prolifically writing and persuading on the topic.
It is easy to think of AARP as an organization for folks older than 50 but Jenkins’ initiatives into prescription drugs, aging, video games and, oh yeah, smacking around elected officials is a blueprint every nonprofit executive should be emulating. Her lobbying operation is just about the best in the sector.

Vu Le
Executive Director
Rainier Valley Corps
Seattle, Wash.

In addition to being an effective leader in the Pacific Northwest for social justice and leadership development, Vu is the author of the nonprofit humor blog “Nonprofit AF.” His humor allows him to take head-on some of the bizarre, harmful power games funders play that cause pain for their grantees.

Antony Bugg-Levine
Chief Executive Officer
Nonprofit Finance Fund
New York, N.Y.

Bugg-Levine is fighting against risk aversion when it comes to making grants. He realizes, as he has written, that short-term funding causes distraction for nonprofits and hinders long-term improvement. Via New Markens Tax Credit, cash from other foundations and NFF’s wallet, he’s creating conditions for resources to flow from the for-profit world to social good.

Robert Lynch
President & CEO
Americans for the Arts
Washington, D.C.

Lynch might be more effective at saving federal funding for the arts than the behemoths targeted for the cuts. He totes the economic impact of the largest and smallest organizations, traveling the nation making sure doors stay open. He leads the way in sharing ideas that even competitive organizations can all implement.

Sr. Donna Markham
President & CEO
Catholic Charities USA
Alexandria, Va.

Sr. Donna foretold the crisis at the border and was among the first to jump into action, pushing other nonprofits to follow her lead. It makes sense that the organization moves into affordable housing, given the volume of those who make it across the border and Americans who need assistance. It is the most frequently cited ask that her 164 agencies receive.

Timothy J. McClimon
President
American Express Foundation
New York, N.Y.

McClimon helps generate the next generation of nonprofit leaders in partnership with sector infrastructure leaders. He was a trailblazer in the corporate social responsibility space long before most for-profits caught on that social engagement supports both community building and workforce enrichment.

Tony Mestres
President & CEO
Seattle Foundation
Seattle, Wash.

How do you take $1 billion seriously without taking it seriously? Meet Tony Mestres. Forget for a moment the marketing ability, such as Geeks Give Back. Take a look at his Climate Justice Impact Strategy to support communities and his repositioning the organization as a voice for the community. It’s a case study for remodeling civic purpose for justice and equity.

Brian Mittendorf, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Accounting & MIS
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

His roughly 1,900 followers on Twitter isn’t going to scare a Kardashian but it sure gets the attention of regulators, nonprofit finance officials and anyone interested in nonprofit accounting and its impact on donors. His writing on Donor Reliance on Accounting should be read by non-accountants. His common sense back and forth on social media should be monitored by all in the industry.

Bradley Myles
Chief Executive Officer
Polaris
Washington, D.C.

Combating human trafficking has become a cause célèbre but not to Myles who has been on the front lines for more than 15 years. He’s put together probably the largest data sets on human trafficking in the United States. He is a sought-after expert on the topic whose ideas are the foundation for public policy.

Michelle Nunn
President & CEO
CARE USA
Atlanta, Ga.

Make no mistake. It takes a dealmaker, politician, tactician and dreamer to run an international organization and Nunn is all of the above. Starting local in Atlanta and now working internationally, deals like those with the Abbott Fund and PepsiCo is laser-focused funding. She has spoken out on tariffs as “threats of an inward-looking and nationalistic sensibility.”

Una Osili, Ph.D.
Associate Dean
Lilly Family School of Philanthropy/IUPUI
Indianapolis, Ind.

There are statistics, damned statistics and then Osili, who makes going into the weeds not only informative and usable but also fun. She led the research and publication of Index of Global Philanthropy and Remittances and Index of Philanthropic Freedom. Check her Generosity For Life Project and women in philanthropy work. It’s all groundbreaking and impactful.

Jonathan Reckford
Chief Executive Officer
Habitat For Humanity
Atlanta, Ga.

Reckford knows that a roof over a family’s head is just the start. He makes the argument about, and connections between, health, education and a community’s center. His ability to bring together proven results in various social service fields builds communities. He is a trusted guru who is sought by other leaders.

Kathy Reich
Director, Building Institutions and Networks
Ford Foundation
New York, N.Y.

The BUILD initiative is in the U.S. and 10 global regions. She emphasizes “whole organization” support and investment from the funding community. She’s powerfully speaking out against “funder knows best,” which is unique given her employer. It’s impact over time, not a burst of unsustainable programmatic impact.

Anthony Romero
Executive Director
ACLU
New York, N.Y.

Romero is the lawyer for the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He aggressively pursues litigation that impacts almost all charities and the people supported by those groups, whether you agree with those views or not. He’s expanding the mission to be more proactive. Romero also has a remarkable winning record in federal court since, well, late January 2017.
Douglas Rutzen  
President & CEO  
International Center for Not-for-Profit Law  
Washington, D.C.

Rutzen has worked in 100 countries to help develop the legal-framework for civil society, philanthropy, and public participation. Punch is name into a web browser and see how many languages in which you’ll see his name included. A member of the advisory board of the United Nations Democracy Fund, his ideas and work are valued across the globe.

Jennifer Sampson  
President & CEO  
United Way of Metropolitan Dallas  
Dallas, Texas

Sampson was probably the first United Way executive to understand the implications of #GivingTuesday on community fundraising and impact, raising $56 million over two years in the process. She brought UW executives from across the U.S. not necessarily known for collaborative spirit, into the #GivingTuesday network. Oh yeah, she’s a trailblazing manager, too.

Brad Smith  
President  
Candid  
New York, N.Y.

Smith (and Jacob Harold) put together the largest public good data and information merger the sector has ever seen, establishing Candid as the place to go for philanthropic information. It took a long time to work out the details but the integration of dozens of products appears to have been seamless to users of both The Foundation Center and GuideStar.

David L. Thompson  
Vice President of Public Policy  
National Council of Nonprofits  
Washington, D.C.

Read his comments on proposed federal regulations and you’ll see he understands the impact of those rules better than those who are writing them. Next, watch him pull together coalition after coalition to mobilize nonprofits to engage in federal as well as state legislative matters, always shining the light on others, rather than claiming any credit.

Henry Timms  
Executive Director  
Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts  
New York, N.Y.

Timms continues to be a remarkable ideas person who turns everything he touches into gold. He and his team rescued the 92Y in Manhattan while launching #GivingTuesday. He is now running one of the nation’s most important but stodgy arts complexes. It is going to be fun watching what he does there (maybe mimes doing The Mikado).

Anne Wallestad  
President & CEO  
BoardSource  
Washington, D.C.

Even in this era of #MeToo and inclusion, getting boards to be more diverse can be a long trail. Wallestad’s even talking about pushing board members to think about mergers. It’s her common sense approach that board members can’t avoid. Her Stand For Your Mission campaign champions board advocacy and eschews the rubber stamp.

Amy Sample-Ward  
CEO  
NTEN  
Portland, Ore.

Amy Sample Ward and her band of tech miscreants built a community of more than 50,000 and it is no doubt the best show in town when the annual NTC opens. It’s all about exchanging ideas and pushing the limits of technology for social good. The community posts are so insightful that anyone can implement the concepts.

Kevin Washington  
President & CEO  
YMCA of the USA  
Chicago, Ill.

Many execs talk a good game when it comes to LGBTQ inclusion but Washington is forming partnerships to make it happen. The Y was a safe place for Washington when growing up and now he is showing how to build a community whether its via recreation, healthcare or a place to feel and be safe. He’s also finding ways to get new funding for health-related programs.

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This survey and recognition program is dedicated to finding and recognizing the best employers in the nonprofit industry! For details, visit www.bestnonprofitstoworkfor.com
### HALL OF FAME

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