THE 2013 CLASS OF 30 IN THEIR THIRTIES is taking on major redevelopments, running larger enterprises, overseeing social media campaigns, and building single-family homes.

Profiles by R.J. King, John S. Schultz, Tom Beamman, Dan Calabrese, and Gary Witzenburg // Photographs by David Lewinski

No. 1 JAMES VAN DYKE // 34
Vice President of Development, The Roxbury Group, Detroit
FINANCED PROJECTS: $100 million
EMPLOYEES: 4

Financing a new building or a redevelopment project in Detroit isn’t easy, due to a lack of new construction and other factors. It took two years for The Roxbury Group to finance The Aubern, a $12 million mixed-use building at Cass and Canfield in Detroit’s Midtown District that offers 58 apartments and 9,000 square feet of retail space. “We started in 2009 and completed the financing in 2011, and we opened late last year,” says James Van Dyke, Roxbury’s vice president of development. “The building is full. We had 150 people on the waiting list for the apartments.” The company’s latest redevelopment is the David Whitney Building, overlooking Grand Circus Park. The historic tower, set to open in fall 2014, will offer a 136-room Aloft Hotel, 105 apartments, and 7,000 square feet of retail space. “Half of the retail space will be for the hotel,” Van Dyke says. “They will offer a bar and restaurant, as well as other amenities, and we’re looking to fill some of the remaining space with a second restaurant.” In addition, the developer will soon start work on the Detroit Globe Building, a historic structure located east of the Renaissance Center that at one time was used to build ships. Following a $13 million renovation, the building will open next spring as an indoor state park operated by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. — R.J. King

No. 2 ALISHA SERRAS // 32
Owner, Scavolini by Cucina Moda, Birmingham
REVENUE: NA
EMPLOYEES: 3

Kitchen designer and entrepreneur Alisha Serras was 18 months into her Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Eastern Michigan University when she discovered Scavolini Italian kitchen cabinetry. Impressed, she dropped out of school and opened Scavolini by Cucina Moda in Birmingham in 2010 along with her husband, Brian Gamache, and her sister, Niki Serras. Despite a sluggish economy, the company has tripled its revenue over the past three years. As lead designer, Alisha says every client’s home gets her final approval. “We put a Ferrari-red kitchen in our front window when we opened and became known as the store with the red kitchen,” she says. “We believe that Italy is ahead in the design world, and we bring these styles and trends to Michigan before anyone else does.” The company’s geographic reach stretches from Birmingham to Las Vegas, and Alisha’s clients originate from a variety of backgrounds. “We find that engineers tend to love Scavolini because of its clean lines,” she says. “Our clients come to us with a vision of doing something different, and (they want things) 100 percent personalized.” — Gary Witzenburg

No. 3 BRIAN SZLITER // 38
COO, Arteva Homes, Bloomfield Hills
REVENUE: $12 million
EMPLOYEES: 17

Arteva Homes was shifting away from building multimillion-dollar custom homes to more conventional residences when Brian Szliter decided to leave his supply chain logistics job at Pfizer Inc. in Ann Arbor in 2005 and join the company his father started in 2003. “I always had an interest in building and development, so I took my pharmaceutical industry experience and parlayed it into home-building,” Szliter says. “When the downturn happened, many competitors turned to slashing prices, but that wasn’t our focus. We found a niche of customers who appreciated the fit and finish, but also didn’t just want to buy a cookie-cutter box design.” Szliter also kept potential buyers engaged through the rough times with a concept he developed called an “idea” show house. “It wasn’t a model home or a high-pressure sales situation; it was where people could come to see the latest and greatest design trends,” he says. Since 2010, the firm
in Ferndale. "Once we perfect the model, we plan to start expanding with other locations, most likely in 2014." Growing up in an entrepreneurial family — Haberman’s parents, Sam and Toby, own Haberman Fabrics in Royal Oak along with numerous real estate holdings — proved to be a harbinger of growth. Haberman and his brother, Jeremy, co-founded The Bosco, an upscale lounge on Woodward Avenue in Ferndale, in 2001. They sold that business a decade later (Jeremy owns the Magic Bag, an entertainment venue located just south of The Bosco). "Byte & Mortar was a concept that came to life after a lot of planning and research," Haberman says. Prices range from a $14 day pass for a co-working project to $599 a month for a furnished, private office. — R.J. King

No 6  JOE KADAF // 38  
CEO, ReMax Leading Edge, Dearborn Heights  
GROSS SALES: $121 million  
EMPLOYEES: 47

When the ReMax agency where Joe Kadaf worked for several years appeared to be on its last legs, Kadaf could have done the easy thing and hooked on with a different agency. His impressive sales record would certainly have put him in demand. But Kadaf saw untapped potential in the seemingly dying agency, so he bought it from his employer and committed himself to turning the company around. Five years later, with two offices and a third one about to open, ReMax Leading Edge has topped $121 million a year in gross sales. "We’ve combined an embrace of the latest technology with the creation of an energetic atmosphere," Kadaf says. "When people think real estate, they think coffee-drinking and water coolers. I created a powerhouse, a machine, with agents that just move one after another." The key, Kadaf says, was in aiming for the top. "I knew I could go hire mediocre agents who would do the same business they’d been doing all their lives," he says, "or I could go for the top 1 percent who want to take their business from what it is now to what it could be." Once he hired the best, Kadaf says, he created an atmosphere that "rewards the best, and helps the best to be even better." — Dan Calabrese

No 7  JOSEPH LAMBERT // 36  
Founder, Sequoia Applied Solutions Inc., Ann Arbor  
SALES: $750,000  
EMPLOYEES: 10

Joseph Lambert is an engineer at heart, but when the engineering firm he worked for decided to venture into manufacturing, it went too far outside its area of strength and ultimately went out of business. That could have been a blow to Lambert’s career, but it turned out to be exactly the opposite. Longtime clients contacted him, urging Lambert to find a way to continue his relationship with them because they valued his engineering expertise. So Lambert founded Sequoia Applied Solutions, which opened in 2012 with just a handful of clients. A year later, Sequoia has grown to 10 employees, and 80 percent of the firm’s business comes from new clients: "Where we really play well is helping to prioritize technology," Lambert says. "A customer has something they do well, but we build the product around it. If they do radar, we’ll build the radar system with platforms and all that stuff. We’re kind of the guys in the back room that make the things you see." Management is a new endeavor for Lambert, but he focuses on empowering people and trusts them to deliver for him: "It’s a different skill set, but it’s very rewarding building a team of people and giving them the tools they need to be successful." — Dan Calabrese

No 5  DANIEL HABERMAN // 39
President, Byte & Mortar Offices, Troy  
CLIENTS: 50+  
EMPLOYEES: 2

Combining his legal, hospitality, and real estate expertise, Daniel Haberman launched a flexible workspace business in 2012 targeted to startups, established enterprises, professional firms, and project teams. Recently rated the fourth best co-working space for entrepreneurs by YFS Magazine, Byte & Mortar Offices in Troy offers a range of services that includes private offices, shared workspace for extended or time-sensitive projects, a support staff, office equipment, furniture, secure Wi-Fi, and various amenities. "We offer the same environment as a Class A office building, with the hospitality of a luxury hotel," says Haberman, president of Byte & Mortar and general counsel of Haberman Productions.