

Groundwerx's rising star

Semu One Bear named top employee in the west

2009: Started at Groundwerx as hospitality ambassador

2010: Promoted to backup supervisor

2010: Promoted to full-time supervisor

2012: Promoted to operations supervisor

2015: Promoted to program director

2016: Named Block by Block Rookie of the Year

2017: Named Block by Block Western Region Employee of the Year

Semu One Bear's rise through the Groundwerx ranks fares well for a guy who thought he'd be with the organization for a short time.

After starting his career in the health-and-fitness industry in San Diego, he returned to his hometown of San Jose in 2009 to care for his mother and ailing father.

"I thought I'd get back into what I was doing in San Diego, but found this job at Groundwerx," he said.

Eight years later, his thoughts of continuing his career in health and fitness remain on hold as he leads a staff of 29 plus 15 Downtown Streets Team volunteers and shapes the culture at Groundwerx.

The public face of the Property-Based Improvement District (PBID) formed by San Jose Downtown Association in 2007, Groundwerx employees provide on-the-ground cleaning and concierge services seven days a week in the downtown.

One Bear has a firm grasp of the various positions and assignments in the PBID and his management style to put people first sets him apart as leader of Groundwerx.

"It's a demanding job answering to the Downtown Association," he said. "I try to be totally honest and up-front."

And he expects his team to work hard and enjoy the job.

"Don't be afraid to talk to me," One Bear tells his staff. "I want to hear your good ideas and concerns."

That approach works, said **Chloe Verrey**, PBID operations manager. "Semu knows what he's doing," she said. "I think that's why the entire Groundwerx team does such a good job — Semu leads by example."

Another sign of success is the PBID contractor Block By Block, which employs Groundwerx staff and holds similar contracts in multiple cities across the U.S., and sends its newly hired operations managers from the region to San Jose for training.

"Semu has developed a culture of professionalism and teamwork with his crew at Groundwerx that is an example to all of us in this business. He cares about his downtown and it shows on a daily basis," said **Rich Mongarro**, Block by Block regional vice president.



Semu One Bear trains operations managers throughout the region.

One Bear applies a management style that keeps the staff happy and makes sure each knows he or she is valued.

"To me, family is everything," he said. "Everyone knows that if there is a family issue, I want them to take care of it over anything else."

He is "big" on cross-training so that everyone can work the machinery and perform the various jobs. "That's what strengthens the organization," he said. "You never know what crazy circumstances might arise, to where I have to say, 'go put on a green shirt (safety ambassador) and get out there.'"

He has come to rely on the volunteers from Downtown Streets Team.

"They allow us to do other special projects and take on more assignments," he said.

The feeling is mutual.

"What makes waking up and coming in to work for Groundwerx and not having to worry about what might go wrong that day is the one great boss — Semu," said **Corinna Salas**, a DST volunteer who now works full time on the clean team.

The training and attention to details has its positive results. Namely, Groundwerx has never been a more cohesive unit than they are right now, One Bear said.

Proof of a job well done are the compliments he hears every day, plus the 94 percent overall approval rating by PBID membership.

"I like to say good morning to someone who looks stressed and give directions to someone who's late to the courthouse," he said. "The green team hears it all the time — 'Thanks. Great job.' We know we're making an impact and that's a good feeling."

Skating rink takes shape

Kristi Yamaguchi, 1992 Olympic women's figure skating champion, will lend her name to Downtown Ice for the seventh consecutive year. The roster of lead sponsors, however, has changed.

Toyota has agreed to serve as title sponsor. Swenson and **Linda L. Lester** are co-presenting sponsors.

The rink will be open daily Nov. 17-Jan. 15 in the Circle of Palms.

The upcoming ice-skating season at Downtown Ice will be extra special this season because the U.S. Figure Skating Championships return to San Jose Dec. 29-Jan. 8. Local favorite **Polina Edmunds** is expected to compete. This is the final qualifying event prior to selection of Team USA at the 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

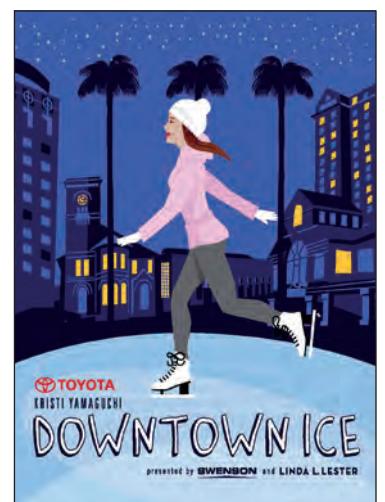
With national skating eyes on San Jose, Christmas in the Park and Winter Wonderland have both decided to extend their seasons an extra week, closing Jan. 7.

More than 50,000 skaters and 100,000 non-skating visitors will enjoy the iconic rink built in a circle around

32 palm trees between the Fairmont Hotel and Museum of Art.

Other sponsors and supporters of the 2017-18 season include: PG&E, The Sobrato Organization, Wells Fargo, Huawei, Martinelli's, Ernst & Young, CH Reynolds, and U.S. Figure Skating; marketing partners VTA and Team San Jose; and longtime media collaborators Clear Channel Outdoor, Mercury News, SVCN, El Observador, Content Magazine and M Magazine.

Hours, prices and special events are posted at downtownicesj.com.



Google Santa Run SV

The sixth annual Santa Run Silicon Valley on Dec. 17 benefits Downtown Ice, Christmas in the Park and Reading Partners. This year, Google has taken over as title sponsor of the run created by Silicon Valley Leadership Group Foundation.

The Santa Run is a 5-kilometer race that includes a Kids Fun Run, costume contest and book drive. Register at santarunsv.com.

Liccardo calls for half of new housing to be downtown in next five years

Mayor **Sam Liccardo's** 15-point housing plan unveiled in October calls for eliminating constraints in development guidelines and reducing costs to encourage the addition of 12,500 new residential units downtown by 2022.

Downtown would represent half of the 25,000 new units he wants finished in five years citywide in San Jose. Directives to city staff specific to downtown include:

- ◆ Speeding permit approvals;
- ◆ Consulting with developers and creating a work plan within 90 days to speed up high-density housing projects — especially the 30 or so

projects already in the pipeline — and getting them to break ground as soon as possible;

- ◆ Updating the Downtown Zoning Code to address at least two obstacles: implementing building height limitations caused by air traffic and eliminating parking requirements;
- ◆ Exploring partnerships between housing developers and private owners of downtown parking to share parking during off-setting times of the day;
- ◆ Expanding the boundaries of the Downtown Core while remaining sensitive to existing single-family neighborhoods;

- ◆ Establishing minimum densities for all Downtown Core parcels and mandating mixed uses such as restaurant or retail on the ground floor;

- ◆ Updating the "program-level" Environmental Impact Report;
- ◆ Working with San Jose State University Planning Department to identify additional locations not in the Downtown Core for more student housing.

Liccardo presented his plan to accelerate housing construction at all income levels at the City Council Rules and Open Government Committee. His plan still needs to be vetted by the entire council.

Business News

Moving from P.A. to S.J.: Patterson + Sheridan, LLP, on *U.S. News and World Report's* top tier of national law firms, has moved its California office from Palo Alto to 50 W. San Fernando St., Suite 250.

The 5,900-square-foot office, which hosts 13 employees, is about the same size as the Palo Alto office, but half the lease cost, according to **Todd Patterson**, founding partner and managing director.

The firm specializes in providing intellectual property protection services to leading and starting tech companies, so closer proximity to the San Jose patent offices and the majority of their clients were additional attractions to downtown.

Patterson + Sheridan also has home offices in Texas, plus North Carolina, New Jersey and Japan. Check patterson-sheridan.com.

New downtown District: District San Jose opened in October in the former BlackArrow offices at 65 N. San Pedro St., serving charcuterie, pizza and other small plates, plus whiskies and wines.

The ownership group includes **Chris and Ryan Vance** and **Jon D'Angelica**. Executive Chef **Bob Cina** and wine and spirits curator **Caterina Mirabelli** have top-flight experience entering this venture.

BlackArrow — now a part of Cadent Technologies — moved in after Tied House departed, so HMR Architects of Sacramento and Bellusci Designs of San Francisco renovated the historic building back into food and entertainment use. Both firms previously worked on improvements of District San Francisco and District Oakland. Check districtsj.com.

More fresh foods:

- ◆ With Chipotle's early October opening, the retail space at One South Market is fully leased. Visit chipotle.com. Also at One South Market: The Proper Cup, Earl of Sandwich and Bishop Barber Shop.

- ◆ Spoonfish Poke opened Oct. 8 at 111 Paseo de San Antonio, serving poke deliciousness of fresh and sustainable ingredients, plus sweet treats. Check spoonfishpoke.com.

- ◆ Für Elyse: After several months of weekends-only operations, Elyse Modern French Vietnamese restaurant has started serving lunch and dinner Monday-Saturday at 151 S. Second St. in the long-departed House of Siam space. Check facebook.com/ElyseRestaurant.

Downtown News

Parklet update: City staff recommends that the pilot Curb Café program first offered in 2013 and then again for two more years in 2015 morph into a more comprehensive Parklet program citywide. Parklets could include curb cafes such as outside Chacho's on San Fernando Street as well as general public seating areas, mini-plazas, park-like features and bike racks. Parklets replace downtown parking spaces.

City staff is still working through the details of the revised program, but are looking at eliminating an additional Sidewalk Café permit and allowing a variety of business types, property owners and neighborhood and business associations in the program. Amended rules will also cover hours of operation, locations and noise/amplified music.

The city's Community & Economic Development Committee discussed the pilot program and proposed changes in October. The recommendations are expected to go to the City Council on Nov. 7.



Swenson is landlord at Back-A-Yard, Shisha and Gotta Eatta Pita.

Swenson bolsters Mitchell Block ownership status:

Swenson has added the buildings at 80 and 84 N. Market St. to its cache of properties on the Mitchell Block bordered by Market, St. John, First and Santa Clara streets and mostly owned by Valley Transportation Agency (VTA). The buildings are occupied by Back-A-Yard Caribbean Grill, Shisha Hookah and Gotta Eatta Pita.

A Swenson LLC acquired the 80 and 84 N. Market properties from the Patel Family Trust for \$2.9 million. Swenson already owns 2 N. Market, occupied by Erik's Deli and Umbrella Salon, and 99 N. First St., leased by Groundwerx.

VTA owns the rest of the block, except three buildings on Santa Clara Street.

VTA will likely use the parking lot as a staging ground for BART construction. VTA is already planning for redevelopment of the block once BART is completed in 2027.



Workers deconstruct Theater 1 seating.

Camera 3's three-month renovation into 3Below

(Editor's note: This is a condensed version of a longer story at sjdowntown.com/sjda-news/.)

Renovation of the former Camera 3 theaters at Second and San Carlos streets is going full-speed ahead, with the owner and partners set on having the new theater called 3Below ready for Cinequest Film and Virtual Reality Festival in March 2018.

"Our official grand re-opening will be Dec. 31 when we host a kickoff event previewing what is to come," said **Scott Guggenheim**, co-founder of Guggenheim Entertainment along with his wife, **Shannon**. The Guggenheims have joined forces with Camera Cinemas co-founder **Jack NyBlom** to renovate downtown's 33-year-old movie theater at the base of the city-owned Second and San Carlos Garage.

Landlord City of San Jose — at Mayor **Sam Liccardo's** directive — is contributing \$500,000 to the project to cover main theater, lobby and restroom improvements, which are all Cinequest's requirements to host films there and for sustained programming the rest of the year. Cinequest lost five screens used for the festival when Camera 12 Cinemas closed, worked with the city to find a new venue with at least 250 seats, and concluded that Camera 3 was the only option, said **Kathleen Powell**, Cinequest co-founder.

The Guggenheims, who started their business in 1997, previously renovated Century 25 and created the Retro Dome movie house and stage productions, had also been looking for a new home after the Century 25 closed in 2012.

"Everyone involved knows this theater is a gem, but in need of a make-over," Shannon Guggenheim said. "We are working to update the venue and infuse it with more programming while keeping much of what makes it special."

The Guggenheims, ComedySportz and upcoming community crowd-funding efforts will supplement the city's investment. ComedySportz remains open during the remodel.

New programming will begin in mid-December. The partners plan to "keep what works:" indie films, art films, Oscar shorts, foreign films and documentaries and the popular opera series. Guggenheim will supplement those Camera Cinemas staples with repertory, revival shows, children's festivals, "Godfather" marathons, Harry Potter-a-thons, James Bond festivals, sing-alongs, and other cinema events that take the movie experience beyond its curtain call. Guests will also participate in open mic nights, family game nights and Broadway karaoke.

From the Archives

10 years ago — November 2007 — The majority of Winter Wonderland holiday amusement rides moved onto Park Avenue.

15 years ago — November 2002 — The 1904-built Jose Theatre — named a historic landmark in 1990 — completes renovation and reopens as home of San Jose Improv comedy club.

20 years ago — November 1997 — San Jose Repertory Co. moved from the Montgomery Theater into a theater built specifically for the Rep, opening with the West Coast premiere of "Thunder Knocking on the Door" by **Keith Glover**.

25 years ago — November 1992 — The City and Parking Advisory Commission agreed to a Downtown Employees Special Parking Action, selling 200 spaces to employees of downtown businesses for \$30 per month. SJDA proposed the idea to discount employee parking.

30 years ago — November 1987 — San Jose City Council adopted the Downtown Parking Validation Program. Five years later in June 1992, separate evening restaurant, cinema and library validations for the downtown area were also adopted.

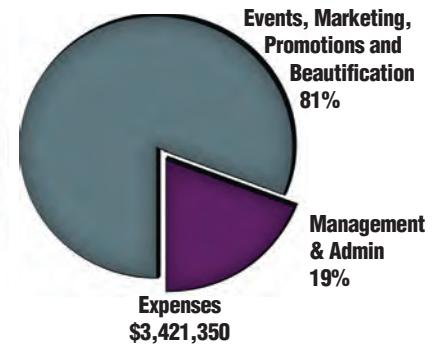
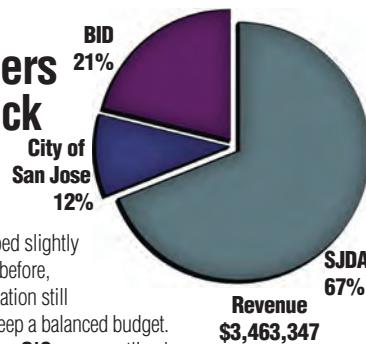
SJDA numbers on track

San Jose Downtown Association's revenues dipped slightly from the year before, but the association still managed to keep a balanced budget. Treasurer **Liam O'Connor** outlined SJDA's balance sheet at the October Annual Meeting.

SJDA's \$3.46 million in fiscal year 2016-17 revenues was about \$100,000 less than the prior year. Business contributed \$732,000 to the funding through Business Improvement District fees, which O'Connor called the "life blood of the organization."

The association kept pace on the expense side, spending \$3.42 million and finishing the year with a \$42,000 reserve. Programs costing the most include events such as Music in the Park and Downtown Ice, which not coincidentally also generate the most revenue.

Other SJDA programs include Dine Downtown, the Farmers' Market, Live & Local, Starlight Cinemas, down-



town marketing during the holidays, and year-round promotions, parking and beautification projects. SJDA expenses also cover personnel, communications, advocacy efforts and research, and pop-up retail. SJDA has kept a balanced budget for four consecutive years, O'Connor said. SJDA's net assets now total \$582,000.

O'Connor credited **Peggy Bradley**, director of finance and administration, for keeping the books. "The outside auditors gave our financial statements the best opinion an organization can get," O'Connor said.

SJDA's financial reports are at sjdowntown.com/sjda.

"We take transparency seriously and encourage people to look at the numbers on the SJDA website," O'Connor said.



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SJDA News

Two new maps: A retail vacancy map and a map of proposed and completed developments can both be found on sjdowntown.com. Contact **Nate LeBlanc** (nleblanc@sjdowntown.com) if you have a property to lease or a development to add. Use the search function or click under SJDA and Business Development to find the maps on the sjdownton.com site.

Downtown Dimension online: Downtown Dimension is available online at sjdowntown.com/sjda-news. Subscribe at sjda@sjdowntown.com, adding Dimension to the subject line.

Event Schedule

Nov. 3 — South First Fridays Art Walk; southfirstfridays.com
Nov. 3, 10, 17 — Downtown Farmers' Market in San Pedro Square; sjdowntown.com
Nov. 11 — Veteran's Day Parade; lvccsc.org/VetParadeInfo
Nov. 17 — Downtown Ice, Circle of Palms. Through Jan. 15; downtownicesj.com
Nov. 22 — Winter Wonderland, Park Avenue. Through Jan. 7; winterwonderlandsj.com
Nov. 23 — Silicon Valley Turkey Trot; svturkeytrot.com
Nov. 24 — Christmas in the Park, Plaza de Cesar Chavez. Through Jan. 7; christmasinthepark.com
Nov. 25 — Small Business Saturday; sjdowntown.com/shopsmall

At the Convention Center

Nov. 2-4 — Association of California School Administrators (2,500) acsa.org
Nov. 4-5 — Home Show (4,500) homeshowsanjose.com
Nov. 15-17 — Quickbook Connects (4,080) quickbook-connects.com
Nov. 24-26 — Harvest Festival (10,300) harvestfestival.com
Dec. 2-3 — Heroes & Villains Fan Fest (15,350) heroes-fanfest.com/sanjose

SJDA Year-in-Review on Dec. 8

Hammer Theatre Center to host: San Jose Downtown Association's Year-in-Review meeting includes the annual slide show, Golden Nail Award, and farewell to term-limited board members. Meet at 8 a.m. at Hammer Theatre Center. Rsvp at sjdarsvp@sjdowntown.com

DOWNTOWN DIMENSION

Downtown Dimension is published monthly by the San Jose Downtown Association, a nonprofit organization established in 1986 to serve the Downtown business community. It is printed on recycled paper.

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