



MISSOULA DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
MISSOULA DOWNTOWN FOUNDATION

Local Media
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SIX INDIVIDUALS HONORED AS DOWNTOWN AWARD WINNERS

United Way's Eric Legvold named Dan Cederberg Downtowner of the Year

From 12 individuals nominated by the community, the Missoula Downtown Association (MDA) Board of Directors presented six special awards to people who have done extraordinary things for Downtown Missoula in 2020, a most difficult year. The annual tradition of honoring people who do special things for Downtown Missoula began in 1986 and has continued on for 44 years. This year's awards were presented in person and celebrated during the MDA's monthly board meeting, instead of the annual awards banquet that typically draws nearly 300 people.

The most prestigious award – the **Dan Cederberg Downtowner of the Year** – was presented to **Eric Legvold**, Director of Impact for **United Way of Missoula County**, for his service to our community during the COVID crisis. Legvold helped raise and distribute over \$400,000 in financial assistance to service industry workers. He led the initiative to collect and distribute more than 40,000 face masks, and he led the team effort to build the new temporary safe homeless camp.

"We learned a long time ago that it takes extraordinary efforts to build a vibrant Downtown, and our leadership is committed to recognizing and celebrating those individuals who give of themselves for the betterment of our community," said Ashley Larkin, President of the MDA Board of Directors. "2020 was a very challenging year, so these honorees and their contributions are even more special!"

The **Missoula PaddleHeads**, under the direction of new owners Peter & Susan Crampton-Davis, were named the **Downtown Business of the Year** for 2020, despite cancellation of baseball for the year. The PaddleHeads creative new opportunities for Missoulians to enjoy all the things they love at the ballpark, including movies, yoga, trivia nights, golf, and even a river cleanup, where they collected more than 1,000 pounds of garbage.

"When most minor-league ballparks across the country went dark, the PaddleHeads completely shifted their entire operations to stay active and connected," said Larkin. "What they did this year was unheard of and absolutely amazing."

Nathan McLeod, design development specialist for **Missoula Parks & Recreation**, is the **Downtown Employee of the Year**. As the lead staff member for the North Riverside Parks & Trails Plan, McLeod led the planning process that resulted in a fabulous plan that was unanimously adopted by 10 different organizations.

“Right when the pandemic hit Missoula, we were preparing to present the new plan to the community,” said Larkin. “Nathan and our consulting team were able to pivot to a digital rollout, complete with creative videos and online surveys, and we had more engagement from the community than anyone would have anticipated. Nearly 3,000 people viewed videos and completed surveys. He did an amazing job during a really difficult time.”

Geoff Badenoch was named the **Downtown Volunteer of the Year**. The former director of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency has stayed active in all things Downtown and recently completed a six-year term on the Missoula Downtown Foundation Board of Directors. He volunteered to create and bury a time capsule in the new Missoula Public Library and served as a volunteer for the Missoula County Elections office and the Festival of Trees.

Tom Snyder, owner of **Five on Black**, was recognized as the **MDA Committee Member of the Year** for his service to the Downtown Advocacy Committee and his contributions to the Revive Missoula Bars & Restaurants (RMBR) alliance.

Lastly, **Ashley Larkin** of **First Montana Bank** was named the **MDA Board Member of the Year** for her contributions as the Vice President of Marketing & Events. With the loss of community events and festivals due to the pandemic, the MDA had to rework its offerings and messaging.

The Downtown Awards Program was established in 1986 and expanded in 2004 and again in 2014. More than 90 individuals and businesses have been recognized over the years for their selfless giving of time, talent and treasure to make great things happen in Downtown Missoula.

To learn more and to view the locally-created videos on the award winners, visit <https://www.missouladowntown.com/annual-awards/>. To schedule interviews with any of the candidates, contact Chelsea Kucera (chelsea@missouladowntown.com) or call the Downtown Missoula Partnership office (406-543-4238).

Downtown Missoula: Connecting Our Community!