



Push things forward

Looking forward through the eyes of eight young leaders

by : C-VILLE Weekly writers

We're on the verge of 2012, and whether the New Year is the dawn of a new era or just another click of the big wheel of fortune as it spins into eternity, it's a good time to talk about new beginnings. This year, instead of a tired year-in-review, we decided to give you a look at the future of your city through the eyes of eight young men and women who are making waves in their fields. They're mostly around 30 years old (which is the new 20), and they're doing things like running businesses, leading schools, buying buildings, and curating art shows. So welcome to your future, Charlottesville, where you'll be alternatively educated, well-fed, creatively coded, idealistic, and fit as a fiddle for the revolution, which won't be televised but will likely be on YouTube.—*Chiara Canzi, Brendan Fitzgerald, Spencer Peterson, Caite White*

"A universal reintroduction to the basics of where food comes from..."

THE FOODIE

Emily Wampler

Age: 27

Occupation: Executive Director, The PB&J Fund

Astrological sign: Gemini

New Year's resolution: To write more.

What's missing from Charlottesville? A "Little Italy." I miss Boston's North End.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

Pretty much exactly what I do now. Or an interior designer, which is hilarious if you have ever been to my apartment.



A UVA graduate, Emily Wampler loves to cook and has made it her mission to give students in city schools the best chance to grow up healthy. The PB&J Fund's mission is to "connect Charlottesville youth with the resources and knowledge necessary to help develop a healthy diet."

To fulfill its mission, the fund works with local agencies "to provide healthy meals and teach cooking habits, aiming to address kids' nutritional needs at each stage of development." Some of them include Children Youth and Family Services (CYFS), the Boys & Girls Club, and local elementary schools.

"The name came about because we believe that a healthy diet should be easily accessible to all kids, just like the most famous and basic childhood food of peanut butter and jelly."

On the future of school food:

"It holds something bright: Healthful, well-balanced lunches and breakfasts through the cafeterias with as much local sourcing as possible and a universal reintroduction to the basics of where food comes from and how to prepare it."

On the state of access to healthy food for city school children:

"The way I see it, we have a head start in the things that will be commonplace in 20 years. I think there are two next steps that are necessary for sustainable change to make the future bright for Charlottesville kids. One: a change on a state and national level that alters the procurement and standards applied to school lunches.

"Two, education, education, education and access, access, access. Changes in school lunch requirements will help our children's diets, but I don't believe it can single handedly solve the issue. Learning to cook, understanding the true implications of obesity related illnesses, and understanding that exercise and applying concerted moderation will help translate health changes in and outside of the school day. This requires a variety of action plans including making healthy foods that might be new or daunting to parents and kids more accessible by where and at what cost they are available to purchase as well as what to do with them when we do. It is irresponsible for adults to ignore that the kids in our lives are currently not expected to outlive us. We should want nothing more than to change that, and soon. We

should be kept up at night about this. I like to think we will all do real and tangible things with that thought."

"I think we'll also see a West Main Street that offers a reason to walk between UVA and Downtown."

THE DEVELOPER

Paul Beyer

Age: 29

Occupation: Vice President of Development, R.L. Beyer Construction

Astrological sign: Aries

New Year's resolution: Focus on projects that I'm passionate about, and that inspire passion in others.

What's missing from Charlottesville? A true critical mass of young people, young professionals creating things, making stuff, starting their businesses, looking to the future. Well, "young" is not operative. But "youthful" is.

What did you want to be when you grew up? A filmmaker.



Though Paul Beyer lost his run for city council, coming in fourth at August's firehouse primary, his campaign was something of a feat for a young candidate. Running on a platform of sustainability, job growth, and arts promotion, Beyer trailed Dede Smith by only 31 votes. During the race, he held a series of informal "Talk About the City" gatherings at his apartment in the Pink Warehouse on Water Street.

After majoring in film at NYU and working in the big city for a spell, Beyer returned to Charlottesville to take a role in the family business. Now, Beyer is vice president of development for R.L. Beyer Construction, a company that specializes in custom family homes, where he handles land sales and acquisitions, advertising and promotional outreach, rental property management, and interaction with city and county government. A past chair of the Albemarle County Housing Committee, Beyer remains involved with the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority Project, and whatever his future in Charlottesville looks like, his ideas are already changing the city's future. Currently, Beyer is responsible for the development of Charlottesville's Huntley neighborhood, where he plans to create a one-acre pocket park with a community garden and a recreational area.

On what the city will look like in 2022: "We will be a city that makes things—art, products, technologies, businesses. I think we'll also see a West Main Street that offers a reason to walk between UVA and Downtown."

On the current state of development: "For most of the city, getting a quart of milk, or a slice of pizza, or a beer means getting in your car and driving. We aren't a walkable city. As much as we promote it, mass transit doesn't make much sense here, because we're not very dense. And we won't be a truly sustainable city until our main corridors are. Preston Avenue, West Main and most of the city's core should be far more vital places. Our neighborhoods should be anchored with commercial components: a deli, a diner, a bar, somewhere close enough to walk, where a true sense of community could start to coalesce. What also is crucial to any city getting denser is that more areas are carved out for public use. They don't have to be big or expensive, just walkable and community oriented."

On what to expect in the short term: "I think the fact someone like Kathy Galvin was elected to Council bodes very well for the future. Understanding how architecture informs community is something Kathy does intuitively."

On what the recession is teaching us: "Developers are already being a lot more cautious in what they promise, and the city and county are more realistic in what they expect. It's a positive trend that will lead to better grounds for collaboration."

"More people over the age of 50 and 60 will remain engaged in vigorous exercise."

THE TRAINER

Hyam Hosny

Age: 37

Occupation: Owner, Clay Fitness + Nutrition

Astrological sign: Leo

New Year's resolution: To be clear about what I want and don't want. Not to do anything by accident.

What's missing from Charlottesville? A beach. I love Charlottesville so much for its beauty, small town traffic, and big city thinking. If there was one thing I would bring to Charlottesville to make it better, it would be a beach. I guess I will have to go to the coast for that.

What did you want to be when you grew up? I wanted to be a track star, a vet, and a dancer.

It didn't take Hyam Hosny all of the 18 months she's



run Clay Fitness to make an impression on the local fitness scene—it was more like nine. That’s around the time she added 4,000 square feet to her too-tiny Douglas Avenue studio, making room for a whole host of new clients (more than 300 these days), more classes (17 total, including everything from cycling to triathlon training), and more opportunities to share a science-based fitness method she passionately believes in.

That’s an awfully fast trajectory for this economic climate, but Hosny, an ACE-certified personal trainer and graduate of the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, has a proven track record. Before moving here in 2009, she owned a fitness and nutrition business in Washington, D.C., where she developed and trademarked a 12-week program that combines highly effective group training with nutrition counseling support and accountability.

“It’s a holistic approach,” she said, “where you can get all aspects of your fitness met without feeling alone on a lonely gym floor on a machine going nowhere fast.”

On the future of fitness:

“Less attention will be paid to traditional weight training (with external weight) and more attention will remain on using body weight and suspension training with body weight. TRX, gymnastics rings, gliding discs, bosu, and other tools that have the user controlling their own body will continue to be a focus. More people over the age of 50 and 60 will remain engaged in vigorous exercise. I have more and more clients who are committed to maintaining a high level of fitness well into their 50s. It’s clear that the issues that come from being less active are more significant than those that come from being more active.”

On fitness fads:

“We have been plagued by gimmicks in fitness, guiding people towards ab rollers, fad diets, silly named classes at their local gym claiming to blast their buns and whittle their waist. People have become more aware that exercise is a science. With all science, there are methods that work, and methods that are likely to flop. Systematic, thoughtful, and functional training is the way of fitness in the next era. No more droves of people running to their local gym to take the ‘blast your booty’ class.”

On training the whole body:

“Rather than doing only one form of exercise, more people are starting to see that what’s best for the body is diversity of training. More people are recognizing that there are many components to complete and overall fitness. Flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, and muscular strength and stability are all critical components. A week that used to involve only yoga or pilates may become more varied with cycling, strength training, pilates, yoga, running, and swimming could be part of one week of training. Gone are the days of treating one sport or mode of exercise like it’s a complete recipe for fitness.”

“I think that the future of education is looking at alternative learning options for kids that are outside of the brick and mortar setting.”

THE EDUCATOR

Thomas W. Taylor, Ed. D.

Age: 33

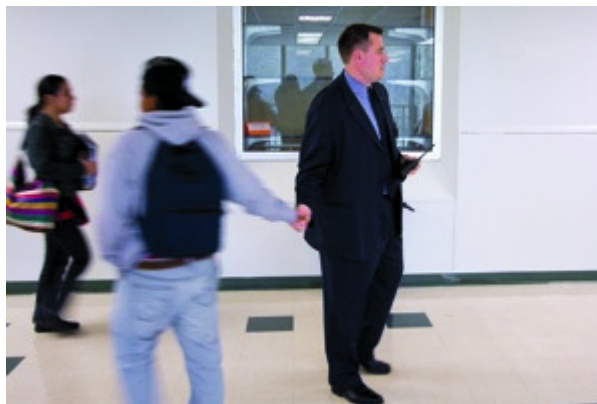
Occupation: Principal of Charlottesville High School

Astrological sign: Gemini

New Year’s resolution: Get into more classrooms for observations. I get to work with awesome teachers; I would love to see them more doing what they do best: teaching our children.

What’s missing from Charlottesville? The beach; otherwise it is perfect. I moved to Charlottesville in 2008 from Virginia Beach.

What did you want to be when you grew up? At the top of the list, I wanted to be a teacher and coach. I am so blessed to do what I love.



Thomas Taylor got his educational doctorate degree from UVA and became principal of Charlottesville High School in 2008. A young and dynamic principal who believes in a hands-on approach to leadership, Taylor prowls the hallways of his school, greeting every student he comes across, offering advice when necessary. Under his leadership, the drop-out rate at Charlottesville High School has decreased each year.

On the future of education:

“When people think about alternative learning, they often think about discipline schools or learning online, but there is much more to alternative learning than just that. I think that the future of education is looking at alternative learning options for kids that are outside of the brick and mortar setting that we are used to. Things that are a little more applicable, that are more hands on and virtual learning is a part of that.”

On the current state of education:

“There is a lot of excitement about education now. There is a greater emphasis today on students and their critical thinking, their writing skills, their problems solving skills, their physical and cultural geography, teamwork, communication. These are things that we really haven’t focused on education-wise in the past couple of decades, and now we have a resurgence in how we think about student learning.”

On teaching and learning:

“What this means for teachers and students is that there is a lot less direct instruction and a lot less teacher in front of the classroom and what this may look like ‘a guide on the side versus a sage on the stage.’ Teachers today are more facilitators and need to be more facilitators than direct lecturers. ‘I am here to help discover what you need to know’

versus telling you directly what you need to know and that is where that guide on the side versus the sage on the stage piece comes in."

On the use of technology in the future:

"I think that you can't substitute any kind of subject area with any kind of technology. What technology can do is that it is an enhancement and it is so much more than a tool. What I am far more interested in is how can you use that to be a better critical thinker, how can you use it to be a better problem solver, how can you use it to develop better cultural competencies."

On the challenges of education in the future:

"I think the future of education holds some significant challenges financially, in supporting teachers if we really want to recruit, train and retain the best teachers in education because it is the most important part of education. Financially we are going to have to be able to support them as a community."

THE (UN)POLITICIAN

Bailee Elizabeth Hampton

Age: 31

Occupation: Musician

Astrological sign: Taurus

New Year's resolution: I don't do those.

What's missing from Charlottesville? A more vibrant social environment.

What did you want to be when you grew up? Not like my parents.

Hampton has been a vocal member of Occupy Charlottesville and was one of the 18 people arrested during the group's eviction from Lee Park. She says the occupation has meant "so many things" to her. "I'll never be the same person I was before this experience." Elizabeth identified herself as homeless when she was arrested. You may have seen her playing her ukulele on the Downtown Mall or working at the Tea Bazaar, but you've definitely seen her, because she's out there, living her life in the open.



On where we're heading: "Into the unknown void."

On the future of politics:

"Maybe I'm wrong, but I feel like we could be headed for an all out revolution. Nationally, we're so far beyond fixing that the only way things are going to change is through revolution. Calling our senators, calling our congressmen, making petitions and voting aren't doing us much good these days on the national level, so resistance is necessary. Locally we need to do some work as well. We need a poor person on City Council. We need to focus on doing more to help the homeless instead of making the Mall look pretty. We need to stop allowing war profiteers to invade our local economy. The list goes on."

On the movement:

"On one level, it represents this grand idea in my mind of true anarchic resistance. A resistance of plutocracy, and a culture that's killing the planet, that's separating people from their humanity, and will destroy life on earth. A resistance that spans many class lines and political ideologies, so that many are represented and involved. A resistance that is non-hierarchical in nature. There's no one in charge, because we're all in charge! That's beautiful."

"On another level it represents the true meaning of community. It hit me after the first Occupy Charlottesville General Assembly, when I realized that over 100 strangers had just agreed to be there for each other spiritually, materially, and monetarily if need be, in order to ensure the movement."

"It also represents frustration. Frustration that I'm only one person. Frustration with people who don't understand why people are doing such a thing. Frustration at how the State fails and yet people still count on it with their lives. Frustration in true democratic process, sometimes it takes a REALLY long time to get an entire group to come to consensus on something."

"I think we'll continue to see improvement in sales over the next several years."

THE ENTREPRENEUR

Greer Johnson

Age: 29

Occupation: Owner of Duo

Astrological sign: Sagittarius

New Year's resolution: To run more.

What's missing from Charlottesville? That's a tough one! I think I'm going to have to go with beach/ocean. Other than that, we've got most everything I'd want.

What did you want to be when you grew up? A T.V. news anchor.

Just under 30 years old, Greer Johnson has been a retail fixture in Charlottesville for four years since opening her Elliewood Avenue shop, Duo. After graduating from Washington & Lee University with a degree in business journalism and a year spent working at SNL Financial, she decided to take the leap and start a business.

"I'd always had this idea of opening a store that had both new and secondhand clothing, so it was just a matter of when I decided to do it," Johnson said. "I kind of figured, why not go for it?"

The store, which opened in April of 2007, is a two-floor, pinked-out homage to beautiful clothing and accessories. The lower level is dedicated to new clothes by designers like Trina Turk, Lauren Moffatt, and Corey Lynn Calter, while the upper level is filled with gently used, brand-name clothing. It's the success of the two-tiered business model that prompted Johnson to open a second Duo location just over the mountain in downtown Harrisonburg. "We actually have a lot of customers who are already familiar with Duo," she said. "They've come over to Charlottesville to shop before and recognized us from that."

On the future of retail:

"The future looks good for small businesses in Charlottesville. Consumer confidence is improving, and Charlottesville customers are so great about wanting to support local small businesses like Duo. I think we'll continue to see improvement in sales over the next several years."

On the state of small business:

"Small businesses were doing really well when I opened in 2007. Shortly thereafter, though, the economy really went south, and we're still recovering from that. I'd say consumer confidence is certainly on the rise, though, and shoppers are more comfortable spending money today more so than a year ago."

"I think apprenticeship is going to make a comeback."

THE CURATOR

Maureen Lovett

Age: 25

Occupation: Executive Director, New City Arts Initiative

Astrological sign: Capricorn

New Year's resolution: Get more involved with the Virginia Arts of the Book Center. I majored in printmaking at UVA, but I haven't had the space to produce much work since I graduated. More broadly, I want to be more present with people when I'm with them.

What's missing from Charlottesville? There are a lot of nonprofits that employ less than three people in this town, which is kind of rare, and a lot of these organizations have a hard time providing good health insurance to their employees. It's a bit idealistic, but I wish there was a way that all of these employees could buy into a group rate across organizations. I would love to start that company, but I imagine it would be incredibly complicated.

What did you want to be when you grew up? Occasionally, I wanted to be a marine biologist. Other times, I wanted to play in the WNBA. I was the tallest kid in my third grade class and thought the basketball court was my calling.

After receiving a B.A. in studio art from UVA, Maureen Lovett took part in that great yearly migration of recently graduated creatives to New York City. While there, she became involved with the International Arts Movement, an organization that works to build grassroots networks of artists and engage them with their communities. Lovett volunteered in the organization's Space 38|39 studio, and at its annual Encounter gathering, before taking part in that small counter migration of UVA graduates back to Charlottesville, where she began curating gatherings of her own.

After organizing the loose collective that would become Charlottesville's New City Arts Initiative, Lovett soon found herself at its center. Since August of 2010, the Ashburn native has served as the executive director of the nonprofit, a local offshoot of the International Arts Movement committed to "gathering artists and creative catalysts to wrestle with the deep questions of art, faith, and humanity." The vision of Lovett's group may be lofty, but from her office at The Haven at First and Market, she runs a number of practical initiatives that keep this city's young artists connected, busy, and community-oriented. In addition to supporting a resident artist, New City Arts runs a gallery out of the



WVTF and Radio IQ Studios on Water Street, assists with the Garage, a small show space at the west end of Lee Park, and develops creative programs for the homeless population served by the Haven.

On the future of the art world:

"I think apprenticeship is going to make a comeback. One local example is Enrique Martínez Celaya. Rather than being a lone studio artist making work and selling it traditionally, he started Whale and Star, a studio that supports his practice, but allows interns, fellow artists and patrons to practice with him, and learn from how he works."

On collaboration in the arts community:

"Because of the recession, funding is down in the art and nonprofit worlds, but I think that the more organizations barter—trading gallery and studio space for things like workshops or publicity—the less money gets wasted on overhead. Lowering the cost of space lets artists benefit more from the resources that places like Piedmont Council for the Arts and the Bridge already offer. Even when the economy improves, I think bartering is going to stay with us, because of how it builds networks of artists and integrates them into the life of the community. Instead of encouraging competition for a few local resources, the arts community is finding that many organizations can meet the needs of artists very easily."

On the changing nature of support for the arts:

"Though the arts are getting cut on an institutional level, I think a lot of other organizations are rising up in support of artists, in the form of grants, or simply by providing them space in exchange for the work that they're doing in the community. Which are both very traditional forms of patronage, but they're starting to happen in increasingly creative ways."

"I wouldn't be surprised if, in the next five to 10 years, you start seeing a lot more start-ups and technology-related businesses in Charlottesville."

THE PROGRAMMER

John Feminella

Age: 27

Occupation: Principal Consultant for fluxcruX, a new web development consultancy.

Astrological sign: Tyrannosaurus Rex (Actually, a Libra)

New Year's resolution: 'Be humble, for you are made of earth. Be noble, for you are made of stars.' It's a Serbian proverb.

What's missing from Charlottesville? One thing we're missing is a creative, community-supported space that people of all ages can go to and experiment with science and technology. Imagine if there was a community-supported hacker space, or lab, where people could try out fun ideas or build something cool. I think that those sorts of spaces are sort of a Library 2.0. With Library 1.0, we consumed knowledge from books and learned by osmosis. With these kinds of spaces, we're looking at something like turning that knowledge into practice with experimentation and trying things out.

What did you want to be when you grew up? A fighter pilot.

In 2004, after one year as a technology consultant for Microsoft, John Feminella took a job as a software architect for defense technology giant Northrop Grumman. While he completed his economics and computer science studies at UVA, Feminella reduced overhead costs and refined NG's software development, and was named Outstanding New Engineer by the company. ¶ One might work for Northrop Grumman in a number of cities. But Feminella loves Charlottesville. For six years, he has helped operate the Charlottesville Blackjack Club, which donates its considerable winnings to charities. And he has never needed an office to house his expertise. On StackOverflow.com—a website that crowdsources questions about programming, sans fee—Feminella is ranked No. 142 of more than 900,000 computer programmers, a stat that brings contracts to him. As principal consultant for fluxcruX, his web development firm, Feminella boosts the online capabilities of national magazines and financial firms alongside locally grown start-ups that keep money in the Charlottesville economy.

On the future of the software sector:

"Charlottesville, like everywhere else, is kind of suffering from a labor deficit of software development talent, and people who can actually construct all of the technology that everybody wants to build."

"If you look at what's happening in the economy in general, a lot of people think that part of the reason for this sort of persistent high unemployment is not because there's a fundamental problem with the American economy, but might be because we're going through a restructuring phase where existing jobs are being obsoleted or changed around by technology. That leaves people in a transient state where people don't yet have the skills to move into a new position, but the job exists and there's nobody to fill it."

"The shortage is likely to continue for a while, so what will probably happen is, this demand is not going to go away. We're going to be able to attract more people to Charlottesville because of its quality of life—it's a great place to work and to live. I wouldn't be surprised if, in the next five to 10 years, you start seeing a lot more start-ups and technology-related businesses in Charlottesville."

