



THE JOURNAL RECORD

# #ACHIEVERS UNDER 40

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# #ACHIEVERS UNDER 40

The Journal Record's Achievers Under 40 program recognizes Oklahoma's rising stars under the age of 40. These young leaders are the newest generation of decision-makers, setting the Oklahoma Standard in business and industry. They are contributing significantly to their professions, communities and state. We congratulate this 20th class of Achievers Under 40 honorees and thank them for making Oklahoma an even better place to live.

THE JOURNAL RECORD

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# Brian Kurtz

*President and CEO*

*Downtown Tulsa Partnership*



Kurtz' work has required leadership, relationship-building and the ability to sell a vision for Tulsa's economic center, said Kian Kamas, executive director of Partner Tulsa. And he did it all during a pandemic.

"Brian has also been a key part our economic development team and will continue to be a major partner to PartnerTulsa," she said. "His expertise in building a vibrant business district through a collection of uses and business mixes and his understanding of business assistance programs will play a key role in our joint efforts."

Tulsa County Commissioner Karen Keith said she has witnessed leadership, wisdom and patience from Kurtz as he built a new agency and developed programs and services for it. During the pandemic, he worked with Tulsa County Cares to allocate more than \$500,000

to help downtown Tulsa restaurants and small businesses.

In Pennsylvania, Kurtz was director of economic development for the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership and international business development officer for the Erie County Industrial Development Agency.

He has a master's degree in urban planning from the University of Buffalo and a bachelor's degree from Gannon University.

Kurtz is board director for the International Downtown Association and has received several awards from the organization, including the Award of Excellence for The Majestic and for Project: Hope Unity Compassion, as well as recognition as a Certified Leader in Place Management. He also is director and board president for the Center for Housing Solutions and a member of the Urban Land Institute.

**W**hen his youngest children – twins – were just 3 months old, Brian Kurtz moved his family, which also included a toddler, across the country so he could work to boost downtown Tulsa.

They moved from Pittsburgh five years ago so Kurtz could start a role for the city of Tulsa and Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum as executive director of the Downtown Coordinating Council with the idea that it would eventually be a stand-alone agency. Since 2021, Kurtz has been president and CEO of the Downtown Tulsa Partnership.

"The act of moving infant twins, a toddler and a dog alone is major feat, but the real victory is looking at the children we've raised and how much we've all grown as a family collective and as individuals. We're certainly stronger today than we were before," Kurtz said.

Downtown Tulsa has more public art and programming than it did before as well as a strategic plan developed in conjunction with many people and businesses to make sure the area "is vibrant, welcoming and thriving," he said.



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