

PBN PROVIDENCE BUSINESS NEWS
FASTEST GROWING
 &
innovative companies
 2021 AWARDS



WINDMOELLER & HOELSCHER CORP.
\$75M+



J2 CONSTRUCT INC.
\$25M-\$75M



ADCARE RHODE ISLAND INC.
\$5M-\$25M



SIGNAL SOLUTIONS INC.
\$250K-\$5M

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Meeting community needs in a crisis



ONE OF THE BIGGEST differences between the Great Recession and the sudden economic downturn created by the pandemic is the uneven effects the latter has had on the local economy.

While some local industries continue to struggle, COVID-19 has created opportunities for others, including many of this year's fastest growing and most innovative companies.

Demand for health care, construction, manufacturing and technology products and services soared in 2020. That left this year's leaders in revenue growth perfectly positioned to take advantage – if they could effectively manage their own COVID-related challenges.

Manufacturer Windmoeller & Hoelscher Corp., which has offices in Lincoln, saw the biggest revenue jump from 2018 to 2020 in the \$75 million and above category, increasing 49%, to \$261.7 million. The machinery it provides customers for flexible packaging saw increased demand, including for medical supplies and personal protective equipment.

North Kingstown-based AdCare Rhode Island Inc.'s drug treatment services became a critical part of the community's response to the tragic rise in overdoses. Its success in expanding telehealth rehabilitation services and online counseling helped boost revenue last year by 65% compared with 2018, making it the leader in the \$5 million to \$25 million category.

Middletown's J2 Construct Inc. rode the building boom to dramatic revenue growth of

1,567%, to \$25 million.

Warwick's Signal Solutions Inc. initially struggled with the sudden loss of business last year but quickly rebounded to help serve the huge shift to remote work. It ended 2020 with a 910% jump in revenue from 2018.

Read on for examples of other companies that stepped up to challenges amid a crisis to help fill critical community needs.

We'd especially like to thank returning presenting sponsor CBIZ & MHM, and partner sponsors Cox Business and Gallo Thomas Insurance.

Michael Mello

Michael Mello
Editor

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NONPROFIT: Children's Friend and Service

TECHNOLOGY: Healthcentric Advisors Inc.

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Congratulations to the 2021 Fastest-Growing & Innovative Companies honorees! On the 10th anniversary of this event, we reflect back on the many local businesses that have been honored and the lessons learned from their stories of growth and innovation. This year's honorees have demonstrated unprecedented resiliency and flexibility given the challenges presented throughout 2020 and 2021, and we are thrilled to recognize them.

From tax planning to accounting and transaction advisory services, CBIZ & MHM has the expertise to help you achieve your goals.

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Cox Business congratulates all the incredible businesses being honored as PBN's 2021 Fastest Growing and Innovative Companies. We applaud your ability to flourish during another challenging year. As your local partner, Cox Business looks forward to supporting your business and we wish you continued success.



Gallo|Thomas is proud to sponsor the 2021 Fastest Growing & Innovative Companies Awards. We congratulate the outstanding group of 2021 honorees and salute your unique attributes and business acumen. Gallo|Thomas is passionate about serving our clients, our employees, and our local community – and delighted to share this special recognition with the companies and individuals honored this year.





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Keeping package makers moving

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer



SNEAK PEEK: Windmoeller & Hoelscher Corp. Senior Vice President Javeed Buch, standing, meets with staffers at the firm's North American headquarters in Lincoln. On the screen is an artist's rendering of the company's future offices that are soon to be under construction.
PBN PHOTO/DAVE HANSEN

'We will ... continue to collaborate with partners to find ways to improve sustainability and recyclability of packaging.'

ANDREW WHEELER,
Windmoeller & Hoelscher Corp. president

1 WINDMOELLER & HOELSCHER CORP. – a German company with offices in Lincoln – manufactures machinery that companies use to produce flexible packaging. This packaging includes plastic film, printing presses, and paper and plastic sack producing lines. Most of its customers produce packaging for food and medical products.

There are several factors that have converged to create growth at Windmoeller over the past few years, says company President Andrew Wheeler.

An increase in demand in the flexible-packaging industry is one influence, he said, with the industry growing about 2% a year since it was developed just after World War II. Many Windmoeller customers are upgrading and adding new equipment as a result. At the end of 2019, flexible-packaging sales totaled more than \$33 billion, Wheeler said.

"To add to that, our headquarters in Germany has an R&D [research and development] department that is constantly working on technologies to improve efficiency, productivity and sustainability during production on our machinery," Wheeler said. "Some new automation systems can significantly reduce the amount of energy used, as well as scrap accumulated during set up and production," details that can make a huge difference, he said.

Wheeler said the company has introduced a comprehensive data collection, analysis and optimization tool as well, which has been popular.

Even outside of increased demand, Wheeler said, customers are periodically replacing old and outdated equipment,

which helps increase Windmoeller's bottom line.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the company was in an interesting position. While Windmoeller operated during the crisis, its customers' products were more in demand due to their nature.

Most food and medical products are packaged in thin-gauge flexible plastic, Wheeler notes, to extend their shelf life and protect them from contamination and spoiling.

"This was particularly important when people were being asked to go to the store just once every few weeks," he said.

Medical supplies and personal protective equipment need to be packaged in plastic to prevent contamination when they are being transported.

With this increased demand, there was a heightened importance that customers' machinery be operational as soon as possible. Windmoeller touts some notable achievements during the COVID-19 pandemic, including completion of all installations on time; successfully strategizing ways to help its customers stay on track with production; and keeping technicians safe and healthy with innovative methods.

With communication the tie that binds it all together, about 70% of the Lincoln

employees worked remotely during the pandemic, Wheeler said, to reduce the chances of infection.

"We created protocols and workstations at customer plants to eliminate to as great of an extent as possible any interactions," he said.

This included cordoning off installation areas so that only workers involved with the installation could enter. Mobile offices with built-in workspaces and bathrooms were implemented as well, to reduce potential contamination and keep installation teams at full capacity.

When COVID-19 first started spreading, Wheeler said, Windmoeller began thinking ahead.

"We crunched numbers and ordered much larger quantities of spare parts than we normally would have on hand at any one time. This was to get ahead of any sort of shipping delays," he said. "We pride ourselves on getting about 70% of spare parts from our Lincoln-based warehouse to our U.S. and Canadian customers right away so they can have them in 24 hours. The ability to do this was absolutely crucial and our plan ended up being a good one."

The capital equipment business is one in which selling a couple more or less machines than the year before can make all the difference, Wheeler said. Continued growth in flexible packaging means continued industry growth.

Windmoeller is committed to improving technologies that consume as little energy and material as possible.

"We will also continue to collaborate with partners to find ways to improve sustainability and recyclability of pack-

aging," Wheeler said. ■

CEO (or equivalent): Andrew Wheeler, president

2020 Revenue: \$261.7 million

2018 Revenue: \$175.4 million

Revenue growth: 49.1%



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Cold soups heat up profits

BY ELIZABETH GRAHAM | Contributing Writer

2 AFTER GROCERY RETAILERS nationwide scaled back on hot deli items in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, **Blount Fine Foods Corp.** noticed an uptick in demand for cold, ready-to-heat soups.

“We reduced our hot to-go [soup] and increased cold soup because retailers wanted anything they could put on the shelves,” said Todd Blount, CEO and president.

Soup sales, and the Fall River-based company, continued to grow. Blount’s annual revenue increased 29% over a three-year period, from \$360.8 million in 2018 to \$465.3 million in 2020.

The numbers keep climbing partly because Blount is a leader in the trend of grocery retailers’ use of store perimeters to display ready-to-eat items, Todd Blount says.

Growth has continued in 2021, with Blount’s Panera Bread-branded refrigerated soup selling well, and upcoming partnerships with online food marketplaces HelloFresh and Goldbelly expected.

More soup varieties are also in the works. ■



CEO (or equivalent):

Todd Blount, CEO and president

2020 Revenue:

\$465.3 million

2018 Revenue:

\$360.8 million

Revenue growth:

29%

Risk model attracting clients

BY KIMBERLEY EDGAR | Contributing Writer

3 ITS DISTINCTIVE APPROACH to insuring large commercial properties has won **FM Global** a faithful following among the Fortune 1000 and multinational who’s who of companies.

Based in Johnston, FM Global’s business model focuses on preventing loss and ensuring business continuity through risk engineering instead of risk transfer.

Most clients have been with the 185-year-old company for decades. Its unique model continues attracting newcomers, which has boosted revenue growth. And as clients’ businesses grow and expand, so does FM Global.

While this year’s financial results are still in the making, the mutual insurance company began 2021 looking to focus on fundamentals, build on what it’s learned and enhance clients’ digital experience.

“2020 really proved a 185-year-old company can still be timeless – and timely,” said Steve Zenofsky, assistant vice president, public relations. “Not only were we resilient, but also we were able to help other companies become more resilient.” ■



CEO (or equivalent):

Thomas Lawson, chairman and CEO

2020 Revenue:

\$6.8 billion

2018 Revenue:

\$5.5 billion

Revenue growth:

23.1%



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Backyard buys boost profits

BY KIMBERLEY EDGAR | Contributing Writer

4 WHEN COVID-19 drove people home in 2020, many looked to escape the four walls of their houses by going outside.

Joining the **Ocean State Job Lot** Insider Club allowed people to take advantage of membership deals and discounts on patio furniture, fire pits, lawn games, pools and supplies, and gardening equipment.

“People were investing in their backyards,” said Paul Conforti, chief marketing officer. “They trust us – they know they can count on us for value.”

Deals and savings on personal protective equipment to stay safe, food to eat and air conditioners to keep cool at home also helped drive an increase in revenue.

“Our sustainability resulted from our commitment to safety before profit,” Conforti said.

North Kingstown-based Job Lot not only expanded its footprint geographically, but on Aug. 31 it joined the e-commerce marketplace with a catalogue of items that could be purchased online. ■



CEO (or equivalent):

Marc Perlman, principal owner and CEO

2020 Revenue:

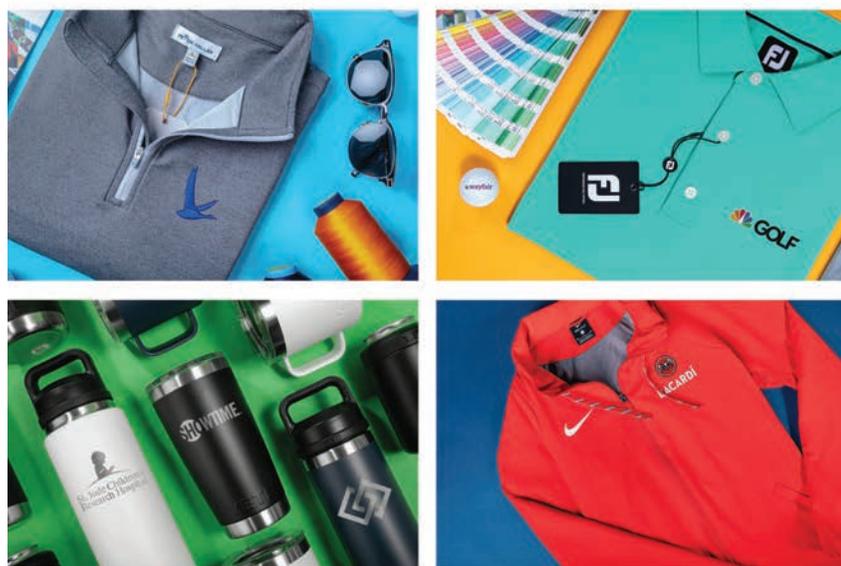
\$810 million

2018 Revenue:

\$685 million

Revenue growth:

18.2%



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Brand awareness growing

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

5 **BANKNEWPORT**, headquartered in Middletown and with 17 branches statewide, credits revenue growth of the bank



and subsidiary OceanPoint Insurance to several factors, including strategic recruitment and brand awareness in new markets.

With just a few months left in 2021, all bank business lines continue to perform well, says BankNewport CEO and President Jack Murphy. “Record deposits and loan originations continue,” he said. “Our brand awareness efforts are growing and effective, with more new customers. With new services and technologies, there are more products a customer can have with us.”

On the insurance side, agency acquisitions and acquisitions in marine lending have been a recipe for success.

“OceanPoint Marine Lending’s acquisitions of Offshore Financial Corp. and Just-BoatLoans, along with the collective talents they bring, have represented an even stronger marine financing experience for our clients, contributing to overall growth,” said Gregory Derderian, BankNewport executive vice president, chief financial officer and director of strategic analysis. ■

CEO (or equivalent):

Jack Murphy, CEO and President

2020 Revenue:

\$101 million

2018 Revenue:

\$85.6 million

Revenue growth:

17.9%

FASTEST GROWING PRIVATE COMPANIES, \$75 MILLION AND ABOVE

(ranked by revenue-growth percentage)

2021 rank	Company Website CEO/President	Address Phone	Revenue 2020 Revenue 2018 FY ends	Growth percentage Revenue growth	Type of business
1	Windmoeller & Hoelscher Corp. whcorp.com Andrew Wheeler, president	23 New England Way Lincoln, R.I. 02865 (401) 333-2770	\$261.7 mil. \$175.4 mil. December	49.1% \$86.2 mil.	Distributor of machinery, spare parts and service for packaging industries
2	Blount Fine Foods Corp. blountfinefoods.com Todd Blount	630 Currant Road Fall River, Mass. 02720 (774) 888-1300	\$465.3 mil. \$360.8 mil. September	29% \$104.6 mil.	Manufacturing
3	FM Global fmglobal.com Thomas Lawson, chairman and CEO; Malcolm Roberts, president	270 Central Ave. Johnston, R.I. 02919 (401) 275-3000	\$6.8 bil. \$5.5 bil. December	23.1% \$1.3 bil.	Commercial property insurer of multinational organizations
4	Ocean State Job Lot oceanstatejoblot.com Marc Perlman, principal owner and CEO; Alan Perlman, principal owner; Steve Aronow, principal owner	375 Commerce Park Road North Kingstown, R.I. 02852 (401) 295-2672	\$810 mil. \$685 mil. December	18.2% \$125 mil.	Retail
5	BankNewport banknewport.com Jack Murphy	184 John Clarke Road Middletown, R.I. 02842 (401) 846-3400	\$101 mil. \$85.6 mil. December	17.9% \$15.4 mil.	Financial institution
6	Sturdy Memorial Hospital sturdymemorial.org Joseph Casey, CEO	211 Park St. Attleboro, Mass. 02703 (508) 222-5200	\$234.6 mil. \$202.4 mil. September	15.9% \$32.2 mil.	Hospital
7	Navigant Credit Union navigantcu.org Gary E. Furtado	1005 Douglas Pike Smithfield, R.I. 02917 (401) 233-4700	\$107.7 mil. \$94.2 mil. December	14.4% \$13.6 mil.	Credit union
8	Woodard & Curran woodardcurran.com Alyson Watson, CEO	33 Broad St., Floor 7 Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 273-1007	\$253.9 mil. \$224.2 mil. December	13.2% \$29.7 mil.	Engineering, science and operations
9	Southcoast Health System¹ southcoast.org Keith Hovan	363 Highland Ave. Fall River, Mass. 02720 (508) 679-3131	\$947.5 mil. \$849.2 mil. September	11.6% \$98.3 mil.	Health care system
10	Gilbane Inc. gilbaneco.com Thomas F. Gilbane Jr., chairman	7 Jackson Walkway Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 456-5800	\$6.5 bil. \$5.8 bil. December	11.5% \$673 mil.	Construction
11	Butler Hospital² butler.org Mary Marran, president and chief operating officer	345 Blackstone Blvd. Providence, R.I. 02906 (401) 455-6200	\$117.7 mil. \$106.2 mil. September	10.8% \$11.5 mil.	Nonprofit psychiatric and substance-abuse hospital for adults, adolescents, children and seniors
12	Lifespan Corp. lifespan.org Dr. Timothy J. Babineau	167 Point St. Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 444-4000	\$2.5 bil. \$2.3 bil. September	10% \$229.7 mil.	Health care
13	Pawtucket Credit Union pcu.org Brian Azar	1200 Central Ave. Pawtucket, R.I. 02861 (401) 722-2212	\$92.1 mil. \$83.8 mil. December	9.9% \$8.3 mil.	Financial institution
14	Bristol County Savings Bank bristolcountysavings.com Patrick Murray	35 Broadway Taunton, Mass. 02780 (508) 824-6626	\$115.4 mil. \$107.7 mil. October	7.1% \$7.7 mil.	Financial institution
15	Morton Hospital, A Steward Family Hospital mortonhospital.org Deborah Bitsoli, president	88 Washington St. Taunton, Mass. 02780 (508) 828-7000	\$124.1 mil. \$119.4 mil. September	3.9% \$4.7 mil.	Hospital
16	Fidelity Investments Inc. fidelity.com Abigail P. Johnson, chairman and CEO	900 Salem St. Smithfield, R.I. 02917 (401) 292-5000	\$20.9 bil. \$20.4 bil. December	2.5% \$500 mil.	Financial institution
17	Arden Building Cos. LLC ardenbuildingcompanies.com Robert Bolton, CEO	505 Narragansett Park Drive Pawtucket, R.I. 02861 (401) 727-3500	\$172 mil. \$168 mil. December	2.4% \$4 mil.	Construction, design and engineering firm

CLOSER LOOK

Top five companies from 2020:

- 1 **Shawmut Design and Construction**
- 2 **Arden Building Cos. LLC**
- 3 **Navigant Credit Union**
- 4 **BayCoast Bank**
- 5 **BankNewport**

¹ Southcoast Health System includes Charlton Memorial Hospital, St. Luke's Hospital, Tobey Hospital, Southcoast Physicians Group and Visiting Nurses Association.

² Part of Care New England Health System, which includes Butler Hospital, Kent County Memorial Hospital, Women & Infants Hospital and Visiting Nurses Association of Care New England

Building relationships key to success

BY CAITLIN HOWLE | Contributing Writer



‘We value women in the construction industry and love what they bring to a project team.’

JEFF LIPSHIRES,
J2 Construct Inc. president

GETTING TO THE POINT: Jeff Lipshires, center, president of J2 Construct Inc., discusses a construction project with his team, from left, John DeRuosi, chief financial officer; Leanne DePaul, director of marketing and estate management; Sam Hardy, operations manager; and Marc Nouman, chief estimator. PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

1 **J2 CONSTRUCT INC.**, founded in 2018, is a construction firm that focuses on residential, commercial, luxury and institutional construction, as well as property management for its clients.

The firm, located in Middletown, has grown to have more than \$25 million in revenue in 2020, hitting this impressive milestone only 2½ years after its initial opening. The company currently services all of Rhode Island, as well as southeastern Massachusetts and the Cape and Islands area.

Its founding came after President Jeff Lipshires, who had been working for a local construction firm as vice president for 15 years, teamed up with business partner Sean Burke to establish J2 Construct. According to the firm, within one year the company had completed \$1.5 million in sales and within 1½ years it had acquired Advanced Building Concepts, a construction company also located in Middletown, in early 2020. Burke died shortly after the acquisition. But Lipshires and the team at J2 Construct persevered.

J2 Construct credits its success to its relationships, especially Lipshires and his work over the past 20 years in the industry. As for financial success, Lipshires said, “There is no doubt the boom in the luxury residential construction market has contributed to our growth. However, the continued development of our collabora-

tive and experienced team has made us the go-to that a homeowner is looking for – a partner in their project – as well as the commercial client requiring experience and expertise in delivering challenging programs within their time and budget constraints.”

As for the COVID-19 pandemic, Lipshires said J2 Construct, like many others, has faced difficulties in labor shortage, material delays and the volatile cost environment of those materials. Still, the company has thrived, even as the challenges to obtain materials and keep up with the demand for workers have continued.

As for its biggest projects, J2 Construct has completed a 40,000-square-foot technology center in Warren that Lipshires described as “structurally challenging.” The company is currently in the process of converting a school in Newport to 34 apartments. J2 Construct’s residential division has included luxury residences ranging from \$1 million to \$12 million.

J2 Construct is also innovating in the construction industry, by holding a company value of gender equality. With construction as a typically male-dominated field, J2 Construct features women running the

administrative side of the business, with the company also having female project managers and leads, and a goal of continuing to bring more women onto the team.

“We value women in the construction industry and love what they bring to a project team,” Lipshires said.

Lipshires estimated the company has 70 years of combined experience on its team.

“We aren’t your mom-and-pop shop. We are highly professional with multiple experienced project managers, superintendents and foremen,” Lipshires said. “We have a tremendous amount of expertise in pre-construction, budget and scope development, and work closely with architecture, engineering and other specialty consultants in developing the most efficient approach to each and every construction project. But, most importantly, we are absolutely the most transparent construction firm, and our goal is to earn the highest level of trust and confidence with our clients.”

Work is not slowing down either.

“We continue on our consistent growth trajectory again due to the high volume of work we’ve completed, the satisfaction of our clients and ultimately the quality projects we are delivering,” Lipshires said. “We are very bullish on our future and invested heavily in our infrastructure for accounting and project management ... as well as the continued development and training of our dedicated staff.” ■

CEO (or equivalent): Jeff Lipshires, president
2020 Revenue: \$25 million
2018 Revenue: \$1.5 million
Revenue growth: 1,567.5%



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Bank capitalization crucial

BY MARY HOWE | Contributing Writer

2 OFFICIALS AT Centreville Bank in West Warwick did not see the COVID-19 pandemic coming. But, continuous good planning, investment in the institution and strong capitalization placed the bank in a position to withstand it, and even to grow. “We are very well-capitalized, and we have invested a lot in our people and our systems over the past three to five years,” said Harold M. Horvat, chairman, CEO and president.

The bank’s recent growth can be attributed to a smart acquisition and to carefully managed organic growth, Horvat said.

In May 2020, Centreville acquired Putnam Bank, with eight branches in eastern Connecticut. That move raised the bank’s assets to \$1.8 billion from the previous \$1.1 billion, Horvat said.

Business has continued to be strong in commercial and residential lending and retail banking. Commercial banking has grown by 30% in each of the past three years, Horvat said, and retail banking has been buoyed by the large amounts of federal pandemic aid money moving through the country in the past year. ■



CEO (or equivalent):
Harold M. Horvat,
chairman, CEO
and president

2020 Revenue:
\$54.5 million

2018 Revenue:
\$34.6 million

Revenue growth:
57.6%

Firm’s fast start not slowing

BY ELIZABETH GRAHAM | Contributing Writer

3 MOTT & CHACE SOTHEBY’S International Realty is still gaining speed after a fast start 8½ years ago. The

Charlestown-based company grew its annual revenue by 50.4% in three years, jumping from \$16.7 million in 2018 to \$25.1 million in 2020. Halfway through 2021, the company was 82% above its closed-sales volume year over year, with revenue up 100% over the same time frame, said Jeni Pardo de Zela, chief marketing officer.

As the real estate market boomed during the COVID-19 pandemic, agents showed properties virtually with the help of a 3D camera.

“No one anticipated a global pandemic would result in a once-in-a-generation real estate market,” said Judy Chace, broker and co-owner at Mott & Chace.

Now, as the company opens a seventh office in Westport and sets its sights on the southern portions of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, its roughly 150 agents will soon benefit from a new technology suite rolled out during the pandemic. ■



CEO (or equivalent):
Raymond Mott
and Judith Chace,
brokers and
co-owners

2020 Revenue:
\$25.1 million

2018 Revenue:
\$16.7 million

Revenue growth:
50.4%



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Always working to get better

BY ELIZABETH GRAHAM | Contributing Writer

4 WITH LONG-STANDING contracts in place with New York City and the National Institutes of Health, technology solutions company **Purvis Systems Inc.** recorded a 38.8% growth rate from 2018 to 2020 by expanding its work in the public safety arena and with the U.S. Navy.

The Middletown-based company saw its annual revenue balloon from \$21.4 million in 2018 to \$29.7 million in 2020, a jump that CEO Joseph Drago attributes to constant polishing of services and a growth mindset.

“Over the last three to four years, we have focused heavily on company and process improvements to position ourselves for future growth,” Drago said.

The company has implemented the Purvis Fire Station Alerting System in California, the Carolinas and Massachusetts, and a system is in the works for the Ocean State.

Fortunate to have sustained minimal impact from the COVID-19 pandemic, Purvis is planning to launch new products this year to enhance its fire station alerting system, Drago said. ■

PURVIS SYSTEMS

CEO (or equivalent):

Joseph Drago

2020 Revenue:

\$29.7 million

2018 Revenue:

\$21.4 million

Revenue growth:

38.8%

E-commerce fuels growth

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

5 PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS company **ParsonsKellogg LLC**, which features high-end brands, is based in East Providence. But its scope is hardly local as one of the largest corporate distributors for Yeti Holdings Inc., Peter Millar LLC, Nike Inc., Adidas AG, Under Armour Inc. and others.

ParsonsKellogg says its 35.5% revenue growth from 2018 to 2020 is due to a combination of factors, including increasing its e-commerce business across its corporate, team and events channels.

“We have access to the best sporting goods and lifestyle brands,” said founder and President Thomas Kellogg III. “We have all the items decorated in house, a turn-key model and a creative team in house, as well as providing items for corporations.”

To maintain its momentum during the COVID-19 pandemic, the company did residential mailings, worked closely with companies and sold personal protective equipment.

“This year, we’re switching our model. We have three [e-commerce] sites and that’s where we’re looking to the future,” Kellogg said. “We see 2021 as a little bit of [an] investment year for the people, equipment and technology to grow these three sites.” ■



PARSONSKELLOGG

CEO (or equivalent):

Thomas Kellogg III, president

2020 Revenue:

\$67.5 million

2018 Revenue:

\$49.8 million

Revenue growth:

35.5%



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FASTEST GROWING PRIVATE COMPANIES, \$25 MILLION TO \$75 MILLION

(ranked by revenue-growth percentage)

2021 rank	Company Website CEO/President	Address Phone	Revenue 2020 Revenue 2018 FY ends	Growth percentage Revenue growth	Type of business
1	J2 Construct Inc. j2construct.com Jeff Lipshires, president	55 John Clarke Road Middletown, R.I. 02842 (888) 301-0076	\$25 mil. \$1.5 mil. December	1,567.5% \$23.5 mil.	Construction management and general contracting
2	Centreville Bank centrevillebank.com Harold M. Horvat, chairman, CEO and president	1218 Main St. West Warwick, R.I. 02893 (401) 827-9100	\$54.5 mil. \$34.6 mil. December	57.6% \$19.9 mil.	Mutual savings bank
3	Mott & Chace Sotheby's International Realty mottandchace.com Raymond Mott and Judith Chace, brokers/co-owners	5280 Post Road Charlestown, R.I. 02813 (401) 364-6700	\$25.1 mil. \$16.7 mil. December	50.4% \$8.4 mil.	Residential real estate brokerage
4	Purvis Systems Inc. purvis.com Joseph Drago, CEO	88 Silva Lane Middletown, R.I. 02842 (401) 849-4750	\$29.7 mil. \$21.4 mil. April	38.8% \$8.3 mil.	Information technology systems provider in the defense and public safety industries
5	ParsonsKellogg LLC parsonskellogg.com Thomas Kellogg III, president	2290 Pawtucket Ave. East Providence, R.I. 02914 (401) 438-0650	\$67.5 mil. \$49.8 mil. December	35.5% \$17.7 mil.	Sports marketing and premium co-branded merchandise
6	John Matouk & Co. matouk.com George Matouk Jr., CEO	925 Airport Road Fall River, Mass. 02720 (508) 997-3444	\$49 mil. \$37.9 mil. December	29.2% \$11.1 mil.	Manufacturer of fine bed and bath linens
7	Wright-Pierce wright-pierce.com John W. Braccio	10 Dorrance St., Suite 840 Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 383-2276	\$48.7 mil. \$38.8 mil. December	25.6% \$9.9 mil.	Engineering firm providing water, wastewater and civil infrastructure services
8	Comprehensive Community Action Program comcap.org Joanne McGunagle	311 Doric Ave. Cranston, R.I. 02910 (401) 467-9610	\$35 mil. \$27.9 mil. June	25.4% \$7.1 mil.	Social-services, health care, nonprofit
9	Family Service Association frfsa.org Sharon Ford, CEO; Carol Nagle, president	101 Rock St. Fall River, Mass. 02720 (508) 677-3822	\$30.4 mil. \$24.5 mil. June	24% \$5.9 mil.	Social-service agency providing an integrated system of services for children, adults and the elderly
10	PACE Organization of Rhode Island pace-ri.org Joan Kwiatkowski, CEO	225 Chapman St. Providence, R.I. 02905 (401) 490-6566	\$29.6 mil. \$24.8 mil. June	19.4% \$4.8 mil.	Assists and cares for older adults with significant health needs
11	Altus Dental Insurance Co. altusdental.com Joseph Perroni, CEO	10 Charles St. Providence, R.I. 02904 877.223.0577	\$69.3 mil. \$61.8 mil. December	12.1% \$7.5 mil.	Dental insurance
12	E.W. Burman Inc. ewburman.com Edward Burman, president	33 Vermont Ave. Warwick, R.I. 02888 (401) 738-5400	\$28 mil. \$25 mil. December	12% \$3 mil.	Construction manager and general contractor
13	Kahn, Litwin, Renza & Co. Ltd. ¹ kahnlitwin.com Alan H. Litwin, managing director	951 North Main St. Providence, R.I. 02904 (401) 274-2001	\$55.4 mil. \$49.5 mil. December	11.9% \$5.9 mil.	Certified personal accountants and business advisory firm
14	Lafrance Hospitality lafrancehospitality.com Richard Lafrance	41 Old Bedford Road Westport, Mass. 02790 (508) 678-7888	\$65.7 mil. \$62.6 mil. December	5% \$3.1 mil.	Catering, event venues, hospitality, hotels

CLOSER LOOK

Top five companies from 2020:

- 1** Pariseault Builders Inc.
- 2** Aqueduct Technologies Inc.
- 3** Altus Dental Insurance Co.
- 4** PACE Organization of Rhode Island
- 5** Kahn, Litwin, Renza & Co. Ltd.

¹ Also known as KLR.

Online options keep AdCare accessible

BY HUGH MINOR | Contributing Writer



‘More people should be educated on how to handle an overdose emergency.’

FRED A. TRAPASSI JR.,
AdCare Rhode Island Inc. CEO

TABLE TALK: AdCare Rhode Island Inc. CEO Fred A. Trapassi Jr., left, meets with staff members at AdCare’s North Kingstown facility. With Trapassi are, from left, Dr. Michael Coburn, medical director; Sarah Horgan, chief operating officer; and Courtney Stafford, director of clinical process improvement. PBN PHOTO/ELIZABETH GRAHAM

1 IN 2020, OVERDOSE DEATHS in Rhode Island increased by more than 20%.

One organization that has been uniquely positioned to respond to this crisis is **AdCare Rhode Island Inc.**, a drug treatment center in North Kingstown.

Since 1975, the institution has been addressing alcoholism and addiction through programs, including detoxification, crisis stabilization, residential treatment and comprehensive outpatient services.

In 2018, AdCare was purchased by American Addiction Centers, joining a national network of treatment providers. Since then, AdCare has grown its annual revenue from \$6.5 million in 2018 to \$10.7 million in 2020.

The demand for services grew drastically during the COVID-19 pandemic as many community-based services such as Narcotics Anonymous moved to limited virtual platforms and saw a steep drop in attendance. Subsequently, the number of overdoses in the area skyrocketed.

“The stressors and anxiety over the last 18 months have caused an increase in substance use that we’re seeing in the community,” AdCare CEO Fred A. Trapassi Jr. said.

As a response to the pandemic, AdCare expanded both its telehealth rehabilitation services and virtual support

meetings.

“We don’t want anything to get in the way of our patients continuing on their path of recovery,” Trapassi said.

Patients can participate in online substance use counseling right in their home, receiving support and treatment to keep their recovery on track.

For many participants, telehealth treatment works even better than in person because it eliminates transportation time and costs, the need to take paid time off from work, and child care or elder care arrangements. It also reduces unnecessary exposure to illnesses such as COVID-19 for both the patient and caregiver.

Patients will partake in confidential virtual sessions with a licensed counselor following the strict standards of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

Virtual support meetings are offered several days a week in the traditional 12-step style, providing a safe space for attendees to connect with one another and help each other through challenging

times.

Monthly sessions are also held to educate family members about addiction so that they can understand the issue and figure out the best way to assist their loved ones. AdCare’s approach allows family members to participate to increase the chances of a successful recovery and to receive counseling and support for themselves.

Recognizing the need to engage the broader community in addressing the staggering increase of deaths caused by overdose, AdCare began hosting free virtual sessions for businesses to train their staff on how to administer Narcan, a potentially lifesaving medication used to treat an opioid overdose.

“The number of overdose deaths last year really [highlights] the hardships so many people faced nationwide, as well as here in Rhode Island,” Trapassi said. “Because of this, more people should be educated on how to handle an overdose emergency, and partnering with our local businesses is a great way to do that.”

As it looks to the future, AdCare will be expanding its work in medication-assisted treatment and increasing the number of beds available to those in greatest need. It will also be recognizing veterans lost to addiction with a walkway called the “Walk of Peace and Hope” funded by Gold Star family members. ■

CEO (or equivalent): Fred A. Trapassi Jr.

2020 Revenue: \$10.7 million

2018 Revenue: \$6.5 million

Revenue growth: 65.2%



Don't worry, eat happy

BY CAITLIN HOWLE | Contributing Writer

2 **GERBS ALLERGY FRIENDLY FOODS** provides grocery items free of major allergens so that its customers can eat their favorite foods without worry.

While Gerbs started its business in 2003, Sean Conte, chief marketing officer, noticed that the products it couldn't keep in stock were those that catered toward removing major allergens. With that observation, he dove into research and took a major risk to reorient the company's products, which are now a staple in many households with individuals who have food allergies.

"Our driving factor is servicing this community; it gives us passion to help others," Conte said. "We're affecting others' lives, kids' lives."

Gerbs is helping bring back a love of food by giving people who have missed out on their favorites the opportunity to have them again, and for some individuals to have for the first time.

The Johnston-based company is constantly expanding its selection and products, which can be found at mygerbs.com. ■



CEO (or equivalent):

Galen Conte, co-owner and CEO

2020 Revenue:

\$6.5 million

2018 Revenue:

\$4.4 million

Revenue growth:

49.1%

Keeping clients connected

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

3 **DEEMED AN ESSENTIAL BUSINESS** during the COVID-19 pandemic, Warwick-based office technology solutions and managed services provider **Automated Business Solutions Inc.** "assisted many clients with work-from-home setups," said President Michael Ardry. "Companies with virtual or hybrid work required our IT [information technology] services, printers and copiers. That sustained us through the early pandemic months."

Today, Ardry said, "Our largest challenge is supply chain delays in chips and sensors needed for our equipment, so we're staying ahead of the curve by placing larger orders and putting extra inventory in storage."

Ardry said the company's \$16.2 million revenue in 2020 represents a 23% increase compared with revenue in 2018. That growth, he says, is largely based on the 2020 acquisition of Expert Laser Services in Southbridge, Mass.

Revenues are also trending upward due to the company's "phenomenal sales and service team," Ardry said. "Our ... customer service and attention to detail can't be beat."

Automated Business Solutions has seven locations, but future expansion plans are under consideration. ■



CEO (or equivalent):

Michael Ardry, president

2020 Revenue:

\$16.2 million

2018 Revenue:

\$13.2 million

Revenue growth:

23%

Fulfilling hiring needs

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

4 **"STAFFING IS ALWAYS DIFFICULT,** but once the pandemic hit, staffing became more challenging than ever, as many employees stayed home and collected expanded unemployment benefits," said Danilo Reyes, CEO and president of **Available Staffing Network LLC.** "With turnover affecting Rhode Island employers, our commitment to be available 24/7 for our clients contributes to our success."

The company manages employee recruiting, interviewing, evaluating and onboarding processes for its light industrial and manufacturing clients, from Fortune 500s to mom-and-pop companies. With offices in Providence and North Kingstown, the company is seeking a third location in Pawtucket, and anticipates expanding into Massachusetts.

"Companies count on us to provide staffing, with employers telling us, 'Permanent staff have disappeared from the workplace,'" Reyes said.

Reyes attributes the company's success to his team's hard work and his family's support. ■



Available Staffing Network

CEO (or equivalent):

Danilo Reyes, CEO and president

2020 Revenue:

\$6 million

2018 Revenue:

\$5.9 million

Revenue growth:

1.7%



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FASTEST GROWING PRIVATE COMPANIES, \$5 MILLION TO \$25 MILLION

(ranked by revenue-growth percentage)

2021 rank	Company Website CEO/President	Address Phone	Revenue 2020 Revenue 2018 FY ends	Growth percentage Revenue growth	Type of business
1	Adcare Rhode Island Inc. adcare.com Fred A. Trapassi Jr., CEO	1950 Tower Hill Road North Kingstown, R.I. 02852 (401) 294-6160	\$10.7 mil. \$6.5 mil. September	65.2% \$4.2 mil.	Behavioral health care and addiction treatment
2	Gerbs Allergy Friendly Foods mygerbs.com Galen Conte, co-owner and CEO; Sennen Conte, co-owner and chief financial officer	92 Allendale Ave. Johnston, R.I. 02919 (401) 231-5181	\$6.5 mil. \$4.4 mil. December	49.1% \$2.1 mil.	Food manufacturing
3	Automated Business Solutions Inc. absne.com Michael Ardry, president	415 Kilvert St. Warwick, R.I. 02886 (401) 732-3000	\$16.2 mil. \$13.2 mil. December	23% \$3 mil.	Office equipment sales and service
4	Available Staffing Network LLC availablestaffingnetwork.com Danilo Reyes	500 Broad St. Providence, R.I. 02907 (401) 274-9300	\$6 mil. \$5.9 mil. December	1.7% \$98,764	Professional staffing and recruiting

CLOSER LOOK

Top five
companies
from 2020:

- 1 Creative Conners Inc.
- 2 Acertitude LLC
- 3 Available Staffing Network LLC
- 4 Vertikal6
- 5 EpiVax Inc.



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CONNECT. CREATE. COMMERCIALIZE.

Passion for tech drives young firm

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer



GOODWILL GESTURE: Information technology services company Signal Solutions Inc. in Warwick declined to charge its struggling restaurant clients during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. From left is Thomas Bastianelli, co-owner and president of managed services; Casey Martin, director of operations; and Matthew Vincent, co-owner and president of carrier services.

PBN PHOTO/TRACY JENKINS

‘We hire people who can solve our clients’ problems so they can focus on their core business.’

THOMAS BASTIANELLI,
Signal Solutions Inc.
co-owner and president
of managed services

1 “WE LIVE AND BREATHE TECH ‘nerdiness’; we’re all geeks at heart,” said Thomas Bastianelli, president of managed services for Signal Solutions Inc.

Bastianelli co-owns the Warwick-based information technology services company with Matthew Vincent, president of carrier services. Serving as a dedicated department for businesses that don’t have in-house information technology resources, the company also offers telecommunication support.

Signal Solutions’ clients, scattered throughout New England, are typically small or mid-sized companies, such as accounting firms, car dealerships and medical practices. Having worked together earlier in their careers, Bastianelli and Vincent teamed up in January 2016 to launch the company, which now employs five people.

Vincent attributes the company’s 910.5% revenue growth from 2018 to 2020 to several factors.

“First, by always being customer service-focused, we hire talent; we don’t just hire to fill a seat,” Vincent said.

By hiring people with the relevant technical skills, 75% of these problems are resolved upon the clients’ first call, rather than routing clients’ problems from employee to employee, as often happens in large IT departments using a Help Desk as the first point of entry. This creates “happy clients; some 80% to 90% of our business comes from other clients,” Vincent said.

Finally, Signal Solutions has created strong informal referral partnerships with local telecommunications compa-

nies, including Cox Communications Inc., AT&T Inc. and Rhode Island Telephone.

“We provide a consistent level of support for clients’ needs,” Vincent said. “After we’ve evaluated the telecommunication needs of new clients, we can refer them to the appropriate carrier. And, when those companies have clients with IT needs, they refer them to us.”

When the COVID-19 pandemic first hit, the company’s project work ceased, which was initially unsettling. A few months later, however, companies that hadn’t invested in their technology needed to implement changes, including work-from-home technology, which provided Signal Solutions with business.

“We understood the challenges companies faced in managing a difficult year. As a goodwill gesture, we didn’t charge our restaurant industry clients from March to December 2020, but we still provided them with our services,” Bastianelli said. “They had no revenue coming in but still needed those technology upgrades.”

In late 2020, Signal Solutions relocated from Johnston to Warwick, to be closer to

many of its clients, and hired PMC Media to help with social media, marketing and to redesign its website.

Acknowledging that Signal Solutions isn’t the only IT company around, Bastianelli reiterated how beneficial the company’s first-call resolution of problems is for clients.

“We hire people who can solve our clients’ problems so they can focus on their core business,” Bastianelli said.

“Signal Solutions’ close relationships with telecommunications companies make us attractive to clients, too. A bank was having issues with its phone systems. Its IT partner blamed the phone system, while the one vendor blamed the IT system,” Vincent said. “When we have a client with a problem, we sit down and figure out what’s going on so we can minimize their downtime. We want to make it a rewarding experience rather than a painful and frustrating one.”

Eschewing the approach of “nickel and diming” clients for its services, the company offers different monthly options, which Vincent called “very competitive pricing.” Clients can choose unlimited remote services for a flat fee and pay an extra fee for on-site visits, or unlimited remote and on-site services for a flat fee.

“During the first six months of 2021, Signal Solutions’ revenue is up 20% from the same period in 2020, and we are projecting, for the last six months of the year, 25% to 30% increase over the last six months of 2020,” Vincent said. “I’m cautiously optimistic. The new [COVID-19] delta variant is a concern ... but I believe that the future looks bright.” ■

CEO (or equivalent): Thomas Bastianelli, president of managed services
Matthew Vincent, president of carrier services

2020 Revenue: \$615,795

2018 Revenue: \$60,939

Revenue growth: 910.5%

Signal Solutions
WHEN EXPERIENCE MATTERS

Lowering cost of wind energy

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

2 ARCTURA INC., a wind energy technology company in South Kingstown, attributes its 631.7% revenue growth from 2018 to 2020 to the development of three technology solutions, “each designed to lower the cost of wind energy,” said founder and CEO Neal Fine.

The solutions include an active lift control technology for next-generation wind turbines, a blade coating that reduces the impact of lightning strikes and a vertical axis design for floating offshore wind turbines.

“Beginning in 2018, we won a series of competitive [grant] awards from the [U.S.] Department of Energy,” Fine said, including \$3.5 million from the Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy for the lift control technology and a \$2.3 million Small Business Innovation Research award from the DOE’s Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy for the blade coating. That award includes a \$1.1 million Phase 2B grant that will be used to refine the coating and demonstrate it in a series of in-situation wind farm pilot studies. ■



CEO (or equivalent):
Neal Fine,
founder and CEO

2020 Revenue:
\$1.5 million

2018 Revenue:
\$198,607

Revenue growth:
631.7%

Driven to deliver

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

3 “COVID WAS CERTAINLY an accelerant for our business,” said **Feast & Fettle Inc.** CEO Carlos Ventura. “Even after our strongest year in 2020, growth will outperform last year.”

Ventura attributes that growth to customer retention and expansion into Boston, Cape Cod and Martha’s Vineyard.

A \$1.2 million equity investment in late 2020 by Paul Salem of Providence Equity Partners enabled Feast & Fettle to expand its commercial kitchen facilities, serve growing customer demand, widen its digital marketing and plan for geographic expansion, including into Connecticut.

Delivering fully prepared meals to nearly 3,000 subscribers, the East Providence-based company reuses its insulated bags and ice packs and is working with the Rhode Island School of Design to develop 3D-printed iterations of reusable stainless-steel packaging.

“We’ve developed a culture where growth is expected and anticipated,” Ventura said. “Our growth rates are crazy – this year, we’ll more than triple our employee base and revenue.” ■



CEO (or equivalent):
Carlos Ventura

2020 Revenue:
\$2.5 million

2018 Revenue:
\$414,000

Revenue growth:
501.5%

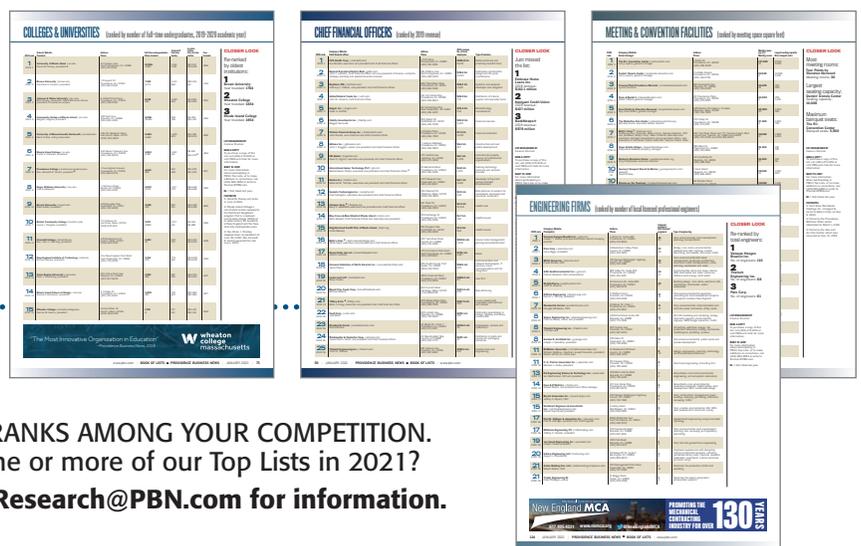
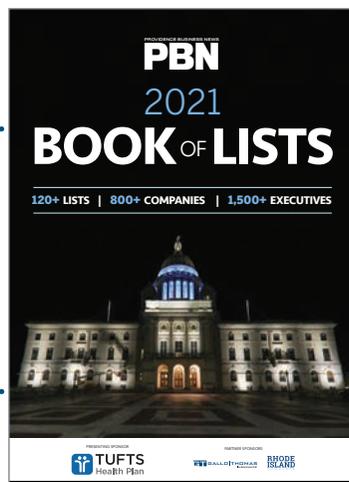
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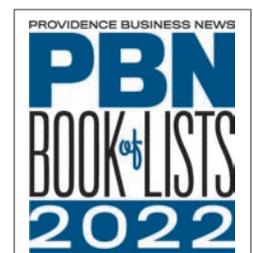
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Pivot pays off for Premama

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

4 LUNA PHARMACEUTICALS INC., doing business as Premama Inc., a pre- and post-natal supplement com-

pany in Providence, attributes its recent revenue growth to a “pivot to direct-to-consumer.”

“We realized in 2017 that succeeding at retail was very costly and difficult as a new brand,” said CEO Dan Aziz, who founded the company in 2011. “We pivoted our marketing efforts to drive to our website, so we could better control the customer experience and better understand the return on our marketing dollars invested.”

This year has seen strong growth in retail, brought on by Whole Foods Inc. and high Amazon.com Inc. sales.

Aziz is optimistic about the future.

“We just launched an at-home sperm test this April, and have a new, patented ovulation and pregnancy test coming out this winter,” he said. “We are also investing more in our community and education so we can be the No. 1 source for new parents on the journey to starting a family.” ■



CEO (or equivalent): Dan Aziz, founder and CEO

2020 Revenue: \$4.4 million

2018 Revenue: \$1.2 million

Revenue growth: 265.8%

Solar savings attract clients

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

5 ANTHONY BARO, founder and managing principal of solar energy equipment supplier



E2SOL LLC in Providence, attri-

butes the company’s 97% revenue growth from 2018 to 2020 to a heightened awareness of the financial and environmental benefits of solar energy.

Additional factors he listed include the rise in utility rates across state markets, the company’s dedicated in-house customer support and satisfied customer referrals.

The COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity for the company to adopt new virtual technologies and meeting practices to improve operational efficiencies and execute project developments, with a backlog extending back to 2019.

Baro said E2SOL is focused on “helping our customers transform their underutilized property assets into new savings and revenue streams and upgrading their electric infrastructures to allow them to better serve and retain their own customers adopting electrified transportation means.”

E2SOL is also looking to continue to capitalize on new product innovation opportunities presented during this clean energy market transformation industrial phase. ■

CEO (or equivalent): Anthony Baro, founder and managing principal

2020 Revenue: \$1.7 million

2018 Revenue: \$869,972

Revenue growth: 97%

FASTEST GROWING PRIVATE COMPANIES, \$250,000 \$5 MILLION

(ranked by revenue-growth percentage)

2021 rank	Company Website CEO/President	Address Phone	Revenue 2020 Revenue 2018 FY ends	Growth percentage Revenue growth	Type of business
1	Signal Solutions Inc. signalri.com Thomas Bastianelli, president of managed services; Matthew Vincent, president of carrier services	175 Metro Center Blvd., Unit 6 Warwick, R.I. 02886 (401) 323-6265	\$615,795 \$60,939 December	910.5% \$554,856	Information technology managed services and consulting
2	Arctura Inc. ¹ arcturawind.com Neal Fine, founder and CEO	336 Columbia St. South Kingstown, R.I. 02879 (401) 595-7379	\$1.5 mil. \$198,607 December	631.7% \$1.3 mil.	Develops technologies and products that reduce the cost of wind energy
3	Feast & Fettle Inc. feastandfettle.com Carlos Ventura, CEO	881 Waterman Ave. East Providence, R.I. 02914 (774) 563-0802	\$2.5 mil. \$414,000 December	501.5% \$2.1 mil.	Fully prepared meal delivery service
4	Luna Pharmaceuticals Inc. ² premamawellness.com Dan Aziz, founder and CEO	244 Weybosset St. Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 383-0299	\$4.4 mil. \$1.2 mil. December	265.8% \$3.2 mil.	Maternity wellness business offering supplements, medical device testing and content
5	E2SOL LLC e2sol.com Anthony Baro, founder and managing principal	10 Dorrance St., Suite 700 Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 489-2273	\$1.7 mil. \$869,972 December	97% \$843,677	Renewable energy design-build developments, electric transportation infrastructure design-build
6	The Capital Good Fund capitalgoodfund.org Andy Posner, founder and CEO	22 A St. Providence, R.I. 02907 (866) 584-3651	\$4.8 mil. \$2.6 mil. December	90% \$2.3 mil.	Nonprofit
7	NeQter Labs LLC neqterlabs.com Richard Astle, co-founder and CEO	163 Exchange St. Pawtucket, R.I. 02860 (401) 608-6522	\$771,090 \$432,040 December	78.5% \$339,050	Cybersecurity software
8	McGuinness Media & Marketing mcguinnessmedia.com Megan McGuinness, owner	2348 Post Road, Suite 200 Warwick, R.I. 02886 (401) 773-7711	\$924,938 \$535,319 December	72.8% \$389,619	Advertising and marketing agency
9	Coutu Bros. Moving & Storage coutumovers.com Robert Romano, president	2 Greco Lane Warwick, R.I. 02886 (401) 739-7788	\$1.4 mil. \$895,000 December	55.6% \$498,000	Moving and storage
10	IT Support RI itsupportri.com Nick Bernfeld and Paul Riendeau, CEOs	70 Woodland Road North Smithfield, R.I. 02896 (401) 522-5200	\$3.3 mil. \$2.3 mil. December	44% \$1 mil.	Information technology services
11	Trailblaze Marketing trailblaze.marketing Christopher Parisi, founder and president	333 Westminster St., Suite 200 Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 753-7470	\$705,000 \$498,000 December	41.6% \$207,000	Full-service digital marketing agency
12	Lathrop Insurance Agency Inc. lathropinsurance.com Dan Lathrop, president	85A Beach St. Westerly, R.I. 02891 (401) 596-2525	\$2 mil. \$1.5 mil. January	30.4% \$460,084	Insurance agency
13	Best Practice Energy bestpracticeenergy.com Bryan Yagoobian, founder, CEO and president	24 Salt Pond Road, Suite H3 South Kingstown, R.I. 02879 (401) 594-2300	\$4.5 mil. \$3.6 mil. December	26.7% \$957,053	Commercial energy broker and consultant
14	Integrated Media Group growwithimg.com Gil Lantini and Ralph Coppolino, founders	1145 Reservoir Ave., Suite 300 Cranston, R.I. 02920 (401) 300-9921	\$2.1 mil. \$1.7 mil. December	23.4% \$398,000	Digital marketing and technology
15	East Coast Technology Group ectne.com Steven J. Gietz, founder and president	1300 Highland Corporate Drive Cumberland, R.I. 02864 401-464-9005	\$1.9 mil. \$1.7 mil. December	9.2% \$160,000	Information technology and cybersecurity services
16	Technology Advisory Group techadvisory.com Gary Harlam, owner	250 Centerville Road Warwick, R.I. 02886 (401) 228-6400	\$3.5 mil. \$3.3 mil. December	6% \$197,034	Technology services

CLOSER LOOK

Top five companies from 2020:

- 1 **CCS Presentation Systems New England**
- 2 **Feast & Fettle Inc.**
- 3 **Luminous Creative Agency**
- 4 **Premama Inc.**
- 5 **Integrated Media Group**

¹ Aquanis Inc. rebranded as Arctura Inc. in October of 2020.

² Also known as Premama Inc.

Adaptive model allows builder to keep innovating

BY ISABELLA DELEO | Contributing Writer

GILBANE BUILDING CO. is breaking ground. The company has “systems and processes and governance, but there’s room to color outside the lines,” said Kelly Benedict, vice president.

The Providence-based organization with 46 offices worldwide counts several initiatives as among its most innovative and transformative. There’s the Innovation Council, a group of company leaders from across the organization’s departments that support and make decisions about cultural change and innovation on a companywide level; the Innovation Accelerator, an idea generator incubator consisting of five stages that includes partaking in project experiments; and the Idea Inventory, a digital portfolio of ideas that provides employees with greater transparency about the ideas that are being pursued, which stages the ideas are in and why certain ideas are no longer working.

Innovation at Gilbane is a “shared value for our stakeholders, our clients and our people. And it’s purposely broad because it’s holistic,” Benedict said.

Gilbane has taken its innovative approaches to local projects as well. In August, the company completed renovations to Lincoln High School. In March, Gilbane began providing construction management services for East Providence High School, a project that is scheduled to be completed in August 2022. Outside of Rhode Island, Gilbane in July won the 2021 Student Housing Business Innovator Award for Best Packaging and Offering of Amenities for a mixed-use housing development for Arizona State University, building a climbing wall, swimming pool and spa for students.

According to Benedict, Gilbane promotes a work culture of collaboration and innovation. “Knowing that the work effort that you put together to present it to some people and say, ‘Hey, what do you guys think about this, does this fit?’ It’s just so rewarding. So, I guess that’s the entrepreneurship,” Benedict said. “And I like processes and systems. And I like to have that operating model, but to also be able to shift when we need to shift and be agile when we need to be agile.” ■



ARCHITECTURE, CONSTRUCTION & ENGINEERING

Gilbane

‘I like to ... be able to shift when we need to shift and be agile when we need to be agile.’

KELLY BENEDICT,
Gilbane Building Co.
vice president

LOOKING BRIGHT-EYED: Members of Gilbane Building Co.’s application development team gather for a meeting at the company’s headquarters in Providence. From left are Gevin Odhiambo, Brian Prosnitz and Peter Mahon.

PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

Bringing holistic health care to the forefront

BY MARY HOWE | Contributing Writer

SINCE ITS CREATION in 2019, **Integrative Healthcare Solutions Inc.** and its founder have been feeling their way through the worlds of grant-seeking, partnerships and COVID-19 bombs to achieve a single goal: melding the best of Western and Eastern holistic medical practices for the benefit of patients.

Founder and CEO Catherine DeOrsey worked her way into creating the 2-year-old West Greenwich-based nonprofit through some deep personal history. Her father had died of cancer. Her brother died of a drug overdose. DeOrsey was a trained physical therapist and had worked as a representative for a pharmaceutical company and had been prescribed a noneffective drug for Crohn’s disease, which she later recovered from on her own, drug-free terms.

All these experiences created a conviction in DeOrsey that Western medicine, with its emphasis on drugs and surgery, needed a dose of holistic medicine, which focuses on the whole person, mental wellness and diet.

“I am trying to accelerate the holistic side of health care to the front lines,” said DeOrsey, who fully respects the value of Western

medicine. “Holistic health care and lifestyle management need to come to the forefront of treatment options.”

With a \$50,000 state Opioid Response Grant and a medical group as a referrer, in mid-2019 Integrative Healthcare began offering education in pain management without opioids, including acupuncture, reiki and relaxation techniques. The six-month grant served 28 people and achieved some reduction in opioid use.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020 and all attention turned in that direction, DeOrsey pivoted to a partnership with A Wish Come True Inc., a Warwick organization that supports families with a child with a life-threatening illness. As a contractor for A Wish Come True, DeOrsey’s nonprofit began offering mental health care sessions for men, women and teenagers from these families.

Both projects – nonopioid pain alternatives and emotional aid to Wish families – continue through referrals. All treatment costs are covered by grants and fundraising, a new challenge that DeOrsey calls her next innovation. ■



EDUCATION



‘I am trying to accelerate the holistic side of health care to the front lines.’

CATHERINE DEORSEY,
Integrative Healthcare
Solutions Inc.
founder and CEO

EAST MEETS WEST: Catherine DeOrsey, founder and CEO of Integrative Healthcare Solutions Inc. in West Greenwich, talks with Cassie White, right, and Lily Oulette. DeOrsey says Western medicine needs a dose of Eastern holistic health care.

PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

Brown's carbon footprint shrinks after \$27M project

BY HELENA TOUHEY | Contributing Writer

BROWN UNIVERSITY took a big step toward its goal of reaching a net-zero carbon footprint when it recently completed its \$26.8 million Thermal Efficiency Project, a massive overhaul of the heating system on the College Hill campus in Providence.

The project upgraded the steam heating system installed in the 1960s to eliminate steam loads from the district heating loop, lower the temperature of the distribution from 350 degrees Fahrenheit to 200-F, and convert the central heating plant to hot water instead of high-pressure steam. Already, the temperature component has improved: water is now being heated at 250-F.

The Thermal Efficiency Project is part of Brown's Campus Sustainability Strategic Plan, which aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2040, with a 75% reduction by 2025. These goals are part of the university's mission to curb climate change while also serving as an innovative leader, both in Rhode Island and in academia, for more-sustainable energy practices.

"[The project] really provided a

bridge between our old goals and our new goals," said David Larson, Brown project manager and senior engineer, who noted infrastructure is now in place to make other improvements toward sustainability.

The project was a transformational undertaking. The overhauled system serves about 4.5 million square feet of the 6.5 million square feet of floor space on campus; it also fulfills a variety of needs, from hot water space heating to fueling high-pressure steam generators used in the process of sterilizing lab equipment.

Groundwork on the project began in 2018 and was completed late last year, although some adjustments are still being made. The total cost invested in the system overhaul amounts to \$24.8 million, with a \$2 million incentive from National Grid. Those investments are already garnering praise. Earlier this year, the Thermal Efficiency Project was recognized by the Society for College and Universities Planning, earning a 2021 SCUP Award for Excellence in Planning, District or Campus Component. ■



ENERGY & THE ENVIRONMENT



BROWN

'[The project] really provided a bridge between our old goals and our new goals.'

DAVID LARSON,
Brown University
senior engineer

THERMAL EFFICIENCY:

Stationary engineer James Cosby stands next to one of three boilers that were converted from steam to hot water at the Brown University Central Heat Plant in Providence, helping the school to reduce its carbon footprint. PBN PHOTO/DAVE HANSEN

Helping patients access dentists

BY ELIZABETH GRAHAM | Contributing Writer

ONCE THE NEED for dental work arises, the issue rarely resolves on its own, but for the uninsured or underinsured, a trip to the dentist usually means facing a sizable bill.

Recognizing the fact that patients without dental coverage, or whose insurance is limited, tend to let dental needs slide until expensive procedures are unavoidable, **First Circle Inc.** created an option that benefits both patients and dentists.

Launched in 2017 by First Circle, a wholly owned subsidiary of Delta Dental of Rhode Island, Chewsi is a mobile app that offers users savings by connecting them with participating dentists in their area.

"We develop reimbursements for the dentist that target an average of 24% savings," said Blaine Carroll, president of First Circle, headquartered in Providence.

Those savings mean that Chewsi members can afford major procedures such as crowns, implants, bridges or dentures.

On average, Carroll said, Chewsi members pay about \$500 for visits because they are undergoing big procedures, while insured patients

who generally visit for preventive services pay about \$200.

That means dentists registered with Chewsi can afford to pass along discounts because they are doing more work.

Patients pay dental bills through the free platform, which charges a transaction fee only if dental services are rendered.

The app has expanded dramatically within the past five years, growing from about 100 Rhode Island dentists to more than 5,000 dentists in 10 states. To date, users have saved nearly \$2 million on dental care, and the app has paid dentists more than \$5.5 million.

Chewsi expects to launch in two more states by the end of the year, said Carroll, who, citing negotiations, declined to name the states.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic nearly stopped activity on the app, there's been a rebound, with revenue reaching record levels this summer.

"Our business really collapsed in April of last year, but once the dentists started opening up, there was pent-up demand," Carroll said. ■



HEALTH & WELLNESS



'We develop reimbursements for the dentist that target an average of 24% savings.'

BLAINE CARROLL,
First Circle Inc. president

AFFORDABLE ACCESS:

Blaine Carroll, right, president of First Circle Inc., shows Joseph Perroni, CEO of Delta Dental of Rhode Island, the Chewsi app, which was launched in 2017 by First Circle, a subsidiary of Delta Dental.

PBN PHOTO/ELIZABETH GRAHAM

Connecting tech fields for a stronger R.I. economy

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

WHEN IT COMES TO discussing the reasons for recent revenue growth at economic development nonprofit **401 Tech Bridge**, in Portsmouth, Executive Director Christian Cowan and Manager Mary Johnson don't miss a beat with their answer.

"We are lucky enough to have great supporters – our donors," Cowan said. "Our growth, as a connector for companies developing leading-edge advanced materials, technologies and products, is attributed to our sponsors."

Partnerships with Northeast Region Tech Bridge, Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport, Rhode Island Textile Innovation Network, the Composites Alliance of Rhode Island, University of Rhode Island, van Beuren Charitable Foundation, Rhode Island Foundation and the National Institute of Standards and Technology sustain the organization, even during challenging times.

Resiliency and solid support were evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, Johnson said, with delays in the renovation of a manufacturing facility to create the nonprofit's Advanced Materials & Technology Center in Portsmouth. The center will be a hub for the organization's partners in aca-

demia, government and industry to build prototypes, test products and advance commercialization, funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, state and private foundations.

While 401 Tech Bridge had planned to offer programming to help companies cross gaps in research and development in concert with the new center, in light of the delays the organization sped up the programming timeline instead, Johnson said.

"We partnered with the [U.S.] Navy to develop innovation prize challenges. We have also created a lot of programming for companies to understand the economic landscape and where the opportunities are," she said.

Looking ahead, Cowan said construction work for the Advanced Materials & Technology Center is now set to go out to bid, and the center should be ready by Jan. 1, 2022. The 401 Tech Bridge plans to be an important piece of a larger blue technology economic engine.

"We measure our success with top-line revenue growth with the companies to which we provide services and the jobs we create," he said. "Those are the clients we serve." ■



INNOVATIVE COLLABORATION



'We are lucky enough to have great supporters – our donors.'

CHRISTIAN COWAN,
401 Tech Bridge
executive director

VALUABLE PARTNER: From left, Lee Silvestre, Northeast Tech Bridge coordinator, meets with 401 Tech Bridge staffers Miguel Crisostomo-Vargas, marketing coordinator; Linda Larsen, programs and partnership manager; Christian Cowan, executive director; Susan Daly, strategic adviser; and Mary Johnson, manager, at the economic development nonprofit's facility in Portsmouth.

PBN PHOTO/TRACY JENKINS

Easing paperwork burden on clinicians

BY ISABELLA DELEO | Contributing Writer

AS MANY HEALTH CARE workers are increasingly facing burnout due to the difficulties of working during the COVID-19 pandemic, **My MOC Inc.**, a North Kingstown-based technology company, is offering a potential solution that it hopes will make clinicians' lives a little bit easier: a cloud-based platform called MOCingbird.

Many health care workers are required to complete various continuing medical education and maintenance of certification, or MOC, requirements to maintain their medical board certifications. MOCingbird brings all of this content together into one dashboard, making it easier for clinicians to keep track of what requirements they need to meet and what they have completed already.

When clinicians open the platform, founded and incorporated by Ian Madom and George Fernaine in 2017, on their desktop or mobile devices, they'll be faced with a dashboard that informs them of the upcoming tasks they need to complete.

For My MOC CEO Brad Artery, much of the platform's innovation is automating and bringing dispa-

rate information together to ease clinicians' administrative burdens so they can get back to the core part of the job, which is taking care of patients.

"Clinicians are burning out at a higher and higher rate. All they want to do is manage patients and not manage paperwork. And unfortunately, that paperwork continues to be kind of a growing burden for them," Artery said. "MOCingbird was developed with the clinician in mind to really simplify his or her life."

It's been an exciting year for the company. Artery says the platform went to market in the final quarter of 2020. The company has gained new business partnerships, including with health care company Grand Rounds in August 2021.

For Artery, who joined My MOC in 2019, the company's mission is personal, as his wife is a health care worker.

"It was finally my opportunity to get into health care and help fix a problem that I didn't feel directly, but indirectly, in my home that my wife had been dealing with," he said. ■



IT SERVICES



MOCINGBIRD

'MOCingbird was developed with the clinician in mind to really simplify his or her life.'

BRAD ARTERY,
My MOC Inc. CEO

KEEPING TRACK: Juell Milder, left, associate product manager, speaks with Scott Duarte, sales executive, at My MOC Inc. in North Kingstown. The technology company developed a cloud-based platform called MOCingbird to help clinicians keep track of requirements they need for various certifications.

PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

Collaborative approach yields bright future

BY ISABELLA DELEO | Contributing Writer

LIGHTING CAN DO A LOT more than just set an atmosphere.

For Laura Wistow, marketing manager at Warwick-based **Lumetta Inc.**, a manufacturer dedicated to the production and design of artisan-crafted lighting fixtures made in the United States – called luminaires – for commercial spaces, the appeal is the “art of light.”

In Lumetta’s 29 years, the company counts three inventions as among its greatest innovations: an antimicrobial diffuser material called Lumenate, a more transparent version called TransLumenate, and the contemporary design of the “Echo” collection, which was first created in 2018 and is also made of the Lumenate material.

The Lumenate materials are meant to be flexible, washable and can come in various opacities and shines, and can be equipped with custom graphics. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Lumetta added a space divider made from the same antimicrobial material to its roster, meeting a demand for tools that could aid with social distancing and reduce viral surface

transmission.

Browse the company’s website and you’ll come across a glowing array of products, including colorful hanging “Lite” pendants, “Echo” sconces that seem to pulsate with kinetic energy, and “Acoustic” lights that are designed to help control noise in a particular space.

Clients can buy pieces from the Lumetta website, or they can request custom modifications or designs.

“Sometimes, we’ll get a sketch on a napkin and say, ‘Can you guys engineer something that looks like this?’ ” Wistow said. And the company seems to happily oblige.

For Wistow, much of Lumetta’s success can be attributed to its collaborative approach to design and engineering.

“It’s really, really nice to be able to say, ‘Hey, we did this, we created this from scratch.’ There’s nothing like it on the planet,” Wistow said. “We really get a lot of enjoyment from that. And having every single person in this plant be a part of that.” ■



MANUFACTURING



‘It’s really, really nice to be able to say, “Hey, we did this, we created this from scratch.”’

LAURA WISTOW,
Lumetta Inc.
marketing manager

BRILLIANT JOB: Lumetta Inc. employees Mirna DeLa-Cruz, in the foreground, and Yonfi Polanco work at a light table in the manufacturer’s facilities in Warwick. COURTESY LUMETTA INC.

Empowering staff to drive change

BY HELENA TOUHEY | Contributing Writer

IN 2018, Children’s Friend and Service launched its Volunteer Army, an outgrowth of a strategic planning process and an effort to better serve its employees and clients.

Roughly a third of the organization’s 450 employees participated, and of that third, 60% were line staff and 40% were managers. They designed a series of program improvements, which led to the development of a staffed Innovation Lab.

This lab, which is not a physical space but rather an approach to process, provides support for implementing strategic recommendations, as well as the creation and early implementation of new approaches to organizational challenges.

“Innovation at Children’s Friend is about creating a culture to empower and equip people throughout the organization,” said David Caprio, CEO and president, noting the goal is to be proactive instead of reactive to change, and to always be evolving. The Volunteer Army, he said, is a tool used to empower employees by providing “space and time for staff to be purposeful and playful around change.”

Children’s Friend was founded in 1834 and is based in Providence, where it has been serving the city

and surrounding communities for 187 years. Through its mission, the organization seeks to be an “innovative leader in improving the well-being and healthy development of Rhode Island’s most vulnerable young children.”

For Joshua Wizer-Vecchi, innovation manager, getting employee perspectives is central to ensuring the success of the organization’s mission, especially when that work spans 16 programs across 14 locations. He said some changes are “little ‘i’ innovations,” which can include “simple fixes,” such as streamlining the process for when people call the main line looking for a certain service and the staff member answering that call is able to transfer the client to the right department, smoothly and efficiently.

“There are a lot of moving parts and getting a lot of people across the organization to think together” is essential, said Owen Heleen, director of program development and innovation.

Enter the Volunteer Army, about to convene for the third time, still going strong and still a useful resource for gathering employee feedback and addressing ways that Children’s Friend can continue improving and innovating. ■



NONPROFIT



‘Getting a lot of people across the organization to think together [is essential].’

OWEN HELEEN,
Children’s Friend and Service director of program development and innovation

COLLABORATIVE CREW: Children’s Friend and Service employees, from left, Lucretia Lopez, enrollment supervisor; Joshua Wizer-Vecchi, innovation manager; Shelby Mack, standing, strategy manager; Owen Heleen, director of program development and innovation; Stacy Couto, chief of philanthropy; and Rachel Cooper, sitting middle, manager of family preservation, gather outside the organization’s Providence office. PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

A PRiSM's view into patient care

BY HUGH MINOR | Contributing Writer

REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING is the wave of the future in innovative medical technology, and Providence-based **Healthcentric Advisors Inc.** is leading the charge.

The company knows that patients need to be engaged beyond a physical office visit to maximize their health care. A regular checkup is no longer enough, particularly for people with chronic medical conditions.

That's why Healthcentric Advisors developed and deployed digital health tools that provide physicians with reliable, between-visit information to help them determine the next clinical action for their patients.

"Moving into the digital space to better connect patients and providers was a natural transition to support the future of health care delivery and align with our organizational drivers of advancing health care quality and empowering people," CEO John Keimig said.

Through the company's PRiSM platform, doctors can collect data and offer interventions in a more timely and effective manner.

For example, patients with high blood pressure can monitor themselves, with the data being sent to their physician. They can include additional information, such as other symptoms they may be experi-

encing, via text.

These interventions have led to improved clinical outcomes, and both patient and provider satisfaction.

Using PRiSM, doctors reduced hypertension in 58% of participating patients within four weeks. The original goal was just 5%.

Given this success, the platform was expanded to address other conditions, including diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and congestive heart failure. Qualitative data shows that improvements are already being seen in these areas.

Providers appreciate the ability to view a patient's data in a clear, informative dashboard, saving time and improving care. Patients have more access to better health care when it can be provided remotely, particularly during a pandemic when people with chronic illness are more at risk.

"The goal for our remote services is to reach the widest group of patients in need," said Lauren Capizzo, Healthcentric Advisors director of digital solutions and practice transformation. "Our team is proud to support providers and patients with a solution that improves clinical outcomes." ■



TECHNOLOGY



'Our team is proud to support providers and patients with a solution that improves clinical outcomes.'

LAUREN CAPIZZO, Healthcentric Advisors Inc. director of digital solutions and practice transformation

WALKTHROUGH: Lauren Capizzo, left, director of digital solutions and practice transformation at medical technology company Healthcentric Advisors Inc. in Providence, walks through the company's PRiSM platform, with colleagues Melissa Miranda, center, senior project program administrator; and Brenda Jenkins, senior program administrator. PBN PHOTO/DAVE HANSEN

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