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# ENR Regional Editions

## TOP YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

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Each year, ENR's regional editions celebrate the excellence of young construction professionals. In early 2021, the Regional publications will highlight a select group of individuals under the age of 40 who represent the industry's top rising leaders by advancing their companies and industry, and by giving back to their communities. For this Top Young Professionals program, ENR's regional editions will be accepting nominations from all 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico.

NOTE: Be sure to save your entry often by selecting 'save draft' at the bottom of the form. When ready to submit your entry, please click 'submit' and 'checkout' below. **Note that after clicking 'submit' and 'checkout' below you will still need to press 'checkout' on the following screen before your entries are officially entered.** You can complete any drafts and/or nominate other Top Young Professionals candidates via your User ID.

Form optimized for I.E. 8.0 or higher, Firefox and Safari.

### SUBMITTER INFORMATION

**Please complete all required fields. Required fields are designated with a (\*).**

Name: Michael Pranger

Title: Vice President, Operations  
Company: Castle Contracting  
City: St. Louis  
State: Missouri  
Phone: 314-656-0226  
Email: michael.pranger@digcastle.com

## NOMINEE

Name: Christie Brinkman  
Title: Business Development Manager  
Company: Castle Contracting  
Nominee Address: 345 Marshall Ave #302  
Company City: St. Louis  
Company State: Missouri

The region this nomination has been assigned to is noted above.

## **Deadline extended to August 14, 2020**

Phone: 636-734-1152  
Email: christie.brinkman@digcastle.com  
Age: (as of Jan. 1, 2021) 35  
Years in Current Position: 2  
Years in Industry: 12  
Highest Education Level: College  
Name of School: University of Missouri  
School City: Columbia  
School State: Missouri

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Subjects Studied and Degrees: | Bachelor of Science Business Administration, Bachelor of Arts, International Studies |
| Year of Graduation:           | 2008   |
| Hometown City:                | St. Charles  |
| Hometown State:               | Missouri   |
| Accreditations (LEED, etc.)   | LEED AP  |
| Nominee's Manager             | Aaron Retherford   |
| Manager Title                 | Director   |
| Manager Email                 | aaron.retherford@digcastle.com   |
| Manager Company               | Castle Contracting   |
| Manager City                  | St. Louis  |
| Manager Address               | 345 Marshall Ave #302  |
| Manager State                 | Missouri   |
| Manager Zip Code              | 63119  |
| Manager Phone                 | 314-456-4602   |

## JUDGING CRITERIA

### 1. Experience

Explain the nominee's professional background, and why he or she should be considered a top young industry professional. Be sure to include educational achievements and information about their current position.

Describe the nominee's career experience. (no more than 300 words)

When Castle Contracting expanded its new civil design-build service in 2018, the St. Louis-based civil contractor enlisted the expertise of Christie Brinkman to successfully position this first-of-its-kind offering with potential clients.

An accomplished A/E/C marketing and sales strategist, Brinkman has leveraged her engineering background and extensive industry network to engage new owner and developer clients. She's played a pivotal role in convincing these individuals to hire Castle early in the

civil design process to save costs and reduce risks during construction.

Since joining Castle, Brinkman has also focused on driving incremental growth with the company's core clients through the implementation of a client retention plan that has significantly improved client satisfaction and repeat business.

When the COVID-19 crisis hit, Brinkman instituted a client appreciation program that included delivering gift cards to clients, prospects and project partners. She has organized virtual happy hours and a virtual trivia event to keep the Castle team connected and positive during this challenging period. She also developed specialized training to help her colleagues focused on sharpening their professional skills.

Brinkman's contributions have had a significant positive impact on Castle's bottom line, and the company is on track to complete its most successful year ever in 2020.

Prior to signing on with Castle, Brinkman led the strategy and business development for Horner & Shifrin, one of the Midwest's premier multidisciplinary engineering teams. During her tenure with the firm, she helped transform a struggling satellite office into a thriving, profitable practice. Despite having limited knowledge about the geographic market, she collaborated with the team to identify a business turnaround strategy, strategic partners and staff development needs that positioned the company to achieve record-high revenues.

## 2. Career and Industry Leadership

Provide specific examples of the nominee's leadership in their current or recent position. How have they strived to industry/company processes or outcomes, and to contribute to overall industry improvement? How have they worked to improve their own skills and abilities? Include industry certifications, professional licensures or accreditations, as well as industry involvement.

Leadership: (300 words or less):

Brinkman launched her professional career in direct sales, and she's also served as physician services manager at a local children's hospital, responsible for the growth of maternal and pediatric services across the region.

This unique background equips her with an uncharacteristically broad perspective that amplifies her impact within the A/E/C industry. With a focus on process improvement and adding value, she has forged

strong partnerships that have resulted in many successful projects.

A highly skilled networker, Brinkman prides herself on her ability to bring together architects, developers, engineers and public works professionals so they can better understand the unique skills and challenges that everyone brings to the table.

She is always eager to help others discover and build successful careers within the industry. As a member of the Construction Forum STL Young Leaders group, Brinkman initiated a partnership with the nonprofit organization LifeWise STL (formerly Kingdom House) to educate students in one of St. Louis' most impoverished neighborhoods about potential careers in construction, engineering or architecture. For several years, she also led the annual diversity outreach event sponsored by the St. Louis Council of Construction Consumers, which provides opportunities for diverse business owners to connect with clients.

Brinkman is currently enrolled in the Women's Leadership certificate program at Washington University in St. Louis.

### 3. Community Service

List the nominee's participation in local, state, national and international industry groups and community-based organizations. If possible, in addition to listing these groups, please explain the nominee's reason for choosing to become involved in these organizations. How do they maintain a work-life balance?

Community service: Provide information about the nominee's involvement with community organizations. (300 words or less):

Throughout her A/E/C career, Brinkman has actively participated in the local chapters of numerous industry associations and organizations.

She has served as chair of the young engineers committee for the Engineers Club of St. Louis, co-chair of the programs committee for Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW), programs committee for Urban Land Institute (ULI), training & education and diversity committees for the St. Louis Council of Construction Consumers, Young Leaders group for Construction Forum STL, education committee for the Missouri Society of Hospital Engineers and programs committee for the Society of Marketing Professional Services (SMPS), which honored her as "Rookie of the Year."

Within the broader St. Louis community, Brinkman has a passion for serving people who are impacted by homelessness. She is currently president of the board of directors for Home Sweet Home, the region's only non-profit furniture bank that helps individuals and

families transition to their new living situations. Under Brinkman's leadership, the organization has doubled the number of families it serves.

Other community organizations that Brinkman has served through volunteering include LifeWise STL (Formerly Kingdom House), Women's Safe House, Safe Connections and SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital.

As chair of Castle's philanthropy committee, Brinkman leads an internal team that establishes and implements the company's community involvement strategy.

#### 4. Additional Information

Include any additional information that you feel is important for consideration. List awards, honors, publications or articles that indicate the nominee's service to their profession, industry or community. Be sure to include a list of landmark projects the individual has contributed to, if applicable.

Additional  
Information:  
Include  
additional  
information that  
may help  
illustrate the  
nominee's other  
accomplishments.

#### PHOTOS

Photos of the nominee are required. One photo must be a high resolution headshot (300 dpi or greater). Please also include at least one high-res (300 dpi or greater), uncompressed action shot. PDF, .JPG, or TIFF files work fine. Ideally this is a shot of the nominee in the field. The photo could also show them doing volunteer work or in a meeting—preferably it is not a posed shot. Ideally they are not looking straight at the camera but rather engaged in work or conversation. Please make it clear who the nominee is in the photo if other people are in the shot. Also, please include captions for each submitted photo to let us know what they are doing, where they are, what the project is, as well as any other relevant information. Let us know the appropriate credit for each photo as well.

Photo Size: While larger file sizes are accepted, we recommend you provide photos under 5MB to reduce load times for judges.

Photo 1

Christie Brinkman, business development manager, Castle

Caption/Description:

Contracting

Photo 1 By:

Castle Contracting, LLC

Photo 1 Upload Here:



Photo 2 Caption/Description:

Brinkman is president of the board of directors for Home Sweet Home, which helps previously homeless individuals and families transition to their new living situations.

Photo 2 By:

Home Sweet Home

Photo 2 Upload Here:



Photo 3 Caption/Description:

Under Brinkman's leadership, Home Sweet Home has doubled the number of families the 501(c)(3) organization is able to serve.

Photo 3 By:

Home Sweet Home

## Photo 3 Upload

Here:

**Optional - Supporting Document**

You may upload one supporting document, such as a testimonial letter. Please limit to one page.

Upload Optional  
Supporting  
Document Here:

Monica Conner letter.pdf

Be sure to save your entry as a draft (below) if you need more time to gather data. Once you are ready to submit your entry, please click 'Submit' and 'Checkout' below. **Note that after clicking 'submit' and 'checkout' below you will still need to press 'checkout' at the bottom of the following screen before your entries are officially entered into the competition.** You can complete any drafts and/or create additional entry forms for other projects under your User ID at any time until your region's entry deadline.

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