

# Greater Reading Chamber to honor Rising Star award winners

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By Brad Rhen



Kristen Boyd Edwards



Nathan Brant



Nicole Fryer



Chris Kaag



Daphne E. Klahr



Brandi Marderness

Tonight, six members of the local business community will be honored with Rising Star awards from the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The recipients are being recognized for their business accomplishments, community involvement and personal commitment to make Greater Reading a better place to live, according to a release.

The ninth annual Rising Star Awards ceremony will be held from 5 to 7:30 p.m. today at Berkshire Country Club in Bern Township.

This year's recipients are:

- Kristin Boyd Edwards, director of community engagement for Reading School District.
  - Nathan Brant, CEO of South Mountain YMCA Camps.
  - Chris Kaag, president and founder of IM ABLE Foundation/Corps Fitness Berks County.
  - Daphne Klahr, executive director of Reading Recreation Commission.
  - Nicole Fryer, senior producer and editor at VA Productions Inc.
- Brandi Marderness, senior manager at Baker Tilly Virchow Krause.

The awards were designed to specifically recognize young professionals in the community who demonstrate leadership potential, said Chamber President and CEO Ellen Horan.

"It's a way of recognizing as well as cultivating further development of the leadership capacity in our community," she said.

Nominees must live or work in Greater Reading and be 45 years old or younger. They are usually nominated by a supervisors or other colleagues, Horan said. Winners are selected by a group of judges.

There were more than 30 nominees this year, Horan said.

"We had a ton this year," she said. "There's a lot of talent out there."

Nominees are judged primarily on two areas, Horan said: Are they demonstrating professional growth, and what are they doing in the community? "Are they engaged and involved, and are they showing leadership potential?" she said.

Though just in their ninth year, the awards seem to have become a prestigious honor, Horan said.

"They're getting nominated by their supervisor, or a peer, or someone from a board they're working on, so that is a great recognition in and of itself," she said. "But then to be held out as outstanding in a field of really good nominees is another level of recognition. I think it does encourage people to want to be seen as a leader in the community and continue that involvement."

Tonight's actual awards program will begin at 6:30 p.m. Cost to attend is \$30.

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