

**ANDREW VAUGHT, 32**

**Artistic director and co-founder, Cripple Creek Theatre Company**  
www.cripplecreekplayers.org, @cripple\_creek

Covington native Andrew Vaught is artistic director and co-founder of Cripple Creek Theatre Company, which has produced more than two dozen plays and original works. He also is a playwright and has directed several performances.

Vaught, who studied drama at Kenyon College, founded Cripple Creek in 2006 as a voice for "social and political issues we were seeing in the country at the time, and New Orleans was and still is the crucible for all those issues," he says. "We wanted to start an organization that definitely created work, or presented work, that dealt specifically with issues grappled with in the area."

In 2013, the company presented *Passum Kingdom*, a play Vaught wrote around a theme of environmental justice, and *Clybourne Park*. Bruce Norris' decades-spanning drama on race relations — performed on St. Claude Avenue, ground zero for the city's gentrification issues. In spring 2015, Cripple Creek will present Marc Blitzstein's opera *The Cradle Will Rock*, and Vaught also is working on The NOLA Project's *Robin Hood* at the New Orleans Museum of Art sculpture garden. He wants Cripple Creek to expand its role as a civic, or civilian, theater.

"We want to push our work so it's as accessible as it can be," he says. "How can we remove all roadblocks to a diverse audience, remove all impediments to that, and ensure theater can serve as a civic function in this city? How do we focus the work we do at Cripple Creek to really address problems in an open way, an inclusive way and an active way? How is it a show, how is it a civic dialogue and how is it a stepping off point for people to make changes in their lives and lives around them?" — ALEX WOODWARD



**Book currently reading:** *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas and *You Can't Go Home Again* by Thomas Wolfe

**Favorite local band:** Hurray for the Riff Raff

**Favorite restaurant:** Cochon

**What do you do in your off time?** Play tennis, walk around the French Quarter and go to the zoo

**Dancing or karaoke?** Karaoke. I like singing "Mama Tried" by Merle Haggard.

**SANDY VILLERE, 39**

**Partner, Villere & Co.; Co-founder, Villere Equity Fund**  
www.villere.com

Sandy Villere helped bring the only independent mutual fund in the area to New Orleans and manages the No. 1 performing fund in its category, which has more than \$1 billion in assets.

Co-founder of the Villere Equity Fund, Villere is co-portfolio manager of the five-star-rated Villere Balanced Fund, named the No. 1 performing fund of its kind three years in a row.

Under his family's leadership, the money management firm Villere & Co. has become nationally recognized. But his achievements haven't been restricted to the financial sector — he also has earned plaudits for his efforts to improve education in New Orleans.

Villere, a father of three, helped found the Choice Foundation, a charter organization that now operates Lafayette Academy, Esperanza Charter School and McDonogh 42 Charter School.

"When everybody evacuated from Katrina, there were discussions: Where am I going to move? Those thoughts never crossed my mind," Villere says. "I knew I had to roll up my sleeves and make the city better. And now it's such a truly entrepreneurial hub. Anything goes — it's incredible." — DELLA HASSELLE



**Book currently reading:** *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson

**Favorite Twitter account to follow:** @SeanPayton

**Favorite local band:** The Radiators

**Favorite restaurant:** La Petite Grocery

**What do you do in your off time?** Watches football and coaches his kids' baseball and football teams

**SCOTT WALKER, 39**

**News anchor, WDSU-TV**  
www.wdsu.com, @ScottWalker6

WDSU-TV news anchor Scott Walker is an award-winning veteran journalist, but the proudest moment in his career has nothing to do with accolades. It was raising \$50,000 to increase awareness of a deadly skin disease that killed a Northshore toddler.

After seeing the story of Tripp Roth, a boy suffering from epidermolysis bullosa (EB), a disease with no cure that causes widespread blistering on the skin and mucus membranes, Walker decided to use his platform as a recognized news anchor to connect fundraising with EB awareness.

"It was so hard to accept that a kid could be in so much pain just from a touch," says Walker, who has won several awards for his work at WDSU, including an Edward R. Murrow award this year for coverage of a stranded Carnival cruise ship. In 2012 and 2013, the Press Club of New Orleans named him Best News Anchor in New Orleans.

Walker launched a website and WDSU aired a public service announcement to spread the word that he would run a half-marathon to raise funds for EB awareness in memory of Roth, who died of EB in 2011. Walker's initial goal was \$5,000, but he raised 10 times that amount in three months.

The half-marathon also forced Walker to get into shape, he says. Now, four half marathons later, he's committed to staying healthy and helping others.

"That was a pivotal change in my life, to be able to be a part of that," Walker says. — DELLA HASSELLE



**Book currently reading:** *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson

**Favorite Twitter account to follow:** @westwingreports

**Favorite local bands:** Jeremy Davenport and Rebirth Brass Band

**Favorite restaurant:** Mr. John's Steakhouse

**What do you do in your off time?** Play basketball and hang out with my kids

**Dancing or karaoke?** Karaoke

**JOHN R. WILLIAMSON JR., 32**

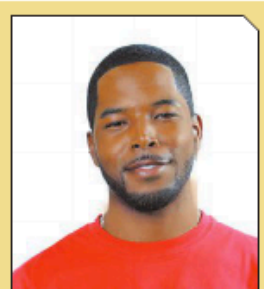
**Owner, CAD Printing; Founder, Firstwitit.com; President, MSAADA Inc.**  
www.cadprinting.biz

John Williamson has used the valuable life lessons he learned while serving in the U.S. Army in establishing a profitable printing business and launching an online fashion venture while also extending his family's tradition of community service into the 21st century.

As an 18-year-old and recent graduate of John Ehret High School, the West Bank native remembers wanting to get away from home and see the world, so he enlisted in the U.S. Army and requested assignment in Germany. Returning to post-Katrina New Orleans, Williamson sensed that the national and even international business and philanthropic entities now had an eye on Louisiana, so he took his knack for logistics and utilized it in establishing CAD Printing, which creates custom banners, menus, promotional materials and other items. This year he launched the fashion-forward, custom-tailored fashion site www.firstwitit.com.

Both businesses enable the charitable community outreach of MSAADA (Swahili for "helping people that need help"), a nonprofit founded by Williamson's late grandfather Arthur Mitchell. The organization currently is raising funds to provide and maintain educational computer tablets for local schoolchildren.

"The military made me who I am, but I went into the military with discipline and a strong mind because of my foundation in my father, who's owned several businesses for over 25 years," Williamson says. "And I don't think I've peaked. I just acquired a tour bus and we're gearing up now for a cross-promotional tour with Firstwitit and MSAADA — advancing education through technology — with special events and concerts across the South." — FRANK ETHERIDGE



**Book currently reading:** *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu

**Favorite new album/CD:** T.I.'s *Paperwork*

**Favorite local band:** Rebirth Brass Band

**Dancing or karaoke?** The two-step