

30

UNDER

30

Rising Supply Chain Stars

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Institute for Supply Management®

30 Under 30

Rising Supply Chain Stars

ABOUT THE PROGRAM & WINNERS

Dynamic. Skilled. Impressive.

The winners of Institute for Supply Management®'s (ISM®) 30 Under 30 Rising Supply Chain Stars program can be described by those words — and many more. The program, in its ninth year, showcases the exceptional talent and remarkable achievements of 30 emerging supply management professionals, who were selected from hundreds of worthy nominees.

The 2022 award recipients come from diverse backgrounds and contribute diverse perspectives to the small- and mid-sized companies or multinational corporations they represent. Each winner has taken a different career path, but all have a common interest — supply management. They are an impressive lineup who demonstrate passion and creativity in their contributions to their companies.

Join us in celebrating the achievements of this year's 30 winners and see how they have individually advanced the profession.

The 30 Under 30 honorees receive complimentary one-year membership to ISM, complimentary registration to ISM World 2023 Annual Conference in Grapevine, Texas, a special rate for one colleague to attend the Conference, as well as recognition in our membership magazine, *Inside Supply Management*®, and in other media.

MEET THE WINNERS



Alana Agcaolli, 26 (27 on April 26)

Procurement specialist, food & beverage hotel operations | IHG Hotels and Resorts | Atlanta

Since joining IHG in spring of 2021, Alana Agcaolli has participated in relaunch and refresh projects and business development efforts to grow the IHG procurement program. She has built relationships across the organization, including with senior stakeholders, to help her better understand how the business operates and where she can add value. Her work with stakeholders on proactive planning sessions and project kickoffs have enabled her to become a trusted adviser. Her solutions for stakeholders include equipment for a safer guest experience, automation within sundry shop to streamline the guest experience and the introduction of products designed to improve cost and labor efficiencies. She has led training sessions that leveraged her hotel experience to help colleagues better engage with owners and collaborated with the supplier base during the coronavirus pandemic by developing forecasts, managing inventory and addressing price pressures.

My job in three words: Community, innovative, rewarding.



Khalid Al Barwani, MS, 27 MEGAWATT STAR

Contract engineer, contract and procurement department | Petroleum Development Oman, a joint venture with Shell Oil Company | Muscat, Oman

Khalid Al Barwani is the category manager and contract engineer for the drilling rigs portfolio and category strategy, considered one of the most critical categories at Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), with an annual spend of US\$500 million. He has been in the forefront in delivering PDO's first integrated rig category strategy — which won a company award of excellence for generating millions in cost savings and improved health and safety — and will contribute toward a net-zero target by 2050. In addition, Al Barwani served as project management officer for the near-term sustainability program (NTSP), helping the supply chain team capitalized on low oil prices to deliver more than \$1 billion in cost savings over two years. His analytical, project management and collaboration skills played a key role in program's success. During the coronavirus pandemic, PDO was faced with a major crisis — materials at high risk of delays. As a member of the COVID-19 emergency taskforce, Al Barwani was assigned a key role as the procurement focal point for critical items, protecting the company successfully against supply chain disruptions and maintaining oil production.

My job in three words: Challenging, impactful, exciting.



Joseph Anderson, 30

Strategic sourcing manager | Boston Scientific | St. Paul, Minnesota

Strategically savvy, Joseph Anderson utilized his talents to drive a high-risk specialty technologies subcategory from US\$20 million to \$70 million in annual spend. Working with internal and external stakeholders, he supports and enhances both local and global relationships by surpassing expectations and delivering growth, savings and new business in nuclear, battery, capacitor and medical technologies, materials and services. Adept at change management, Anderson established a global sourcing model to successfully transition new site operations and a cross-functional global sourcing category team. His abilities enabled him to deploy Boston Scientific's first nuclear materials and services strategy. Resiliency is one of his many core competencies, evident as a negotiations subject matter expert and a skilled critical risk mitigator, executing alternative sourcing plans successfully, preventing back orders and supply outages. By merging specific target markets and internal trends, Anderson forecast potential battery material pricing shifts with accuracy, providing a three percent cost savings, beating market pricing for three years.

My job in three words: Invigorating, rewarding, thought-provoking.



Alex Brunero, 28

Senior manager, procurement — media | GSK | Brentford, United Kingdom

Working across silos, Alex Brunero draws from subject matter experts and his own curiosity and uses his eye for detail in finding solutions. After reviewing GSK's content creation and RFP processes, he orchestrated efforts to consolidate and raise efficiencies, leading to improvements on costs, rebate structures and upfront investment. This project was part of his helping implement a "one holding company" model across multiple markets. The simplified structure enabled streamlining of staff, from hundreds of individual roles to nine bands across 14 key markets. Stepping in as a procurement transformation leader, Brunero worked with business leaders and agency partners to focus on design generation and customer satisfaction by increasing reuse of existing content. The initiative brought 70 percent in value versus the baseline, through improved commercial terms and process efficiencies, as well as increased ROI. Brunero is adept at taking complex procurement ideas and processes and conveying the information in a clear and user-friendly way to professionals outside the profession. As a leader, he has an innate ability to balance empathy and fortitude, which motivates and empowers colleagues.

My job in three words: Collaborative, rewarding, stimulating.



Karen Burlingame, 27

R&D procurement category manager | Johnson & Johnson | Lansdale, Pennsylvania

Through speed, agility and pioneering thought, Karen Burlingame champions her role as global category manager in a cross-sector team supporting drug discovery and health-care innovations in cell and gene treatments, vaccines, oncology and other therapeutics. She created Johnson & Johnson's (J&J) first bioanalysis/pharmacokinetic /absorption, distribution, metabolism and excretion (ADME) subcategory strategy white paper by conducting market research, interviewing and collaborating with key internal and external stakeholders, and presenting the findings to leadership. She facilitated several RFPs in category excellence initiatives and negotiated more than 15 master services agreements and rate cards, realizing double the annual cost savings target. Also, her efforts exceeded supplier diversity, category strategy, sustainability and talent development goals and effectively supported case volume growth of 50 percent. In her prior role, Burlingame collaborated with a cross-functional supply chain team to enable the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines under the federal Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). Methodical, data-driven and customer-centric, she helped shape the order-to-cash process and led an initiative to create a COVID-19 EUA order tracking dashboard. A proponent of career development, Burlingame is involved with recruiting and manages a candidate in J&J's GROW talent program, providing peer coaching and perspectives.

My job in three words: Engaging, collaborative, rewarding.



Jordan Cress, 30

Principal commodity specialist | Collins Aerospace | Cedar Rapids, Iowa

During his five-year tenure in Collins Aerospace's electronics division, Jordan Cress has been a source of valuable insights for management and industry peers. He leads complex sourcing projects, fostering improvements and progressive outcomes. Through negotiation and supplier relationship management, he launched strategic resourcing initiatives for printed circuit boards and assemblies. His involvement in a large footprint project supporting multiple functions and mission-focused collaboration enabled several million dollars of savings. Cress also led quotation and analysis for company-wide supplier consolidation initiatives, resulting in performance improvements and cost savings for customers. When piloting an embedded components initiative, he facilitated millions in pipeline savings while establishing a new process encouraging continued cost-reduction opportunities. His insights on geopolitical challenges helped mitigating negative impacts. As the supply chain lead on technology teams tasked with driving innovation, Cress guided project management and efficient execution.

My job in three words: Challenging but rewarding



Garrison Dallas, 28

Principal supply chain subcontract specialist | Northrop Grumman | Redondo Beach, California

A 2022 Northrop Grumman Women's International Network (NGWIN) Rising Star, Garrison Dallas joined the F-35 major subcontracts group and was assigned an at-risk supplier. Expectations included driving supplier performance measured in costs, scheduling, technical attributes, quality, risk/opportunity management and business administration. Her collaboration with stakeholders and subject matter experts enabled increased risk mitigation, aiding the supplier's recovery. As one of the F-35 major subcontracts leads for a sector-wide contractor purchasing system, Dallas worked with program and audit teams on quick turn requests and answers throughout the evaluation process. Her efforts help ensure legal, regulatory and company policy compliance in procurement and with contractors and subcontractors — instrumental in obtaining government approval for the purchasing system. Dallas balances supplier and customer needs consistently and exercises calm amid urgency, juggling shipping disruptions and quality issues while accommodating program and leadership requests. She is known among Northrop Grumman leadership and stakeholders for driving product quality without compromise.

My job in three words: Collaborative, tactful, inspiring..



Andrew Dougher, CPSM, 26

Category manager II | United States Steel Corporation | Pittsburgh

In the operations-critical mill rolls and services category, Andrew Dougher uncovered opportunities to refine existing sourcing process, improving internal specification requirements and optimizing inventory levels, among other benefits. In addition to establishing quarterly review forums with key stakeholders, he expanded the supply base and developed a detailed should-cost model that improved results up to 5 percent over bidding alone. He has added a "melt approval" process to ensure demand forecast changes are recognized at frequent intervals and before a supplier begins production; this limits U.S. Steel's cost exposure in changing market conditions and aids suppliers in reducing work-in-progress costs. Dougher has collaborated across sourcing teams to aid in accelerating several refractory projects outside his direct responsibilities and has helped improve the machine and fabrication sourcing process. In questioning why mill roll performance varied by supplier and facility location, he realized that capturing enhanced information could lead to improved vendor specifications and greater awareness about the conditions for best roll performance. He worked with internal stakeholders to develop a roll tracking system.

My job in three words: Engaging, challenging, collaborative.



Leah Goebel, 23

Category manager | United States Steel Corporation | Pittsburgh

While managing the iron ore supply chain for U.S. Steel's Minnesota Ore Operations, Leah Goebel ensures raw materials are shipped to internal and external facilities worldwide, working with multiple railroads and lake vessel carriers, as well as an ocean cargo broker and end users. Complicating those efforts is the annual two-month Soo Locks closure that completely halts vessel shipments across the Great Lakes, where nearly 80 percent of the 23-million-ton iron ore program is transited. She effectively manages the closure, working with multiple vessel carriers to stockpile iron ore at two internal steelmaking facilities, supporting product movement and inventory balance. As her focus shifts to international business development and global logistics, Goebel is examining alternative rail- and ocean-freight solutions. Prior to her role in managing U.S. Steel's iron ore supply chain, Goebel oversaw construction and engineering services in the Minnesota Ore Operations capital expenditures procurement group, responsible for over US\$42 million in annual spend while accumulating \$3.5 million in savings. One of her key achievements was negotiating a three-year alliance agreement with two strategic contractors, yielding nearly \$1 million in cost avoidance.

My job in three words: Complex, rewarding, engaging.



Madeline Guillory, MBA, 27

Principal supply chain procurement specialist, emerging capabilities development team | Northrop Grumman | Linthicum Heights, Maryland

Sensing a need, Madeline Guillory pitched the concept of a standardized compliance template. With management buy-in, she developed multiple templates, coordinating with the compliance and quality functions to streamline them and ensure compliance with federal regulations. Now used by her team for RFQs and POs, the templates save the team time and the customer money; they have significantly improved PO placement time and contributed to improved customer delivery times. As lead for one of the company's lab procurement teams, Guillory organized meetings with key suppliers, program managers, engineers and management to discuss supply chain issues and brainstorm new approaches to securing supply of key chemicals and materials amid lower availability due to the coronavirus pandemic and various geopolitical factors of 2022. She helped the group (1) identify new sources and (2) obtain a forecast for future needs. Additionally, Guillory identified a need for her current team to work together in a more streamlined, timely manner to avoid repeat usage of outdated information and duplication of efforts. She developed a website for new hires on her team that offers standardized and up-to-date training resources.

My job in three words: Impactful, complex, fast-paced.



Sarah Gutter, 24

Global supply chain operations professional | IBM | Armonk, New York

Responsible for manufacturing value-add cost and supply chain gross spending, Sarah Gutter transformed a manual process to an automated, operationalized process allowing for more time to analyze output, dive into cost increases/decreases, and provide recommendations to executive leadership. This transformational project resulted in a decrease of manual efforts by 83 percent. Gutter developed IBM's Supply Chain Virtual Intern Program, a comprehensive program to onboard, create a sense of community and to drive internship engagement during remote working conditions. The program continues to be leveraged and adapted for hybrid work. As a part of her supply chain cost responsibilities, she has implemented a new management system to drive collaboration between the finance and operations functions, in which teams discuss upcoming forecasts, headwinds, tailwinds and roadmap opportunities. The team generated more than US\$10 million of cost reduction opportunities in 2022. Among other accomplishments, Gutter has completed Lean Six Sigma Black Belt training and is pursuing certification by working on a project to automate a labor-intensive human resource data reconciliation process. Her passion for others' development is exemplified by her many mentorships of IBM interns and staffers.

My job in three words: Dynamic, innovative, rewarding.



Alex Hendrick, 30

Senior global sourcing specialist — electronics | Boston Scientific | St. Paul, Minnesota

A senior global sourcing specialist in Boston Scientific's electronics category, Alex Hendrick was part of a team that developed a new, company-wide procedure for documenting, tracking, and coordinating responses to supply disruptions, successfully identifying and correcting gaps in cross-functional communication channels while reconfiguring them into one standardized process. Despite the challenging electronics market conditions, Hendrick's creativity and outside-the-box solutions resulted in multimillion-dollar cost savings to the business over the last three years, and 7 percent in year-over-year standard cost improvements, irrespective of inflation. When leading supply recovery strategies across his supply base, Hendrick developed a supply chain map beyond Tier-1 suppliers, partnering with multiple supply chain layers to establish greater resiliency and execution. A veteran army logistics officer, he continues to serve others by supporting people, programs and products that improve and save lives.

My job in three words: Relationships, negotiation, solutions.



Laura Beth Hirt-Sharpe, 27

Product owner — IBM Procurement Analytics as a Service | IBM | Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Laura Beth Hirt-Sharpe has taken the initiative to grow IBM's Procurement Analytics as a Service, curating the product's vision and independently spearheading growth into new areas, such as utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms and environmental, social and governance (ESG) data integration. The result: satisfied clients, diversified service offerings and millions in IBM revenue annually since the product's inception. Hirt-Sharpe has helped development teams, peers, stakeholders and IBM executives align to the product-development vision. Additionally, she ensures the product's delivery. Hirt-Sharpe manages the product's most senior technical talent, based in Hungary and the U.S., overseeing more than ten thousand hours of development work each year. She conducts reverse mentoring sessions to ensure the product team is aware of daily issues that can be addressed through automation and enhanced communication. Hirt-Sharpe also serves in an escalation role for IBM's global client base. She recently helped facilitate innovation with a first-of-a-kind project in partnership with IBM's Chief Information Office. Early in her career, she received IBM's Outstanding Technical Achievement Award honoring her work to curate algorithms behind the products' successful client implementations; this spirit of innovation helps her better support clients and delivery teams.

My job in three words: Data, strategy, communication.



Hendrik Krumwiede, 30

Strategic sourcing manager | H.B. Fuller | Nienburg, Germany

Hendrik Krumwiede is a trusted advisor, expanding his sphere of influence as a sourcing manager for 10 key categories. His input and knowledge proved essential in contract negotiations, working capital improvements, inventory management, ensuring adequate raw material supply and new sustainable sources. Krumwiede enhanced supply management by creating a tool and standardized procedures for tracking and monitoring quality, sustainability and corporate social responsibility; this helped improve efficiencies for direct and indirect suppliers. While monitoring the security of raw materials supply during the coronavirus pandemic, as well as geopolitical and supply chain constraints, he has successfully secured 20 percent more volume. Leading the global feedstock team, he provides reporting to business stakeholders by covering energy trends and macroeconomic updates, facilitating strategic development. Krumwiede has been instrumental in the successful management of over US\$50 million in spend since he began at the company, delivering more than \$10 million in annualized savings, cost avoidance and corporate collaborations.

My job in three words: Global, strategic sourcing



Barbora Labasova, 27

Global procurement category manager | U.S. Steel Košice, a subsidiary of United States Steel Corporation | Košice, Slovakia

Barbora Labasova used her passion for and knowledge of the environment as procurement lead of a project designed to meet European Union (EU) requirements to improve the quality of discharged industrial water — without compromising the principle of “value for money.” The project resulted in substantial cost savings. Labasova also was part of an initiative to reevaluate procurement procedures for waste recovery and disposal, to comply with existing regulations. She performed a detailed analysis of the current landscape and category challenges to develop reasonable solutions. As part of the packaged and non-packaged product disposal process, she proposed recycling applicable material rather than sending it to a landfill. Also, Labasova has worked on one of U.S. Steel Košice's biggest projects pertaining to decarbonization, in which new technology for blast furnaces will result in a reduction of 135,600 tons of carbon dioxide annually. Using historical data analysis and market research to prepare a fundamental fact base for negotiation, she met with sub-tier suppliers and achieved a cost savings of 700,000 euros (US\$740,775). Additionally, Labasova incorporated different types of billing, including lump sum, time and material, and cost plus, into one contract.

My job in three words:Challenging, improvement, teamwork.



Niraj Kumar Mahapatra, 30

Head of strategic solutions | CDL 1000 Inc. | Chicago

At General Motors (GM), Christina Winkler Meredith, MBA, developed a process to streamline budget-impact requests for management approval, then led its implementation and buyer training. She also led collaboration across product engineering, cost engineering and supplier quality to ensure a successful launch for more than US\$200 million in annual purchase value. As the company lead of the GM/Wayne State University (WSU) case competition, which involves 20 to 25 colleges, Meredith heads the case-writing team, recruits judges, obtains sponsorship, develops the work plan and manages required resources. Through this endeavor, she builds further relationships with internal and external stakeholders. Meredith also worked on reimagining training for new buyers in the work-from-home structures space and implemented weekly training and office hours. She created commodity-specific training to promote smooth transitions and deeper understanding of the role. Additionally, Meredith earned a 25 Under 25 Award from WSU's Mike Ilitch School of Business (MISB). She is the co-chair for the MISB alumni council and is the fundraising committee lead.

My job in three words: Global logistics management.



Ronald A. Montano, CPSM, 29

Buyer analyst — marketing | Volkswagen of America | Herndon, Virginia

Before joining Volkswagen of America in January, Ronald Montano, CPSM, was a purchasing and supply management specialist for the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), where he led pallet procurement, improved processes and collaborated with suppliers and internal business partners, while achieving cost savings. For example, he was instrumental in planning and coordinating holiday mail transport equipment requirements with multiple organizations. He quickly executed various contracts and orders to ensure equipment was available during peak season, generating substantial savings. He performed delivery modeling and ensured suppliers delivered necessary equipment on time and managed the sourcing actions. For this effort, Montano was honored internally with the 2021 Portfolio Team Member of the Year Award. Last year, to meet the requirements for mail transport equipment, including pallets, trays and tubs, for midterm election materials, he ensured suppliers operated at maximum capacity and that equipment was ordered, produced and delivered in time, achieving bottom line savings. Among other accomplishments, Montano led a team early during the coronavirus pandemic in sourcing critical personal protective equipment (PPE) from non-traditional suppliers. In 2022, he led the effort to ensure pallet boxes were available for the COVID-19 test kit initiative. He worked with his suppliers to ramp up pallet box production for postal facilities. These boxes were critical for storing and distributing the test kits to American mailboxes.

My job in three words: Challenging, teamwork, supportive.



Allison Morris, 28

Director — brand engagement | Hilton Supply Management | McLean, Virginia

A subject matter expert in fitness and wellness, Allison Morris successfully championed for the evolution of wellness as its own category at Hilton Supply Management (HSM), directing strategic — and sustainable — sourcing efforts for such wellness elements as clean air and scenting, soothing music and fitness equipment. Morris started building a relationship with Peloton in 2018, acting as the primary representative and guiding the collaboration of a commercial offering that would allow for a Hilton-wide product partnership. Her forward-thinking and collaborative approach helped Hilton become Peloton's primary partner in hospitality, placing at least one Peloton bike in all 5,400 U.S. Hilton-branded hotels. Morris's leadership abilities were tested by coronavirus pandemic and post-pandemic supply management challenges. She mitigated inflationary impacts by renegotiating proposed cost increases, monitored stock outages and production plans, and ensured alternate products and suppliers were identified and ready to support partnering properties. As an environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards advocate, Morris works with team members to review and award supplier contracts to companies that meet criteria requirements for sustainability, responsible sourcing, and diversity and inclusion.

My job in three words: Strategic, engaging, thought-provoking.



Oladunni Olowoporoku, MSc, 28

Industrial engineer | Syncreon | Fairburn, Georgia

Having a continuous process improvement background has enabled Oladunni Olowoporoku, MSc, to drive innovation on different processes at Syncreon. Due to her strong engineering background, she has been able to redesign and optimize the inbound and outbound layout, resulting in smoother workflows. The company had been experiencing costly issues with damaged products shipped to customers, and Olowoporoku, working with a packaging engineer, designed a solution to ensure the right parts would be matched to the correct packaging. She also created a new procedure for tracking packaging inventory levels. Olowoporoku has been instrumental in improving safety; her actions have included implementing a specific pallet strapping machine and exoskeleton suits; since then, there have been no back-related incidences. Among other safety-related efforts, she used design software to create designated warehouse drive and walk paths to avoid congestion. This measure has prevented the material-handling equipment like forklifts and pallet stackers from hitting an employee. Since Olowoporoku's initiatives were implemented more than a year ago, there has not been a loss of time or recordable incident.

My job in three words: Challenging, fun, exciting.



Melissa Ottenbreit, MBA, 28

Senior materials manager — excess and obsolete inventory key operating indicator owner | Flex | Althofen, Austria

Within her first two weeks at Flex, Melissa Ottenbreit, MBA, who joined the company as a member of its Supply Chain Leadership Program (SCLP), met with every leader available to understand their roles within the supply chain organization, their team complexities, and how she could contribute. In the process, she established valuable relationships with key organizational members, and branded her as someone who could be relied on when a future leadership opportunity arose. In November, Ottenbreit was promoted to excess and obsolete inventory key operating indicator (KOI) owner and subject matter expert, where she is responsible for leading cross-functional efforts for the global materials team to manage imbalances between customer forecasts and inventories on hand or on order. This has become an executive-level priority in terms of cash flow and risk management. After temporarily relocating to Flex's Althofen, Austria, site for a six-month tenure supporting this project, she was asked to return abroad and lead mitigation efforts and escalate reduction activities globally between sales, operations and procurement to maximize inventory strategies.

My job in three words: Collaborative, dynamic, investigative.



Barbara de Moura Pereta, 26

Senior global strategic sourcing analyst I | H.B. Fuller | St. Paul, Minnesota

At H.B. Fuller, Barbara de Moura Pereta has quickly demonstrated personal drive that sets her apart from peers, resulting in a rapidly expanding set of responsibilities. In her short time in the global strategic sourcing organization, she has managed eight categories covering a total of US\$228 million in spend. She reduced the number of single-sourced raw materials — and associated risk — by more than 18 percent over 12 months. She has worked closely with peers and cross-functional partners to improve business practices and elevate traditionally transactional relationships with suppliers, resulting in competitive advantage. The partnerships have allowed H.B. Fuller to secure multiple loads of commodities and specialty raw materials to avoid plant shutdowns and production interruptions. Among other efforts, de Moura Pereta has elevated her team's knowledge of and response to market trends, onboarded four people to the team and created new tools and practices to identify opportunities for transactional savings. These efforts have helped improve working capital and qualification of offsets used by the entire organization.

My job in three words: Global, strategic, dynamic.



Julie Rotunda, 27

Senior analyst — cost management | Wesco International | Pittsburgh

Julie Rotunda has taken initiative for a variety of projects, implementing new ideas at Wesco. She ran three kaizen initiatives pertaining to more efficient pricing and cost tracking, resulting in new ways to automate the process. She implemented process refinements for accuracy, tracking and reporting, designing a set of actions that accomplished tasks in a more simplified and time-efficient manner. Her efforts demonstrated a thorough understanding of key traits needed for successful collaboration. Working in a virtual environment due to the coronavirus pandemic, Rotunda devised creative solutions and new training protocols to enhance onboarding procedures. She led the integration process of multiple new team members, ensuring that new employees had a seamless transition onto Wesco's team. As a result, five people were brought on and trained within three months. To better assimilate them into the company, she met every day with each coworker.

My job in three words: Engaging, collaborative, productive.



Sydney Ruble, 24

Category manager — metallics | United States Steel Corporation | Pittsburgh

After working on the chemicals, electrodes and fuels desk, where she managed more than US\$100 million in spend, Sydney Ruble was promoted to the metallics team, where she manages an estimated \$260 million in spend. Last year, while managing the electrode commodity, Ruble started a new program with one of U.S. Steel's electrode suppliers to examine the furnace's electrode consumption profile. Through the program, experts provided benchmarking feedback on ways to use their product more efficiently to result in lower consumption per ton of steel. In addition, she started a recycling program that allowed electrodes to be reused instead of landfilled when damaged. In her new role, Ruble took on several demolition projects involving teardown of idled operations in order to recycle the scrap metal by melting it in U.S. Steel's electric arc furnaces. This project required her to work with the real estate, environmental, operations and safety functions to ensure these buildings could be harvested safely and efficiently — not only providing U.S. Steel with a cost-effective alternative to purchasing scrap, but also finding new uses for legacy facilities.

My job in three words: Strategic, impactful, exciting.



Sarah Scruppi, 26

Commodity manager — blast furnace raw materials group | United States Steel Corporation | Pittsburgh

A consistent and confident communicator, Sarah Scruppi drives growth for U.S. Steel's blast furnace coke sales program serving external and internal customers. With her effectively negotiating and implementing all commercial, contractual and logistical aspects, sales reached unprecedented levels for the Clairton, Pennsylvania plant of U.S. Steel's Mon Valley Works. When an existing customer requested additional product, the affected supply chain could not accommodate the throughput increase. With quick pivots and flexible strategies, Scruppi commandeered an action plan with alternate transportation carriers, increasing volume delivery in the specified time frame. This enabled an incremental 100,000 net tonnage of blast furnace coke — far exceeding the initial 2022 business plan. Her previous responsibilities included moving 6.2 million tons of blast furnace coke through third-party railroads. When a customer expressed an urgent need for increased shipments, Scruppi developed a new supply chain, moving coke to a Great Lakes transloading facility. In addition, she developed a baseline gearbox repair specification while working with materials management, streamlining the repair process and driving enhancements to internal plant operations to better support supplier relationships.

My job in three words: Communication, planning, flexibility



Jackie Sever , 26

Principal associate, supplier manager, cloud productivity engineering | Capital One | McLean, Virginia

An integral part of Capital One's procurement supply chain management rotational program (MRP), Jackie Sever leveraged career competencies to fulfill an urgent US\$8 million purchase with a two-week request for completion. After facilitating negotiations, two statements of work and a supplier distribution of 13 POs, the project realized \$2.5 million in savings and lead time reductions beyond 50 days. When faced with a supplier renewal and software cost increase of 300 percent, Sever identified ways to lower costs and negotiated with alternate suppliers, resulting in nearly \$2 million in savings while limiting the cost increase to 25 percent. Engaging in successful collaboration with the technology, finance, cyber, risk, contract management, compliance and anti-corruption teams, she managed 20 suppliers, completing more than 100 renewals and new contracts. While leading a \$30 million contract renewal, she secured discount increases of 14 percent for inventory and 7 percent for maintenance. Sever has developed procurement negotiation strategies for several multimillion-dollar renewals and initiatives involving suppliers in telecom, voice, data, card-technology software and hardware services. She encourages diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

My job in three words: Challenging, rewarding, collaborative.



Sarah Sharpe, 25

Procurement manager | Danone | Denver

Sarah Sharpe plays a crucial role for Danone, managing the procurement of eggs, cashews and soy for the company's plant-based business. Challenged by commodity traceability and roadblocks, she found alternative solutions: identifying new suppliers, working with local farmers and building an infrastructure that vertically integrated ingredients at a lower cost. By establishing new strategic relationships with external suppliers and growers, Sharpe drove upstream transparency for the company, as well as customers and consumers. With her diligence, the company received the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Climate Smart Grant funding, a new program dedicated to expanding market opportunities for sustainable sourcing. Sharpe outlined how Danone could achieve regenerative agricultural practices with growers. Working closely with the research and innovation function and a third-party entity to analyze soy varieties (seeds), she helped highlight key differentials in Silk brand products, compared to competitors. Sharpe gave dairy farmers an opportunity to grow soy and helped identify ways to improve soil health through crop rotation. Her short-term objective is to establish more than 200 soy acres planted with Danone's growers, ultimately growing the endeavor to at least 10,000 acres.

My job in three words: Impactful, dynamic, fulfilling.



George Tee, 29

Head of procurement — United Kingdom (U.K.) and Ireland | GSK | Brentford, U.K

A valued procurement expert who presents as a business "partner," George Tee is a renowned company representative who has led complex initiatives for outsourced services in more than 30 countries to standardize and elevate global talent acquisition. For example, when Tee consolidated a decentralized operating model and shifted from multiple incumbent suppliers to one core vendor, results included a 30 percent in annual savings, cash-flow generation and improved performance. Tee is a spearhead in driving positive transformation with suppliers, including diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) initiatives, by working in partnership with the business to develop and create suitable service-level agreements and KPIs designed to deliver ambitious DE&I recruitment targets, focused on senior hires. Stakeholders described the approach as "market leading." By partnering with technology, professional services, operations, marketing and human resources, he has fostered collaboration on a GSK total talent management strategy, ultimately transforming how the company procures and onboards talent and services. A consummate process innovator, Tee developed a strategy template now referenced by internal procurement leaders as a best-in-class example.

My job in three words: Varied, challenging, rewarding.



Kayla VanDyke, 27

Senior strategic sourcing analyst | H.B. Fuller | Vadnais Heights, Minnesota

Kayla VanDyke joined H.B. Fuller's strategic sourcing function more than three years ago, managing 11 unique direct categories during the first two years. For example, she took global ownership of butyl rubber, leading the team to create, sell and implement a global strategy, work normally reserved for employees several grades above her level. Due to her strong performance, she was promoted into a position managing North American contract manufacturing, where she has redefined and automated processes to improve overall effectiveness and track performance. Her work has created accountability and cross-functional alignment across processes. VanDyke interviewed internal customers to understand the needs, wants and pain points related to contract manufacturing, used the data to create a portal tool and remade procedures to improve cycle time, internal customer satisfaction and overall category performance. Among other accomplishments, VanDyke took ownership of what was previously an ad-hoc college recruiting process and turned it into a competitive advantage for the company, resulting in the hiring of dozens of young professionals.

My job in three words: Rewarding, impactful, strategic.



John Verhovnik, 28

Advisory manager | ProcureAbility | Columbus, Ohio

Since joining ProcureAbility in 2020, John Verhovnik has actively driven internal strategic initiatives by setting direction, guiding teams and meeting goals to better scale the company. He has been a lead in ProcureAbility's professional development initiative for more than two years and has developed robust project plans to ensure deliverables are completed on time. In other efforts, as a program lead for a consumer-packaged goods client, Verhovnik worked to establish a framework that fosters collaboration, encouraging conversations that leverage team members' strengths. He championed the rollout of ProcureAbility's data cleansing and visualization tool at a client company, giving it increased procurement spend visibility. Verhovnik is known for volunteering without hesitation for a critical project or to help a colleague. For example, he worked to revitalize and improve a little-used but important process: an internal document repository and knowledge center of excellence called the Hub. Verhovnik met with previous project leads to get up to date on the status, then assembled a new team to reassess and drive incremental improvements.

My job in three words: Solving client issues.



Timothy Youngman, 29

Director of purchasing | Panos Brands | Rochelle Park, New Jersey

Prior to joining Panos Brands, Timothy Youngman worked at Wakefern Food Corporation, managing more than US\$160 million in category spend. Always seeking ways to improve efficiency, he expanded the company's private label soup category by adding 16 new SKUs to the product assortment and improving the customer experience. Youngman's commodity procurement strategy improvements aided Wakefern's retail competitiveness. For two years, he led a sourcing team to submit RFPs and negotiate in more than 100 categories, helping enable the successful launch of the company's Bowl & Basket, Wholesome Pantry and Paperbird brands. Through cross functional collaboration, Youngman ensured the quality, merchandising, pricing, legal and branded procurement functions, as well as suppliers, were aligned for product launches. As a supervisor for a sourcing category manager team, he helped secure significant savings goals and ran more than 40 RFPs to deliver the highest possible quality at lowest possible costs. His efforts were recognized with a Private Label Manufacturers Association (PLMA) Salute to Excellence Award. Youngman's resourcefulness and dedication to understanding other functional areas of the business provided extraordinary support to stakeholders.

My job in three words: Dynamic, competitive, family-oriented.