

# IN BUSINESS Las Vegas

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## DR. MICHAEL CROVETTI

**Founder**  
Medical Education  
and Research  
Institute of Nevada  
**Founder, Chairman and Chief  
Medical Officer**  
iPed Solutions  
**Founder and Owner**  
Peak Performance  
Therapy & Fitness Center  
**Founder and Owner**  
Nevada Sports Academy

Age:  
38

**Founder and Orthopedic  
Surgeon**  
The Bone & Joint Institute of  
Southern Nevada

DR. MICHAEL CROVETTI'S commitment to education, health care and people all converge at a single point: quality. One of the smartest decisions he ever made, "marrying a great woman."

His wife Karen told him during their two-week Las Vegas vacation in 1997 that they would live here someday. She was right. After Crovetti completed his orthopedic surgery fellowship in Ohio, the couple decided to turn down opportunities in five other cities, including one at Baylor University Hospital in Houston, his wife's hometown.

Of the five successful medical-related businesses Crovetti has founded, the newest is the nonprofit Medical Education Research Institute of Nevada (MERIN). "Bringing this facility to Henderson allows me to live my dream 12 years early," Crovetti said.

Crovetti, MERIN and Smith & Nephew Medical Instruments will sponsor their first total hip and knee replacement training April 13-15. On the 16th, a group of European physicians Dr. Crovetti works with in Amsterdam will arrive at MERIN to continue designing a new hip-replacement method. Crovetti recently traveled to Okinawa, Japan, to train orthopedic surgeons on how to conduct minimally invasive surgeries using Smith & Nephew instruments, both of which he designed.

"MERIN is going to be more than orthopedics," Crovetti explains. "Soon, we will offer training in spinal, brain, ear, nose and throat, foot, hand and ankle surgery."

Crovetti's involvement in cadaver procurement has garnered international attention.

"If you do the numbers, they are phenomenal," Crovetti said. "Eight cadavers will train 40 surgeons how to safely complete a procedure. Each of those 40 surgeons will perform about 100 surgeries per year. If those doctors practice medicine for 20 years, the original eight cadavers will potentially benefit 80,000 patients."

MERIN and the Henderson Economic Development have spent 18 months creating an ethical, detailed program for educating the public on the importance and benefits of securing bodies for science. Nevertheless, MERIN takes second bill on the list.

"We work closely with the Nevada Donor Network to promote the cause of organ donation," Crovetti said. "Any time a donated body can save a life — that comes first." — C.W.



## STEPHEN A. CRYSTAL

**Co-Founder, Vice  
Chairman and President**  
Barrick Gaming

Age:  
39

WHEN BARRICK GAMING began setting up its downtown Las Vegas offices, Stephen Crystal's assistant Rebecca Ruff received word to choose her boss an office chair.

Her response: "Why? He's never going to sit in it."

Not only does Crystal's non-stop energy inspire humor in the office, it also motivates personnel. "I have never met anybody who does as much as he does. He is constantly going," Ruff said. "That trickles down and resonates with me. He's a fantastic mentor."

Although Crystal thrives on making business deals, Ruff emphasizes his compassion. "You don't see it often in business. He pays attention to details, like what you told him about your family last

week. The people that work around him appreciate that."

Thinking of others appears to be something that Crystal does naturally. At 20, while attending Dartmouth College, Crystal became the youngest legislator to hold office in New Hampshire. A graduate of American University's Washington College of Law, Crystal participates actively in the national political scene, and has managed congressional and presidential campaigns.

A man of apparently limitless talents, Crystal has served as General Counsel to the Barrick family of businesses since 1993. An expert deal negotiator and project manager, Crystal assisted Barrick in its \$450 million joint-venture relationship with Station Casinos. Together, the two companies created a riverboat gaming, hotel and entertainment complex in Kansas City, Missouri.

As aware of the needs of local constituents as he is of CEOs, Crystal and Barrick Gaming have started an initiative to reach out to Las Vegas's Hispanic community. They have sponsored holiday festivities, boxing events and pool parties hosted by Univision. Crystal meets regularly with leaders of the Hispanic community.

"We're such a large part of the face of downtown," says Ruff, "It's important to us to reach out to the fastest growing group of people in the city."

An avid art collector, under Crystal's direction, Barrick Gaming has also sponsored First Friday, an attempt to focus on the arts in downtown. — C.W.



## JASON DIAZ

**CEO**  
TaxiPass

Age:  
31

FEW WHARTON SCHOOL of Business graduates pursue their New York City taxi driver's license. Jason Diaz did it to gain credibility with the yellow cab roadsters.

His history with taxi drivers nationwide reads like heroic myth. After a college friend's murder in the mid-1990s, the young financial consultant founded a nonprofit organization called Cab Watch ([www.cabwatch.org](http://www.cabwatch.org)). Now the largest taxi-driver safety organization in the country, Cab Watch provides police training and immediate 911 access to cabdrivers across the country.

"In New York City alone, there are 12,000 cab drivers," Diaz said. "They see it all, and they have the most dangerous jobs. When I drove cabs, I often felt threatened, even though I didn't drive that often."

Statistics from Cab Watch show that, since its implementation, cab drivers are 50 percent less likely to be robbed. The average taxi driver reports two emergencies a year. And while 70 percent of the calls made are non-emergency, 30 percent of crimes reported are hit-and-runs, robberies and murders.

Diaz's achievements garnered the attention of N.Y. mayors Rudy Giuliani and Michael Bloomberg and President Bill Clinton. He received accolades as New Yorker of the Week and Reader's Digest "Hero of the Month."

His latest contribution to the country's cabbies: TaxiPass ([www.taxipass.com](http://www.taxipass.com)), a voucher payment system that brings

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America's drivers and riders into the 21st century and up to speed with their European and Australian counterparts. TaxiPass allows riders to pay their cab fare with a credit card at booths in the airport, in certain casinos and online while booking their hotel and airfare.

"Las Vegas has the number one airport market in the nation. Half of all people leaving McCarran use cabs. We hope our success in the Las Vegas market will allow us to multiply in other markets."

What Diaz enjoys most about being a business leader is "bringing together disparate groups of people." He united a primarily immigrant taxi driving community with the NYPD and the mayor's office. He brought together Las Vegas cab drivers, the casino, and convention and travel industries.

Diaz taught relatively unskilled workers about new technologies that improve their bottom line results: the average TaxiPass ride earns the driver 25 percent more than a cash fare. Diaz gave convenience to the customer. — C.W.



## TOM FAY

Executive Director  
Henderson Public  
Libraries

Age:  
37

TOM FAY GOT HOOKED on the library after moving from Las Vegas to Overton during the summer when he was 11. "At the time, I didn't have a friend in the world in Overton," he said.

Fay became such a regular at the rural library that, several years later, director Tonia Payne offered him a job as a shelver. "I had worked in construction, ranching and farming," Fay said. "The opportunity to work in an air-conditioned building during the summertime was too good to pass up."

A lifelong Nevada resident, Fay's contributions to the public library systems could fill a book the size of a Russian novel. Fay oversaw the construction and renovation of more than 40 libraries throughout the State. He has also consulted on libraries outside Nevada.

Fay's 15 years of experience in the Las Vegas Public Library system allowed him to contribute plenty when he moved to Henderson. Both cities' libraries now serve as models, offering some of the best technology and services in the country.

For example, Fay's involvement in the planning, design and construction of the Paseo Verde Library in Green Valley reaped one of the nicest spots to congregate in town.

"The library system and the City of Henderson have partnered together, so as not to duplicate services," Fay explains. "Now, at Paseo Verde, in addition to wireless technology for everyone, art and visiting authors, the city has opened a multi-generational recreation center and an amphitheatre for concerts."

"I tell people, 'this isn't your grandmother's library;' but I also like to remind them that the public libraries serve everyone in the community from age 0 to 102."

Besides the contribution he makes to readers in Southern Nevada, Fay enjoys his involvement with Henderson Civitan, a community group dedicated to serving the mentally challenged. He also participates actively in Green Valley Rotary.

The executive director of the Henderson Public Library system's favorite genres of literature is history and "alternative" histories. His is currently reading "Return Engagement" by Harry Turtledove, a tale of what happens when the South wins the Civil War. — C.W.



## JONATHAN FINE

Founder  
Sting Surveillance

Age:  
28

ASTUTE VISIONARIES RECOGNIZE that life's most unexpected opportunities often ride in on the wave of a strange event. Jonathan Fine, the founder of Sting Surveillance, keeps his eyes open for these.

An unsolicited letter from an unsavory character — he received a few of those while working as a Maxim magazine executive — tipped him off to the Taiwanese firm that developed the state-of-the-art software he utilized to found Sting Surveillance, his second start-up company.

Fine financed his first business, frometou.com, with the profits he made day trading while attending the University of Arizona. He took the e-bay business model and added improvements, such as local auctions, insurance and product guarantee.

Ironically, good publicity cost him the company.

"When NBC did a story about frometou.com, almost 50,000 people logged on in the first minute. It took down the Web site and the Internet service provider in Arizona," Fine said. "It took about a week before the Web site functioned correctly again. People would sign-in, but they couldn't manage their auctions. I wrote a lot of apologies, but no one really came back."

Fine applied what he learned from that situation to the business he now runs.

"At Sting Surveillance, we focus on service and support. Sting Surveillance customizes its services to fit the needs of each customer. And we have a four-hour fix-it policy on each camera. We're booked with installations until March. But we focus on our existing clients."

The client satisfaction strategy appears to be working. Sting Surveillance began with a staff of two; it now has eight. Sales in the first year were \$158,000, which grew to \$2.5 million in the second.

Apparently, Fine learned this ethic at home. On multiple occasions, Fine mentions how hard his father works. He spends a significant amount of time with his older brother, also a local business owner. He and his sister recently raised \$50,000 each for the Andre Agassi Foundation.

Fine feeds the homeless on Thanksgiving. He contributes to the fight against storing nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain. His small company donated equipment to a private school.

"I just want to make my dad proud," Fine states. — C.W.



## DAWN HATHAWAY THOMAN

Vice President  
Manpower Inc. of  
Southern Nevada

Age:  
37

DAWN HATHAWAY THOMAN dispels the myth that a woman can't have it all. The balance she maintains between profession, family, philanthropy and spirituality might best be explained through an analogy she uses with her 14-year-old son.

"If these four aspects of life are like the tires on a car, then it is useful for business people to consider themselves the car," Thoman says. "We perform best when the same amount of air is in each tire, when there's a balance."

A woman of humble beginnings, Thoman represents the consummate American success story. A stay-at-home mom for many years, Thoman eventually took an administrative assistant's position out of necessity. Soon, that company's CEO advised her to start searching for executive level work. That's how she became a branch manager at Manpower.

Although Thoman worked her way up during 10 years at Manpower, she stresses the