

BUSINESS IN VANCOUVER

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2010 **BIV** Forty under 40



RECIPES FOR SUCCESS

These top-tier businesspeople have proved they can stand the heat in the kitchen and just about any other room in the mercilessly competitive C-suite

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Presenting Sponsors:



Robert Tham

Owner, Corbel Commercial Inc.
Age: 32



Robert Tham hasn't forgotten where he came from. In fact, he's made a career out of giving back to it.

The 32-year-old owner of Corbel Commercial Inc. grew up in Vancouver and turned his lifelong love of heritage buildings into a commercial real estate firm.

"I love those buildings because my parents were in the demolition business," he said. "I love history. I got that from my mother; she's a big antiques collector."

"When you have people living in an area that's a little rough, they don't tolerate stuff going on in their neighbourhood"

Tham's firm is slowly transforming parts of neighbourhoods such as Yaletown and the Downtown Eastside.

"For many years, parts of Yaletown and Gastown—a lot of people didn't want to go there." By encouraging investment in the local heritage buildings, Tham is able to attract reputable tenants who end up improving the surrounding area.

"When you have people living in an area that's a little rough, they don't tolerate stuff going on in their neighbourhood," he said.

Corbel's success came from developing a niche real estate market in Vancouver, Tham explained, and he's proud of how his company stays true to its roots and hasn't gotten too big.

"The purpose of my company when I started it wasn't to grow and get big. I could've made a lot more money if I believed in that, but I wanted to keep it small." ■



Birthplace: Vancouver
Where you live now: East Vancouver

Highest level of education: BCIT, diploma in marketing management - commercial real estate option

Car or chosen mode of transport: 2011 BMW M3 Hard-Top Convertible

Currently reading: *Practicing the Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle

Last CD bought or music downloaded: P. Diddy, *I Need a Girl*

Favorite local restaurant: Kirin Seafood restaurant

Profession you would most like to try: Teacher

Mentor: My old boss

Toughest business or professional decision: Starting my own firm and doing it my way

Advice you would give the younger you:

Sometimes you gotta just do it. If you think too much, you may think yourself out of it

What's left to do? **Buy a ton of commercial properties and travel the world with my wife**

Dan Kriznic

CFO, Eminata Group
Age: 32

Dan Kriznic was a teenager expected to jump into the family business when his daughter was born.

It might have been easier to follow in his father's footsteps and become a tradesman, but ambition and the desire to succeed was too hard for Kriznic to ignore.

"I didn't think I'd ever become a business guy," Kriznic said.

But at age 19, he discovered an affinity for numbers and joined Deloitte & Touche LLP's assurance and advisory group.

He did this while attending college for an accounting diploma and juggling a young family.

By 25, Kriznic had his chartered accountant designation and was quickly ascending the ranks at the firm where he was eventually promoted manager and then senior manager.

In 2009, he was on the road to being named a full-fledged partner but a headhunter sought him out for another opportunity.

"You get the golden handcuffs and that's it,

you're a partner until you retire, but I thought I was young enough that I could go back [if I wanted to], so I should try something else."

That something else was the Eminata Group, Canada's largest private education and training provider.

These days, Kriznic oversees the finances and business development opportunities for 31 campuses and 1,100 employees across Canada.

In his spare time, Kriznic is also chairman and president of the LINC Universities Foundation, which helps students obtain post-secondary education.

At Eminata, he might be the chief money-man, but Kriznic said he's learned a lot about business since he was a teenager with a talent for numbers.

"You can't just be a bean counter, especially when you're negotiating deals. No one is going to take you seriously if you're just focusing on the numbers." ■



Birthplace: Edson, Alberta
Where do you live now:

Vancouver and Langley
Highest level of education:

Chartered Accountant
Car or chosen method of transport: Yukon Denali

Currently reading: *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell

Last CD bought or music downloaded: Rise Against

Favorite local restaurant: Five Sails

Profession you would most like to try: Professional wakeboarder

Mentor: Parents, Rick Montgomery at Deloitte and Peter Chung at Eminata Group

Toughest business or professional decision: Leaving the family business to go out on my own

Advice you would give the younger you:

Perseverance, time and commitment are the key ingredients to success. Stay the course, set goals and execute
What's left to do: **Continuing the growth in the Eminata group, as well as taking some wins in business and helping out others in the local community. Our mission is to change lives through education, and we want to change as many lives as we can**

"You can't just be a bean counter, especially when you're negotiating deals"