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2021 40 Under 40

2021 40 Under 40: Emma Gergen brings family-business background to Carlson Private Capital Partners

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When she was only 26 and working in accounting and investment banking, Emma Gergen was recognized for her distinctive abilities and became interim chief financial officer for St. Paul-based med tech firm BioMedix. Since then, her career and talents have only grown stronger.

After earning her MBA at Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management, Gergen joined Northwest Equity Partners as a vice president, where she led several high-profile acquisitions, including Bix's Produce, Edge Fitness and Integrated Nutrition. In January 2019, she became a founding member of Carlson Private Capital Partners, launched in partnership with the Carlson family, and is now a principal at the firm at age 35.

The firm's portfolio includes middle-market businesses with a focus on family-owned enterprises in the Upper Midwest, as it aims to support the employees and communities where these companies are located. Gergen has helped shape CPC's vision, manage its investment process, and work with portfolio CEOs to implement growth strategies. She uses her own background as part of a fifth-generation family-owned company to guide her decision making.

Today, CPC has investments in companies that employ over 1,000 people, many of which are based in Minnesota.

Known for her relationship building, strategic thinking and grit, Gergen is likely to keep making a considerable impact on the Twin Cities business community for decades to come.

More from our honoree ...

Why do you do what you do? I find the challenges and rewards of direct investing to be extremely fulfilling, and I have a personal passion, stemming from my own family-business roots, for helping founder and family-owned businesses succeed over the long term. I am fortunate to work with wicked smart (and fun!) people to invest in leading businesses and support talented management teams across our portfolio. I am truly learning something new every day and am blessed to love what I do.

What's been your biggest professional accomplishment? Working alongside colleagues who I consider friends at Carlson Private Capital to launch our platform with the incredible support of the Carlson family has been an amazing experience. The opportunity to build a firm and together, form its culture and identity, and have some early wins, is hopefully just the beginning!

Looking back at the challenges and turmoil of the past year, what was a bright spot? Reflecting on this past year, I am particularly thankful for the partnership I have with Cristo Rey Jesuit High School. Cristo Rey met the pandemic and social unrest in our community head on with strength and leadership. Observing the community's resilience through the extraordinary challenges of this year has been a bright spot for many South Minneapolis families and a source of inspiration for me personally.



EMMA GERGEN

During work from home, Emma Gergen, a vice president at Carlson Private Capital Partners, finds a sunny spot to work.

What was a key takeaway from the year that will guide your perspective and/or actions going forward? I have always tried to align my personal and professional partnerships with my values. That has never been more important, and the experience of the past year proved this out in spades.

Fast facts

Vice president, Carlson Private Capital Partners

Age: 35

Education: Bachelor of Business Administration, University of Notre Dame; MBA, Northwestern Kellogg School of Management

Family: Husband, Nick; son, Theo

Board memberships and volunteer activities: Cristo Rey Jesuit High School