



VIEW*S* & VISIONS

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Making a Difference

A New Generation of Leaders Looks to the Future

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FROM OUR MANAGING PARTNER

Tom Heywood is Managing Partner of Bowles Rice. He has significant experience in health care, corporate, finance and commercial law, and leads the firm's Government Relations Team.

In 2016, he was named to the inaugural class of "Sharp Shooters," by *West Virginia Executive* magazine. *The State Journal* named him one of the state's "Ten Most Influential Business Leaders" in 2012.

He served as Chief of Staff to the Honorable Gaston Caperton, former Governor of the State of West Virginia, from 1990 to 1993, and was chairman of Governor Earl Ray Tomblin's election campaign in 2011 and 2012. In 2016-2017, he was a member of the Jim Justice Inaugural Committee.

Heywood serves on numerous charitable and nonprofit boards, including the West Virginia University Board of Governors, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, the West Virginia Roundtable and the Discover the Real West Virginia Foundation. He also participates actively in various business and trade associations.

In recognition of his many contributions to the legal profession and community, he was named a Fellow of the American Bar Association. He also is a past recipient of *The State Journal's* "Who's Who in West Virginia Business" award.

The long-anticipated demographic shift is upon us. The Baby Boomers are retiring in droves, and will continue to do so for several years to come. What comes next?

This is a question almost every organization I work with in the region has been thinking about and planning around for some time. Assuring a smooth succession to the next generation of leaders is at the top of the "to-do" list of every CEO, board and organization I know.

As the Managing Partner of our firm, I am very familiar with the richness and depth of our own up-and-coming leaders. I am struck by just how good, mature and seasoned they are. I sincerely believe that our young colleagues are more skilled, experienced and ready to lead than we were at their ages. This reality brings a smile to my face every time I think about it.

The past three decades have been a challenging time for our region. We have suffered contraction in many of our industries, experienced a stagnant economy and declining population in most of our communities and faced new threats and challenges – such as opioid addiction – even as we have not experienced the growth seen by much of the rest of our country.

Yet I have never been more optimistic about our future. Why? One need only turn the pages that follow for the answer.

From Williamson to Pittsburgh and from Parkersburg to Martinsburg, emerging leaders are stepping boldly forward and making a difference. Across a diverse range of industries – energy, medicine, architecture, arts, philanthropy, engineering and many

more – this new group is articulating their vision, making their mark and pursuing their dreams. Their stories inspire me all over again.

More than just the energy of youth is reflected in their leadership, work and articles. I discern knowledge, experience, passion, compassion and grit in all that they do. The articles that follow would make a pretty darn good course syllabus for any doctoral or executive level leadership class across the globe. These young people are wise beyond their years; exhibit true servant leadership; and many have the scrapes and bruises to prove their mettle and persistence.

I am not alone in celebrating the qualities and accomplishments of those featured in this edition of *Views & Visions* and their many peers across the region. Senior management and boards of directors of organizations across the area tell me regularly how impressed they are with the next generation of leaders in their organizations, and how much confidence they have that these individuals will unlock the potential we all know exists in our region.

Let us celebrate not only the beginning of a new calendar year and all the promise that a new year brings, but also the generational shift that is underway. I cannot wait to see just how far these passionate young leaders will take us, building on the work of those who have come before. In the immortal words of Timbuk3, "The future's so bright, I gotta wear shades." Ray-Bans on, let's get after it! ▽