

# avenue



12<sup>th</sup> Annual

# Top 40 Under 40

Jump up and celebrate the successes of Calgary's high achievers including glass blowing collective The Bee Kingdom

## Cold Feet

Don't let winter ruin your running

## Bronco's Wild Ride

A look back at Dave's 18 years in City Hall

## Eat Meat

Feed your inner carnivore with locally made charcuterie



**2010** marks the 12th year of Calgary's Top 40 Under 40. Each year, we improve our selection process slightly, refining as we go. In the past, we have relied on nominees to tell us why they think their colleagues, partners and friends should make the list. This year we added a second step — once nominators told us why they thought a candidate should make the Top 40 list, we then asked nominees to fill out a second form telling us where they had gone to school, what they did in their work, where they volunteered and how much time they dedicated to the community, and we asked for references who could speak to their career and community successes.

Photography by  
Jared Sych  
and Colin Way  
Hair and makeup by  
Hedkandi Salon

Overall, it was a much more thorough process — and much more work for our judges. We received more than 200 nominations for this year's Top 40 Under 40. We then narrowed that down to a shortlist of about 90 candidates.

Our judging panel of local business people and Top 40 alumni pored over the candidates' nomination packages — more than 500 pages of material — and scored each out of 100 based on their career success and positive impact on the city. From there, our panel debated the results and came up with the final list.

This year's inductees are once again a diverse group, including business people and entrepreneurs, lawyers and doctors, artists, designers and musicians. Here is the 2010 Top 40 Under 40.



# Michael Bates 33

Criminal Defence Lawyer, Partner,  
Ruttan Bates Barristers and Solicitors

**740** When he was in high school, Michael Bates got a different kind of education when he was given the chance to job-shadow his uncle, a criminal defence lawyer, during a trial.

Far from what you might recall from courtroom dramas like *Law & Order*, Bates recalls the experience as a chaotic affair; during the trial, for example, several witnesses stumbled over their original stories.

But, while other legal aspirants might have been turned off by the real-life courtroom drama, Bates says the experience left him “completely intrigued,” and make him decide to follow in his uncle’s footsteps.

In 2005, Bates and his partner, Jennifer Ruttan, founded the firm of Ruttan Bates, focusing on criminal defence law and criminal appeals. Over the firm’s short history, Bates has distinguished himself as a formidable courtroom presence,

unafraid to tackle tough cases. He’s defended billionaires, gang members and media-spotlight figures like Calgary street preacher Art Pawlowski.

Bates is naturally endowed with an attention-commanding baritone, and while that kind of voice goes a long way toward being effective in the courtroom, at the end of the day he’ll tell you when it comes to cross-examining a witness, there’s no substitute for knowing the evidence better than they do.

His unflappable presence garners him referrals — even from his professional adversaries.

“Success in this job is when I get a call from a client who says, ‘My family member is a judge and they suggested I come talk to you because they’ve seen you do your job,’” he says.

Bates’s success can also be measured by the fact he has appeared three times before the Supreme Court of Canada, an experience he describes as “the Stanley Cup of being a lawyer.” In two of the cases, he defended the rights of citizens versus the actions of the police — arguing for protection of privacy while investigators snoop through household trash, and also to limit



police powers to search homes. And while Bates admits it’s not always easy to be a public face of police criticism, he says he sees his work as a way to ensure everyone is accountable to the law.

This sense of civic duty also extends to the 150 hours Bates logs in every year with the Canadian Bar Association Criminal Justice section, where he provides analysis and commentary to parliamentary and Senate committees on criminal justice issues.

“It’s an opportunity to actually participate in the legislative process,” he says. “We have to take those opportunities to speak up about things that are going to potentially create injustice, because if we don’t speak up about it, nobody will.”

—Shelley Arnusch

“Success in this job is when I get a call from a client who says, ‘My family member is a judge and they suggested I come talk to you because they’ve seen you do your job.’”

**Why he’s the top:** By the age of 32, Bates had taken three cases before the Supreme Court of Canada, a distinction few lawyers will achieve in the course of an entire career.

**The key to his success:** “You can’t substitute for preparation. At the end of the day, you really just need to put the time in, to be sure that, before you go in to cross-examine a witness, you know their evidence better than they do.”