

## BUZZWORDS

**TEXTRON'S BELL** has won the **U.S. ARMY'S** competition to build the Future Long-Range Assault Aircraft, the service's largest helicopter procurement decision in 40 years. The deal for the next-generation helicopter is worth up to \$1.3 billion and is set to replace roughly 2,000 Black Hawk utility helicopters. FLRAA will not serve as a one-for-one replacement for existing aircraft, but it will take over the roles of the Black Hawk, long the workhorse of the Army for getting troops to and around the battlefield around 2030. Ultimately, the Army's Future Vertical Lift pursuits will also replace around 1,200 Apache attack helicopters among other legacy aircraft through the pursuit of FLRAA, the Future Attack Reconnaissance Aircraft and Air-Launched Effects working in advanced teaming formations. The service wants FLRAA to be capable of traveling roughly 2,440 nautical miles (or 2,810 miles) without refueling, but also to be agile enough to maneuver troops into dangerous hot spots. The engineering and manufacturing development and low-rate production phase could be worth roughly \$7 billion. If the "full complement" of aircraft are purchased across the entire life of the fleet, the program could be worth in the range of \$70 billion to include potential foreign military sales. The contract represents a milestone for the service as the Army hasn't procured two major helicopters since the 1980s and multiple efforts to buy other helicopters over the last several decades ended in failure. In a Dec. 5 statement, **SCOTT DONNELLY**, Textron's chief executive, said the company is "honored that the U.S. Army has selected the Bell V-280 Valor as its next-generation assault aircraft. We intend to honor that trust by building a truly remarkable and transformational weapon system to meet the Army's mission requirements."



**BROWN & FORTUNATO** announced that attorneys **KIANNA SITARSKI** and **JOE SHAMP** have been admitted to the State Bar of Texas. Kianna Sitarski joined Brown & Fortunato as a member of the Health Care Group. She is a member of the State Bar of Texas, the Amarillo Area Bar Association, and the Amarillo Area Young Lawyers Association. Kianna's practice includes assisting pharmacies, hospitals, physicians, durable medical equipment companies, and other health care providers on a variety of matters that impact the health care



industry. Kianna also assists health care providers in pending investigations by the Department of Justice and other regulators. In 2019, Kianna earned a Bachelor of Science in Cellular and Molecular Biology and a minor in Business from Texas A&M University. Kianna graduated cum laude from Texas A&M University School of Law in 2022. Joseph R. Shamp joined as a member of the firm's Corporate Group. He is a member of the State Bar of Texas, the Amarillo Area Bar Association, and the Amarillo Area Young Lawyers Association. Joe advises clients in complex contract review, mergers, joint ventures, acquisitions, and corporate restructuring. In 2018, Joe graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Economics from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Joe graduated cum laude from Tulane University School of Law in 2022 where he was a Veteran Member of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Moot Court Team. Joe also graduated with a Master of Business Administration from Tulane University in 2022.



**Education Credit Union (ECU)** announced the promotion of **MARCUS SMITH** as President and Chief Executive Officer. Smith has been with ECU since 2014, most recently as the interim CEO since July. Previously, Smith had been the CFO. Prior to

joining ECU, Marcus, was a Senior Controls Specialist where he was involved in financial audits, internal control testing, regulatory training, and compliance. Smith was raised in Amarillo; he received his Bachelor's degree in Business from West Texas A&M University.



Amarillo CPA firm **JOHNSON & SHELDON, PLLC** announced the appointment of **RICHARD BLANKENSHIP** as the firm's managing partner beginning January 1, 2023. Richard has been a partner since 2003 and has served as the firm's audit and accounting practice

leader with primary responsibility for quality control, including overseeing the firm's triannual independent peer review for which the firm recently received an unqualified opinion for 2022 from Crowe, LLP, the nation's 9th largest CPA firm. Richard has 32 years of experience in public

accounting. Johnson & Sheldon, PLLC also announced the appointment of **CHRIS PACE** as the firm's audit and accounting practice leader beginning January 1, 2023. Chris has been a partner since 2019 and will now have the primary responsibility for quality control and overseeing the firm's peer



review going forward.

**HEAL THE CITY FREE CLINIC (HTC)** announced the addition of **DR. TREY BOWEN**, the first on-staff physician in the organization's history. "While we have an amazing



team of physicians who volunteer their time every single week and will continue to do so, Dr. Bowen will be our first full-time paid physician at Heal the City,” explains founder **DR. ALAN KEISTER**. “He will work alongside HTC Nurse Practitioners and medical staff to continue to provide excellent patient

care to everyone who walks in our doors.” Dr. Bowen received his undergrad at Texas A&M University, attended medical school at the University of Texas Southwestern, and is currently completing his internal medicine residency at the Yale-New Haven Hospital Primary Care Program in Connecticut. He will begin his career at Heal the City in the summer of 2023.

**AMARILLO NATIONAL BANK** celebrated the opening of its first branch in San Antonio recently at 1020 N. Loop 410 E., Ste. 100.

For Christmas, The **UNITED WAY OF AMARILLO AND CANYON**, along with **XCEL ENERGY**, partnered to give away new bikes to every second grader at **ROGERS ELEMENTARY**.



**ST. ANDREW’S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL** has announced the selection of **JESSICA MORRIS** as Head of School. While she will officially begin her tenure on July 1, 2023, she will begin her transition over the spring trimester. Ms. Morris will come to Amarillo from St. George Episcopal

School in San Antonio, where she has been the Director of Communication and Community Engagement since 2015 and served as the Assistant to Head of School from 2013-2015. Prior to her work at St. George Episcopal School, Jessica taught 5th grade at Robertson Elementary in Round Rock. She has a Bachelor of Arts from University of Notre Dame and is currently completing her Master of Arts from the University of Oklahoma.

**INTERSTATE BANK** announced the retirement of Market President **MIKE BLASINGAME**. Mike has served the bank for 20 years and has held the positions of Executive Vice President, Senior Vice President, Commercial and Ag Lender, Chief Lending Officer, and most recently Market President as well as a member of the bank’s Board of Directors. Mike is a Perryton native and has played a vital role in the day-to-day operations of the bank. Chairman and CEO is **DANNY SKARDA**.

**ALBERS AEROSPACE** (Albers) announced the acquisition of **GARRETT CONTAINER SYSTEMS, INC.** (GCS) located in Accident, Maryland. GCS is the leading manufacturer of highly engineered aluminum storage and shipping containers and tactical kits. As a subsidiary of Albers Aerospace, GCS will maintain its upward growth trajectory and remain poised for continued growth with many military programs. Albers plans to expand GCS significantly

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in Amarillo and has begun research and activity around that expansion already to effect the expansion in 2023. Albers has plans to expand its manufacturing, engineering, and Innovative Technologies division in Amarillo as part of its recently awarded incentive package and work with the AEDC. Albers Aerospace, a leading service-disabled veteran owned defense contractor located in McKinney, Texas provides services and solutions in the Engineering, Manufacturing and Aviation Services markets, creating unique products that enable WarFighters to dominate in their mission areas. **JOHN ALBERS** is CEO of Albers Aerospace.

The **HEREFORD VETERINARY CLINIC** is building a 16,000 square-foot facility that will serve as a clinical instruction site for fourth-year veterinary students at **TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE**.



(JAMS Quartet: Left to right) - Anna Ng, Josenir Cerqueira Jr., Sydney Buckner, and Jasmin Caldera

**A WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY STUDENT STRING QUARTET** will make its **CARNEGIE HALL** debut in the spring. The **JAMS Quartet** recently won the collegiate strings category of the American Protégé International Competition of Romantic Music and will perform May 27 at the Weill Recital Hall in the legendary concert house in New York City. “It feels surreal,” said **JASMIN CALDERA**, viola player and sophomore health science/pre-dental major from Amarillo. **SYDNEY BUCKNER** is second violinist and senior animal science/pre-vet major from Amarillo. The quartet is rounded out by **JOSENIR CERQUEIRA JR.**, first violinist and graduate student in instrumental performance from Criciúma, Brazil; and **ANNA NG**, cello player and freshman biology major from Amarillo. Only Cerqueira is a music major. *AW*