

JOBS

## Workers quit at fastest pace in 16 years

Forget about watching the unemployment rate or the pace of job growth.

"I quit" will be the employment phrase to watch in a year when, curiously, the man who popularized "You're fired" became president.

Plenty of consumer confidence polls and scores of retailing data points help us gauge the psyche of America's shoppers. But no one statistic speaks better to our overall sense of financial security than the lightly discussed government tally of the folks who voluntarily left their jobs.

Quitting is a big statement by any worker bee. In most cases, one doesn't tell the boss good-bye before a happy landing is prepared. This kind of economic leap requires fairly significant



**Jonathan Lansner**  
Columnist

confidence in personal finances and job prospects.

Like we're seeing now. Quitting hasn't been this frequent since the turn of the century as workers today depart voluntarily at a pace that means roughly 1 in 4 might quit this year, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

Basically, it's become more of a worker's market for many employees. Fresh data from government job trackers show quits on the rise in a big way: 3.22 million Americans left their jobs in January, up 11 percent in a year and the highest one-month quit count in 16 years. That I-am-outta-here frenzy put January's quit pace at 2.2 percent of all U.S. workers. The last time it

was higher was in 2005.

The best regional snapshot is a breakout for Western states: 822,000 quits in January, up 20 percent in a year and more than double the cyclical low of 347,000 in January 2010.

That wave of resignations equals a quit rate of 2.5 percent of all workers in California plus Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The West was tops for quit rates among the four regions tracked nationwide for the first time since August 2009. And the last time the West's quit rate was higher was in 2001.

When the Robert Half staffing firm recently polled chief financial officers about workplace conditions, 52 percent felt they didn't have enough "worker en-

gagement" — a critical factor in employee satisfaction.

Brett Good, Half's senior district president in the Los Angeles area, thinks CFOs are growing concerned about worker happiness as surging labor costs hit corporate bottom lines — from paying up to keep key personnel as well as attracting new hires.

One government study showed Southern California leading the nation's major job centers in salary gains in three of last year's four quarters. Half's CFO survey showed Los Angeles with the nation's highest share of engaged employees among major metro areas — a result that Good says speaks to a healthy local economy.

Southern California workers with skills in key specialized areas are being rewarded with nu-

merous suitors for their talents, Good says. Examples are workers in accounting, finance, technology, digital media, legal and compliance fields, to name a few.

"Counter-offers and multiple offers are not uncommon," he says.

Quits are a bit of sweet revenge for workers who've seen wages stagnate and harsh workplace conditions this century, especially in the years after the Great Recession. Disappointing hiring patterns caused numerous workers to stay in place in a job longer than expected.

According to one government measure of worker longevity, the typical U.S. worker was with his or her current employer for 4.2 years last year vs. 4.6 years post-recession in 2012, and four years during the last expansion in 2006.

STATUS UPDATE

## STATUS UPDATE



**Samantha Gowen has the latest on movers and shakers in Orange County**

Send items about business expansion, milestones and promotions to [sgowen@scng.com](mailto:sgowen@scng.com)

On the move

**Pimco** in Newport Beach has promoted several associates to managing director. They include:

- Michael Cudzil, a senior member of the liability-driven investment portfolio management team
- Sachin Gupta, global portfolio manager and head of the Global Desk
- John Kirkowski, a member of Pimco's executive office with responsibility for financial and strategic initiatives
- Rene Martel, head of pension solutions in the Americas and focuses on liability-driven investments, asset allocation and asset-liability management strategies for pension funds and insurance companies
- Roger Nieves, head of the enterprise coverage team within Pimco's U.S. Global Wealth Management group
- Cathleen Stahl, head of global marketing at Pimco

Dr. Paul Yost has been elected chair of the **Cal Optima** board, effective March 31. Yost will serve in the role being vacated by Mark Refowitz, who is leaving when he retires as director of the Orange County Health Care Agency at the end of this month. Yost will complete the remaining portion of Refowitz's term, through June 30, until another election is held. Yost previously served on CalOptima's Board from 2001 to 2009 and was reappointed in August 2016. He practices adult and pediatric anesthesiology through Allied Anesthesia and is affiliated with St. Joseph Hospital and CHOC Children's. Yost is also serving as the director of cardiothoracic anesthesia at St. Joseph.

Pamela Fleming has been promoted to director of human resources at **Fusco Engineering** in Irvine. Fleming has worked 10 years at Fusco Engineering and oversees the firm's HR team and all of



Yost



Fleming

SMALL BUSINESS

## Longtime Dana Point esthetician launches her own skin care line

By **Hannah Madans**

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*HannahMadans on Twitter*

A booming economy has helped Alana Mitchell, owner of Skin Care by Alana in Dana Point, create her own line of skin care products.

Alana Mitchell Skincare has been a long time coming for Mitchell, who has been selling other companies' skin care products for years at her shop off Golden Lantern.

"It started at a time when the economy was shifting, the beauty industry was shifting, and consumers' need for skin care and advice was there," Mitchell says of her new venture.

For Mitchell, a licensed esthetician, the company took shape as her customers asked for advice for skin care. As the economy picked up and her client base grew, Mitchell realized she could make products that were as good or better than those she was already selling.

"From there, things really grew. We went from a few sales to competing with the big guys, and we are a multimillion-dollar business," she says.

She invested \$10,000 to start her own line. The company, with 13 employees, brings in roughly \$6 million in annual revenue, the part-time model and San Clemente resident says.

Mitchell launched the skin care line with the goal of making "things as easy and streamlined as possible."

Among her most successful products are a 4-in-1 Cleansing Pod and a Quick Comeback Masque. A full kit with six prod-



COURTESY OF SKIN CARE BY ALANA

Alana Mitchell says she uses only natural preservatives in her line.

its human resource functions.

**Burnham Benefits Insurance Services** in Irvine has promoted two associates within the firm to vice president: Rachel Aleknavicius and Helen Vits. Aleknavicius joined Burnham in 2013 and has more than 15 years of industry experience. Vits has been with Burnham since 2014



Vits

and has more than a decade of industry experience.

Vanessa Hobson has been named vice president of marketing at **Club Pilates** in Costa Mesa. Hobson joins the team with more than 15 years marketing experience in the fitness industry, having worked for 24 Hour Fitness.

Victor Martinez has been named area manager for



Hobson

the Orange and San Bernardino county offices of **WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff**, an engineering and professional services organization. Martinez will support diversification and growth, drive strategic direction, and lead the firm's management team in Orange County and the Inland Empire.

**Kahana Law** in Santa Ana has transitioned to Kahana & Feld PC with the addition of named partner Jason Daniel Feld. Feld brings 18 years of experience in Arizona, Texas and California. He primarily represents smaller, family-owned and operated clients. Kahana Law was founded by managing partner Amir M. Kahana 10 years ago.

New ventures

Tustin-based **Conrey Insurance Brokers** has launched a private client department for personalized insurance and risk management for high-net worth individuals. The new department will pro-

vide special handling and expertise for clients with extensive assets and harder to place risks, such as large homes and rental properties, as well as artwork, car and jewelry collections. The CIB Private Client Department is managed by David Aloyan.

Newport Beach-based **Alliant Insurance Services** has acquired **Burkhardt Consulting** in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Founded in 2003, Burkhardt Consulting provides a range of employee benefit consulting services. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Milestones

Dr. Tim Munzing has been honored as the 2017 Hero of Family Medicine by the **California Academy of Family Physicians**. Munzing practices family medicine in Santa Ana and serves as director of the **Kaiser Permanente Orange County Family Medicine Residency** program. The Hero of Family Medicine title is awarded annually to a CAFP member who has "gone above and beyond the call of duty to advocate for patients, colleagues and the family medicine specialty."

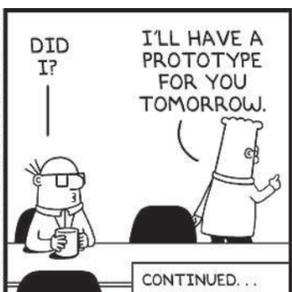
Good works

To celebrate the sale of its 1 millionth vehicle, **Wilson Automotive** in Orange has donated a Toyota Tundra to Orangewood Children's Foundation. The vehicle was auctioned off at the Athletes First Classic Gala, which benefits the foundation. The fundraiser also featured Jim Kelly, NFL Hall of Fame quarterback, who donated Hall of Fame memorabilia. That and the truck and other items together sold for \$55,000, helping Orangewood achieve a record-breaking year for this event. David and Holly Wilson received the Golden Heart Award for their "leadership in doing good works and benefiting humanity."

Esther Frias, an eight-year veteran of the Army National Guard, has been given a refurbished car from **Caliber Collision** and **Allstate** as part of the National Auto Body Council's Recycled Rides program. The Recycled Rides vehicle was donated by Allstate and repaired by technicians at Caliber Collision in Lake Forest, who volunteered their services to repair the vehicle.

*Status Update is compiled by contributing writer Karen Levine and edited by Samantha Gowen. Submit items to [sgowen@scng.com](mailto:sgowen@scng.com). High-resolution photos also can be submitted. Allow at least one week for publication. Items are subject to editing for length and clarity.*

DILBERT: By Scott Adams



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