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Eight Buyout Pros Under 40 To Watch

Allow us to introduce eight buyout professionals who haven't yet reached age 40, but have already made a significant impact on their firms.

Hailing from mid-market shops and global mega-funds, boasting degrees from state universities and elite Ivy League institutions, these professionals (listed alphabetically by last name) have achieved large things in a small amount of time, whether by starting international offices, leading new investment initiatives or generating remarkable returns on the deals they've sourced.

Name: David Basto, Managing Director, MidOcean Partners

*Basto has been with this mid-market buyout shop since it spun off from Deutsche Bank's **DB Capital Partners** in 2003, helping to lead some of its most high-profile deals, mostly in the consumer sector but also in business and financial services. They include Totes Isotoner Corp., which MidOcean bought for \$288 million in 2006 from **Audax Group** and **Bruckmann, Rosser, Sherrill & Co.**; True2Form Collision Repair Centers, a chain of car collision repair shops; Vitaquest International, a vitamin maker the firm sold in 2006 for \$345 million to Hong Kong-based biotechnology company CK Life Sciences after only a 10-month holding period; and Young America, a marketing company. Basto also co-led MidOcean's 2007 investment in Bushnell Outdoor Services, a company that makes rifle scopes and binoculars for the sporting and law enforcement industries. The company has since closed four add-on acquisitions under his supervision. Prior to joining MidOcean, which has offices in New York and London, Basto was a vice president at DB Capital Partners, and an associate at **Juno Partners**.*

Snapshot: Age: 37

E-mail: dbasto@midoceanpartners.com

Social Networking Activity: None

Education: B.A., History, University of Virginia

Average number of hours worked per week: No comment

Last book read: Blink, by Malcolm Gladwell

Name: Orlando Bravo, Partner, Thoma Bravo

*The private equity industry took note of Orlando Bravo in 2007 when industry stalwarts **Carl Thoma** and **Bryan Cressey** changed the name of their Chicago-based firm, **Thoma Cressey Equity Partners**, to **Thoma Cressey Bravo** to recognize his contribution to the firm. Since then the partners have split, with Cressey specializing in health care deals at **Cressey & Co.** and Thoma and Bravo pushing ahead with a more generalist approach at **Thoma Bravo**, which is investing out of an \$822.5 million fund. Bravo has helped lead investments in 10 companies, including Prophet21 Inc., a communications equipment maker; the investment generated 4.7x invested capital and a 91.1 percent IRR. Bravo also led an investment in VectorSGI, a company that develops software used by banks and other financial institutions to process payments; the deal generated 2.9x invested capital and a 123.8 percent IRR. Bravo sits on the board of eight companies, including Activant Solutions Inc., a company that provides software to automotive and building supply companies; Consona Corp., a company that develops software that helps businesses automate their marketing, customer support and scheduling requirements; and Datatel Inc., a company that helps colleges manage their business processes.*

Snapshot: Age: 39

E-mail: obravo@thomabravo.com

Social Networking Activity: None

Education: MBA, Stanford Graduate School of Business; JD, Stanford Law School; BA, Economics, Political Science, Brown University

Average number of hours worked per week: 60

Last book read: *The Snowball*, by Warren Buffett

Name: Phil Carpenter, Senior Managing Director, Irving Place Capital

*Since joining **Irving Place Capital** in 2002, Carpenter has helped execute some of the firm's most successful deals, including women's retailer New York & Co., which the firm bought in 2002 and took public in 2004, earning 4x its investment. In 2004 Carpenter spearheaded the firm's push into the packaging industry, which Carpenter found ripe for consolidation, noting many small suppliers that were seeing steady growth. Later that year he led the acquisition of Multi Packaging Solutions, which has since grown its annual revenue to more than \$500 million from \$150 million through organic growth and six add-on acquisitions. In 2007 Carpenter hired **Phil Yates**, the former CEO of a packaging company, as a senior advisor to help expand the packaging initiative. This past May he helped Irving Place navigate one of its most complicated deals to date: the acquisition of Chesapeake Corp. out of bankruptcy. Irving Place had never bought a distressed company before. Carpenter had sourced the deal in 2007, and he recruited packaging industry veteran Jerry Kerins to work with him and eventually become CEO of the company. Carpenter also brought in **Oaktree Capital Management**, a firm with ample*

experience investing in distressed companies, as a co-investor.

Snapshot: Age: 37

E-mail: pcarpenter@irvingplacecapital.com

Social Networking Activity: None

Education: B.S., Accounting, State University of New York at Binghamton

Average number of hours worked per week: 65

Last book read: *The Supreme Commander: The War Years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower*, by Stephen Ambrose

Name: Kara Cissell-Roell, Managing Director, VMG Partners*Kara Cissell-Roell has a knack for closing successful consumer product-related deals, and has spent nearly her entire career in private equity doing just that. At VMG Partners, a San Francisco firm that invests in consumer products companies generating revenues between \$10 million and \$100 million, Cissell-Roell helped lead the acquisitions of three healthy-food companies, Pirate's Bounty, Pretzel Crisps and KIND Healthy Snacks, and helped the firm become one of the largest private investors in the pet industry with investments in Waggin' Train dog treats and an undisclosed pet specialty food brand. So far in 2009, the above-mentioned businesses, which have combined sales of about \$800 million, have seen average net sales growth of 35 percent, thanks in part to Cissell-Roell's continued work with their respective management teams. Prior to helping launch VMG Partners in 2005, Cissell-Roell worked a five-year stint at **The Shansby Group** (now **TSG Consumer Partners**), where she was involved in the turnaround and sale of Mauna Loa Macadamia Nut Corp., which generated \$100 million of profit for TSG Consumer Partners and its investors; she also played a role in successful exits from VitaminWater and Smart Balance, which returned 13x and 7x invested capital at the time of their exits.*

Snapshot: Age: 35

E-mail: cissell-roell@vmgpartners.com

Social Networking Activity: None

Education: B.A., Economics and German, Colgate University

Average number of hours worked per week: 70+

Last book read: *South of Broad*, by Pat Conroy

Name: Ian Fujiyama, Managing Director, The Carlyle Group

*Fujiyama, a 12-year veteran at the **The Carlyle Group**, was only 27 years old when he moved to*

Hong Kong in 1999 to help establish the Washington, D.C.-based firm's Asia buyout practice. In 2000 he helped lead the \$450 million investment in KorAm, Korea's eighth-largest bank. The deal was Carlyle Group's first in financial services, its first in Korea, and, at the time, its largest commitment outside the United States. The investment established Carlyle Group as a major player in Asia and financial services and the firm more than doubled its money when it sold the bank to Citigroup in 2004. As the leader of Carlyle Group's services effort, Fujiyama has gone on to lead the firm's \$845 million acquisition of ARINC, an engineering and communications service provider for the aviation industry and government agencies, and the \$2.4 billion acquisition of Booz Allen Hamilton, one of the largest buyout deals of 2008. Other deals he helped execute include United Components Inc., an aftermarket automobile parts company; Lear Siegler Services Inc., which provides military logistics support and weapons systems maintenance for the military; and EG&G Technical Services, a company that provides engineering and technical support services to government and commercial customers.

Snapshot: Age: 37

E-mail: ian.fujiyama@carlyle.com

Social Networking Activity: None, prefers meetings and phone calls to keep in touch

Education: BS in Economics with a concentration in finance, University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Business

Average number of hours worked per week: As much as his wife and three children allow him

Last book read: *Megacommunities*, by Mark Gerencser and others from Booz Allen Hamilton

Ajit Nedungadi, Managing Director, TA Associates

A member of TA Associates's Executive Committee, Ajit Nedungadi opened TA's London office in 2003 and heads the firm's European and Indian investment efforts with a focus on recapitalizations, management buyouts and minority equity investments in fast-growing companies. Under Nedungadi's leadership, TA's London office has grown from three individuals to 13, enabling the firm to invest \$2 billion in 14 deals in Europe and India. His most notable successes include the January 2004 \$80 million investment in vehicle fleet operator Drive Assist, which returned 3.25x in three years; and the \$85 million September 2006 investment in financial software provider SmartStream Technologies, which returned 3.5x after only 15 months when it was sold in November 2007 to DIFC Investments, the investment arm of the Dubai International Financial Centre. Nedungadi also led TA's \$125 million October 2006 minority investment in wireless services provider Idea Cellular, the firm's first foray into India, as well as TA's largest investment to date, the \$490 million investment in telecom services provider Weather Investments in June 2008. Other investments led by Nedungadi include Alma Lasers, eDreams, ION Trading, Jupiter Investment Management, M and M Direct, and Sophos.

Snapshot:Age: 39

E-Mail: *ajit@ta.com*

Social networking activity: *None*

Education: *MBA, Harvard Business School; B.S., Electrical Engineering and Economics, Yale University*

Average number of hours worked per week: *65*

Last book read: *Night Train to Lisbon, by Pascal Mercier*

David Panton, Partner and Co-Founder, Navigation Capital Partners

*In late 2006, David Panton co-founded **Navigation Partners** (formerly Mellon Ventures) when the firm spun out of Mellon Financial. Panton, who had been with Mellon Ventures since 2004, led the first two deals closed by Atlanta-based Navigation Partners. The first came in February 2008, when Panton sourced, negotiated and structured the acquisition of Exeter Finance Corp. At a time when many auto finance companies were going out of business, revenue at Exeter Finance grew 5x in 2008 alone. To ensure it continues, the former Rhodes Scholar and president of the Harvard Law Review designed a deal to merge Exeter Finance with an undisclosed bank. This will provide the company with improved leverage and a lower cost of funds while also creating what he said will be the only "pure play" bank-owned subprime auto finance company. Next came the acquisition of Brown Trucking for less than 4x EBITDA in May 2008. With Panton serving as chairman of the company's board, the logistics and fleet services business has since reduced its debt by 20 percent, increase its sales pipeline and maintained revenue. Panton, a former senator in the Upper House of Parliament in his native Jamaica, also sits on the board of Exeter Finance.*

Snapshot:Age: *37*

Email: *dpanton@navigationcapital.com*

Social networking activity: *LinkedIn, Facebook*

Education: *Doctorate, management studies, Oxford University; J.D., Harvard Law School; B.A., Public Policy, Princeton University*

Average number of hours worked per week: *50 - 60*

Last book read: *Big Rich: The Rise and Fall of the Greatest Texas Oil Fortunes, by Bryan Burrough*

Karl Peterson, Partner, TPG

*Since returning to **TPG** in 2004, Karl Peterson has led investment activities in the travel & leisure and media & entertainment sectors, and beginning in 2009, he assumed responsibility for*

investments in financial services and led more than \$400 million in debt investments. Peterson also directed several major investments in companies, including casino operator Harrah's Entertainment Inc., cruise operator Norwegian Cruise Lines and travel services provider Sabre Holdings Corp.; he serves on the board of directors for these companies. Peterson also led the firm's investment in Fidelity Information Services. Prior to 2004, Peterson was CEO of Hotwire Inc., an online travel site he founded along with TPG and a group of airlines. Peterson led Hotwire from inception to its sale to IAC/InterActiveCorp for \$680 million in 2003. Before his work at Hotwire, Peterson was a principal at TPG, where he was integral to the firm's investments in, and subsequent IPOs of, broadband device manufacturer Paradyne Networks and DSL chip set developer Globespan Semiconductor. According to a 1999 article written in Buyouts, those offerings generated returns of 20x and 100x, respectively, for TPG, based on stock prices at the time.

SnapShot: Age: 38

Business phone: 415-743-1500

Social networking activity: Facebook

Education: B.B.A., Finance and Business Administration, University of Notre Dame

Average number of hours worked per week: 80

Last book read: Lords of Finance, by Liaquat Ahamed

By Ari Nathanson



[David Basto](#)



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