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Rising Star: Michael Gantz

BY KEN BROWN

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Michael Gantz, of Dubuque, is with Limerock Springs Co. and Verena Street Coffee Co. and is a 2019 Biz Times Rising Star
Photo by: JESSICA REILLY

Michael Gantz believes in taking chances.



Gantz, along with his cousin Eric Gantz, are co-presidents of Pepsi Dubuque/Lime Rock Springs, a company with more than 100 years of service to the Dubuque area. Neither cousin believes in resting on his laurels, however.

In 2010 the cousins took a chance by co-founding Verena Street Coffee, which has quickly become a national brand. Starting a brand was a risk the cousins took, and it is the willingness to take those risks that has made Michael a strong leader.

“A great leader is one that allows his team to make mistakes,” Michael said. “As a leader you should instill the ability for the team to make mistakes, and then learn from them and make the organization better. An organization that is fearful of screwing up will never be able to reach its full potential as the greatest lessons learned are the ones from mistakes.”

Michael also is a leader in the community. He understands that volunteering in the community is an important way of giving back. He recognizes that community involvement can help him as a leader.

“Volunteering is important because it helps to keep you grounded and understand the needs of the community,” he said.

He is a board member of Opening Doors and the Boys and Girls Club, as well as the Gantz Foundation, which gives generously to numerous tri-state area nonprofits.

“With Opening Doors we are able to focus on getting help to women who suffer from substance abuse/addiction, which is a growing concern in our community as well as nationwide,” he said.

“With the Boys and Girls Club, I generally have a soft spot for children, and many of these members are not in control of their own circumstances. We provide them a safe place to spend their free time away from the streets and work to develop and foster a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives.”