



The varied career paths of these 18 exceptional young people prove that there are many ways to make a mark in your family business.

NextGens to Watch

Rising-generation members who want to contribute to their family business need relevant education and experience, but that's not all. They also must prove themselves as indispensable contributors to the enterprise.

The 18 NextGens featured here have excelled in meeting that challenge. Many have worked their way up the ladder in their family company. Others work in their family office, managing investments or philanthropy. Some are playing important roles in family governance.

Members of the NextGens to Watch Class of 2022 represent the second through the fifth generation of their family. They're based all over the United States (from Upstate New York to California's Santa Clara Valley) and beyond (Canada and Argentina).

Of those who are working in the family business, some joined right out of college or after graduate school. Others entered the family firm after college, left to attend grad school or work elsewhere, and then returned (or are planning to return) to their family firm.

Some of these rising stars didn't originally plan to work for their families. "As with many things in life, I didn't realize the immense opportunity and privilege I had right in front of me until I had experienced life after college and in the professional world away from the comforts of home," says Alexandra Justis of Doyle Security Systems, based in Rochester, N.Y.

Others, like Sarah Fultz of Post Leasing & Sales in Knoxville, Tenn., planned to join the family business since childhood. Even so, Fultz wanted to make her own way within the company. She found a role where she could thrive — one that involves "wearing multiple hats while tackling new challenges each day."

“I feel immense pride in being the first female family member to work at Meritex, particularly in a historically male-dominated industry and position. Through my work in industrial real estate, I hope I can demonstrate to my female family members, as well as the younger generation of women in business, that it is an asset to lead with kindness and to find strength in being yourself. I am grateful every day to be a member of my family and my family business, and strive to make both proud.”

JULIAN BOYD, 32

Second generation

D'Bo's Inc., Memphis, Tenn.

Julian is the president of Boyd Franchising and a co-owner of D’Bo’s Inc. The business was started almost 33 years ago by his parents, David and Leticia Boyd, and was the first hot wing restaurant to open in Memphis. Julian also serves as the director of sales for Boyd Foods Inc., which houses the proprietary products for the restaurants.

In 2011, D’Bo’s took first place in the “creative sweet” category at the National Buffalo Wing Festival in Buffalo, N.Y. In its January 2016 issue, *Men’s Journal* included D’Bo’s in its listing of “Where to Find the Best Chicken Wings in the U.S.”



Julian graduated from Morehouse College in 2012 and worked at Raytheon Corporation for four years. He earned an MBA in 2018 from UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School in Chapel Hill, N.C., focusing on entrepreneurship and family business. After graduation, he partnered with Rising Phoenix LLC to consult and manage the growth of several franchise concepts in the Rising Phoenix business portfolio. From 2019 to 2021 he partnered with The Original Hot Dog Factory as the vice president of franchise sales and helped add more than 20 franchise partners to the network in less than a year. He also partnered with Hattie Marie’s Texas BBQ on a two-store deal in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

“Julian Boyd was a memorable MBA student,” says Lauren Willets, assistant director of student and alumni engagement at UNC Kenan-Flagler’s Family Enterprise Center. “While in school and deciding if he was going to return to

D’Bo’s Wings, Julian had an internship with a global franchise company. He wanted to learn from a company that had figured out franchising. He saw franchising as an opportunity for his family.

“Julian is a charismatic leader, but he is also always focused on his own self-development. He found one of the best coaches in the industry to work with over the past few years during the global pandemic to make sure he was ready for the company to grow when the time was right. The time is now right, and Julian has the energy to help lead this restaurant founded by his parents in the early 1990s into a nationwide recognizable brand.”

“My passion for my family’s business stems from the strong foundation that was set for my brothers and myself from our parents,” Julian says. “I grew up almost every day of my life seeing my parents working for themselves in the family business, so I knew what my path would likely be, but I knew I wanted it to be different.

“I always take pride in our humble beginnings as a Black-owned business that started from a food truck to as many as five locations open simultaneously. We’ve now franchised locations in Detroit (Southfield), Mich., and Memphis and are also going to open in Winter Haven, Fla. (near Orlando); Chicago; Atlanta; Olive Branch, Miss.; and a few other markets.

“I’m proud that I am taking this business to new heights through franchising, and we are actively looking for those looking to do so! My main focus is helping small businesses grow through franchising. To date, I’ve worked on over 40 franchise deals, and it’s truly been a blessing to grow my family’s brand as well.”

BROOKE STUTSMAN, 26

Fourth generation

Eldon C. Stutsman Inc., Hills, Iowa

Brooke is part of the fourth generation of Eldon C. Stutsman Inc., a diverse agribusiness located in Hills, Iowa. She graduated from Iowa State University in 2017 with a degree in agricultural studies and a minor in general business. That September she took a position at the family business in the human resource department. To solidify her knowledge in human resource regulation and compliance, she obtained her MBA with a human resource management focus in May 2021.

Brooke has led efforts in developing a comprehensive onboarding process, implementing efficiency-boosting software and establishing outreach activities with local youth interested in pursuing careers in the agriculture and transportation sectors. In addition to the big-picture items, she works on benefit administration, processing payroll, employee wellness and employee relations.

Brooke is a leader, along with other members of the fourth generation, in creating and implementing a family constitution. She felt this was important to have in place as the business and the family continue to grow. Through monthly meetings, she and other fourth-generation leaders have moved the needle on governance, philanthropy, company mission and core values and have tackled