

Achievers Under 40 profile: Craig Immel

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Many professionals contribute to leadership, community, and notable causes. And, while Craig Immel is noted for all of these, his peers say it is his commitment to economic, environmental and community sustainability that is his true strength.

"He has tirelessly worked to help move the green building and renewable energy industry forward here in Oklahoma," said Terrell Hoagland, Jones Design Studio's director of sustainability.

A native of Fayetteville, Arkansas, Immel started his career as a GIS mapping editor and moved through various careers including snowboard instructor, river guide, homebuilder and LEED consultant before opening Steady State Renewable Energy Co. in 2011 to focus on the design and construction of geothermal heat pump systems. And, while his career path has changed faces over the years, his goals and ethical aspirations remain the same.

"My work and lifestyle these days (are) rooted in my long-held interest in exploring our natural world while also trying to leave things a little better than I found them," Immel said. "My goal is to help people improve their quality of life by adopting new ways of living within the limits of the ecosystems we are part of."

One of the ways Immel helps the environment and builds a stronger community is through the U.S. Green Building Council's Oklahoma chapter.

"His contributions to the U.S. Green Building Council Oklahoma chapter have been immeasurable. After establishing our infrastructure and controls, he was then willing to step into the chapter chair position and has done amazing work to push us forward as an organization," Hoagland said. "We could never have done all the great things we have so far with sustainable construction in this state without him."

Immel also works with the Public Service Company of Oklahoma's Power Forward Energy Efficiency Program, providing energy-efficiency and renewable energy assessments, strategies and resources for PSO's business and residential customers.

"His passion for sustainability and renewable energy prompted (Immel) to start his own business. He has overcome numerous barriers to build a viable green business in Oklahoma where environmental awareness is low," said Kerry Rowland, commercial and industrial energy-efficiency coordinator for PSO.

Currently, Immel is developing innovative financing strategies to help residential, commercial and school entities pay for the installation of cost-saving geothermal systems, along with other renewable energy and efficiency solutions.

Immel enjoys spending time with his 2-year-old daughter, Sylvie. He also likes to snowboard, mountain bike, camp and travel as much as possible.

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