

# BLACKSTONE POST



The Voice of Blackstone Security



The Secret to Our Success is in Our People

1st Quarter, 2021

## Veterans Helping Veterans

# Blackstone Sponsors Disabled Vet's Effort to Spotlight Plight of Disabled Veterans Nationwide

**Phoenix, Ariz.** – How high is up?

Ask Danielle Skranak. The reigning Miss Gilbert, Arizona 2020 has been to a mountaintop – literally. The mountain she scaled is named South Sister, a 10,363-foot hike in Bend, Oregon. Also known as Charity, South Sister is the third highest mountain peak in Oregon.

And Danielle is still climbing, still waiting for the “high point” to happen in a life already brimming with individual achievements despite the odds against her. “Many of the things I have accomplished in life are not the cherry on top of my life,” she says. “These are all building blocks to something greater.”

And that something greater? If Danielle has it her way, it would be eventually taking



Danielle Skranak

up residence at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. “I’d love to be President of the United States,” says the Gilbert-raised activist. “That is my ultimate goal. It has always been that calling, that guiding light because I have been through a lot. I have been through the wringer, and I want to translate what I’ve been through into something where I can help change the world.”

The wringer for Danielle began when she was living in Glendale with biological parents who suffered from alcoholism and bipolar disorder. She was bullied and victimized by racial discrimination as an Anglo member of a bi-racial family, and she experienced homelessness. “It’s surreal to me because my family still lives there. I know it’s incredibly difficult to come out of poverty and because of that I want to

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## He Epitomized the Blackstone Spirit

# Blackstone Pioneer Tony Browe Succumbs to Cancer

**Houston, Texas** – In what was probably the only battle he ever lost, Tony Browe, Vice President of Blackstone Security Services of Texas, Inc., lost his gallant fight with pancreatic cancer on November 28, 2020, six days after his 54th birthday. And for those who knew him, Tony’s passing was a fitting exclamation point to a year filled with forgettable events and experiences.



Tony Browe

But unlike 2020, those who knew the blustery military veteran are remembering Tony for all the positives he brought with him – his professionalism, his presence (when Tony was in the room, you knew it) and a crusty exterior that masked the soft center of a caring individual with a sense of humor that was just as offbeat as his fascination with reptiles. An avowed herpetologist, Tony had the tattoos and the pets to prove it.

While stationed in Phoenix, Tony kept a pet boa constrictor in an aquarium in his office that he used to entertain visitors by feeding it mice.

Everyone who knew him has a “Tony Story.”

Blackstone Chief Operating Officer Jeanne Croft tells a

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## POST ORDERS

Dan Swindall, President & CEO

### 2021, Here Comes an Improved Blackstone!

Happy New Year, Everyone!

I sincerely hope your holidays were as joyful and fulfilling as you hoped they would be.

To 2021 I say, welcome! We look forward to working with you! To 2020, I say, "Whew! Made it through!" But 2020 can serve us well if we apply the right metaphors: There's 20-20 hindsight. Then there's 20-20 foresight, where we clearly see the future ahead.

I choose the latter.

That being said, we have some exciting news about Blackstone that will make our services even more efficient. I have decided to split my role as President and CEO. I have assigned the duties of company President to Mike Quattrocchi so that I may concentrate my efforts more on the role of Chief Executive Officer. Jeanne Croft, our current Executive Vice President, is our new Chief Operating Officer (COO). Croft, whose strength is customer satisfaction, will work closely with the CEO to define Blackstone's vision going forward, set policy and oversee the company's overall performance. Lisa Miller has assumed the role of Vice President for Business Development where she will oversee Blackstone's national sales efforts.

Ken Vandiver is our Corporate Training Coordinator and is the contact point for all company training. Ryan Swindall is the Division Manager for our Phoenix Division 32. Alex Beristain is our new Division 34 Manager in Tucson.

These moves are part of our ongoing effort to provide our clients with the best possible service. Assigning the right people to the right positions is essential to continuing the quality service our clients expect and deserve.

2021, here comes an improved Blackstone!

I've saved the last line for our employees, because at Blackstone the bottom line is, as always,

"The secret to our success is in our people."

## Tony Browe

*Continued from Page 1*

story of the time the family was enjoying Easter by the backyard pool when they noticed a "huge snake" lounging near her back door. Fearing for herself and her grandchildren, she called Tony. Upon seeing the reptile, Tony ascertained that it was a female King Snake that probably had a previous owner who released it into the wilds of the Arizona desert to hunt rattlesnakes, a preferred delicacy of king snakes.

Assuring everyone that the six-foot long snake was harmless, he encouraged Jeanne's fascinated grandchildren to pet it. After-

## T-BEST Award Named for Tony Browe

**Phoenix, Ariz.** – The Fallen 33 Award, heretofore granted to the winner of Blackstone's Officer of the Year, has a new name, effective immediately. Blackstone's Officer of the Year for 2020 will receive the Tony Browe Excellence in Security Tribute, or the T-BEST award.

The new name is to honor Tony Browe, who was instrumental in helping Blackstone establish an indelible footprint in the private security industry throughout the Southwest. For almost 13 years Browe made his presence felt as the director of operations in Phoenix, the regional manager in Tucson and lastly forging new ground as Vice President of Blackstone Security Services of Texas, Inc., in Houston.

Browe passed away on November 28, 2020 after waging a heroic battle against pancreatic cancer.

In making the announcement, Blackstone President and CEO Dan Swindall called Browe a "force to be reckoned with" in the competitive security industry. "I'm just glad he was on our side," Swindall said. "His knowledge of the industry coupled with his innate ability to analyze new markets and determine client needs made Tony an invaluable resource. Clients were happy to have him and so were we. This award is now a physical representation of the memory we will all have of him."

The 33 Award was so named for the 33 private security officers who perished on 9-11 in the Twin Towers going up the stairs with other first responders looking for survivors.

Browe is the second Blackstone employee to be memorialized. The Bill Richards Memorial Scholarship Fund Award is given annually in the name of long-time employee Bill Richards, whose leadership in customer relations helped solidify Blackstone's presence in the marketplace in the early days.

ward, he draped the critter around his neck and released it into friendlier desert confines away from humans, much to the snake's and Jeanne's relief.

Croft still shudders whenever she recounts the episode. "I didn't touch it," she said after being asked to pet the snake. "I was freaked out and I said, no way!"

Croft also recalled that Tony immediately took to Blackstone when he visited the office and met everyone's pets. "He liked our

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### Blackstone Post Editorial Staff

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Dan Swindall

EDITOR: Art Gissendaner

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Bobby Holley

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Bruce Vander Jagt

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### Team Blackstone

www.blackstonesecurity.com

BLACKSTONE SECURITY SERVICES, INC.®  
PHOENIX, Ariz.

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Jeanne Croft – Chief Operating Officer

Mike Quattrocchi – President

Lisa Miller – Vice President, Bus. Development

Ken Vandiver – Corp. Training Coordinator

Ryan Swindall – Division Mgr.

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Division 54  
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OF NEVADA, INC.  
LAS VEGAS  
Division 62  
Matthew Clay – Division Mgr.

## Seeks a Degree in Criminal Justice

# Emanuel Ruiz Wins Blackstone Scholarship Award

**Phoenix, Ariz.** – Emanuel Ruiz is on a mission. The Phoenix native wants to make the world a better place to live by making it a safer place to live – for everybody – especially those in underrepresented populations.



**Emanuel Ruiz**

or had an undocumented friend staying at their house,” Ruiz explained. “I wish to help better educate and show the Latino community that police officers aren’t there to hurt us or to find out if you are documented or not but to help us and keep us safe.”

That’s the passion that prompted Ruiz to pursue a bachelor’s degree in the Criminal Justice in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University. Ruiz, who is a senior, attends classes as a part-time student while logging weekend hours at various posts in Blackstone’s Division 32 in Phoenix.

Blackstone Security Services, Inc.® is stoking that passion by naming Ruiz the 2020 winner of the Bill Richards Memorial Scholarship Award. As the winner, Ruiz will receive a \$1,000 boost to his academic pursuits. The money will be paid directly to ASU.

Ruiz said the award caught him completely off guard because while he hoped he would win he thought the competition would be tough. “I was overwhelmed and surprised by it, honestly,” Ruiz said. “Blackstone is such a big company I knew a lot of students would submit their applications.”

Ruiz, 22, said he has been with Blackstone for almost three years. He was unsure about applying at first because he was a student when he applied for the job, but things worked out.

“I can’t thank Blackstone enough for all it’s done for me and this is even more,” he said. “The experience is great because I want to go into law enforcement, and I learned how to talk to people and file reports.”

The scholarship’s namesake is the late Bill Richards, a long time Blackstone administrator whose contributions to customer service and other operational areas proved invaluable to the Blackstone mission.

Ruiz is the fifth recipient of the scholarship. Last year’s winner, Mohamad Zaid A Alloush, is using his award to study Biomedical

“I was born in Phoenix and raised in a Latino community and saw how many Latino friends and family would be victims of a crime but would fear calling the police because they had an undocumented family member

Sciences at Sam Houston State University in Houston, Texas.

In his narrative to the selection committee, Ruiz said that after he earns his undergraduate degree, he intends to join the Phoenix Police Academy to put his words into action.

“I want to be knowledgeable about how to solve problems and how to speak to my community,” Ruiz wrote. “My current community has this distrust of (police) officers, but me being Hispanic and working for law enforcement I hope to bring trust between officers and the Latino community.”

Ruiz said he isn’t harboring any notions that the task he has set before him is going to be all cake and ice cream but hopes that he can be an example for others.

“I know this is going to be a very difficult job but that is why I wish to expand my education,” his narrative continued. “I am also the oldest in a family of four siblings and I believe that furthering my education and graduating would be a good way to show my siblings that one should always strive to go to school and receive an education to not just better their lives but to help better the lives of those around them and those in society.”

Ruiz added that he hopes his siblings view his pursuit of an education as a challenge to push themselves beyond his accomplishments. “By furthering my education, I strongly believe that I will be able to make an impact with the Latino community and police officers to find a way where both are happy, and where Latinos aren’t afraid to call police officers for help,” he wrote. “I wish to eliminate that fear and the prejudice that all police officers are bad.”

Ruiz credited Blackstone with giving him the opportunity to learn many things he would not have learned working at other jobs. “Working at Blackstone taught me how to speak to customers with respect, dignity and sensitivity,” Ruiz said. “Blackstone not only offered me a job, but it gave me the experience and knowledge of how to act and to speak.”

Ruiz said he is especially grateful to Operations Manager Ken Vandiver and Scheduler John Watson for working with him to develop schedules that allowed him to attend classes and maintain the minimum hours to remain enrolled at ASU.

“I was a student when I came to Blackstone as a part-timer,” he said. “John and Ken have been very gracious with my hours so I can continue going to school and work.”

Ruiz said he will finish his degree in May and winning the scholarship was sort of an irony. “Blackstone gave me the first push to go to school and now it’s giving me the final push to finish it.”

Along with Vandiver and Watson, Ruiz offered thanks to his family and to his mentor at St. Vincent DePaul, Debbie Henschel, his academic and personal adviser.

“The individual who says it is not possible, should move out of the way of those doing it.”

Tricia Cunningham



## Mercedez Olivas

**Officer of the Quarter  
Division 32 Phoenix**

**Phoenix, Ariz.** – There is nothing quite like delivering quality service with a smile – and getting smiles in return. With Mercedez Olivas, this version of a mutual admiration society has become a way of life for her as she performs her duties as a security officer for Blackstone Security Services.

Efficiency and leadership with a smile. That's why Security Officer Olivas is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 32 in Phoenix.

"Mercedez always has a smile on her face and goes the extra mile while working," said Blackstone Director of Operations Ken Vandiver. "She gets along with everyone and is showing leadership skills at the site where she is assigned."

Mercedez has been in security for three years and with Blackstone for seven months, but time is something that this Phoenix native does not waste. "In the short time she's been with Blackstone, she has gotten several compliments from the client where she works," Vandiver said.

Olivas says the thing she likes most about Blackstone are "the amazing people I work with."

She said the aspect of her job she enjoys most is, "being able to interact with our clients and employees and bringing smiles to everyone's face."

See what we mean about the smiles?

When Olivas is not standing post, she enjoys hiking, camping and dirt-biking. Her philosophy on security: "Providing customer service, being polite and most of all (providing) security."

Congratulations, Mercedez. And thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

## Disabled Vets

*Continued from Page 1*

help other families, like mine, to achieve greater things and live a better lifestyle."

Without a doubt the most challenging trip through the wringer in Danielle's experience is the brain injury she suffered during basic training at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri.

Danielle is a Disabled American Veteran.

Not to be denied, Danielle even turned that setback into a positive when she decided to use her platform to become an advocate for Disabled American Veterans nationwide. Danielle plans to compete for Miss Arizona 2021 and eventually Miss America if her luck holds out. That would put her on the map nationally along with her program to help DAV's.

"Being a disabled veteran is hard," Danielle explained. "We need more help. There haven't been any major changes lately towards VA healthcare and assistance. We need legislative reform, more funding and more volunteers. Those three things are lacking,

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## Debra Piazza

**Officer of the Quarter  
Dallas Division 53**

**Dallas, Texas** – Security Officer Debra Piazza hit the ground running with Blackstone Security Services, Inc., so to speak. Her previous security experience in retail management made her "invaluable" in identifying potential shoplifters on the sales floor of the major retail accounts she has worked and helped train other Blackstone security officers to work, according to Division 53 Manager Edith Fikes.

Piazza's security savvy and her willingness to share that savvy with others are just a couple of the reasons why Fikes selected Piazza as Blackstone's Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 53 serving the greater Dallas Metropolitan area.

A veteran of four years in the private security industry, Piazza has spent the last 10 months with Blackstone.

Calling Piazza an asset to the Blackstone Team from Day 1 because of her years of experience, Fikes said the native of Graham, Texas was hired initially to cover the bus lobby in Denton, Texas – then the coronavirus pandemic hit. "The lobby closed down for two months and security there was suspended," Fikes explained. "But Officer Piazza was willing to work at other sites until the lobby reopened."

In the interim, Fikes said Piazza worked at a Trinity River Authority Wastewater Plant (TRA) as well as working the overnight Denton patrol for the Denton County Transit Authority (DCTA).

Most recently Piazza was instrumental in training new security officers for opening sites for a major national retail client in East Dallas and Waco, Texas. "Piazza's previous retail management experience was invaluable," Fikes said. "She was a great help with opening those accounts."

The admiration between Fikes and Piazza is mutual because the aspect of her job that she likes the most is her boss, Fikes. "She is so down to earth," Piazza says of Fikes. "She's funny and smart."

Piazza is a people person at heart and includes her coworkers among the positives of her job. "I like the people I work with," she said. "I enjoy making people smile."

When Piazza is not making people smile while serving clients on the job, she enjoys spending time with her family outdoors fishing (or pretending to fish, she says).

Debra and David, her husband of six years, have five children and four grandchildren. Debra also has three stepchildren and five grandchildren from a previous marriage, who still call her Mom.

Congratulations, Debra. And thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

"A year from now you may wish you had started today,"

Karen Lamb



## Luis Aguirre

**Officer of the Quarter  
Division 52 El Paso**

**El Paso, Texas** – Luis Aguirre is back! And he's better than he ever was. Luis is on his second tour of duty with Blackstone and the interruption doesn't seem to have done any harm. According to his supervisor, Luis has not missed a beat.

That is why Luis is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 52 in El Paso. He shares all he knows about occurrences during his shift with his supervisors and with his relief personnel.

"Luis informs me of everything he thinks I need to know," says Connie Contreras, Luis' account manager. "He writes everything on the pass down book and he calls to verify with the officer that is covering the day he is not working to see if he has any questions about what Luis wrote on the pass down book. He is always ready to help if needed."

Luis spent three years and seven months with Blackstone before leaving for personal reasons. In total, he is a veteran of five years in the private security industry. And he is happy to be back with Blackstone.

"What I like most about Blackstone is the opportunity they give me to learn something new wherever I am needed," Luis said. "I also like the opportunity to use the skills I already possess so I can be as helpful as possible with our clients."

Luis said he enjoys his job because Blackstone support is dependable. "What I enjoy most about my job is knowing that I can always rely on my Blackstone Chain of Command," he said. "I know that they are experts at what they do and that gives me peace of mind to focus and accomplish my duties."

Luis operates from a philosophy that anything can happen at anytime and anywhere. "That's why it is so important to have professional security men and women to always be on the lookout and staying vigilant for anything that might become a problem," he said. "That, I think, is what makes security important and necessary."

When he is not standing post, Luis, a bachelor, enjoys reading news articles, evening walks and watching historical documentaries.

Congratulations, Luis, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

## Tony Browe

*Continued from Page 2*

company because when he came to the office, we all had our dogs there," said Croft, who added that Tony "always called me Jeanne Mae, never just Jeanne."

Browe was a trailblazer by nature. When he returned state-side after serving in the U.S. Army abroad and owning a private security company in Ireland, he was hired nearly 13 years ago by Blackstone President and CEO Dan Swindall to oversee opera-



## Raymond Lente

**Officer of the Quarter  
Division 42 Albuquerque/Gallup**

**Albuquerque/Gallup, NM** – Raymond Lente doesn't talk much, he's all about performing on the job. That's good news to Area Manager Scott Clark and any client that Lente is assigned to. That's why Lente is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 42. To Clark, Lente is Mr. Dependable. "Raymond always goes above and beyond his duties and he's very personable," Clark said. "I have observed a number of interactions with Raymond and there is an exceedingly high level of respect."

An Albuquerque native, Lente has been with Blackstone for the entire five years he's been in the security industry and he likes both.

Lente says he likes Blackstone because management respects employees and staff support each other. But that's not all. "I like knowing that I can provide for my family," Lente said.

Clark said Lente is someone he can call on whenever a new post is started or whenever one needs to be filled at the last minute. "He has stepped up and accepted new assignments when asked and always exceeds expectations," Clark said. "Raymond always takes his duties very seriously. He is on-site to provide security for the client's staff and visitors and he demonstrates that he cares for the well-being of both."

Clark added that Lente is always ready to go the extra mile whenever needed and has called on him at various times when additional security was required for various functions and emergency situations.

Lente believes that any job worth doing is worth doing right. "I do my job right for my safety and for the best safety of others," Lente said.

That attitude suits Clark who says he never has to worry when Lente is on the job. "I know that he will perform his duties as a professional and will follow all procedures as requested by the client," Clark said.

When Lente is not on duty, he enjoys camping and fishing, but said he enjoys family time most of all. Lente and his wife, Michelle, are the proud parents of four children.

Congratulations, Raymond, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

tions in the Phoenix Division. Later, Tony was tapped to mine the southern Arizona region when Dan decided to open a division office in Tucson.

Swindall again turned to Browe as his "go-to" guy when he needed an experienced, aggressive leader to establish a permanent presence in the Houston area when Blackstone expanded there in 2013.

## Disabled Vets

*Continued from Page 4*

and because of that it's not only difficult for veterans to ask for help but it's difficult to find it as well."

Following in her ancestors' footsteps, and always looking for a challenge, Danielle joined the army when her recruiting officer told her that the traditional male-dominated jobs were opening up to females. That was her cue.



Danielle signed up to be a military police officer. Two weeks into basic training she fell during a training exercise and hit her head. After a period of misdiagnoses and the accompanying medical problems, Danielle was finally diagnosed with a brain injury at about the same time her orders came through assigning her to corrections duty at Fort Leavenworth Prison in Kansas.

Despite the situational difficulties in performing her duties created by her brain injury, Danielle completed her two-year tour of duty and received an Honorable Discharge as a Private First Class. It was then that Danielle became involved with Friends in Service of Heroes (F.I.S.H.), a non-profit group in Kansas City, that advocates for and assists disabled veterans. She brought the idea of the group from Kansas City to Gilbert, listing it as a reason to compete for Miss Gilbert.

"(Competing) had a lot to do with helping disabled veterans," she said. "I wanted to give F.I.S.H. a nationwide voice."

One of the first orders of business was for Danielle to find sponsors for her run for Miss Arizona 2021. A win there will put her in a better stead to help disabled veterans.

Enter Blackstone Security Services, Inc.<sup>®</sup>. Blackstone is a federally certified veteran-owned small business (VOSB), a designation awarded by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Center for Verification and Evaluation (CVE). Blackstone had to meet a strict set of requirements to qualify for the designation and must maintain a stringent set of conditions to remain in compliance. Blackstone's founding president and CEO Dan Swindall, who served in the US Air Force, was also a military police officer.

Blackstone will sponsor Danielle and her efforts for DAV's by purchasing a full-page ad in the Miss Arizona 2021 Magazine. Blackstone's sponsorship will benefit Danielle and the entire Miss Arizona 2021 Competition.

"When the information about Miss Skranak's undertaking came across my desk it got my attention immediately," said Blackstone Executive Vice President Jeanne Croft. "What a great cause DAV is and what a wonderful person Danielle is for championing disabled veterans throughout the state. Her courage, leadership, and her uncompromising commitment to helping her fellow veterans should serve as an inspiration to all who support America's armed forces. This sponsorship fits nicely with Blackstone's commitment to hiring veterans."

Danielle said she is thankful for all supporters but to be sponsored by a veteran-owned company is extra special. "I'm extremely thankful for Blackstone Security's support," Danielle said. "To be sponsored by a Veteran-owned business for Miss Arizona is a blessing. I strive hard to support all local businesses that support veterans and will continue to do so as Miss Arizona and as Miss

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## Tony Browe

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Swindall said that even though Browe's given name was Anthony, he always wanted to be called Tony. Like Swindall, Browe was an avid sports fan and followed his beloved Detroit Tigers and Detroit Lions as avidly as a Michigan native should. "He epitomized the spirit of Blackstone," Swindall said of his friend. He was always there when we needed him. He was a driving force that set the performance bar high, but he never asked anyone to do anything he wasn't willing to do or had not already done himself."

Swindall said that because Browe's contributions have left an indelible mark on Blackstone's legacy, he is renaming the Officer of the Year Award in Browe's honor. From here on that recognition will be known as the Tony Browe Excellence in Security Tribute or T-BEST. "I think this is a fitting tribute to the influence he had on Blackstone and on me," Swindall said. "He was a coworker who became a close friend. We exchanged "war" stories about our time in the military that only we would understand. He was a good time."

Browe also enjoyed purposely employing his sometimes-abrasive nature to elicit a rise out of people to get them motivated but was always the first in line when someone was in need or a charitable group needed assistance. Besides chairing the Arizona Private Security Professionals' Association's fundraising arm for the families of fallen private security officers for several years, Tony's

charitable ways often extended beyond the US border to Mexico and South America as he sought to sponsor sports teams to help underprivileged youth in those countries.

"Tony certainly was an acquired taste," recalled colleague Art Gissendaner. "But once you got used to the taste, it stuck, especially considering everything he brought to the table."

After becoming accustomed to Tony's antics, everyone would answer questions about Tony from new employees with the same reply: "That's just Tony being Tony."

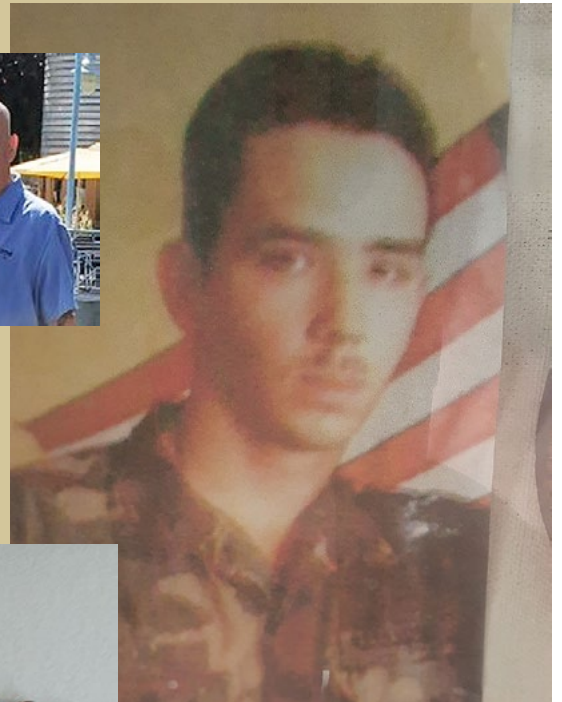
Another quality that set Tony apart from his contemporaries was his willingness to seek out and mentor employees in the security industry. Every candidate for Officer of the Quarter from Tony's divisions listed "leadership" as one of the main reasons why they enjoyed working at Blackstone.

He is mourned by his wife, Nici, and children, Carrie, Darryl and Matthew; grandsons Troy and Gage; a sister, Sherry (Mark) and his mother, Ruth Ann Browe.

A stickler for being prompt, closing the circle of life by coming and going during the same month of the year is probably how Tony had it figured all along, and probably the way he would have wanted his final Post Orders to read.

# Life with Tony Browe

Tony the entertainer



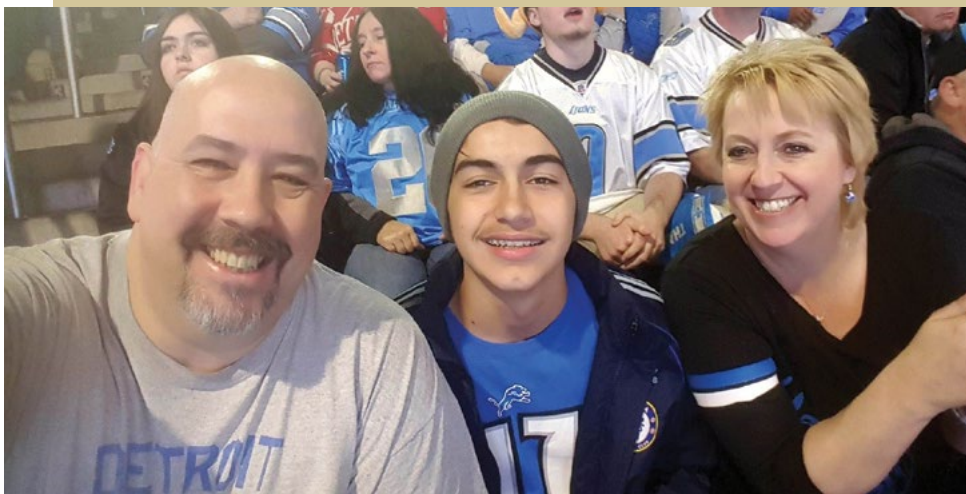
Tony in the military

Tony as a child with dad



Tony the craftsman

Tony with family





## Employee Anniversaries

### Fifteen Years

Jerry Snyder

### Eleven Years

Daniel Calderon  
Joseph Sojack

Ryan Swindall

### Ten Years

Jeffrey Fisher  
Jack Thurston

### Nine Years

Michelle Chatham  
Fausto Garcia  
James Pilon

Miguel Torres

### Seven Years

Travis Clarkson  
George Lawrence

Eddie Risely

### Six Years

Lana Callen  
Cheryl Martin

### Five Years

Koffi Afanou  
Jeremiah Butler  
Mauro Castro

Michael Edmiston  
Robert Freeman  
Aaron Thompson

### Four Years

Benito Avelarde  
Manuel Gatewood  
Robert Jones

Howard Musselman  
John Olguin

### Three Years

Betty Jo Garavito  
Emanuel Ruiz

Jose Sanchez

### Two Years

Jacob Beard  
Christopher Cervantes  
Jose Garduno  
Manny Hernandez  
Gregory Johnson  
Don Larimer  
Luis Lopez  
Walter McCain

George Mirabile  
Ian Nish  
Deven Owens  
Serban Pirvulescu  
Kristhian Santamaria  
Warren Santos  
Hernold Terrazas Sr.  
Eduardo Torres

### One Year

Andrea Arellano  
Charlene Bates  
Victor Borrego  
Charles Bradford  
Denis Carpenter  
Alex Chamberlain  
Kenyana Connor-Jones  
Talia DeFiore  
Andres Diaz  
Nathaly Duran  
Lindsey Elie  
Jesus Garcia

Tristan Gragg  
Wendy Jenkins  
Nathaniel Jones  
Roberto Lopez  
Shane Lotches  
Christopher Newcomb  
Vanessa Pablo  
Jo Ellen Palomarez  
Jose Ramirez  
Gilbert Smith  
Everett Stone  
Vern Wilson

## Disabled Vets

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America. Thank you, Blackstone Security!"

Even though life has been an uphill climb for the 25-year-old since her accident, Danielle has gotten everywhere she has wanted to go. She is currently a paralegal at Radix Law, PLC, a Scottsdale based law firm. Her goal is to earn a Juris Doctorate and become the next elected female senator from Arizona. There's more: among other milestones, Danielle is a graduate of Arizona State University; a spokesperson for the Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona; the Communications Liaison for the Town of Gilbert's Veteran's Advisory Board; the Affiliate Coordinator for the Arizona Foundation for Women's Young Professionals Board and the spokesperson the new USS Arizona – a Virginia Class Submarine. While on active duty, Danielle was hand-picked for the Presidential Security Detail and was one of the first women to work security inside Fort Leavenworth Prison. And she did all this after her brain injury.

A win at the Miss Arizona competition would mean \$10,000

in scholarships, which Danielle says she will need for her post-graduate studies and punch her ticket to the Miss America competition. But Danielle says it would also further enable her to gain some satisfaction from her altruistic nature.

"My life has always been centered on helping others, though I wasn't able to serve my country for the twenty years as I hoped, I'm thankful that I can serve in a different way – as Miss Gilbert," she said. "Even if I help just one person in this role, it's all worth it."

For the record, Danielle said there has been a Miss America who was deaf and a Miss America with autism, but there has not been a Miss America who is a military veteran with a brain injury – yet.

"Opening that door would be great, because when you leave military service, it's hard." Danielle said. "You feel disconnected from your family and the world. This is therapeutic for me as I enter back into the civilian world."

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