

## movers & shakers

A look at the people behind the numbers in area business:



### **JOSHUA WERT** SABES JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

**Title:** CEO

**Age:** 43

Joshua Wert had merged his business and entrepreneurial experience with his passion for community service in his new role as CEO of the Sabes Jewish Community Center in St. Louis Park. It's a perfect fit, Wert said,

because the organization touches many lives through its 32 programs and because the center can benefit from his skills and the strategic vision he will help develop and carry out there.

"One of the opportunities we have here at the Sabes JCC is to re-articulate the role we play now and in the future, both in the Jewish community and the broader community," Wert said. "That's one of my key objectives for my first year here."

The center operates an Early Childhood Center and offers programs and services in health and fitness, recreation, arts, senior services, after-school programs and day camps. It has 56 full-time and 227 part-time staff members. In recent months, it has expanded its childhood center, launched a KidsFit Club and developed additional services for people with disabilities.

Wert previously worked as chief operating officer at Black Ridge Oil & Gas in Minnetonka and is the former president of Copycats Media in Minneapolis. He has an MBA and law degree from the University of Minnesota and began his career as a management consultant with McKinsey & Co.

#### **Q How does your role at a not-for-profit organization compare to your for-profit work?**

**A** They're very similar. The one thing that's unique in my role here that would be expected in for-profit but not necessarily in not-for-profit is to apply rigorous professional business skills and best practices to the organization. That covers everything from being very performance oriented to being data driven and very analytical in the way we solve problems. Defining what success looks like and measuring success.

#### **Q What kind of reaction did your move to the nonprofit side generate?**

**A** People who know me well said it's a perfect fit. There's a trend of businesspeople going into the nonprofit sector and adding a lot of value. I think we've evolved today where businessmen and women coming into, or out of, nonprofits is part of the phases of your career.

#### **Q What would you like people to know about Sabes?**

**A** We are very inclusive. We serve the entire community. That's both the whole spectrum of people within the Jewish community and many members and stakeholders in the broader community. That runs along the whole spectrum of faiths and ages, people from different backgrounds and perspectives of politics and socioeconomic backgrounds. That differentiates our organization and we're really proud of that.

TODD NELSON