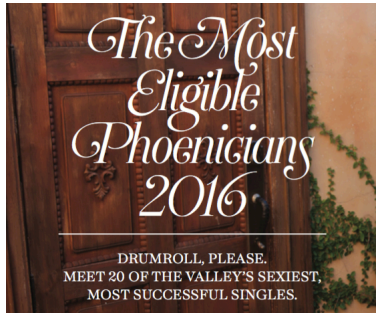


Most Eligible Phoenicians 2016

Written by Karah Van Kammen

Friday, 12 February 2016 11:56 - Last Updated Friday, 12 February 2016 15:02



Interviews by Melissa Larsen

Photography by Cori Roberts

Shot at The Royal Palms Resort & Spa, A Destination Hotel



Travis Shumake

31, GENERAL MANAGER OF CITYSCAPE RESIDENCES, FOUNDER OF DOWNTOWN PHOENIX NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, PHILANTHROPIST [@TRAVIS SHUMAKE](#)

What is your dream date? An urban night on the town. Start with martinis at Durant's, dinner at Blue Hound overlooking Central Avenue, then head to the Herberger for a show, and finish with a nightcap at Hanny's.

What do you seek in a partner? Consistency and reliability. I'm all about loops and free-falls. I just need to know the ride is going to come to a safe and complete stop at the end.

Do you hope to get married one day? #tbd. A year ago, I would have told you I want a black-tie wedding at the Biltmore. My desire to be a father now supersedes my need for a traditional marriage.

Jaime Cerreta

39, KTVK CHANNEL 3 "GOOD MORNING ARIZONA" ANCHOR/REPORTER [@CERRETANEWS](#)

What is your dream date? I'm picturing two seats up against a big picture window. People are rushing by outside. Inside, we are sharing a cheese plate, and the conversation is flowing. A true connection and unbridled communication are two beautiful things.

What is the most romantic thing you've done for a partner? I'm more of a baker than a cook so when I made a full-course meal for a boyfriend, he was in shock. He was so stunned I went through the effort, and I was so worried we'd get sick from the meal.

Who is your celebrity crush? Hmm...that Tim Tebow fella is pretty cute.

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Darleen Santore

40, FOUNDER OF COACH DAR WELLNESS AND LIFESTYLE REDESIGN [@THECOACHDAR](#)

What is the most romantic thing you've done for a partner? I arranged to have all of his friends fly in for a surprise 30th birthday party. I had a special guest come, "the Godfather," to say a few words (he was from New York and I am Italian—I had to). It was hilarious. Then I got dressed up and came out to the party as Marilyn Monroe to sing "Happy Birthday, Mr. President" as his last name was the name of a former president. It was a blast.

What can you offer a potential mate? The coolest best friend ever who will do lots of different things with him from going to sporting events, to watching them at home, to attending concerts, to hiking, to digging deep and having meaningful conversations, to dressing up and going out for a night on the town, to laying low and watching a movie. Point being, someone who is fun, flexible and passionate about doing life together.

Who is your celebrity crush? Jimmy Fallon because he's hilarious, can make everyone comfortable, can break out in rap and dance, and he's just great at what he does. Derek Jeter because he was top of his game, he led with integrity, he stayed below the radar on his personal life, and he gives back. Ryan Reynolds because he can be so funny, sweet but then can turn into a superhero and take charge.

Rachit Kumar

33, RADIATION ONCOLOGIST

[@RACHITKUMARM](#)

Tell me about your day-to-day. Most of my daytime hours are spent at work from about 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., usually caring for my patients but also teaching medical students at the University of Arizona, performing research to improve our ability to fight cancer, and participating in local and national cancer-related committees. On the evenings and weekends, I like to stay active. I exercise, play sports and hike. I also love to travel and make it a habit to visit a new destination every year. Finally, I find time with friends and family invaluable, and I try to maximize these interactions, including recently joining a new book club which has led to many other life adventures.

What do you seek in a partner? A complex answer to a fairly short question: a person who loves my many faults, is not afraid to call me out, recognizes their own weaknesses and works to improve them, is driven to make both their own and others' lives better, and works to build strong relationships with people around them.

What is the most romantic thing you've done for a partner? I planned a 24-hour trip to Rome that was supposed to be fairly simple. It turned into one of the strangest trips possible including escaping from angry Roman shop owners, trying (and almost failing) to find the entrance for a Vatican tour at the 11th hour, and navigating the most treacherous staircase we had ever seen in a sixth-century Catholic monastery while hauling luggage. Despite the craziness, it was incredibly romantic, fun and meaningful for both of us.

Nora Lundquist

28, DIRECTOR OF JET CARD SALES

[@LADYBOSSLUXURY](#)

Tell me about your day-to-day. I have been in the private jet industry for 10 years now so I spend a lot of time educating my clients and prospects on aviation so they can make the best decision for themselves and their companies. When I do have free time, I enjoy cooking, hiking, traveling and reading. I get out to Cali a lot to surf. I love being active and am outside as much as possible. I just bought a house, so I am

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working on that and I am always delving into something new, whether it be a business idea or a new hobby. I love to learn, check out new restaurants and go on fun adventures.

What can you offer a potential mate? My parents have been an excellent example of what love is. They have been married for 35 years now and are still going strong. I believe that love is not just an emotion but a choice, and it is not always easy. I am fiercely loyal, supportive, loving and caring. I want to be a part of a power couple and, therefore, will challenge and inspire my other half. I also welcome individuality and know that you need to have your separate time and hobbies as well. As much as I am independent, I am a nurturer at heart and love to make sure my mate is taken care of and is happy. I am lighthearted, passionate and love to laugh.

Who was your first love? My dad. He is my hero!



Erik Merkow

48, FOUNDER OF AZ FOOD & WINE, VP OF CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT OF GOLDWATER INSTITUTE, VP OF MARKETING OF GIGI'S PLAYHOUSE [@ERIKMERKOWPHOTO](#)

Tell me about your day-to-day. I love to explore new places, restaurants, food and patios. I'm always looking for new dishes to cover for azfoodandwine.com. I love to cook, especially for someone who likes to be in the kitchen (my sous chef) listening to music and refilling our glasses. I typically run four miles a day. If there's a beautiful sunset happening, you most likely will find me pulled over on the side of the road capturing it (same for a great lightning storm, but I tend to chase those).

What do you seek in a partner? Looking for a beautiful smile, big heart and partner in remedial crimes to share a glass of wine with at the end of every day. Someone who's active, loves experiencing new foods, wine and drinks. Someone who is honest and loving and wants to give as much as she wants to be spoiled. I want to find someone who knows what true love is and is looking for their best friend and the one they can't keep their hands off of. The person who's on the other side of the door that gives you butterflies when you first meet...and 30 years later.

What can you offer a potential mate? I'm a fun, loving, kind, adventurous, wannabe chef, passionate, respectful, car-door-opener, flower-deliverer, wine-drinker, concert-goer, runner, Cards fan, photographer, entrepreneur, fun, laid-back, beach-lover, Californian, shopper, dad, best friend, provider, foodie, kisser and lover. So, a world filled with fun, happiness, passion and an abundance of love.

Bob Stump

44, CHAIR OF PHOENIX OPERA, COMMISSIONER OF ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION [@BOBSTUMP](#)

What is the most romantic thing you've done for a partner? Flying to Shanghai on relatively short notice to have a great Shanghaiese dinner and watch the sun set over the Huangpu River from the highest building in China.

What can you offer a potential mate? Financial and emotional stability; a partnership based on humor and love and tolerance for our mutual imperfections; and a devotion to making her dreams—career or otherwise—a reality. Also, I can fix the roof.

Who is your celebrity crush? Former Metropolitan Opera soprano Lei Xu. I saw her perform as a "flower maiden" at the Met. What an artist.

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Cyndie Turtoro Verity

55, CREATIVE PRODUCER/MULTIMEDIA ARTIST @CYNDIEVERITY

What is your dream date? A dream date is just that. It can't be planned or purchased, no amount of money or means can create it. It's the unexplainable magic that happens between two people. It's when you look forward to it all day with anticipation and realize halfway through that you lost all sense of time and space. And suddenly you realize you don't ever want to be anywhere else in the world.

What can you offer a potential mate? Wardrobe? A sense of humor, a positive outlook and independence of thought, not life.

Who was your first love? My children. My daughter would be the first, followed by her brother.

Kelley Primc

28, MARKETING COORDINATOR FOR CAPITAL MARKETS, BMX RACER @ [_KELLEYSLIFE](#)

Tell me about your day-to-day. During the weekdays I'm extremely busy creating and designing materials for my awesome job. If I'm not at my desk it's because I'm running around town uncovering all the amazing amenities Phoenix has to offer. After work, I like to unwind and have a glass of wine at any local hot spot or go ride my favorite BMX track to end the day. I like to spend time with friends and family, travel as much as possible, drink good coffee and delicious drinks, online shop and do anything competitive.

What can you offer a potential mate? I can offer a lot of love, laughs and adventure. Even though I have to be tough for my BMX racing, I'm really all about putting others before myself. It's important to me that people around me are having as much fun as I am.

Do you hope to get married one day? Definitely! I've been fortunate enough to travel and experience a lot, and I can't wait to share that with someone for the rest of my life. So one day when we can't travel or shut down the local bar, we'll have plenty to laugh about.

Harper Babin

26, MEDIA HOST, LULULEMON ATHLETICA KEY LEADER @[HARPERBABIN](#)

What is your dream date? My dream date—that's tough! What I do know is I'd love for the guy to take total charge and plan a date from start to finish. Taking the time to put such genuine thought into something for me is enough. A bonus would be if he picked out an outfit for me to wear for the date; I've always thought that'd be such a fun, flirty surprise! Nice touch to set the excitement for the date ahead.

What do you seek in a partner? As cliché as it sounds, a best friend for life. I want the fun person I can travel with and go out with our friends, but I also want that person who I can trust, lean on and ultimately support one another 100 percent in our daily life decisions. Oh, and he's got to be a true gentlemen.

Who is your celebrity crush? It's always been a tie between Justin Timberlake and Derek Jeter.

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Chris Thompson

OWNER/DESIGNATED BROKER OF ONSITE REALTY

What do you seek in a partner? Fun. That's really my only criteria. I want to have fun with no drama.

What is the most romantic thing you've done for a partner? That's a tough one to narrow down. I'm actually a pretty romantic person. I think doing little things every day is more important than just one big blowout.

What can you offer a potential mate? See previous question. I'm a good Midwest kid, hardworking, honest, and I'm not your typical Old Town douchebag. Can I say that word?

Steve Hanson

43, ENTREPRENEUR, GLOBAL HEALTH & WELLNESS INFLUENCER, ARTS ADVOCATE [@STEVE_HANSON3](#)

What is your dream date? My dream date would combine the things I love: travel, art, music and food. The date should be thoughtful but also allow for spontaneity. Maybe we could pick three cities to put into a hat and then draw the one where we will go.

What do you seek in a partner? Honesty. Confidence. Dedication. The ability to be honest, direct and open with your thoughts and feelings. Being confident with style and substance. An unrelenting dedication for never giving up on each other.

Do you hope to get married one day? Absolutely. There's nothing better than being devoted to your best friend and lover. It is the ultimate.

Shannon Campbell

45, WARDROBE STYLIST, FASHION EDITOR, PERSONAL SHOPPER, TV PERSONALITY, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

[@SHANNONSTYLIST](#)

Tell me about your day-to-day. I have a full-time job as an executive assistant to a busy CEO at a pharmaceutical company (PruGen Pharmaceuticals). When I'm not doing that, you can see me doing occasional fashion segments on Fox 10 News, talking about the latest fashion trends, etc. Or I am running around town pulling clothing for the next magazine I am styling. Also, I'm picking my son up at school. And maybe planning a big fashion show. Definitely very busy, but so blessed because I get to do so many things I love. I wouldn't want it any other way! I love to spend time with my son and friends. I love the occasional happy hour libation. And weekend getaways. I love riding my bike in the park.

What can you offer a potential mate? I am very independent and successful. I am a little more seasoned due to my age, so have a lot of life lessons under my belt. People say I'm really funny and I probably have one of the biggest hearts out there. Very caring, affectionate, and loyal.

Who was your first love? That would have to be my dad. I have always been a daddy's girl. Sadly, he just passed away in December. He was my best friend, and I'm still dealing with the realization that he is gone. Anyone I meet has tough shoes to fill. He was an amazing man.

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Dan Bowman

38, PROJECT MANAGER AT DREWETT WORKS, PARTNER AT ACTIVE MEDIA SOLUTIONS, PRESIDENT OF SCOTTSDALE LEAGUE FOR THE ARTS [@THEDANBOWMAN](#)

What is your dream date? I would have to say my dream date would be a fun private island adventure. Do some exploring, take a boat ride back to an amazing restaurant on the beach where after dinner we would grab a bottle of wine and sit in the sand watching the ocean waves come in. Having the right person there with me is what would truly make it a dream.

What do you seek in a partner? I really like someone who is educated, driven, compassionate and funny. Most of all, I am always drawn to someone who is passionate about learning, passionate about giving, passionate about family, passionate about anything. When someone is passionate, they give so much of themselves, and it really shows me what matters most to them.

What can you offer a potential mate? I am intelligent, driven and have a wicked sense of humor. I have always been a giving and supportive person. Once I am in a relationship, I give everything of myself to that person. I have always had the desire to create a life with someone in the manner that works well for both of us. There is something to be said about creating the life you want.

Michael Banovac

26, MANAGING PARTNER OF RMB LUXURY REAL ESTATE, INTERNET ENTREPRENEUR [@MILLDATEDOCTOR](#)

What is your dream date? My dream date would be more like a dream trip, so it probably wouldn't be the first or second date. I love Southern France and Italy. One of my favorite romantic spots would be drinks at Chateau Eza in Eze, France, as the sun begins to set. There is a table on their private patio that cascades over the Mediterranean 1,300 feet above the sea that will take anyone's breath away.

What can you offer a potential mate? Fun! I am so focused on success during much of the week that when I am with someone I care about, I love the escapism of food, laughter, passion and travel.

Do you hope to get married one day? If the right person came along, I would seriously think about it. Marriage is such an important commitment that I think people treat it so trivially these days. I am certainly in no rush by any means, but I love the idea of respecting, loving and growing old with someone.



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K?m Quintero

31, TV METEOROLOGIST ON "GOOD MORNING ARIZONA," "GOOD EVENING ARIZONA" AND 3TV NEWS AT 9P [@KIMQUINTERO](#)

What is your dream date? A hike in Sedona or Grand Canyon, followed by relaxing at a spa, then dinner and wine alfresco...with maybe an outdoor concert under the stars.

What do you seek in a partner? A sense of humor is a must. Honesty, willingness to be physically active with me, able to communicate what's on his mind, driven and goal-oriented, easy-going, able to make and follow through with plans, someone who's affectionate, thoughtful and kind. He also should take care of himself physically and mentally. I'm a very independent person, but I want a man in my life who will still look out for me. I'd like to think I'm able to offer all those traits in return.

Who is your celebrity crush? Jimmy Fallon for tall, dark and funny. Cristiano Ronaldo for tall, dark and athletic. Hugh Jackman because he gets even better with age.

Shannon Beaver

27, PRODUCER OF THE JOHNPAY AND RICH MORNING SHOW [@SEBEAVER](#)

What is your dream date? I like casual dates. Meeting someone for happy hour and having a few drinks is ideal. Honestly, the dream date to me would be having a great connection with someone. I could stay on a date for hours as long as there is great conversation.

What is the most romantic thing you've done for a partner? I planned a trip to a winery for an anniversary. It was nice. We stayed in Cottonwood and drank great wine.

Who is your celebrity crush? Joseph Gordon- Levitt. He's a major babe who can act and sing. Love him!

Darcy Olsen

44, CEO OF GOLDWATER INSTITUTE [@DARCYSOLSEN](#)

Tell me about your day-to-day. Most mornings start when the moon is up with a run on the canal or yoga and are non-stop until my little ones (ages 4, 3 1/2 and 2) fall asleep. On any given day, I move between strategic leadership and public appearances at work to finger painting, gardening and dancing with the kids at home. Elton John is my go-to mood lifter, and my latest obsession was The Last Viking.

What do you seek in a partner? I'm looking for the kind of person I'm raising my children to be: trustworthy, helpful, friendly, self-reliant, mentally alert and physically strong.

What can you offer a potential mate? You won't have any pressure to have children because I already went out and got three of them.



Bo Robert Patrick

30, OWNER/AUCTIONEER AT FIDELITY STATE SERVICES, LLC

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What do you seek in a partner? Confidence, manners, style, educated and someone who enjoys being noticed. I love crowds, events and people, so I have always wanted to be with someone that stands beside me, not behind me. I want the confident gal who likes to go out and have a good time but is still a great woman and wants to have a family as well.

What is the most romantic thing you've done for a partner? I was dating a gal from Northern Arizona University, and I told her to drive down to Phoenix. Being a gentleman, I booked her a hotel (for herself). When she arrived, there was a wrapped pair of cowgirl boots in her room, and I told her what time to be ready. I picked her up and took her to the last George Strait concert. We went country dancing after, and I dropped her back at her hotel that night.

What can you offer a potential mate? Honesty, trust, confidence and always something new! I have worked very hard to get where I am so I have a nest to live a good life and experience new things with a woman, though I am not looking for someone that just wants to be a kept woman.

Jason Sani

30, NUTRITIONIST/OWNER OF ACTIVE MIND & BODY [@JASONSANI](#)

Tell me about your day-to-day. I get to do the things that I love all day: playing with food and helping people enhance their health and energy. My days bring me variety from working with clients and computer logistics with a lot of work around food. In my free time, I'm trying to escape the digital world by getting outdoors and challenging myself physically and mentally. Usually music is involved; whether it's dancing, live music, cooking or chilling out in a yoga class.

What can you offer a potential mate? Good cooking, never-ending smiles, nasty dance skills and stimulating conversation are just the tip of the iceberg.

Who was your first love? College relationship. Surprisingly, we met at a bar. So there is hope.