

LARSEN JAY

Founder/CEO, Random Acts of Flowers

Two seconds and a freak accident in July 2007 changed the trajectory Larsen Jay's life forever. A TV and film producer for nearly 15 years, Larsen suffered a near-fatal fall from a ladder that left him battered, broken, and bruised. During his long hospitalization after the accident, the influx of floral arrangements to his room at the University of Tennessee Medical Trauma Center boosted his spirits and helped with his recovery. Those healing flowers also seeded the idea for Random Acts of Flowers; and, in fact, the organization's first, unofficial delivery of hope and encouragement was straight from his hospital room. From there, his idea has blossomed into a nationwide movement.

After graduating from the University of Tennessee in 1998, Larsen moved to Hollywood and became entrenched in the film industry. His credits include commercials for MCI and Denny's; sporting events with Nike; and feature films like *Universal Soldier*, *Madison*, *Big Fat Liar*, and the Academy Award-winning *Erin Brockovich*.

Larsen left Los Angeles, CA after years of experience at the top film studios and returned to Knoxville, TN where he created more than 200 hours of cable network programming for Scripps Network's DIY Network in less than three years. He then struck out on his own, founding DoubleJay Creative, an independent, full-service visual media company specializing in feature films, documentaries, television specials and series, commercials and educational media.

During that time, Larsen devoted considerable time and energy to community endeavors in Knoxville, including deep engagement with Leadership Knoxville. He also founded Center City Events, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoted and producing special events in and around downtown Knoxville, which introduced the *Daddy Daughter Dance* (now hosted by the Girl Scouts), the *East Tennessee Chili Cook-Off* (now supporting Second Harvest Food Bank) and the Market Square ice skating rink, Holidays on Ice (now an official City of Knoxville tradition).

Now, Larsen dedicates himself to serve others as Founder and CEO of Random Acts of Flowers, managing both the workings of the National Headquarters in Knoxville, TN, as well as the organization's five branches nationwide. His community spirit, ambitious nature, and strong project management and organizational skills as a director and producer have allowed Random Acts of Flowers to flourish under his leadership. Less than a decade after the initial spark of an idea, RAF has grown to serve more than 200,000 vulnerable individuals across the country and has helped inspire dozens of similar organizations around the world.

Larsen is the proud recipient of major awards in both the entertainment and nonprofit spheres, including an Emmy Award, numerous Telly and Aurora Awards, the Daughter of the American Revolution's National Conversation Medal, the TN Governor's Volunteer Star Award, Healthcare Heroes Award, Go Green East Tennessee Award, and the Sertoma's Service to Mankind Award.

Larsen remains active in the East Tennessee community, sitting on multiple nonprofit boards, including The Alliance for Better Nonprofits and the University of Tennessee Medical Center's Trauma Survivors Council. In his spare time, Larsen volunteers for numerous charitable organizations, plays ice hockey, and travels with his wife, Adrian, and their two young sons.