

People to Watch: All eyes are on these leaders in 2019

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It might be an understatement to call 2018 "eventful."

After all, venture funds raised hundreds of millions of dollars, while businesses and startups may have seen the biggest funding year outside of the dot-com era. Sequestration-related austerity gave way to what analysts describe as a tech modernization powder keg in the federal government, even as the region's contractor community minted several billions-dollar marriages. The #MeToo movement came for a local celebrity chef, while a Northeast D.C. hospital made moves to shut its doors. Oh, and we brought home the Stanley Cup.

And then there was HQ2.

But 2019 promises to be no slouch either. Amazon (NASDAQ: AMZN) will begin to set up shop in Crystal City this spring and Virginia Tech will embark on its \$1 billion innovation campus in Alexandria. From Silver Spring to Anacostia, developers aim to keep the momentum going, new restaurateurs and retailers aim to add vibrant twists to their surroundings and emerging startups aim to be the next, well, Amazon.

So, who will be moving the ball forward this year? These are the D.C.-area business leaders we'll be keeping tabs on in 2019.



Doug Firstenberg, principal, StonebridgeCarras

One of the most prolific developers in the Greater Washington region, Firstenberg will see many projects kick off this year — the largest being to transform the Oakville Triangle area of Potomac Yard into the new home of Virginia Tech's \$1 billion innovation campus, as part of Northern Virginia's HQ2 coup. But also watch for construction to begin on the 1 million-square-foot mixed-use Hoffman Town Center development anchored by a Wegmans grocery store and on the \$100 million, 175,000-square-foot Bethesda Bio commercial development that's a joint project with The Donohoe Cos.

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