

This fall, Vargas returned to the company's emerging technology team as a part-time associate. She also serves as a mentor for new i.c. stars participants.

"Natalie is a rising star, innovator and woman in tech who has already made a mark and will undoubtedly become an influencer and leader in Wisconsin," i.c. stars executive director [Blanca Gonzales](#) and Molson Coors senior manager [Jonah Turner](#) wrote in Vargas's Inno Under 25 nomination.

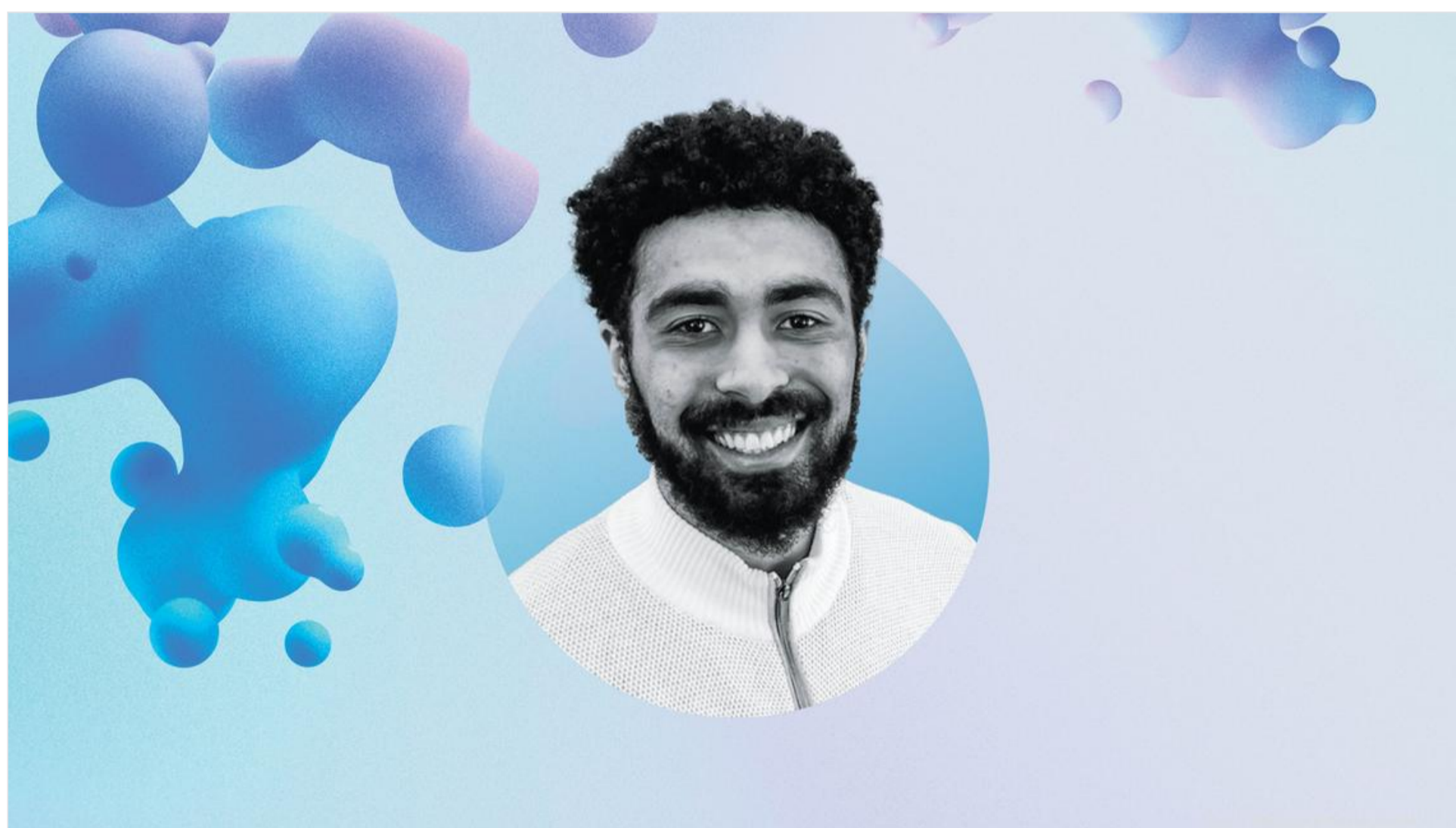
Born and raised on Milwaukee's south side, Vargas is the daughter of Mexican immigrants. Working in engineering and technology, she said she's often the only woman and Latina in the room.

"Instead of feeling discouraged, it makes me feel like, I too, deserve a seat at the table," Vargas said.

Tyrone Powell, 23

CEO of Unext

"France isn't as entrepreneurial-minded as the U.S. I didn't imagine myself in business until college."



Tyrone Powell, 23, CEO of Unext

Photo Illustration by Matt Haesly | ACBJ; Getty Images

Powell is the founder of Unext, a Green Bay startup that matches students with organizations and companies offering job shadowing experiences, internships, volunteer opportunities and employment.

Originally from France, Powell and his family moved to Wauwatosa when he was in high school. He then attended the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, where he played basketball during his freshman and sophomore years.

"France isn't as entrepreneurial-minded as the U.S.," Powell said. "I didn't imagine myself in business until college."

Powell started Unext in 2019 while at UW-Green Bay, after noticing it was difficult for him and his friends to gain real-world experience in their fields of study. When Powell did eventually find a shadowing opportunity related to his computer science major, he quickly realized it wasn't for him but soon found a passion for business and entrepreneurship.

Starting Unext during college was beneficial because Powell was able to leverage resources such as professors and student pitch competitions, Powell said. He served as president of the campus's Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization during his senior year.

Additionally, Powell tapped his other students to get feedback about Unext through surveys and to spread the word about the service, he said.

Since graduating in May, Powell has been pursuing Unext full time. He works with several part-time web developers, designers and sales representatives.

The platform has had its soft launch and plans to officially launch this fall, Powell said. It has around 200 active student users and about 60 employers on the platform, he said.

Outside of the university setting, Powell has participated in local entrepreneurship programs including The Blueprint Green Bay, a startup incubator program run by Milwaukee-based Young Enterprising Society, and FOR-M, an incubator program sponsored by the MKE Tech Hub Coalition. He recently was among a group of past FOR-M participants who were selected to receive a \$10,000 grant.

Rebecca Alcock, 26*

University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Engineering

"We need to use our resources more efficiently now more than ever."



Rebecca Alcock, 26* University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Engineering
Photo Illustration by Matt Haesly | ACBJ; Getty Images

Alcock is a doctoral student studying industrial and systems engineering at UW-Madison. She also earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in biomedical engineering there. Her ultimate goal is to tackle challenges at the intersection of climate and health, she said.

As a graduate student, Alcock worked as a Fab Fellow at the UW-Madison Makerspace where she hosted workshops and developed a prototyping curriculum. Around the same time, she was involved with Engineers Without Borders, which included volunteering in Guatemala.