

## 2014's game changers in Long Beach

## CIVIC LIFE

## MEGAN CARMICHAEL

**Age:** 33**Her role:** Helped save the iconic Seventh Street doughnut sign**Bio:** Carmichael's parents met at Cal State Long Beach in the 1970s, and both have fond memories of the doughnut above a pastry shop. Carmichael was born in Long Beach and spent 10 years living here before moving to Pasadena after her March wedding.**Why she's an influencer:** After a January article in the Long Beach Register announced that Dunkin' Donuts didn't plan to install the doughnut when it opened a new franchise at the location, Carmichael approached vendors in Retro Row to see if they wanted to champion saving the doughnut as a cause. Carmichael worked as a social media representative for the Retro Row shop owners. She and shop owner Dave Eaton, who owns in retrospect on Fourth Street, suggested saving the doughnut, and Carmichael spearheaded a social media campaign in which residents gathered to share news of the pastry's fate. Within 10 days, the Facebook page had 2,000 likes.**"I just provided a platform for the concerned citizens to get together," she said. "The residents, the merchants, individually kind of just used this Facebook page to say, 'Hey, there's a planning meeting.' I was just responsive to what they were calling for."****Her biggest challenge:** The haters. Not everyone wanted to keep the sign or see a doughnut store installed at the Seventh Street location, and some vocalized their opposition in snarky Facebook posts. Car-

KYUSUNG GONG, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Megan Carmichael rallied Long Beach to help save the iconic giant doughnut.**

michael said the campaign wasn't so much about installing a doughnut shop as preserving a local icon. "I'm neutral about what goes in the building as long as the sign goes up," she would tell them.

**Inspiration:** Dave Eaton, the Fourth Street shop owner whom Carmichael has known since high school. Seeing him grow into a small-business owner inspires Carmichael as she set out on her own, breaking away from the banking industry to run her own social media company.**What's next:** Carmichael plans to continue helping small-business owners expand their businesses and reach new target audiences through social media.

— Lauren Williams