



## Gary Erickson Founder, Owner & Co-Chief Visionary Officer Clif Bar & Company



Gary Erickson, along with his wife, Kit Crawford, is owner and co-chief visionary officer (co-CVO) of [Clif Bar & Company](#), a leading maker of nutritious and organic foods and drinks for people on the go. Though resistant to labels, Gary is nationally recognized as a visionary entrepreneur who believes there is more to business than the bottom line. With the founding of Clif Bar & Company, he created his dream job. A baker by trade, a competitive athlete and foodie at heart, Clif Bar combined Gary's love of the outdoors, cycling and great food with his passion for business and social responsibility.

As the leaders of a family- and employee-owned company, Gary and Kit developed an innovative business model that integrates social and environmental responsibility into every area of the business. Guided by Five Aspirations – *Sustaining our People, our Business, our Brands, our Community and the Planet* – Clif Bar & Company has not only achieved success in business with a double digit compounded annual growth for the past 10 years, it has also garnered national acclaim for its commitment to the environment, for nurturing employees, and for supporting important causes such as the fight against breast cancer. Gary shares this unique approach to business in his book, [RAISING THE BAR: Integrity and Passion in Life and Business: The Story of Clif Bar Inc.](#) (Jossey-Bass, 2004).

Gary started the company as a small bakery, Kali's Sweets & Savories. In 1992, the bakery introduced the first CLIF® Bar energy bars to the public. CLIF Bars are great-tasting energy bars made with a nutritious blend of organic rolled oats and wholesome ingredients for sustained energy. The name CLIF Bar pays tribute to Gary's father, Clifford, who introduced him to wilderness adventures and encouraged him to follow his passions in life.

Gary continues to find inspiration in food and the outdoors. After purchasing 130 acres of land in Napa County, Calif., he and Kit set aside 10 acres for growing food. Inspired by their experiences in Napa, they launched [Clif Family Winery & Farm](#) in 2004. Building on the success of the winery, they opened [Velo Vino](#) in 2011— a tasting room offering wine pairings and edible delights from [Gary & Kit's Napa Valley](#) as well as custom bike tours through local gardens and vineyards.

Prior to establishing Kali's and Clif Bar & Company, Gary spent a decade overseeing the design and production of bicycle saddles. His designs earned him high praise and inclusion in an exhibit at the New York Museum of Modern Art. He holds a business degree from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

An experienced outdoor adventurer, he is an accomplished rock climber, cyclist, mountain biker, skier and backpacker. He has cycled through the French and Italian Alps, trekked in the Himalayas and competed in 24-hour mountain bike events. Kit and Gary have three grown children and share a passion for adventure, travel, family backpacking trips and great food and wine.

Updated: 11/2/16 AT