



FROM LEFT Thrive co-founders Gunnar Lovelace, Kate Mulling, Sasha Siddhartha and Nicholas Green.

says. "It blew my mind how deep the demand was. And it made me wonder if there was a way to create a truly scalable platform."

Through the burgeoning L.A. start-up world, Lovelace connected with fellow serial entrepreneur Nicholas Green; co-founder of fashion site Little Black Bag, Sasha Siddhartha; and lifestyle publishing veteran Kate Mulling, who signed on as co-owners and helped to hone the concept: essentially Whole Foods meets Costco online. (Jeremiah McElwee, former head of Whole Body at Whole Foods, oversees merchandising and curates the site's deep inventory, which covers categories including beauty, nonperishable food, and cleaning—everything from E&O bubble bath to Alter-Eco dark chocolate.)

There's also a Toms-style social agenda: For every \$60 annual membership purchased, Thrive will donate a free subscription to a low-income family. Recipients will be chosen through partnerships with nonprofits. "That's what makes it so exciting," says Mulling, whose resume includes posts as L.A. editor

of Refinery 29 and editor-in-chief of Pressed Juicery's site, The Chalkboard. "We'll be able to get good, natural, wholesome organic products into the hands of people who need and want them."

Under Mulling's direction, content will include features with experts such as godfather of Primal Nutrition, Mark Sisson (also an investor and adviser), and celebrity yoga instructor and Deepak Chopra collaborator Tara Stiles.

"We want people involved who get our vision—whether it's brands, content curators, investors or advisers," says Green, citing investor and adviser Brian Lee, co-founder of The Honest Company, as an example. "People who aren't just in it because they want to strap themselves to a rocket ship, but also because they like where that rocket ship is going." *thrivemarket.com*. •

## Pure Intentions

A new e-commerce site aims to stage a healthy living revolution by cutting out the middleman **BY MELISSA GOLDSTEIN**

Entrepreneur Gunnar Lovelace traces the origins of his Culver City-based start-up (launching later this month) **Thrive Market**, an online wholesale membership club devoted to healthy products, to his upbringing on an organic farm in Ojai. It was there, amidst roaming chickens and fruit tree groves, that he was first introduced to a community-based buying model—one that could be applied to shopping list items spanning sprouted quinoa to unrefined coconut oil.

But it wasn't until relatively recently that Lovelace, who got his start in educational software, had his "aha moment" when he began organizing shopping events for natural brands via Facebook. "They were oversubscribed by 300 percent within 24 hours," he

**GOOD STUFF** A selection of products that will be available at wholesale prices when Thrive Market launches.

