

BIO BOOK

Participants of FiRe 2026

Speakers indicated by 

 **FiRe**²⁰₂₆

Future in Review Conference

FiRe2026

Reimagining Innovation in the Next World

Speakers are highlighted with 

FiReFilms

BEN ABBOTT

**SCIENTIST-SUBJECT, FiRe 2026 FEATURED FILM *THE LAKE* |
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GROW THE FLOW**



Ben Abbott is a global ecologist leading the water policy group Grow the Flow. He has a BS in watershed and Earth systems science from Utah State University and a PhD in ecology from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He works on global water security, energy systems, catchment hydrology, climate change, and Earth stewardship.

Ben's team of grassroots organizers, policy experts, and business advocates is dedicated to facilitating the first successful restoration of a saline lake.

[Note: FiReFilms selected *The Lake* (Sundance Film Festival US Documentary Special Jury Award: Impact for Change) as our 2026 FiRe Featured Film, with an exclusive screening offered only to FiRe attendees. Molly Peterson will host scientist-subject Ben Abbott and Grow the Flow managing director Jake Dreyfous for a post-screening Q&A.]

GIL ALVARADO

**CHIEF FINANCIAL AND INVESTMENT OFFICER, THE CONRAD
PREBYS FOUNDATION**



Gil Alvarado is a senior financial and investment executive with more than 30 years of experience in philanthropy, institutional investing, healthcare, and nonprofit governance. He has held executive leadership roles overseeing finance, investments, operations, risk, and compliance for large private foundations, mutual fund trusts, public benefit organizations, and healthcare-related institutions.

Gil brings deep expertise in fiduciary oversight, investment policy development, and governance design. He has managed complex, endowment, and portfolios across public and private markets and has led audit, finance, and investment functions in highly regulated environments. His leadership is characterized by a strong focus on internal controls, long-term sustainability, and alignment between financial strategy and mission impact.

An experienced board leader, Gil has served as trustee, treasurer, audit and finance committee chair, and designated financial expert for national and local organizations spanning healthcare, mutual funds, wellness, and philanthropy. He is recognized for his ability to translate complex financial and investment matters into clear, actionable guidance for boards and stakeholders.

Gil currently serves as chief financial and investment officer for the Prebys Foundation and holds a bachelor of business administration in accounting from Texas A&M University and a master of science in IT from the University of Phoenix. He is a certified public accountant licensed in the state of Texas.

ILKAY ALTINTAS

CHIEF DATA SCIENCE OFFICER, SAN DIEGO SUPERCOMPUTER CENTER,
UC SAN DIEGO



Ilkay Altintas, PhD, is the chief data science officer (CDSO) of the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC), as well as a founding faculty fellow of the Halicioglu Data Science Institute. She is also the director of the Cyberinfrastructure and Convergence Research Division (CICORE) as part of the executive team providing strategic and operational leadership to SDSC.

As its inaugural CDSO, Ilkay plans and oversees a broad range of data-science research, development, and education activities at SDSC and works as a bridge to SDSC's cross-sector campus, national and global collaborators, and partners. In addition to her administrative duties at SDSC, she is a tenured research scientist and has significant research and education activities in this role.

Ilkay is the founding director of the Workflows for Data Science (WorDS) Center of Excellence and of the WIFIRE Lab. The WorDS Center specializes in the development of methods, cyberinfrastructure, and workflows for computational data science and its translation to practical applications. The WIFIRE Lab focuses on methods for all-hazards knowledge, from data collection to modeling efforts, and has achieved significant success in helping to manage wildfires.

Ilkay holds a joint appointment at Los Alamos National Lab. She served as a member of the founding boards of two community-oriented nonprofits, the Data Science Alliance and the Climate and Wildfire Institute. Among the awards she has received are the 2015 IEEE TCSC Award for Excellence in Scalable Computing for Early Career Researchers and the 2017 ACM SIGHPC Emerging Woman Leader in Technical Computing Award. Ilkay serves on the elected Board of Governors for the IEEE Computer Society and was appointed by California Governor Newsom to the Wildfire Technology Research and Development Review advisory board. She holds a PhD from the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

DAVID ANDERMAN

CEO & FOUNDER, SOVERA | CO-FOUNDER & GENERAL PARTNER,
STELLAR VENTURES



David Anderman is a seasoned executive with a passion for business strategy and dealmaking in technology and aerospace. He is the co-founder and general partner of Stellar Ventures, a fund that has invested in more than three dozen early-stage space startups; and CEO of Omnis Corp., a space company in stealth mode incubated at Stellar Ventures.

Prior to starting the fund, David was the general counsel of SpaceX, Elon Musk's rocket company, where he helped roll out the Starlink global satellite internet system and launch both the first humans to space by a private company and the first flights of *Starship*. He previously spent 16 years at Lucasfilm Ltd., George Lucas's entertainment empire, starting as the junior lawyer and rising through the ranks to become general counsel and chief operating officer. He has held C-level positions at a series of technology startups. He began his career as an intellectual-property litigator in Silicon Valley.



Berit Anderson is chief operating officer and a senior analyst at Strategic News Service, publisher of the *Global Report on Technology and the Economy*, the business world’s most accurate source of information about the future of technology and the global economy.

Jointly, Berit is the COO of Future in Review (FiRe), which the *Economist* calls “*the best technology conference in the world.*” In that role, she serves as host of the Future in Review conference and the weekly Future in Review podcast. Berit also co-founded and serves as managing director of the FiRe Action Tank, which coalesces experts around the creation of action plans to solve global challenges. Most recently, she co-led and co-authored “100% Renewable: An Action Plan for American Energy

Independence.”

Berit is an advisor to the National Science Foundation–funded Resilient Commission, focused on building community resilience in the face of pandemics and other global disasters; and the Scripps Institute of Oceanography’s Mythos project, focused on giving voice to coral reefs and uplifting indigenous knowledge about coral regeneration from communities around the world. She is the co-chair of YES! Media’s board of directors and a board member of the Pacific Northwest investigative news outlet InvestigateWest.

Previously, Berit co-founded and served as CEO and editor-in-chief of Scout.ai, a media company that used investigative reporting, science fiction, and scenario-planning games to help illustrate the ethical impacts of emerging technologies. Her investigative report “The Rise of the Weaponized AI Propaganda Machine” was the first to explain the full scope of how Russia, Cambridge Analytica, and the Trump campaign used Google, Twitter, and Facebook to game the outcome of the 2016 US election and their strategy for influencing other elections around the world.

An international keynote speaker and advisor on innovation, technology, media, and global policy, Berit has spoken at the Brussels Forum, the European Council on Foreign Relations, the Conference on World Affairs, TEDxVilnius, and Devoxx Belgium and has delivered lectures at NYU, the University of Washington, and UC Boulder. She and her work have been featured in the *New Yorker*, Gizmodo, the BBC, and TechCrunch, and her work on information warfare was cited by internet creator Tim Berners-Lee as one of the top three challenges facing the internet.

Berit is an alumna of the World Economic Forum’s Global Shapers network, which supports and uplifts young leaders around the world.

FiRe Team

 **EVAN ANDERSON****HEAD OF PROGRAMS, FUTURE IN REVIEW | SENIOR ANALYST,
STRATEGIC NEWS SERVICE | CEO, INVNT/IP**



Evan Anderson serves as deputy director of Programs for the Future in Review (FiRe) conference, named by the *Economist* as “the best technology conference in the world.” At Future in Review, Evan utilizes media and technology to affect positive global change, crafting and assisting with conference panels, the FiRe Action Tank, and other special projects dedicated to geopolitics, climate, and health, including battling the COVID-19 pandemic. Evan seeks to use the platforms and resources at his disposal to fight for a more just, equitable, and positive future for both humanity and the living

creatures with whom we share our world.

Evan concurrently is CEO of INVNT/IP (Inventing Nations vs. Nation-Sponsored Theft of IP). For the past 10 years, his focus at INVNT/IP has been on actively fighting nation-sponsored theft of intellectual property through a combination of political advocacy, private briefings, and public education in conjunction with top global companies; government representatives in intelligence, research, and policy; and top academic researchers.

In addition, Evan is a senior analyst at Strategic News Service, publisher of the weekly *SNS Global Report on Technology and the Global Economy*. From early 2020 to 2022, he was the author of the *Viral Economy*, a biweekly SNS publication dedicated to informing the public about the novel coronavirus and its effect on the world. In the *VE*, Evan predicted the onset of the global pandemic, the ensuing 2020 market crash, several new variant waves, the resulting inflation crisis, and many other ripple effects, often months before they happened.

Evan’s seminal briefing book *Theft Nation: How IP Theft Drives the Chinese National Business Model, and Its Effect Upon the Global Economy* has been featured in global media including *60 Minutes*, the BBC World Service, and many others. His most recent book, *Disengagement: Moving Beyond Reactionary China Policy to a Better World*, was published by FiReBooks in May 2023.

Since 2011, Evan has been closely engaged, both in the field and from home, with Ti Kay Haiti, an organization dedicated to delivering DOTS-plus TB and HIV care to underprivileged communities in Port-au-Prince. He has worked on various projects to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and serves as an executive advisory board member at the Resilient Collective. He holds a BA in Cultural Anthropology with a minor in International Relations from the University of British Columbia. He lives in Seattle, Washington.

FiRe Team

 **MARK R. ANDERSON**

**CHAIR & CEO: PATTERN | STRATEGIC NEWS SERVICE |
FUTURE IN REVIEW**



Mark Anderson is the founding chair and CEO of startup Pattern Computer Inc., born at the Future in Review (FiRe) conference – a unicorn the Department of Energy has called “the best machine learning company on the planet.”

Mark is chair of the annual FiRe conference (www.futureinreview.com), launched in 2003, which the *Economist* has named “the best technology conference in the world”; and founding CEO of the Strategic News Service, which publishes the weekly *SNS Global Report on Technology and the Global Economy*, read by Bill Gates, Vint Cerf, Michael Dell, Craig Venter, Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, Bill Janeway, Paul Jacobs, Leroy Hood, and technology executives and investors worldwide.

Mark’s work includes the creation of INVNT/IP (Inventing Nations vs. Nation-sponsored Theft of IP, www.invntip.com), a global consortium of corporations and government agencies; SNS Project Inkwell –

the first global consortium to bring vendors, educators, and students together to accelerate the deployment of appropriate technology into K-12 schools; SNS iNews (www.snsinews.com), using patented processes to bring daily interactive communications “About Leaders, For Leaders” worldwide; a new Global Rescue System (GRS) for victims of human trafficking, in concert with Julia Ormond’s ASSET program; Orca Relief Citizens’ Alliance (ORCA: www.orcarelief.org), the sole nonprofit organization working to reduce the mortality rate of the Southern Resident Killer Whale; and Nutritional Microanalysis, a new field of medical research and practice aimed at connecting biochemical descriptions of food with health. The subscription-based SNS FiReFilms (www.firefilms.org) was created in 2009 to identify, support, and promote potentially world-changing documentary films in which technology improves the human condition. SNS FiReBooks publishes books on how technology drives the global economy.

Mark is credited with accelerating the deployment of 3G wireless in Iceland; helping design Sweden’s wireless auction process; assisting Eastern Germany’s technology programs; creating “Project Intelligent Response,” the first post-911 manual for the US government on the use of technology to combat terrorism; and being the first to fully document the central role of stolen intellectual property in China’s national business model.

His successful predictions include the Great Financial Collapse of late 2007 (made in March of that year, on CNBC Europe’s *PowerLunch* live TV); the contemporary outbreak of “currency wars” and the first modern use of the term; the advent and success of the “CarryAlong” computer category as the fastest-growing and largest in the industry, now represented by pads and netbooks (predicted in 1997); the first detailed description (in 1998) of the Internet Assistant category, represented by Siri, Google Now, and Dragon Go!; and the global currency crisis of late 1997 (in April of that year) – contributing to a publicly graded 95.3% prediction accuracy record since 2006. He is the only person to have publicly predicted both the Great Financial Collapse and the Oil Price Collapse, perhaps the two most important economic events of modern times.

Mark’s intellectual contributions include: Resonance Theory (10 papers) – the first physics Theory of Everything based on the resonant properties of empty space; the AORTA (Always-On Real-Time Access) concept, subsequently taken as the name for Europe’s first broadband network; the AORTA Manifesto, a proven process for K-12 schools integrating technology, since adopted by the White House in its ConnectED initiative and by NGOs and educators around the world; Equilibrium Genetics, a new theory of evolution, cell function, and genetic variation; the Global Trifecta proposal – a solution set to slow global warming, based on linking commercial graphene production to energy-plant CO2 emissions and graphene 3D printing; and Flow Economics and Hyperstructural Economics, two new pragmatic descriptions of the forces behind the post-Information Age economy.

Having discovered the power of Flow & Interaction, Mark is the author of the book *The Universal Powers of Flow and Interaction: Applying the Two Fundamental Actions Behind Every Element of the Universe*, as well as of *The Pattern Future: Finding the World’s Great Secrets and Predicting the Future Using Pattern Discovery* (2018). He is the author of the chapter “The Future of AI” in the German / English decadal publication *Ignite 2034*.

Mark is co-founder of the Pattern Recognition Laboratory at UC San Diego, a member of the Australian-American Leadership Dialogue, and an advisory board member of the Calit2 and Qualcomm Institutes, the Graphene Industry Stakeholders Assn. (GSA), and the GSA Center of Excellence. He provides advice to or has invested in Ignition Partners, Mohr Davidow Ventures, the Global Advisory Council of the mPedigree Network (Ghana), SwedeTrade, The Family Circle (Europe), the NSA, the Department of Justice, the FBI, the DHS, the NGA, the US State Department, USTR, the White House, GCHQ, MI6, the British Cabinet Minister’s Office, and industry-leading firms including Dell, Microsoft, Google, Symantec, Nuance Communications, and others. His work on China was showcased in the *60 Minutes* segment “The Great Brain Robbery,” and he has been a frequent guest on National Public Radio’s *All Things Considered*, as well as the *BBC World News* and Bloomberg TV. He regularly appears in the *Economist*, the *Financial Times*, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and other media.



As editor-in-chief of Strategic News Service, Sally Anderson manages content for SNS and is the editor of the *SNS Global Report*. She also serves as editor-in-chief of FiReBooks, the book publishing branch of SNS, from conception to publication; and of the Future in Review (FiRe) conference, which the *Economist* has called “the best tech conference in the world.”

Sally is the managing director of www.FiReFilms.org, founded in 2009, supporting excellence in documentary filmmaking from conception through distribution, to educate, inspire, improve, and transform. She is a member of the board of directors for Orca Relief Citizens’ Alliance, the longest-standing nonprofit dedicated to studying and reducing the mortality rate of the endangered population of Southern Resident orca whales in the Salish Sea.

Sally previously served as production manager for SNS and Future in Review (FiRe) global events and websites (2003–19), from the annual FiRe conference to the annual SNS Predictions Dinner in NYC and annual SF Bay Area evening, as well as the SNS “Future in Review” Speaker Series in Park City and Salt Lake City, Utah (2013–17). With Mark Anderson and Scott Schramke, she shares the US patent for the interactive SNS iNews tool.

As sole proprietor of Red Pen Productions, Sally has been an award-winning book editor and writer and/or editor for clients including the Smithsonian Hirshhorn Museum (Communication Arts Award of Excellence), Microsoft Press, Peabody Essex Museum, Amazon.com, msn.com, *Seattle Weekly*, secondstory.com, Miami Aviary, Sasquatch Books, the Seattle Arts Commission, and Bay Press.

Sally was the first executive editor at Bill Gates’ Corbis Productions after serving as lead editor, associate producer, and writer for the award-winning CD-ROM *Leonardo da Vinci*. She created Corbis’s first corporate style guide and co-produced history, travel, educational, and pop-culture internet features, working with experts in technology, photography, multimedia, and film, including the Ansel Adams Trust, Ken Burns, Peter and David Turnley, Martin Kemp, Roger Ressmeyer, Curtis Wong, and Paul Souders. In the late 1990s, she was part of a small stealth editorial team hired by Amazon to set up the foundations of the “Everything” store it is today. While at Amazon, she spearheaded the company’s first interdepartmental style guide, as well as serving as manager of three web stores.

In February 2003, with celebrated poet Sam Hamill, Sally co-edited *Poets Against the War* (Nation Books) and continued to serve on the board and as lead editor for the PAW project and website, enlisting and supervising 30 poetry editors from 18 countries. In 2005, she conceived and served as creative consultant of the documentary *Voices in Wartime*, which became the basis of curricula for Andrew Himes’ Voices in Wartime Education Project.

Sally holds a double BA in fine arts and comparative literature from the Evergreen State College, with studies at Harvard University and U-Mass in psychology, studio art, art history, classics, and fiction writing. She survived as an exhibiting painter during long portions of a previous life. Today she cares most about helping to improve communications among humans and the rest of our connected planet, while practicing photography and foreign languages, fumbling at electric blues guitar, and doting on a family of Taiwan rescue animals, Robert the Crow, squirrels Chip and Nancy, and assorted other visitors of the Pacific Northwest urban wild.

FiReStarter

XAVIER ANGLADA

**CO-FOUNDER, NIVD | MANAGING DIRECTOR, ACCENTURE |
STRATEGIC INVESTOR**



Xavier Anglada is a global technology executive and deep-tech pioneer operating at the intersection of industrial scale and molecular innovation. As a managing director and member of the Global Leadership Council at Accenture, Xavier leads strategic transformation across the energy and technology sectors, having previously architected the digital ecosystem for Expo 2020 Dubai.

A committed catalyst for emerging tech, Xavier is the co-founder of Nano In Vitro Diagnostics (NIVD), driving the development of nanosensors to redefine early diagnostics across diseases. His influence in the startup ecosystem extends through a strategic investment portfolio focused on high-impact sectors, including fintech, health tech, and AI-driven SaaS.

A former fintech CEO and strategy partner with experience in 30+ countries, Xavier is a frequent speaker on the “invisible government” and the ethical convergence of biotechnology and digital infrastructure. He is an electrical engineer by training, an MBA alumnus of ESADE, and a leading voice on navigating the “Great Transition.”

FiRe Team



**FiRe 2026 OPERATIONS TEAM LEAD | CEO & FOUNDER,
BEECH ENERGY**



Wilfred Audley has dedicated his entire career to advancing the transition to renewable energy and electric vehicles. As the CEO and founder of Beech Energy, he has helped businesses navigate growth in a rapidly evolving and promising industry, with a focus on rooftop solar and energy-storage development. His firm’s primary client was eleXsys Energy, a Brisbane-based innovator in solar, battery systems, and power electronics.

Following that, Wilfred worked on the front lines of utility-scale renewable development, leading the charge on multiple large-scale solar and storage projects in the state of Wisconsin. After achieving commercial close on \$1.6B / 800+ MWs of energy assets, Wilfred moved back to Australia to be with his partner and further his renewable career.

Wilfred also contributes his time each year to the Future in Review conference, where he is head of Operations behind the scenes.

If you have questions or need assistance during the event, Wil is happy to help – or just stop by and say hello!

FiReStarter

MICHAEL AUSTIN

CO-FOUNDER & CHIEF PRODUCT OFFICER, DIMENSION GENOMICS INC.



Michael Austin, PhD, is a seasoned technology entrepreneur with over 20 years' experience in managing complex IP, product development, multidisciplinary core teams and external vendors and contractors (through product launch and upgrades), and supporting marketing and sales, customer service, and fundraising activities.

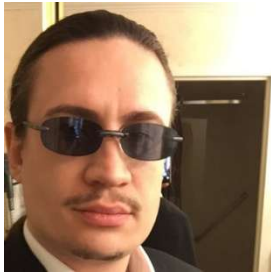
As co-founder of Dimension Genomics Inc., Mike oversees a team of multidisciplinary scientists and engineers. He designs and manufactures prototype devices and system to image and enrich critical aberrant genomic components such as ecDNA or aneuploidy genome out of heterogeneous somatic cancer samples.

An early founding member and former senior program director of Bionano Genomics Inc. (BNGO; 2005–19), Michael was a critical core development leader of consumer devices and systems, product design, and manufacturing behind Bionano's flagship Saphyr system.

Michael holds a PhD in electrical engineering from the Nanostructure Lab at Princeton University, the birthplace of nanoimprinting lithography technology.

DALLAS BEDDINGFIELD

PRESIDENT, EVOLUTION COMPUTING



Dallas Beddingfield has spent over 10 years in one form of information technology or another. With his mind always directed by what's at hand combined with new potential for what is becoming available and predicting where in the market our efforts should be most focused, he has found himself to be of greatest use. His specialties include merger negotiations, generation-gap technology bridging and regression testing development.

Partner



BRIAN BENTOW

CEO & CO-FOUNDER, GET SAUCY | SERIAL ENTREPRENEUR



Brian Bentow is a serial entrepreneur, technology executive, and multi-time founder operating at the intersection of health, technology, and innovation. He is the CEO and co-founder of Get Saucy™, where he is building a new category of ultra-compliant™ sauces and seasonings for both direct-to-consumer and food service, designed to support people navigating dietary restrictions without sacrificing flavor or functionality.

Inspired by his personal autoimmune journey, Brian established ultra-compliant as a higher standard for ingredient integrity, formulation, and usability, removing common allergens, seed oils, preservatives, gums, and refined sugars while aligning with protocols such as AIP, Paleo, Mediterranean, and plant-based. This approach is grounded in the

Seed2Sauce™ standard of excellence, an end-to-end philosophy that prioritizes sourcing, intentional ingredient selection, and thoughtful product innovation through to the finished sauce, rooted in transparency, craftsmanship, and care.

In addition to Get Saucy™, Brian is the CTO and co-founder of Ignition Benefits, a healthcare technology platform bringing transparency to employer health benefits spend by unlocking hidden workforce risk score data, enabling companies to better understand pricing, improve wellness investments, and make smarter funding decisions. He is also the co-founder of ItsWare, an enterprise platform transforming how businesses track and manage physical assets and tools through seamless, automated workflow

visibility.

Prior to his current ventures, Brian built a distinguished career in technology and entrepreneurship, with four successful acquisitions across fintech, healthcare payments, and pet technology. He was the CTO and co-founder of FinDox, a leveraged finance compliance platform acquired by Reorg in 2022, where he also served as CISO. Before FinDox, he spent 15 years at InstaMed, joining as the company's first hire while still a senior at Harvey Mudd College and ultimately rising to VP of Innovation and Architecture through its acquisition by JPMorgan Chase in 2019. He also served as CTO of Pet Wireless, acquired by Nestle Purina in 2018, and CTO of LendAmend, acquired by FIS in 2013.

Brian holds a BS in computer science from Harvey Mudd College, where he completed two internships at Microsoft and was a two-time recipient of the Microsoft Technical Scholarship. Across every company he builds, his focus remains consistent: identifying broken systems, creating visibility, and building solutions that help people and organizations thrive.

JILLIAN BENTOW

OLIVIA BENTOW

NEAL BLOOM MANAGING PARTNER, INTERLOCK CAPITAL



A SoCal native, Neal Bloom studied mechanical engineering at UC San Diego and worked with NASA on the Space Shuttle Main engines and the upcoming Artemis program. He moved back to San Diego to co-found an edtech startup, Portfolium, which was eventually acquired by Instructure.

Neal began angel investing after having built strong relationships with fellow founders in San Diego. As he launched his tech blog and podcast, he had the opportunity to participate in more deals. Having joined Tech Coast Angels, he joined forces with fellow member and past mentor AI to launch an angel syndicate. He's powered up by activating entrepreneurs and operators sooner than they would have expected into investing.

As with Interlock Capital's community focus, Neal is passionate about building platforms that connect startup communities. Opening access to investing, especially in your own city, gives everyone skin in the game to feel that a rising tide lifts all boats.

KARSTEN BLUE

ERIC BOLT PRODUCER SPECIALIST | ATTORNEY



Eric Bolt is an attorney and strategic partnerships executive based in Oceanside, California. He works with founders and technology companies on business transactions, governance, and commercialization issues and recently began working with Pattern Computer.

Through his business law practice, Eric has supported early-stage and growth-stage companies as they navigate risk, structure key relationships, and bring new products and services to market. He enjoys working with people who are building novel technologies and complex businesses, helping them solve difficult problems and turn new ideas into sustainable enterprises.

JAN BOLT **BOD**

Jan Bolt is a retired attorney and board member of Pattern Computer Inc., bringing more than four decades of litigation experience to the company’s strategic oversight. As founder and managing partner of Bolt Law in Santa Rosa, California, he led a private practice focused primarily on litigation, and for roughly 40 years he also served as a Superior Court settlement conference panelist and judge pro tem. At Pattern, Jan helps guide governance, risk management, and contracts as the company pursues its mission of using pattern discovery to address complex challenges in business and medicine.

FiRe Team

AMBRE BONNE **FiRE 2026 OPERATIONS TEAM DEPUTY LEAD**



In her previous experience as an accomplished executive assistant, Ambre Bonne has led a highly successful marketing team, known for her ability to bring clarity, coordination, and heart to everything she does. She is also a passionate entrepreneur who lives by the belief that empathy builds empires, learning is a lifelong journey, and the most powerful leadership is rooted in love. Deeply committed to sustainability and making a positive impact in the world, Ambre aligns her work with values that prioritize both people and the planet.

This year marks Ambre’s first as operations team deputy lead at the FiRe conference, where she is eager to contribute to a mission-driven team focused on global change and innovative solutions. Her enthusiasm for collaboration and continuous growth makes her a natural fit for this dynamic environment.

Outside of her entrepreneurial pursuits, Ambre also serves as a postpartum doula, offering compassionate support to families as they navigate the transition to parenthood. Whether in business or in caregiving, Ambre brings empathy, strength, and a deep desire to make a difference.

FiReStarter

 **GEORGE BOYAJIAN** **CEO, MUSSEL POLYMERS**



George Boyajian is the CEO of the startup Mussel Polymers, a chemistry startup ready to take unique Purdue adhesive technology to the market. Mussel Polymers' novel underwater adhesive technology is based on a glue used naturally by marine creatures which may soon provide a safer adhesive option for industries ranging from biomedical to aerospace.

George is a technology executive with over 25 years' experience specializing in commercializing breakthrough technologies. He previously launched and headed PhytoWorks, Living Independently Group, and TurnPointMedical Devices, among others. As managing director of Columbia Digital Knowledge Ventures, he helped launch Columbia University's digital asset commercialization venture. Most recently he was chief commercial officer of Primus Green Energy.

Prior to his business career, George was an assistant professor at the University of Pennsylvania. He holds a PhD from the University of Chicago and a BA from Penn.

CHRISTOPHER BRAMWELL

CHIEF PRIVACY OFFICER, STATE OF UTAH



Appointed by Governor Spencer Cox as the inaugural chief privacy officer for the State of Utah, Christopher Bramwell is entrusted with the pivotal role of architecting and implementing a comprehensive information privacy program across all levels of government. This position demands close collaboration with public sector entities, private stakeholders, and governmental agencies to ensure robust data protection and privacy practices.

In his tenure, Christopher has successfully spearheaded the creation of a statewide strategic privacy plan and played an instrumental role in the enactment of the Government Data Privacy Act (HB491, 2024 General Session). Furthermore, he secured critical funding for the establishment of the Utah Office of Data Privacy, dedicated to assisting governmental entities in fulfilling their privacy obligations.

Utah will be the first state to hire a privacy ombudsperson to provide mediation and dispute resolutions services regarding privacy complaints between governmental entities and individuals. Christopher's experience has demonstrated that public employees and officials universally value privacy. Building and maturing privacy programs is challenging, yet achievable through strategic planning and steadfast leadership.

REBECCA BREIHAN

QUANTUM RESEARCH INTERN, QUALCOMM INSTITUTE

PABLO BREUER

PRESIDENT, ORTHOGONAL INSIGHTS | BOARD PRESIDENT,
DISARM FOUNDATION



Pablo Breuer, PhD, is an executive at a publicly traded Fortune 50 company. A 22-year veteran of the US Navy, Pablo's tours included top-level positions at US Special Operations Command Donovan Group, SOFWERX, the NSA, US Cyber Command, and US Naval Forces Central Command. He is a Department of Defense Cyber Cup and two-time Defcon Black Badge winner and has taught at the Naval Postgraduate School, National University, California State University Monterey Bay, and Carnegie Mellon CERT/SEI.

Pablo is the co-founder of the Cognitive Security Collaborative and co-author of the Disinformation Analysis and Response Measures (DISARM) framework – the methodology used by the US and EU governments and NATO to address misinformation and disinformation. He is a sought-after speaker in those fields, as well as cybersecurity and protecting critical assets from attack.

Pablo sits on several boards and has mentored countless students and professionals. He is fluent in English and Spanish.

BEN BRIN



AUTHOR, FUTURIST & PUBLIC SPEAKER



David Brin is a scientist, tech speaker / consultant, and author. A film by Kevin Costner was based on Brin's novel *The Postman*. Brin's 16 novels, including *New York Times* bestsellers and Hugo Award winners, have been translated into more than 20 languages. Several of them foreshadow global warming, pandemics, biotech, AI, cyberwarfare, and the world wide web. His Uplift series is one of the most popular and influential in science-fiction literature. In *EARTH* and *EXISTENCE*, he explores near-future trends that may transform our world in a dangerous-but-hopeful near future.

A Caltech Distinguished alumnus, David is seen frequently on television shows such as *The ArchiTechs*, *Universe*, and *Life After People*, with frequent appearances on PBS, the BBC, and NPR. A patent-holding inventor, he is in demand to speak about future trends, keynoting for IBM, Google, Procter & Gamble, SAP, Microsoft, Qualcomm, the Mauldin Group, and Casey Research, all the way to think tanks and public agencies.

With degrees from Caltech and the UC Diego, David serves on advisory panels ranging from astronomy, NASA innovative concepts, nanotech, and SETI to national defense and technological ethics. His first nonfiction book – *The Transparent Society: Will Technology Make Us Choose Between Freedom and Privacy?* (1997) – won the Freedom of Speech Award of the American Library Association. His next – *VIVID TOMORROWS: Science Fiction and Hollywood* (2021) – explores the messages and cliches and memes that often go unnoticed but help society shift under the influence of SF films.

David's SF comedy novel is *The Ancient Ones*. He has two series of SF novels for teen readers: the High Horizon series – aliens kidnap a California high school! – and the Out of Time (or Yanked!) series: only teens can teleport through time and space! You can visit David's website at www.davidbrin.com.



**APPLICATIONS ENGINEER, KONGSBERG DISCOVERY US,
KONGSBERG MARITIME**



Steve Brodet is an applications engineer with more than 20 years of experience specializing in the integration and operational capabilities of uncrewed underwater vehicles. His expertise spans sonar systems and oceanography, supporting both government and commercial customers with innovative underwater technology solutions and mission-focused applications.

Steve is passionate about advancing maritime technologies that improve underwater exploration, data collection, and operational effectiveness.

BENJAMIN BROWN

CO-FOUNDER & PRESIDENT, SKIP TECHNOLOGY



Benjamin Brown, PhD, is the co-founder and president of Skip Technology. He is an expert in fluid dynamics, and he leads the company's research efforts.

Ben earned his BS in physics from Harvey Mudd college and his PhD in astrophysics from the University of Colorado Boulder. He has served as a tenured professor of astrophysics at CU Boulder for over a decade, and his academic work on the solar dynamo was recently featured on the cover of *Nature* magazine. Ben is passionate about helping develop the solutions we need for our warming and climate-changing world.

JENNIFER BYRNE

GENERAL PARTNER, GRIT CAPITAL PARTNERS



Jennifer Byrne is a general partner at Grit Capital Partners, an early-stage specialist fund investing in applied AI in fintech / insurtech, commerce, media, and martech.

In 2024, Jenn co-founded and launched the Female Investors Club in Los Angeles and New York – a community whose mission is to support women investing in technology by providing leadership and educational and network events and driving ecosystem collaboration by sharing high-quality investment opportunities.

Prior to joining Grit Capital Partners, Jennifer co-founded and ran, as CEO, Quesnay Inc., a strategy and innovation advisory firm that also ran global startup accelerators and produced executive leadership events. Quesnay's clients included Farmers Insurance, Hanover, Hearst, Liberty Mutual, Nationwide, Paramount, Prudential, Thomson Reuters, and Verizon. Quesnay launched the world's largest Female Founders in FinTech & InsurTech accelerator. Over 500 women-led startups from 78 countries have been evaluated by 500+ industry leaders and investors, raising over \$1.8B.

Before starting Quesnay, Jenn served as VP of Business Development at American Express. At Verizon, Jennifer was executive director, Business Development & Partnerships, where she was responsible for a multibillion-dollar mobile applications and data services P&L. She spearheaded Verizon's innovation division, led 4G services launch, identified investment opportunities such as Siri and Twilio, and established industry-first mobile partnerships with Amazon, Facebook, Google / YouTube, and Twitter.

Jennifer has been investing in tech for over 10 years. She currently serves on the Duke University SoCal board and co-chairs the Duke Women's Forum SoCal. In 2024, she was named to "53+ Must Follow Women Leaders in Investing," the "Innovate Finance Powerlist" (three years), "NYC Inspiring FinTech Females," and "Female Founders Alliance Champions. She has been featured on the cover of *AMBest* and in *American Banker*, the *FNOInsurTec Podcast* (top 100), *Nasdaq Tradetalks*, *Digital Insurance*, *InsuranceJournal.tv*, *InsureTechConnect*, and *Nassau Financial Live*.

Jennifer is a graduate of Duke University and speaks Spanish, Italian, and French.

PATRICK BYRNE

FOUNDER, WARFIGHTER READY



Patrick Byrne's life changed when he was asked to become a program manager for Air Force One. As PM, he reminded every new employee: "You're not just working on the president's aircraft; you're building the iconic symbol of democracy and freedom abroad." Today, that freedom is under threat. America's adversaries are moving faster than ever, while the warfighters who protect us operate with outdated tools and technology that pale in comparison to the phone in your pocket.

Patrick has never worn a uniform, but he's made it his mission to move the best technology downrange and into the hands of those who keep us safe. Because one day, his kids might have to wear a uniform, and today, someone's kids already do. Over 20 years in aerospace and defense, Patrick has led product, program, and GTM efforts across every layer of the defense innovation stack. He gravitates to product because it demands the rare blend of strategic thinking, technical fluency, and tactical execution.

From a seat at the table of defense primes to the ground floor of defense tech startups, Patrick has managed more than 55 products and driven over \$2.1 billion in revenue. He's deployed technology in some of the most complex, high-stakes environments on Earth. Now, he helps other leaders do the same.

As a NATO DIANA defense expert and a DIU defense technology acceleration mentor, Patrick has seen what it really takes to cross the Valley of Death. Great dual-use products (and great companies) are built when leaders set a clear vision, align teams toward that success, and empower them to bring their full talents and experience to the mission. But building great products isn't enough. Winning in defense means navigating the Byzantine labyrinth of defense acquisition – a path that too often feels reserved for those with Pentagon pedigree or membership to the Beltway boys' club. That's where Warfighter Ready comes in. Warfighter Ready gives founders a proven playbook for turning prototypes into programs of record. It unlocks operator access, enables field testing, finds champions, and leverages acquisition vehicles to help its clients build, scale, and deliver capability for the warfighter. The company is building from the Pacific Northwest because it's home to the richest untapped defense-tech ecosystem in the country. With its deep tech talent, early-stage capital, and proximity to some of the Department's most critical military facilities, the PNW is poised to become the Silicon Valley of dual-use innovation. Patrick is here to help get tech where it belongs: downrange into the hands of the warfighter.

FiReStarter



CO-FOUNDER, PRESIDENT & CEO, DIMENSION GENOMICS



Han Cao, PhD, is a serial technology entrepreneur with more than 22 years of experience across IP creation and management, technology assessment and transfer, product and application development, commercialization, corporate leadership, marketing, sales, and global customer and distributor engagement. His background spans all stages of business development, from early technical innovation to venture financing and IPO.

Han co-founded Dimension Genomics Inc., a post-seed life-science and medical diagnostic platform company dedicated to addressing key bottlenecks in the emerging field of genomics-driven, clinical-grade analysis of heterogeneous somatic dynamic genomes such as cancer genomes. This work represents a significant advancement beyond traditional static bulk ensemble germline genome analysis.

The founder and former CEO and CSO of Bionano Genomics Inc. (BNGO; 2003–18), Han's experience includes guiding technologies from initial concept through IPO. Using nanotechnology developed from a Princeton University DARPA project, Han was the main inventor and an early visionary in resolving

long-range genomic information with structural variations and contributed to numerous landmark technology and genomics publications.

Bionano technology was recognized as an *MIT Tech Review* Top Ten Technology of the Year (2009) and a *Scientist* Top Ten Product Innovation of the Year (2014). Today, the field of genomic structural variation has become a major, billion-dollar driver of biodiscovery and biomedical research, advancing understanding of genome function and disease origins.

 **DIVYA CHANDER** **CEO & FOUNDER, LUCIDIFY**



Divya Chander, MD, PhD, is a physician-scientist, entrepreneur, neuroscientist, neuroethicist, and futurist. She is a practicing anesthesiologist and founder and CEO of Lucidify, a brain-computer interface and neurotechnology platform focused on brain health, cognitive longevity, and disorders of consciousness, including delirium and sleep disruption.

Divya served on the faculty of Stanford University for eight years, specializing in neuroanesthesia, and formerly chaired the neuroscience track at Singularity University, where she now serves as a medicine and biotechnology expert. As a Stimson Center Loomis Innovation Council fellow and former Atlantic Council GeoTech Center senior fellow, she advises governments and industry on biometric data rights, data trusts, cybersecurity, and public health policy. She serves as advisor and board member to a number of companies.

Divya's work centers on brain-computer interfaces, neural signal processing, and the science of consciousness. She develops technologies to decode and modulate brain function, explores cognitive enhancement and human augmentation, and investigates how understanding consciousness may inform intelligent nonhuman systems. A finalist for astronaut selection and alumna of the International Space University, she is also developing critical-care systems and brain-computer interfaces to support astronaut health and long-duration space exploration.

NEIL CHASE **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CALMATTERS**



Neil Chase is the CEO of CalMatters. He was formerly executive editor at the *Mercury News* and the *East Bay Times* and has worked as a journalist at the *San Francisco Examiner*, *Arizona Republic*, *CBS MarketWatch*, and the *New York Times*.

ROBERT CONTINETTI **SR. ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR, UC SAN DIEGO**

SHANE CYBART

KRISTINA DIZON

OPERATIONS COORDINATOR, CENTER FOR MARINE BIODIVERSITY & CONSERVATION, SCRIPPS INSTITUTION OF OCEANOGRAPHY



Kristina Dizon is a conservationist at heart whose dedication to the ocean extends far beyond her career. Growing up in San Diego just minutes from the beach, she developed a deep passion for marine biodiversity and conservation from an early age. She attended the University of California, Berkeley as a regents & chancellor's scholar, where she earned her bachelor of science degree in conservation & resource studies with a focus in conservation ecology & biology.

After graduating, Kristina returned to her hometown to join the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, where she began her career as a research vessel expeditionary assistant. In this role, she served as a liaison between research vessel staff and the science parties conducting research onboard, helping teams navigate demanding schedules and setting them up for success at sea.

That experience laid the foundation for Kristina's current position as operations coordinator at the Center for Marine Biodiversity & Conservation. There, she brings an interdisciplinary lens to her work, forging connections and building partnerships that advance meaningful solutions to the pressing marine biodiversity and conservation challenges facing our oceans today.

JULIO DE UNAMUNO IV

MANAGING PARTNER, SAN DIEGO VENTURE CAPITAL



Julio de Unamuno IV believes that entrepreneurship is the gateway to generational wealth and prosperity. As a Latino father at the age of 19, Julio's likelihood of success as a founder was improbable, let alone as an entrepreneur in the life-sciences industry. It took a community of mentors, advisors, and capital allocators – some who looked like him but most who did not – with an open heart and a growth mindset to support and lift him up. Thanks to them, Julio was able to raise millions in venture capital and grow a vertical SaaS startup managing biotech lab operations with a team made up of over 80% women and underrepresented minorities. Now Julio is sitting on the other side of the table and investing in and coaching the

world's most disruptive founders to do the same – only better, faster.

As background: Julio was raised in a blue-collar family with parents holding only high-school– level educations: his mother soldered boards at Apple Computer in Cupertino for Steve Jobs and his father was an aircraft mechanic for the naval air station based out of Moffett Field. No surprise that Julio grew up with a slant for technology and building things with his own two hands.

In university, Julio did anti-cancer research on million-dollar instruments and computational chemistry tools. He spent the last decade making a blessed living helping bring science out of the lab and into the market and mastered untold numbers of competencies along life's journey.

BRENDA COOPER

AUTHOR | DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY,
LEASE CRUTCHER LEWIS



Brenda Cooper is a technology professional, a writer, and a futurist.

As a CIO and IT director, Brenda has worked in both the public and private spheres. For the last four years, she has been the IT director for Lease Crutcher Lewis, a general contractor in the Pacific Northwest. She is interested in cybersecurity, generative AI, and analytics.

Brenda holds an MFA from Stonecoast and is an Imaginary College fellow at the Center for Science and the Imagination (CSI) at Arizona State University. She is also a member of the brain trust for the Biodiversity and Conservation domain at XPrize.

Brenda's novel-length fiction has won two Endeavour awards and been shortlisted for the Phillip K. Dick Award. Her most recent work includes short stories published in *Seattle* magazine, *Anthropocene Magazine*, and *Slate*. Brenda lives in Woodinville, Washington, with her wife, five dogs, and three bicycles.

KAI DE ALTIN ADVISOR, VINMAT



Kai De Altin is a private business development consultant based in Alexandria, Virginia. His company serves clients with trend and technology scouting, market entry analysis, regulatory affairs, and strategic alliance building on both sides of the Atlantic. Kai is also the marketing director (Europe) for Strategic News Service (SNS).

Kai was born and raised in East Berlin. He finished his degree in Latin American Studies at the University of Rostock and continued his education after the fall of the Berlin Wall at SAIS Bologna, Johns Hopkins University.

SIR RICHARD DEARLOVE CHIEF (FMR.), BRITISH SECRET INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (MI6)



Sir Richard Dearlove served as chief ("C") of the British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) from August 1999 until his retirement in July 2004. A spymaster for 38 years, Sir Richard served in Nairobi, Prague, Paris, Geneva, and Washington, as well as in a number of key London-based posts.

Sir Richard was elected master of Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 2004. (Founded in 1347, Pembroke is the university's third-oldest college.) He has just stepped down as chair of the board of trustees to the University of London, having held the role for 10 years. He was formerly a trustee of Kent School (Connecticut) and an honorary fellow of Queens' College Cambridge. Until very recently, he was chair of Ascot Underwriting, a director of the Ascot Group, and a director of Kosmos Energy. He is now an advisor to several international companies and is co-host to *One Decision*, the world's leading foreign-affairs podcast.

Sir Richard is married to Lady Rosalind. They have two sons and a daughter.

MARLENE DIDUCK CPA, DIDUCK & MCCRONE CPAS



Marlene Diduck has been a dedicated tax professional for over a decade. Since joining Timothy McCrone in Los Altos in 2022, she has specialized in providing personalized tax services to individuals. Before this role, Marlene honed her corporate accounting skills at Zscaler, a leading company in Silicon Valley. Her career began at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), where she earned her CPA designation and gained extensive experience in tax accounting for both partnership and corporate clients.

QUENTIN DIDUCK

CEO, QED ELECTRONICS



Quentin Diduck completed a BSc degree in electrical engineering at the University of Alberta, Canada, in 1998, and a PhD in electrical engineering at the University of Rochester in 2007. He then worked for two years as a research associate with Prof. Lester Eastman at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

In 2009, Quentin worked for Group4Labs, based out of Fremont, California, for three years developing GaN on diamond-based high-electron mobility transistors. Currently he is with Avogy Inc., based in San Jose, California, developing high-voltage vertical power transistors using bulk GaN.

CRAIG DOBSON

FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, TAYLOR WARWICK CONSULTING LTD



Craig Dobson is founder and president of Taylor Warwick Consulting Ltd. He has 40 years of professional experience in the information and communications technology (ICT) industry, specializing in research, strategic technology, and business development. He provides unbiased guidance, strategies, and solutions to help developers, communities, telecom providers, and governments plan, finance, build, and operate broadband copper, fiber, and wireless networks; develop the partnerships they require to deploy services and manage ongoing operations; and accrue the knowledge they need to support and capitalize on their broadband deployments.

Over the past six years, Taylor Warwick has worked with all 11 Alberta regional economic development associations and helped dozens of communities evaluate a comprehensive set of options to enhance broadband infrastructure and service sets within their regions and develop the strategic, tactical, and financial plans and partnerships to make it so. Over the past decade, 19 have moved forward toward implementation.

Craig has been nationally recognized through his work with Canada's Centre of Excellence in Next Generation Networks and on various National Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada committees. He is a professional engineer and holds master's degrees in both science and business administration from Queen's University in Kingston. Craig was a founding director of O-Net, Canada's first community-owned full-service Gb/s triple-play provider and is a life member of the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers.



Jake Dreyfous is a fifth-generation Utahn and holds a degree in environmental studies and biology from Middlebury College. He has worked for the Nature Conservancy of Utah, the Woodwell Climate Research Center's community science initiative Science on the Fly, Save the Bay, and the Utah Rivers Council.

Jake is the managing director at Grow the Flow (growtheflowutah.org), a nonprofit organization focused on restoring the Great Salt Lake through policy innovation and implementation, public engagement, and action-oriented research. He views the lake's loss as Utah's preeminent environmental crisis, and he is working to protect habitat for 12 million migratory birds, \$2.5B in direct economic output, and the health of millions of residents in Northern Utah impacted by toxic dust storms from a dry lake.

Jake's work with Grow the Flow focuses on community organizing to build a robust coalition of Great Salt Lake advocates from the private, nongovernmental, and public sectors. In tandem with his work, Grow the Flow and partners are drafting local and state water policy, creating connections with saline lake conservation initiatives around the world, and convening researchers across institutions to turn the latest evidence into action-oriented solutions.

Of more than 100 saline lakes worldwide, almost all of them are in chronic decline, and no community has reversed this trend. Jake believes Utah has an opportunity to become the first community to save their saline lake and hopes to use Utah's success as a roadmap to saline lake conservation around the globe.

[**Note:** FiReFilms selected *The Lake* (Sundance Film Festival US Documentary Special Jury Award: Impact for Change) as our 2026 FiRe Featured Film, with an exclusive screening offered only to FiRe attendees. Molly Peterson will host scientist-subject Ben Abbott and Grow the Flow managing director Jake Dreyfous for a post-screening Q&A.]



**AUTHOR, *IN DEFENSE OF LIMITS: HUMAN TIME AND AI SCALE* (2027)
| ANGEL INVESTOR**



Esther Dyson is the founder of Wellville, a 10-year nonprofit project to nudge society toward long-term thinking and equity by showing the social and financial value of investing in health and wellbeing for all. The Wellville team of seven people coaches leaders in five US communities as they work to improve the physical, mental, and financial health of all their residents.

The five Wellville communities are all under 200,000 in population: Clatsop County, OR; Lake County, CA; Muskegon County, MI; North Hartford, CT; and Spartanburg, SC. The Wellville advisor for Muskegon, Esther is actively involved in overall policy and fundraising for the project. When it ends in 2024, she will focus on spreading its learnings (many from mistakes) more broadly, to other communities, to healthcare systems, to voters, and to the government, which is best-suited to invest in collective, equitably distributed health.

Esther advocates long-term thinking, including putting externalities into pricing, such as taxing sugar and subsidizing care work (nurses, childcare workers, gym teachers, prison guards, etc.). In her spare time, she is fascinated by and invests in new business models, new technologies, and new markets (both economically and politically).

Overall, Esther works to leverage new business models, new technologies, and new markets (both economic and political). From October 2008 to March 2009, she lived in Star City outside Moscow,

Russia, training as a backup cosmonaut. She also sits on the boards of several nonprofits, including the Long Now Foundation and ExpandED Schools, and is a patron of the Commercial Spaceflight Federation. From 1998 to 2000, she was non-exec chair of ICANN (overseeing the Internet’s domain name and address system), and before that, chair of the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

Esther has a BA in economics from Harvard and started her serious career as a fact-checker / reporter for *Forbes* magazine (1974–77). From 1977 to 1982, she worked on Wall Street as a securities analyst, covering companies such as Federal Express, Apple Computer, and Electronic Data Systems. From 1983 to 2004, she wrote / edited *Release 1.0*, a monthly analysis of the PC / internet business; and ran the yearly PC Forum, the industry’s leading executive conference (no sponsors), as head of her own company, EDventure Holdings. She sold EDventure to CNET in 2004 and worked there for two years before going completely independent. Along the way, she served as founding (non-exec) chair of ICANN and wrote the best-selling, widely translated book *Release 2.0: A Design for Living in the Digital Age* (Broadway Books, 1997).

Esther’s new book, *In Defense of Limits: Human Time and AI Scale*, will be published in 2027.

CLINTON EDWARDS

ECOLOGIST, NOAA-NCCOS | VISITING SCHOLAR,
SCRIPPS OCEANOGRAPHY | CO-FOUNDER, CENTER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGING



Clinton Edwards is a marine spatial ecologist and entrepreneur with expertise in coral-reef ecology, data systems, and applied environmental science. A NOAA scientist and co-founder and director of strategy and development at the Center for Environmental Imaging (CEI), Clinton leads efforts to advance scalable imaging solutions by integrating ecological expertise with software development, data architecture, and operational strategy.

Clinton has over 15 years of experience developing tools and partnerships to enable efficient collection, processing, and interpretation of complex environmental data to support conservation, restoration, and resource management. He is driven by a commitment to translating scientific knowledge into practical applications, fostering innovation at the intersection of ecology and technology, and supporting collaborative solutions to global environmental challenges.

BRANDON FANT

FiRe Team

EMMA FIELDS

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & EXECUTIVE LIAISON, FUTURE IN REVIEW



Emma Fields is the executive assistant to Berit Anderson – COO of the Future in Review (FiRe) Conference Corp. and Strategic News Service (SNS) – and the company’s digital marketing strategist. Among other roles, Emma is responsible for the redesign of the Future in Review website and social-media posts, as well as serving as an executive liaison for FiRe.

Emma holds a bachelor of business administration in marketing and a BFA in studio arts (printmaking) from Hamline University, where she graduated *magna cum laude, sigma beta delta*, and was a recipient of the Henriette Diebold Memorial Art Prize.

Previous positions include executive director and director of marketing for the Minnesota Translator and Interpreter Cooperative and branding director and marketing team lead for SF Strong, an organization working to strengthen San Francisco communities and promote safe pandemic practices.

In her free time, Emma is an avid gardener and hiking enthusiast. A Bay Area native, Emma has also lived in the Twin Cities. She currently lives in the Denver area, where she loves exploring nature. She is married with two dogs (Harley and Bear) and one cat (Misty), all rescues.

CYNTHIA FIGGE CEO AND CO-FOUNDER, CSRHUB



Cynthia Figge is a forerunner, entrepreneur, and thought leader in the corporate sustainability movement. She is CEO and co-founder of CSRHub, a leading big-data ESG (environment, social, governance) information platform. CSRHub provides consensus ratings on the performance of 40,000 companies worldwide for benchmark, supply-chain, and risk-assessment data solutions.

In 1996, Cynthia co-founded EKOS International, one of the first consultancies integrating sustainability and corporate strategy. She has worked with major organizations including Boeing, Coca-Cola, Dow Jones, and REI to help craft sustainability strategy integrated with business. Cynthia is a national speaker on trends in ESG, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and impact, and business intelligence.

Prior to becoming an entrepreneur in sustainability, Cynthia was an officer of LIN Broadcasting / McCaw Cellular, leading new-services development. She is an independent board director of CleanFiber, serves as an advisor to media and technology companies, and volunteers in the area of social and environmental justice.

Cynthia has an MBA from Harvard Business School and a BA in economics. She is based in the Seattle area.

ED FINN FOUNDING DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND THE IMAGINATION, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY



Ed Finn is the founding director of the Center for Science and the Imagination (CSI) at Arizona State University, where he is an associate professor in the School for the Future of Innovation in Society and the School of Games, Arts, Media, and Engineering. CSI is dedicated to inspiring collective imagination for better futures; and since 2012, the team has produced more than 20 collections of award-winning speculative fiction and nonfiction that explore hopeful visions of the future. Ed is also the academic director of Future Tense, where CSI publishes a series of original short stories and essays in partnership with *Issues in Science and Technology* and the National Academy of Sciences.

Ed's research explores collaborative imagination, AI, and the intersection of the humanities, arts, and sciences. His book *What Algorithms Want: Imagination in the Age of Computing* examines how the stories we tell about AI and algorithms shape the real-world potential of these technologies. Ed is also the co-editor of several books, including *Future Tense Fiction*; *Frankenstein: Annotated for Scientists, Engineers and Creators of All Kinds*; and *Hieroglyph: Stories and Visions for a Better Future*. His writing has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Science*, the *MIT Technology Review*, and many other venues. He completed his PhD in English and American Literature at Stanford University and his bachelor's degree at Princeton University.

JACK GEORGE**ENTREPRENEUR ACCOUNT MANAGER, ECOSYSTEM VENTURE GROUP**

FiReStarter**JINGJING GONG****MICROFLUIDIC ENGINEER, DIMENSION GENOMICS**

Jingjing Gong is a microfluidics R&D leader with a PhD in chemical engineering and a proven track record of taking complex genomic diagnostics from academic concepts to commercial platforms. He currently plays a key role in R&D for next-generation platforms at Dimension Genomics, focusing on the end-to-end technical execution of next-generation tools, including 3D spatial genome analysis and microfluidic device for ecDNA profiling. Previously, he co-founded MobiDrop, a Harvard spinoff from the Prof. David Weitz group, where he built and led the R&D organization in the greater Boston Area, drove the R&D of a fully integrated droplet digital PCR system, and played a critical role in securing \$26M in financing.

LAURA GUERRANT-OIYE**VICE PRESIDENT, INVESTOR RELATIONS & CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS, PATTERN**



Laura Guerrant-Oiye is a senior investor-relations practitioner with over 25 years of experience in the design and implementation of successful IR programs. She has advised clients in a wide variety of industries, including technology, artificial intelligence, life sciences, consumer products, REITS, and financial services; and has deep experience in crisis communications and transactional communications, including IPOs, M&A, and secondary equity and debt offerings.

Laura was appointed VP of investor relations and corporate communications for Pattern in July 2023. She previously served as VP of investor relations and corporate communications for Aspen Aerogels Inc., a company in the EV battery space, where she was also appointed vice chair for the company's newly launched ESG initiatives. In addition, she served as IR manager for semiconductor capital equipment company Asyst Technologies Inc.

For 21 years, Laura was the owner and principal of Guerrant Association, an IR firm providing financial communications, IR, financial media relations, and strategic counsel to publicly held and pre-public companies. The firm offered a range of services, from financial communications and corporate counseling to full-service IR programs. Additionally, she began her career as an AE for leading international IR & financial communications firm FD Morgen-Walke's San Francisco office. As a capital-markets consultant to sell-side firm Edison Research, she worked with a global team responsible for introducing the firm's international client base to US investors. For 15 years, she has been the co-chair of the Summit Investor Conferences, biannual events that feature SMID-cap technology companies. She is a member of the BOD for Intro-act, an AI platform reinventing targeting and corporate access in the post-MiFID II era, and is a strategic advisor to InvestorCom, a leading independent full-service shareholder intelligence and proxy solicitation firm.

Laura is a recognized leader in the IR community. She served on the Silicon Valley chapter's board of directors for the National Institute of Investor Relations (NIRI). She is a founding member of the NIRI Virtual chapter, the largest chapter in the organization; and served as chapter president for the program in 2005–06. She is a 2006 recipient of the NIRI Leadership Award and served on the 2006 NIRI Annual Conference planning committee. She also served on and co-chaired the advisory board for the

Semiconductor Capital Equipment Trade Association's (SEMI) IR committee and is a speaker at IR conferences.

Laura holds a BA degree from Allegheny College (Meadville, PA) and has completed courses toward an MBA in finance and marketing at Golden Gate University (San Francisco). She resides with her husband and two golden retrievers in Anchorage, Alaska, where she can be found in her limited spare time fishing and photographing the northern lights and grizzly bears.

BERNARD GUSTIN **CEO & CIO, FINDLAY DELAWARE**



JOHN HANACEK

CAITLIN HARDY **FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, NESS SEA**

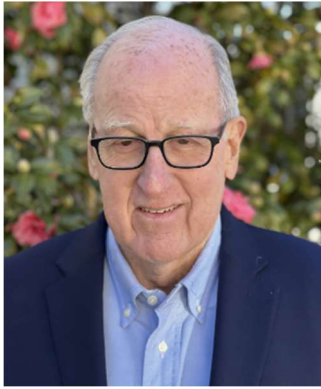


Caitlin Hardy is the founder and managing director of Ness Sea – a strategic consulting firm at the intersection of maritime and tech – supporting both the commercial and defense spaces, from shipbuilding to novel new technology.

Caitlin was most recently the president of Kongsberg Underwater Technology LLC in the United States. In her time at Kongsberg, she led Kongsberg Discovery's US entity with a strong focus on delivering technology differentiating solutions to customers in the region, primarily in the subsea market for both commercial and government customers. During her tenure, the US team grew substantially, to support all of Kongsberg Discovery's product centers, and won meaningful government contracts related to outfitting new vessels as well as AUVs.

Caitlin has worked across engineering, project management, and maritime operations for multiple industry segments and defense, including time at maritime technology startups. Her time in industry ranges from experience as a naval architect with a focus on tugs, fishing vessels, ferries, and salvage to heavy project management around new vessel construction around LNG and drydocking periods, to maritime operations for both operating companies and OEMs. She is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy with a BS in naval architecture and holds an MBA from the University of Washington.

Currently, Caitlin sits on the board of directors for Washington Maritime BLUE, the Women Offshore advisory board, and the Lloyd's List editorial board. She is passionate about the intersection between the maritime industry and high tech, as well as ensuring that future generations have an equitable and sustainable workforce within the ocean economy.



Bill Harris has nearly 30 years of diverse, progressively advanced international experience building and leading major government and university institutions, strategically developing research and educational enterprises to benefit society, managing large budgets for maximum results, and hiring entrepreneurial personnel and teacher-scholars.

Bill is the co-founder and board chair of Innovation Advisory Partners. From 2006 to 2022, he was the president and CEO of Science Foundation Arizona, where he was responsible for initiating a new public-private \$235MM partnership to help the state of Arizona transform its focus on research and education.

Previously, as director general of Science Foundation Ireland (2001–2006), Bill was responsible for the overall leadership of this new national science foundation and management of its €635MM grants program. SFI was founded in 2000 by the Irish government to build high-tech research programs with national economic impact, to support outstanding Irish scientists, and to recruit distinguished scientists from around the world to Ireland’s universities and institutes of technology. With SFI, Bill built partnerships with numerous Irish government agencies to create dynamic academic-industry research centers, recruited multinational corporate investment in these centers, and initiated the formation of effective national policies on technology transfer and intellectual property.

From 2000 to 2001, Bill was vice president for Research and a professor of chemistry at the University of South Carolina, where he was responsible for leading research activities totaling \$125MM annually throughout the eight campuses and diverse interdisciplinary centers of the state’s most comprehensive public university. At USC, he initiated a focus on interdisciplinary work by young faculty from the arts, humanities, and social sciences and established processes enabling students to earn support from incubator. Bill also served on the Governor’s Task Force, focused on building a more diverse, knowledge-based economy.

From 1996 to 2000, Bill was assistant director of the Columbia University Earth Institute and president of the Biosphere 2 Center, the western campus of Columbia which focused on earth systems science and climate model testing. There, he developed an undergraduate semester system for students from approximately 30 colleges / universities and led construction of a new campus complex.

As assistant director for mathematical and physical sciences at NSF (1992-1996), Bill was responsible for creating a major focus on interdisciplinary research by establishing the Office of Multidisciplinary Activities, where he successfully introduced new materials-focused group grants and guided the successful establishment of a new magnet lab, the Gemini telescopes, and the LIGO project. Bill is the co-author, with Peter Mackey, of the upcoming book *How to Change the Future: Lessons from Ireland on Revolutionizing Scientific Innovation and Economic Prosperity* (FiReBooks, 2023).

 TROY HELMING**CEO & FOUNDER, EARTHGRID PBC**



Troy Helming, CEO & founder of EarthGrid PBC, founded two of the most successful renewable-energy companies in the US: Tradewind Energy (the biggest wind developer in the US in 2017) and Pristine Sun (the leading developer of community utility-scale solar farms in CA, WI, VT, MN, and NC).

Troy sits on the boards of numerous solar and clean-energy companies and has been an advisor, investor, executive, or director of over a dozen successful companies. He is an *American Ninja Warrior*

and competed on Season 10 and placed 8th in the world in the Over 40 category at the UNAA World Championships (Ultimate Ninja Athletic Assoc.).

Troy is the author of *The Clean Power Revolution* (2004) and creator of The Freedom Plan (2005) – a blueprint to convert North America to 100% clean-renewable energy. One of Troy’s driving goals is to save the US economy over \$1 trillion per year by eliminating its dependence on dirty fossil fuels.

JOSH HERZ

BENJAMIN HILBORN CEO & Co-FOUNDER, ELASTIC ENERGY



Benjamin Hilborn is CEO and co-founder of the company Elastic Energy (“We make the grid think for itself”), headquartered in Victoria, British Columbia. With a background in electrical engineering, Benjamin previously worked at a couple of IoT startups before starting his own – primarily in industrial IoT, medical devices, and consumer electronics: “a whole gamut of making small things, taking them through production, and making sure that they talk to each other nicely.”

Ben’s passion is getting the electrical grid ready for humanity’s future as a Type 1 civilization. Elastic Energy powers coordinated home energy systems and grid programs for solar providers, utilities, and energy partners. The company monitors real-time production and usage, reduces peak energy costs, and automatically optimizes batteries, EVs, HVAC systems, and other distributed-energy assets around your rate plan, available grid programs, and battery revenue opportunities in your area.

The system operates continuously and securely in coordination with your energy provider. At the edge, the Elastic Energy ER-01 Energy Router™ turns these devices into a flexible, intelligent energy network. V1 is now live with early partners across the US and Canada.

BILL HILF AUTHOR, TECHNOLOGIST & CONSERVATIONIST | BOARD CHAIR, ALLEN INSTITUTE FOR AI (AI2)



Bill Hilf brings over 25 years of experience building world-class teams and scaling transformative software products at the forefront of technology change. At IBM, he pioneered open-source strategies and developed some of the world’s largest scientific computing systems. At Microsoft, he convinced the company to adopt open source while leading the global Windows Server business and helped build and launch Azure into a multibillion-dollar cloud platform. He then modernized HP’s cloud division before becoming CEO of Vale Group (formerly Vulcan Inc.) from 2016 to 2024. There, he successfully steered Paul Allen’s diverse portfolio through complex challenges, overseeing ventures that spanned aerospace, real-estate development, sports franchises, museums, film production, and cutting-edge research institutes focused on brain science, artificial intelligence, and conservation.

Today, Bill continues to lead at the intersection of emerging technologies and purpose-driven impact as board chair of both the Allen Institute for AI (AI2) and American Prairie. At AI2, he champions

breakthrough AI research for the common good – from open large-language models to groundbreaking applications in climate modeling, wildlife conservation, and maritime intelligence that protect both endangered species and ocean ecosystems worldwide. At American Prairie, he helps guide the creation of North America’s largest nature reserve, a 3.2 million-acre vision that supports both wildlife and local communities.

Bill also serves on the University of Washington School of Computer Science & Engineering advisory board and, through his consulting firm Highwood Consulting, partners with leaders navigating the convergence of technology, science, and philanthropy. His commitment to purpose-driven leadership extends to High Five Sports, which he founded in 2008 to provide sports programs for over 1,500 street children in the Philippines, building confidence and leadership through athletics.

When not working, Bill can be found exploring remote wilderness areas from Montana to Africa, mentoring the next generation of leaders, or writing fiction stories that explore the convergence of technology, nature, and humanity’s potential. His first sci-fi novel, *The Disruption*, launched in April 2026.

FiReStarter

 **ERIK HILL** **CO-FOUNDER, VIRBELA**



Erik Hill holds a master’s degree in computer science from UC San Diego, where he specialized in computer graphics and managed the university’s Experimental Game Lab – an innovative research group focused on video-game engine technology housed at the Qualcomm Institute.

As a co-founder of Virbela, Erik wrote the first line of code and has led the engineering team for over 13 years. Under his technical leadership, the team grew from a single engineer to a department of more than 30 engineers and over 50 technical staff.

Erik has overseen the development of Virbela’s complex, real-time virtual world platform, which supports a wide range of applications in business, education, and collaboration. The platform has served hundreds of thousands of users globally, establishing Virbela as a leader in immersive virtual environments.

 **JUNIUS HO** **FOUNDING TEAM MEMBER & STRATEGIC ADVISOR, AFFINIDI**



Junius Ho has spent over 20 years at the intersection of technology and people – building products, launching ventures, and opening markets across three continents – with a consistent focus on one of technology’s hardest problems: building trust. That conviction led him to become a founding team member of Affinidi, where he now leads US market development for the trust infrastructure powering the agentic AI era.

Junius’s work is grounded in real deployments at scale. During COVID, he led the rollout of a universal credential verification system that helped reopen international borders by authenticating health records covering 100+ countries, processing over 5 million verifications globally. At BCG Digital Ventures, he helped build Tracr, a blockchain-based platform giving natural diamonds an immutable record from mine to hand. Before BCG, Junius built and launched mobile products at Palm and Oracle when mobile was still an open frontier. He holds BS and MEng degrees in electrical engineering and computer science from MIT.

FiReStarter **ALEX HOWLAND****FOUNDER & CEO, VIRBELA**



Alex Howland, PhD, is the founder and CEO of Virbela, an AI-powered behavioral simulation platform for enterprise workforce development. Originally developed in partnership with UC San Diego, Virbela scaled as an immersive enterprise platform and was bootstrapped to an eight-figure exit with eXp World Holdings, helping power eXp's growth into a multibillion-dollar company. Alex later reacquired the company to build the AI-native behavioral simulation platform that reflects Virbela's original vision: making leadership and human performance measurable through immersive practice.

Alex holds a PhD in organizational psychology and has spent more than 15 years at the intersection of behavioral science, immersive technology, and enterprise workforce development. His career has been defined by a single conviction: the skills that matter most in leadership can be practiced, measured, and improved, not just talked about.

DENYSE HUDSON**EVP, SPECIAL PROJECTS, PATTERN**



Denyse Hudson is EVP, Special Projects, for Pattern. She first joined the Strategic News Service team in January 2016 as the executive assistant to Mark Anderson and administrative logistics coordinator for SNS, then subsequently the senior operations manager for Pattern. She works remotely from her Firestone, Colorado, office with her main focus on fundraising efforts, customer relations / project management, leadership training, and other administrative tasks.

In the 14 years prior to joining SNS, Denyse worked in the business offices of a retail company and a resort, performing a variety of back-office tasks. She spent more than five years volunteering on the boards of local youth athletic programs her children participated in, where she helped with fundraising and organizing teams and sporting events for football, basketball, baseball, and lacrosse. She has also volunteered on her children's elementary-school PTA board. Denyse now spends her free time volunteering at her church in their sports programs and "Night to Shine" event; preparing for her postponed mission trip to Kenya; exercising at the fitness club; raising her two dogs, Elka and Sterling; enjoying camping with her husband; and planning for her next 14-er hike.

 **ADAM JACOBS****PRESIDENT, XZOM**



Adam Jacobs is president of Xzom, a San Diego-based liquid biopsy platform, and AI Company, enabling the early detection of disease and cancers. He is also founding partner of the Jacobs Scheriff Group, a business consulting company with a mission of enhancing the value of businesses and organizations that have a strong focus on societal impact.

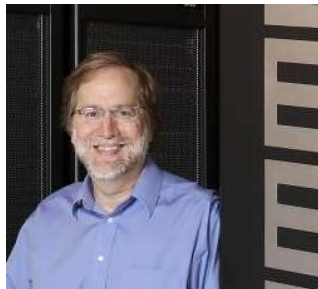
A graduate of Cornell University and three-year captain and starting catcher of the Big Red baseball team, Adam received a BS in applied economics and management from the Dyson School in the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business in 2009. He is part of a multigenerational Cornell family, also including his grandparents, Irwin M. Jacobs ('54, BEE '56) and the late Joan K. Jacobs ('54), who together founded the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute at Cornell Tech. The Jacobs Institute advances graduate tech education, academic entrepreneurship, and innovation and spans the Cornell Tech campus in New York City and the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa.

In addition to his role with Xzom and the Jacobs Scheriff Group, Adam is an investor in several startups focused on social change and a real-estate entrepreneur. He is also highly involved in San Diego, enhancing and extending his family's long tradition of engagement and philanthropy in the city. Adam serves on the Dean's Council of Advisors for the UCSD Jacobs School of Engineering, is an executive board member of the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, and is co-chair of the La Jolla Playhouse's Innovation Night. He is also involved with the San Diego Food Bank, San Diego Symphony, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, and Jewish Family Service and is in the ambassador cohort for the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, among others. He actively supports initiatives addressing housing, homelessness, and food insecurity and is a member of The Giving Pledge Next Gen cohort and a former member of Forward Global.

Adam and his wife, Amy, a trustee of the Salk Institute, have established the Amy and Adam Jacobs Family Philanthropic Fund through the Jewish Community Foundation and have two young daughters and a son.

GARRETT JACOBS **FOUNDER, WORKFORCE EQUITY**

 **DANIEL JACOBSON** **COMPUTATIONAL SYSTEMS BIOLOGIST & DISTINGUISHED RESEARCH SCIENTIST, OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY | JOINT PROFESSOR IN PSYCHOLOGY AND NEUROSCIENCE, DATA SCIENCE & ENGINEERING, MICROBIOLOGY, ENERGY SCIENCE & ENGINEERING, AND GENOME SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE**



As a computational systems biologist and distinguished research scientist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), Daniel Jacobson and his team focus on the development and subsequent application of mathematical, statistical, and computational methods to biological datasets in order to yield new insights into complex biological systems. Their approaches include the use of network theory and topology discovery / clustering, wavelet theory, machine & deep learning (among others: iterative random forests, deep neural networks, etc.).

Daniel's team is focusing on the development of explainable-AI methods for the discovery of complex, high-order interactions in biological systems. These methods are applied to various population and (meta) multiomics data sets (genomics, phylogenomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, metabolomics, microbiomics, viromics, phytobiomics, chemiomics, and more) – individually as well as in combination – in an attempt to better understand the functional relationships as well as biosynthesis, signaling, transcriptional, translational, degradation, and kinetic regulatory networks at play in biological organisms and communities.

Daniel's group is happy to be the first to break the exascale barrier and to have done it for biology. This project led to them winning the 2018 Gordon Bell Prize (the first-ever for systems biology). At present, their latest 9.37 Exaflops mixed precision calculation is the fastest scientific calculation ever done anywhere in the world.

Many of the team's projects center around studying systems involved in the Center for Bioenergy Innovation (CBI), plant-microbial Interfaces (PMI), and Crassulacean acid metabolism (CAM) biodesign programs at ORNL. However, it has a broad view of biological complexity and evolution that stretches from viruses, microbes, and plants to drosophila, mice, and humans (including cancer and

neuroscience), as well as an active role in the DOE-VA collaboration on clinical genomics and human systems biology.

ORNL is home to some of the world's largest supercomputers. Daniel's lab uses petascale computing to analyze and model complex biological systems and is actively involved in the development of exascale applications for biology with a particular emphasis on explainable-AI. Thus, there are excellent opportunities to be involved in the cutting edge of computational biology and supercomputing.

2026 FiReFellow

KAILA JOHNSTON

**2026 FIREFELLOW | COMPLEX COMMUNITY & HOME SUPPORT
NURSING SPECIALIST**



Kaila Johnston is an Australian registered division 2 nurse and dedicated healthcare professional with over 15 years of experience across support coordination, aged / palliative care, disability services, youth intervention, and mental health.

Based in Queensland, Australia, Kaila has built her career around advocating for and empowering vulnerable populations, from older Australians navigating complex homecare packages and government bodies to young people requiring trauma-informed intervention to individuals living with disabilities in supported independent living environments.

Having held roles spanning frontline clinical care, facility assessor / accreditor, area management, and service coordination, Kaila brings a deeply practical, person-centered perspective to the intersection of health, human services, and systemic change. She is currently undertaking her fifth qualification – applied health science – with the Australian College of Health and Wellness. She is passionate about making a difference to improve health outcomes and quality of life for others in need of support and compassionate care.

ROBERT JUDD

CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER, BLACKLAKE



Robert Judd is the chief customer officer for Blacklake, with 39 years of experience profitably building national security businesses. Robert specializes in delivering new, mission-critical, advanced technology solutions for the defense, Homeland Security, counterterrorism, and first-responder communities.

Robert has succeeded in large (Fortune 500) and small (venture-backed startup) organizations, with a knowledge of North American, European, and Middle Eastern markets. His expertise includes leading and inspiring teams, setting the vision, fully utilizing agile innovation, and charting the way. He regards the focus on customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and shareholder return as a

three-legged stool that must remain balanced for long-term commercial success.

Aside from Blacklake, other career highlights include having been COO of Metron (an ESOP small business); and GM of Rantec, responsible for all day-to-day operations, including designing and delivering power conversion for numerous platforms in aerospace, missile defense, counter-UAS, and undersea platforms. Robert built the undersea warfare business at 3 Phoenix and subsequently ran the unit post-acquisition by Ultra Electronics to successfully transition it to the point of consolidation into another Ultra business. He brought a through-wall radar system to the US market as part of a VC-backed

Israeli company and led the Smiths Detection businesses fielding explosive and anthrax detection systems post-9/11.

Robert's long-term professional objective is to continue to positively impact safety / security / wellbeing in a talent-rich, supportive, inspiring, and 100% engaged work environment.

MARIO JURIC

PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON |
DIRECTOR EMERITUS, DiRAC INSTITUTE



Mario Juric is the principal investigator of the University of Washington's contribution to the construction of the Rubin Observatory, senior fellow at UW's eScience Institute, and the director of UW's Institute for Data-intensive Astrophysics and Cosmology (DiRAC). Once fully operational in 2026, the Rubin Observatory will deliver the largest sky survey in the history of humankind, answering questions from the nature of dark energy to discovering potential "killer" asteroids. Mario led the definition of Rubin data products and oversees the solar-system team.

Mario received his PhD in astrophysical sciences from Princeton University and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study and a Hubble fellow at Harvard University. His research is in the area of data-intensive survey astronomy and AI. He developed a range of astronomical software products and techniques, including software for asteroid detection, mapping the Milky Way, novel astronomical databases, and cloud-based astronomical data analysis systems.

Mario discovered what was at the time the largest known structure in the universe (the Sloan Great Wall; with J. Richard Gott), a dwarf galaxy colliding with the Milky Way (the Virgo Overdensity), and over 100 asteroids – including 22899 Alconrad, the smallest known main-belt binary asteroid; with Korado Korlevic). Jupiter-family comet 183P/Korlevic-Juric is named after him.

JAMES KEANE

CEO & CO-FOUNDER, GREENROOM ROBOTICS



James Keane leads Greenroom Robotics with a mission to deliver safer, cleaner, and more protected oceans through the ethical application of maritime autonomy and AI. He is focused on expanding Greenroom Robotics' global impact across defense, commercial, and transport sectors.

James is a former Royal Australian Navy marine engineer specializing in sub-surface autonomous systems. He has published seven articles on autonomous underwater systems in peer-reviewed journals. An accomplished sailor, he has competed in the Sydney to Hobart yacht race as part of the Happy Wanderer crew, composed of current and former Australian Defence Force personnel.

ANNE KELLEY



David S. Kim, MD, is the founder of CyanoCapture, a synthetic-biology company that is pioneering the low-cost manufacturing of insulin and GLP-1s from cyanobacteria. He is a former TED speaker, British Army officer, and physician with an MD from the University of Oxford.

David has raised more than \$7m in capital and was a winner of Elon Musk's XPRIZE in 2021.

NICOLA KINSELLA**SVP GLOBAL MARKETING, FLUENT COMMERCE 2026**



Nicola Kinsella is the SVP of global marketing at Fluent Commerce. Nicola has over 15 years of experience in product marketing, with a focus on go-to-market strategy, product positioning, and messaging. Prior to joining Fluent Commerce, Nicola was the head of product marketing at Product Marketing Alliance, where they led the development and execution of product marketing strategy for a portfolio of software products.

Nicola has also held positions at Justice Esports and Rocket League Main, where they served as a strategic advisor and helped the organization establish several professional esports teams. In addition to their work in product marketing, Nicola is an experienced event planner and has organized events for companies such as Justice Esports, Rocket League Main, and Fluent Commerce.

Nicola Kinsella has a BA in history and politics from Macquarie University. Nicola is certified in Leadership and Management Certificate Program, Strategic Management: Competitive and Corporate Strategy, Managing the Global Firm, Managing and Motivating Talent, and Leadership in the 21st Century from Wharton Online.

KELLY KISH

JASON KNAPP**FRACTIONAL AI EXECUTIVE & PRODUCT ARCHITECT, JKNAPP.COM**



Jason Knapp is a fractional AI executive and product builder based in San Diego. He co-founded Strategic Data Corp, where the team co-invented and patented Real-Time Bidding before News Corp acquired the company to anchor its online advertising platform. As chief product officer at Viant, he built the identity graph behind 250M users and ~1B linked identities and led the relaunch of Myspace to 50M+ monthly users.

Today, Jason embeds with founders and CEOs on product strategy, measurement, and hands-on AI development. He currently leads product and engineering for a health-and-wellness startup and continues to build Crafted Pour, the spirits-industry platform he founded, where his retrieval-grounded shopping assistant has a verified zero-hallucination rate and lifted conversion by

58%. He invests in early-stage companies through his AngelList syndicate and mentors founders through Techstars, EvoNexus, and UC San Diego's innovation programs.

At FiRe, Jason wants to pressure-test his thinking on where today's trends actually lead and find conversations that stay ahead of tech-world groupthink.

RAGNAR KRUSE **FOUNDING PARTNER & CEO, AI.FUND**



Ragnar Kruse is a founding partner and CEO of AI.FUND, an entrepreneurial venture-capital firm focused on investing in seed and Series A-stage applied AI companies across Europe. Since its launch in 2024, AI.FUND has invested in nine AI startups and operates as an AI data-driven VC fund.

With over 40 years of experience as a technology entrepreneur, Ragnar spent more than two decades in Silicon Valley, where he co-founded Intershop (IPO in 1999) and Smaato (acquired, 2019). Upon returning to Hamburg in 2019, he launched AI.HAMBURG, a nonprofit initiative aimed at accelerating the adoption of AI technologies. He also co-founded AI.STARTUP.HUB in Hamburg, which has accelerated the growth of over 99 AI startups in the Hamburg metropolitan region within the last three years and recently initiated the AI.ACADEMY with 30+ AI workshops to help corporates integrate AI into their operations.

Ragnar has been deeply passionate about artificial intelligence since 2002 and sees AI as a key economic growth engine for Germany and Europe.

JOSHUA LADAU **SENIOR SOIL SCIENTIST, ARVA INTELLIGENCE | ADJUNCT ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY | AFFILIATE, UC SAN FRANCISCO**



Joshua Ladau is an internationally recognized expert on microbial science. His work lies at the nexus of agriculture, public health, and the ecology of microbes inhabiting Earth. He has pioneered our understanding of the global bacterial diversity in the oceans, the risks of invasion that microbial amendments pose, and worldwide links between the microbes inhabiting soils and allergic diseases in children.

Joshua is currently a senior soil scientist at Arva Intelligence, adjunct assistant professor at Louisiana State University in the Department of Biological Sciences, and research affiliate at the University of California, San Francisco. Prior to these positions, he worked as a scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, the Joint Genome Institute, the Gladstone Institutes, and the Santa Fe Institute. He received his PhD and BS from Cornell University, graduating Summa Cum Laude. He is the author of numerous peer-reviewed, highly cited scientific articles, and his work has been featured in *WIRED* magazine and other news media.

FiReStarter

EVAN LEE **CEO & FOUNDER, SEVEN POINT ONE**



As the CEO of Seven Point One, Evan Lee spearheaded the development of AlzWIN, an FDA-registered, AI-powered cognitive screening solution that utilizes a simple one-minute voice test to identify early signs of impairment.

Under Evan's leadership, the company has secured 14 patents and established high-impact partnerships with global pharmaceutical leaders, major insurers, and clinics to streamline the dementia care continuum. Evan's mission is to empower primary-care providers with scalable tools that improve both clinic profitability and patient dignity, ensuring that proactive cognitive care becomes a universal standard in our aging society.

MYPHUONG LE

PRESIDENT, AQUILLIUS

Partner

SUHAN LEE

HEAD CHEF & CO-FOUNDER, GET SAUCY | CULINARY INNOVATOR



Chef Suhan Lee is the head chef and co-founder of Get Saucy™, where he leads culinary innovation at the intersection of flavor, food science, and inclusive dining. With more than a decade of leadership across Michelin-starred kitchens, executive dining, fast-casual concept development, large-scale catering, and entrepreneurial food ventures, Suhan brings elite culinary training, operational rigor, and hospitality-driven innovation to the future of food.

At Get Saucy, Suhan works in close collaboration with food scientists and product-development partners to recreate authentic global flavors in a new ultra-compliant™ format, building chef-crafted sauces and seasonings that make flavorful meals accessible across restricted diets and allergies.

Suhan's work centers on reengineering traditional recipes by thoughtfully identifying and replacing restricted ingredients while preserving the color, texture, aroma, and depth of flavor that define each cuisine. The result is a line of globally inspired products that deliver a true-to-culture culinary experience while meeting rigorous standards for ingredient integrity and usability.

Get Saucy products are designed to be free from the top nine allergens, seed oils, preservatives, gums, and refined sugars, while aligning with protocols such as AIP, Paleo, Mediterranean, and plant-based. This work is guided by the company's Seed2Sauce™ philosophy, an end-to-end standard rooted in sourcing excellence, culinary craftsmanship, and science-backed product development.

Prior to co-founding Get Saucy, Suhan built his culinary foundation across some of the most demanding and respected environments in hospitality. He served as executive chef at Korilla BBQ, where he led kitchen operations, optimized systems and workflow, reduced food costs by 25%, and helped guide the brand's evolution from a successful food-truck concept into brick-and-mortar locations. His ability to balance culinary creativity with operational discipline played a key role in scaling the concept while maintaining product quality and consistency.

Suhan also co-owned Roosevelt Ave. – a celebrated food concept featured at Smorgasburg and the Queens Night Market, where he developed menus, led service, and consistently served 300 to 500 guests per event. His experience in large-scale catering includes overseeing private and corporate events for up to 300 guests, requiring precision in logistics, menu engineering, and execution at scale. He also served as a sous chef within the JPMorgan Chase Executive Dining program, supporting high-profile executive meals, receptions, and private events with the standards expected of a world-class corporate hospitality environment.

Earlier in his career, Suhan received formal culinary training at The French Culinary Institute and further refined his craft under Paul Liebrandt at Corton, a Michelin two-star and New York Times four-star restaurant widely recognized for its technical excellence and innovation. This foundation in fine dining continues to inform his disciplined approach to flavor development, technique, and product quality.

Before entering the culinary world, Suhan served in the United States Marine Corps, where he developed the leadership, resilience, discipline, and commitment to excellence that continue to define his management style and culinary philosophy. Across every kitchen, concept, and venture he leads, Suhan's focus remains the same: creating exceptional food experiences that are inclusive, scalable, and uncompromising in flavor.

FiReStarter

 **ARNOLD LEITNER**

CEO & FOUNDER, LEITNIUM



Arnold Leitner is a cleantech pioneer, a serial entrepreneur, and an expert in energy markets. He designed and built one of Germany's first super-efficient "passive" houses.

Earlier in his career, Arnold worked as an energy consultant at S&P Global and authored the influential study "Fuel from the Sky" for the US Department of Energy. In 2005, he founded SkyFuel Inc., a prominent cleantech company whose parabolic solar collector won an R&D 100 Award in collaboration with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. SkyFuel was acquired in 2015. Arnold then founded Leitnium (formerly YouSolar) to develop PowerBloc, a modular, scalable, multi-source power system – a nanogrid platform for distributed power that serves as a private utility.

Arnold also served as chair of the Solar Electric Division of the American Solar Energy Society from 2007 to 2009. He holds multiple patents in the energy sector, a PhD in physics from the University of Colorado Boulder, and an MBA in entrepreneurship and finance from Columbia University. Arnold has raised over \$50 million in funding from private and institutional investors, including \$15M for Leitnium.

FiReStarter

PRADNYA LEITNER

HEAD OF OPERATIONS, LEITNIUM



Pradnya Leitner is a seasoned operations executive with a track record of building and scaling organizations across startup and enterprise environments. She currently serves as head of operations at Leitnium, where she leads operations, human resources, legal, financial administration, and overall organizational execution.

Prior to Leitnium, Pradnya led consulting engagements through Leitner Consulting, advising startups and executives on operational excellence, and served as a business operations leader at a high-growth startup. Earlier in her career, Pradnya held senior roles in sales and product marketing at IBM and Salesforce, where she co-led go-to-market strategy, scaled revenue from an acquired product line, and grew major accounts across Wall Street and Silicon Valley.

Pradnya has received distinguished recognition for her leadership and service, including the Startup Leader of the Year Award for Operational Excellence, Salesforce's President's Circle Award for Sales Eminence, and IBM's Gerstner Award for Client Excellence. She holds a bachelor of science degree in biomedical engineering, magna cum laude, from Marquette University. Pradnya is passionate about building strong teams, scalable systems, and mission-driven organizations that contribute to a more sustainable future.

 **IVAN LIACHKO****CEO & FOUNDER, PHASE GENOMICS**



Ivan Liachko is a scientist and entrepreneur with three decades of experience in molecular genetics and computational biology. He is a co-founder of Seattle-based Phase Genomics and three other startups. He is one of the original inventors of Phase's core technology and has served as CEO and CSO of Phase Genomics since its founding in 2015.

Ivan has authored over 50 peer-reviewed papers and patents specializing in the fields of genetics, genomics, and synthetic biology. Ivan received his PhD from Cornell University and did his postdoctoral work at the University of Washington. He is passionate about applying genomic technology to improve our world and serves as scientific advisor and mentor to several life-science companies.

 **ROMI LIFSHITZ****CO-FOUNDER, [STEALTH STARTUP]**



Romi Lifshitz is a quantum AI and quantum security expert, and the co-founder of a stealth AI startup. She earned her MSc in Computer Science and Mathematics under Professor Thomas Vidick, one of the world's top quantum cryptographers. Her original contributions span enhancing the security of quantum communication networks, inventing AI compilers for quantum computers (including the Quantum Deep Dreaming algorithm), developing quantum machine learning systems for climate prediction at PASQAL (a world-leading neutral-atom quantum computing company), and more.

Romi has been invited to speak on her work at various international conferences, including SXSW in Austin and IFA Berlin, Europe's largest consumer electronics tradeshow. She has also lectured university courses on innovation and mentored over 500 students in entrepreneurship and design thinking. She holds an interdisciplinary Bachelor's degree in mathematics, physics, and innovation, from a highly selective program where she completed the equivalent of two degrees' worth of courses in five years.

SHALEV LIFSHITZ**CO-FOUNDER & CEO, [STEALTH STARTUP]**



Shalev Lifshitz is an AI researcher, engineer, and founder. He's spent the last decade engineering frontier AI systems (computer use, reasoning, verification) and working at the intersection of AI and security. He's currently the co-founder of a stealth AI lab.

Shalev started working in AI at age 14. While in high school, he built the entire AI system for a leading surgical navigation company, which was deployed worldwide, and continued during university. By age 16, he'd spoken at conferences in Prague, Berlin, Austin, San Diego, and beyond.

Shalev developed one of the first AI systems capable of general computer control, later built upon by frontier AI labs like Google DeepMind. He created AI simulations for the defense sector, invented new ways to improve LLMs without any additional training with Harvard, developed train-time RL algorithms with Oxford before OpenAI's o1, created brain-inspired neural networks with the University of

Waterloo, and built AI to help diagnose cancer. He's shipped products in high-stakes domains such as surgical navigation and security.

Shalev's past work includes one of the first AI systems capable of general computer control (NeurIPS 2023 Spotlight), methods for scaling test-time compute to improve LLMs without additional training, with Harvard (CoLM 2025), train-time RL algorithms for reasoning during pretraining before OpenAI's o1, with Oxford (NeurIPS 2024), novel brain-inspired neural network architectures with the University of Waterloo, creating the entire ML infrastructure stack for a leading surgical navigation company, and designing AI simulations of cities for the security sector.

Outside of research and engineering, Shalev enjoys writing low-level systems in C/C++ like operating systems, 3D rendering engines, and game engines.

Shalev first fell in love with AI because it was the bridge between both of his passions: the brain and technology. He believes we are living through the most consequential moment in human history – the transition to a world shared with superintelligent machines. Getting this right is the greatest opportunity of our generation. He's spoken at conferences around the world to help others grapple with what's coming, and everything he does is in service of ensuring humanity emerges from this transition safer, freer, and more capable than before.

Shalev's objective is to build safe superintelligence and help humanity reach a new evolutionary step.

MARK LISTES

CEO & CO-FOUNDER, PENDULUM INTELLIGENCE



Mark Listes is the CEO and co-founder of Pendulum Intelligence (www.pendulumintel.com). He leads Pendulum in its mission to increase the observability of the world in order to empower companies to take proactive action and convert threats into opportunities. Mark also serves as a US State Department instructor.

Prior to Pendulum, Mark was the COO and chief of staff of the National Security Innovation Network (NSIN), a US Department of Defense R&E program office with the mission of accelerating the adoption and deployment of cutting-edge technology to support national-security missions.

Mark also served as the director of policy at the US Election Assistance Commission (EAC; 2016–18). In this role, he was the agency's staff lead for all national-security issues – including combatting foreign election interference, intergovernment and intragovernment coordination, policy design, and policy implementation.

Before the EAC, Mark was the co-founder and executive director of Revive My Vote, a voting-rights NGO that specialized in collaboratively building solutions with government organizations. Mark has a JD from William & Mary Law School and a BA from the University of Tennessee. He is a published author in the topics of critical infrastructure, election law, and policymaking.

JUSTIN LOCKE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GLOBAL ENERGY MONITOR



Justin Locke is the executive director for Global Energy Monitor (GEM), the world's most trusted open-source database on energy and climate infrastructure. Spanning more than 20 sectors – including power generation, energy transport, heavy industry, and extraction – GEM provides comprehensive, gold-standard, asset-level data through its trackers, maps, and reports.

Justin is a visionary servant leader with nearly 25 years of direct professional climate and energy experience, including over 10 years of global energy transition executive leadership at C-suite level. His work has been featured in dozens of top-tier global and domestic media outlets – including *60 Minutes*, Reuters, and *Forbes*. He holds extensive experience in leading data-driven, large-scale global climate finance, mitigation, poverty alleviation, energy access / transition, and climate resilience programs. His technical depth includes program design, data management, climate finance, PPPs, carbon markets, and RE infrastructure cycle management.

Justin has proven executive leadership in organizational strategy development and change management, energy transition thought leadership, UNFCCC compliance (NDCs), budget / risk management, fundraising, and operational management. He excels at cultivating global partnerships, creating a learning environment, strategic communications, and fundraising.

Prior to GEM, Justin served as managing director for RMI's Global South program, where he incubated and established the organization's Caribbean, Pacific Island, Southeast Asia workforce development and climate finance access programs. Under his tenure, the program expanded tenfold. He also expanded RMI's revenue base by establishing its multilateral and bilateral partnership strategy and drove cutting-edge initiatives to advance clean energy in low- and middle-income countries.

AMORY LOVINS

CO-FOUNDER & CHAIR EMERITUS, ROCKY MOUNTAIN INSTITUTE



Physicist Amory Lovins is co-founder and chair emeritus of RMI (founded as Rocky Mountain Institute); author of 31 books and 900 papers; an integrative designer of superefficient buildings, vehicles, and factories; and a half-century advisor to major firms and governments worldwide on advanced energy efficiency and strategy. He received the Blue Planet, Volvo, Zayed, Onassis, Nissan, Shingo, and Mitchell prizes; MacArthur and Ashoka fellowships; 12 honorary doctorates; the Heinz, Lindbergh, Right Livelihood, National Design, and World Technology awards; and Germany's Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit.

A Harvard and Oxford dropout, former Oxford don, honorary US architect, Swedish engineering academician, and 2011–18 member of the National Petroleum Council, he has taught at 10 universities and is currently adjunct professor of civil and environmental engineering at Stanford. In 2009, *Time* named him one of the world's 100 most influential people, and *Foreign Policy*, one of the 100 top global thinkers. Stanford's citation analysis lists him among the top 2% of the world's scientists.

PETE MACKAY

LEAD CONSULTANT & EXECUTIVE STRATEGIST, MACKAY STRATEGIES



As president and founder of Mackey Strategies, Pete Mackey, PhD, brings to the company's partner institutions three decades of experience leading branding, campaign marketing, presidential communications, and crisis management for colleges, universities, national and international foundations, and independent schools. He served as the inaugural chief communications officer for such institutions as Amherst College, Bucknell University, Science Foundation Ireland, and the University of South Carolina, building the first institution-wide communications office at each; and has played similar leadership roles on an interim basis for such institutions as Clark University, Lafayette College, and the National Association of College Admission Counselors.

Guided by Pete's leadership, Mackey Strategies has worked with more than 60 institutions, driving rebranding, campaign fundraising and marketing, admissions marketing, crisis management, and more. Among numerous such examples, Pete played an instrumental role in branding and rebranding such institutions as the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the Aspen Institute's American Talent Initiative, the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, the College Advising Corps, and more and has guided communications for campaigns ranging from \$40 million to \$2 billion.

A frequent seminar leader and public speaker, Pete is the author of numerous essays, as well as the book *How to Change the Future: Lessons from Ireland on Revolutionizing Scientific Innovation and Economic Prosperity* (FiReBooks, 2023), co-authored with Dr. William C. Harris, examining the 20 key lessons from Science Foundation Ireland's highly successful first 20 years that other small countries and US states can take to advance their own research enterprises.

MARK MAHAN

PRESIDENT, MMCO



Mark Mahan is a consultant to Majiq Inc., a company he co-founded in 1981 and served as president for until 2005. Mark currently provides his technical expertise and guidance in software development, networking, and system performance. MAJIQ is a global leader in enterprise software and services for the pulp and paper industry. The company's Elixir product provides integrated Sales Order Processing (SOP) and Manufacturing Execution Systems (MES).

Mark's education and background is in software development. He greatly enjoys traveling the world with his wife and is an avid bicyclist.

GARY MARCUS

AI EXPERT, SCIENTIST & AUTHOR | PROFESSOR EMERITUS, NYU



Gary Marcus is a leading voice in artificial intelligence, well-known for his challenges to contemporary AI and his advocacy of alternative approaches. He was the founder and CEO of Geometric Intelligence, a machine-learning company acquired by Uber in 2016; and is the founder and executive chair of Robust AI.

A professor emeritus at New York University, Gary is the author of six books: the *New York Times* bestseller *Guitar Zero*; *The Algebraic Mind*; *Kluge*, one of the *Economist*' "eight best books on brains and consciousness"; *The Birth of the Mind*; *Rebooting AI*, co-authored with Ernest Davis – named one of *Forbes*' "7 must-read books in artificial intelligence"; and, most recently,

Taming Silicon Valley: How We Can Ensure That AI Works for Us.

SAMI MARQUEZ

KERRI MARSHALL**STRATEGIC ADVISOR ANIMAL HEALTH, PATTERN**



Kerri Marshall is a second-generation veterinarian who, after 10 years of practicing and three years as a staff veterinarian at the University of California, Davis, became a part of Banfield's founding management team. While at Banfield, she designed various technology applications, including electronic health records for pets, medical record sharing between hospitals, a pet parent portal, and a digital radiology platform to support the practices.

Following her 16 years with Banfield, Kerri joined the executive team at Trupanion, a provider of medical insurance plans for cats and dogs throughout the US and Canada. She was the lead innovator who created the patented Trupanion Express®, effectively ending the reimbursement model of pet insurance and introducing a new technology-enabled veterinary direct-pay model and leading the claims and IT teams through an IPO in 2014.

Most recently, Kerri was the chief veterinary officer and on the board of directors for BabelBark, a holistic virtual-care ecosystem that helps owners care for their pet and communicate with local pet businesses and veterinarians digitally. Kerri will continue to serve on the BabelBark advisory board, as well as on the board of directors for Inulogica, a company offering personalized pet health messaging at point-of-care and beyond.

Kerri has been a strategic advisor in animal health to Pattern Computer since 2017, expanding new AI and diagnostic products and technology from medical research and other industries into animal health.

Kerri holds a doctor of veterinary medicine from Washington State University, an MBA from the University of Oregon, and a bachelor of science in zoology from Washington State University. She is relocating to Vancouver, Washington, with her husband, two dogs, two horses, and future cat.

RICHARD H.L. MARSHALL, ESQ.**FOUNDER AND CHAIR, CINTURION GROUP**



Richard Marshall, PhD, offers 35 plus years of broad executive leadership experience as a former member of the senior executive service in the federal government, having served in the Department of Defense, the National Security Agency (legal architect of the nation's first cyber warfare exercise), the White House (Comprehensive National Cyber Security Initiative), the Department of Commerce (Critical Infrastructure Assurance Office), and the Department of Homeland Security (director of Global Cyber Security Management).

Since retiring from the federal government (SES), Richard has broadened his executive experience by serving on various boards of

directors, as a CEO of tech startups, as executive director of a nonprofit research center, and as a special cyber advisor to the government of Moldova.

Richard has extensive leadership experience and success in designing growth strategies, integrating policy, culture and training with technology issues, building relationships, and delivering lasting results. He is a strategic thinker who knows how to lead and most importantly, where to lead.

Richard is the founder and chair of the board of Cinturion Group, a global provider of international fiberoptic cable communications systems and services delivering high-reliability and high-capacity solutions via the next generation of fiber optic networks. Cinturion's current project is connecting Europe to India and Singapore through Israel, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

He is also chair of the board of SDSE Networks, home of SCOUT, providing a software-defined secure enclave. SDSE (SCOUT) secures and encrypts network communications at each checkpoint, in every instance, over any device, anyplace in the world, "engineered with stealth, dark by design."

Richard graduated from the Citadel with a BA in political science, history, and English; Creighton University School of Law with a JD; Georgetown University School of Law with an LLM in international and comparative law; National Security Law Institute, University of Virginia School of Law; Harvard University School of Law Summer Program; and Georgetown University Government Affairs Institute on advanced legislative strategies.

He has represented the United States before Her Majesty's High Court of Justice in London and is licensed to practice before the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, the United States Court of Appeals (8th Circuit), and the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

ANNETTE MASON **SABBATICALIST & SUCCESSION ARCHITECT, TRILOGY DESIGN WORKS**



Annette Mason is a sabbaticalist and succession architect at Trilogy Design Works, specializing in guiding leaders to enhance communication, connection, and sustainable success through intentional sabbaticals. Her work emphasizes designing purposeful breaks to regain clarity, spark creativity, and align with core values using frameworks like Compass, Maps, and Constellations.

With interests in space, design, and entrepreneurship, Annette bridges personal renewal with business continuity for self-employed professionals.

JOHN MATTISON **SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE, AI AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES, UCSD CENTER FOR HEALTHCARE DESIGN, UC SAN DIEGO**



John Mattison is currently chief medical information officer and health tech advisor at Arsenal Capital Partners and strategic advisor to a wide range of portfolio companies in biotech, health tech, and care delivery. Previously, he was CMIO at Kaiser Permanente, where he led the company's \$3B digital transformation.

John was formerly a strategic consultant to the NHS healthcare system, a board member of MaxHealth (value-based healthcare delivery), and a board member of SNOMED International data interoperability standards. He was the founder of the international interoperability standard for electronic health records, known as the clinical document architecture (CDA), formerly chaired the translational science workgroup at Global Alliance for Genomics and Health (GA4GH), and is an AI policy contributor at Duke Margolis Center, the AMA, the Helena Group, the Rockefeller Foundation, and UC San Diego.

John has been a contributor to Biosecurity in the Age of AI (Helenabiosecurity.org) and scholar-in-residence on responsible AI and advanced technologies at UC San Diego's Center for Healthcare Design. He teaches exponential medicine with Singularity University, serves as a strategic advisor to numerous AI-enabled health tech startups, and is a contributor to the Human Immunome Project (TREAT California). He is also a member of eHealth Exchange, the Covaxcen Initiative (Northwestern University), and the AMA Digital Medicine Payment advisory group.

John is co-editor of the textbook *Healthcare Information Technology* (McGraw Hill, 2018) and co-author on numerous publications on topics ranging from NLP, immunology, large-scale systems, and data interoperability to IOT and person-centric healthcare. He conducts workshops and delivers keynotes across four continents on health tech and policy and is currently focused on the convergence of multiple exponential technologies in health tech.

 **BILL MCALEER**

MANAGING DIRECTOR, VOYAGER CAPITAL



Bill McAleer has nearly 40 years of combined business, senior executive, and investing experience in the information technology industry. He has participated on the boards of more than 27 companies, including 20+ Voyager portfolio companies, focusing on software, digital media, and mobile. Seventeen companies were sold or went public. He has been involved in over \$3.5 billion in exit transactions.

Prior to co-founding Voyager in 1997, Bill was president of e.liance Partners, a consulting firm that advised information technology companies on strategy, venture financing, and corporate partnering. He served as vice president of finance, chief financial officer, and secretary of Aldus from 1988 to 1994, when the company's revenues grew from \$30 to \$240 million. Bill was responsible for global finance, legal, operations, and acquisition activities, including completing the merger with Adobe in 1994. He also served as a senior executive with Westin Hotels from 1979 to 1987.

Bill is active in several industry organizations and has served on the board of the Washington Technology Industry Assoc. and WTA and the advisory boards of DEMO (one of the industry's premier events), the Canadian Financing Forum, Harris Private Bank, and Thayer Ventures.

Bill was also an elected Cornell University trustee and serves on the advisory boards for Cornell's Johnson Graduate School of Business, Cornell Hotel School, e.Cornell, and the Cornell Center for Entrepreneurship. In addition, Bill is a past chair and current member of the advisory board for the University of Washington Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. He has been a featured speaker at a variety of industry conferences and panels and earned a BS and an MBA from Cornell University.

 **NATHAN McDONALD**

**MANAGING PARTNER, ECOSYSTEM VENTURE GROUP |
MANAGING PARTNER & CEO, KEIRETSU CAPITAL**



Nathan McDonald is the managing partner of Ecosystem Venture Group, where he oversees investment strategies and fund management, leading a portfolio that includes investments and a growing network of investors. With nearly two decades of experience in early-stage investing, Nathan has played a key role in supporting entrepreneurs and fostering innovation across multiple industries.

Nathan is a managing partner and CEO of Keiretsu Capital and currently manages over \$25M in across 5 funds with over 220 investors and over 175 investments to date. Keiretsu Forum is a worldwide investment community of capital, resources, and deal flow with over 60 chapters on 3 continents comprising accredited private-equity angel investors, venture capitalists, and corporate / institutional investors. Keiretsu Forum members invest in high-quality, diverse investment opportunities. Keiretsu Forum and Keiretsu Capital (the exclusive worldwide fund partner of Keiretsu Forum) are ranked as the most active angel investors in the USA, according to PitchBook and the Halo Report.

Nathan brings a unique entrepreneurial business and organizational development background developed during 17 years of hands-on, active leadership and operational experience. He co-founded and currently oversees as chair the Northwest Region of the Keiretsu Forum global angel investment group. He wrote the business plan and designed the organizational structure, which led to the initial license agreement with global Keiretsu Forum. He recruited the team, implemented policies and procedures, and designed and coordinated hundreds of multifaceted events. As part of his overall regional growth strategy, Nathan created and implemented controlled expansion activities in Seattle and Bellevue, WA; Boise, ID; Portland, OR; Vancouver, BC; Denver / Boulder, CO; and Salt Lake City, UT. His leadership and personal networking skills combined to quickly build the region into the fastest-growing angel investment group in the nation, adding over 800 investor members and facilitating over \$450 million in funding for more than 700 companies.

Nathan received a BA degree from the University of Washington, Foster Business School, in business administration and finance with an emphasis in entrepreneurial leadership and venture finance. He currently serves as president of the Buerk Center Entrepreneur Alumni Committee, raising scholarship funds to support future entrepreneurs.

LEON MEAS



BRENDAN A. MILLER

PRINCIPAL ENGINEER, APPLIED SOCIAL MEDIA LABORATORY,
HARVARD UNIVERSITY



Brendan A. Miller is a principal engineer with the Applied Social Media Laboratory at Harvard's Berkman Klein Center, where he architects technology to serve the public interest and advance digital democracy. His work focuses on granting users sovereign control over their digital identities and utilizing AI to foster healthier interactions online.

A technologist with a civic mission, Brendan applies deep experience from the private and public sectors to these challenges, having served as chief software architect for Fortune 500 clients and as the director of the Office of Science and Technology for the State of New Mexico. He holds a math-computer science degree from Brown, an MPA from Harvard, and an MBA from MIT.

LYNN MILLSPAUGH

PHOTOGRAPHER & CAMERA OPERATOR | FIRE 2026 VIDEOGRAPHER



Lynn Millspaugh is a Los Angeles–based photographer and camera operator. When she’s not working, she loves to cook and go rock climbing, so naturally, she has gravitated toward building her career around capturing food and travel. Some of Lynn’s career highlights have been filming on *Bravo Top Chef* as well as *Life Below Zero* for National Geographic.

Lynn is a native Chicagoan who graduated from DePaul University in 2012 with a degree in PR and advertising and a Spanish minor. She has since won an Emmy as a producer, joined the Local 600 Union as a camera assistant, gained multiple credits as a camera operator, and been a licensed drone pilot for several major networks, including Apple TV+, HBO, National Geographic, and PBS, among others.

ALEX MOJTAHEDI

2026 FiReFellow

SIMRAN MOORJANI

2026 FiReFellow | MASTER'S STUDENT, ELECTRICAL & COMPUTER ENGINEERING, UC SAN DIEGO



Simran Moorjani is a master’s student in Electrical and Computer Engineering at UC San Diego, with a focused interest in medical devices and health technologies. Her research spans flexible and stretchable biomedical sensors, medical instrumentation, and electrochemical sensing – work that sits at the intersection of engineering innovation and real-world healthcare impact.

Before UCSD, Simran completed her undergraduate studies at BITS Pilani, one of India's premier institutions, where she served as editor-in-chief of Publications for the Student Alumni Relations Cell, managing alumni communications, leading interviews, and coordinating cross-functional teams. She was also part of the core organizing team for the BITSAA Global Meet, an international alumni conference with over 1,500 attendees, where she developed a sharp eye for logistics, relationship management, and high-stakes event execution.

At FiRe 2026, she’s excited to support a community of leaders shaping the future of advanced AI, health technologies, and frontier innovation.

When she’s not in the lab, you'll find Simran exploring San Diego’s best cafes or catching a golden-hour sunset at Scripps Beach.

GAIL MORGAN CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (RET.)

 **MARC-ANDREAS MUENDLER** CHAIR & PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS, UC SAN DIEGO



Marc-Andreas Muendler is a professor of economics at the University of California, San Diego, where he currently serves as its chair. He is a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research, a research professor at the ifo Institute in Munich, and a guest professor at the University of St. Gallen.

Marc has published in leading economic journals on the origins of globalization and its consequences for local industries and labor markets, firm dynamics and entrepreneurship, and information economics. He has worked as a consultant to the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and private businesses; and as a consulting researcher for the Brazilian census bureau and labor ministry, the German central bank, and the

Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Marc received his PhD in economics from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2002. He founded and directs the Globalization and Prosperity lab (GP-lab) at UC San Diego. Marc's ongoing research revolves around local impacts of global markets.

BRIAN MULLINS

BREANNA NEFF

OLIVIA BENTOW

MARGEIGH NOVOTNY

STRATEGY & OPERATIONS, FIRST PERSON NETWORK



Margeigh Novotny is a product strategist and innovator known for advocacy of equitable value exchange between users and intelligent systems and for her work in developing trust-building technologies. She served as vice president of product design and co-chief product officer at Wikipedia, shaping user-centered design and product strategy for the world's largest free-knowledge platform.

With deep expertise in human-computer interaction, Margeigh has also held leadership roles at Microsoft, Bing, eero (now Amazon), and MOTO Development Group (now Cisco). At Microsoft, Novotny led research that resulted in foundational patents in user-centered AI; and in previous work, papers and patents related to first-of-category hardware, software and service platforms. She advocates for ethical, inclusive technology, with work that spans tech for social good, cross-disciplinary design, and public digital infrastructure.

KATE NOLAN

FOUNDER & GENERAL PARTNER, SOURDOUGH VENTURES



Kate Nolan is founder and general partner of Sourdough Ventures, a Seattle-based pre-seed fund backing applied AI deployed inside critical sectors such as energy, public safety, and civic infrastructure.

Before launching the fund, Kate led startup growth at 1776, a Washington, DC-based regulated-sector incubator, where she built systems to support hundreds of founders, including the digital identity platform ID.me. A former operator at Amazon, Kate brings an innovator's view of how technology, regulation, and institutional trust intersect.



DEJI BRYCE OLUKOTUN

FUTURIST AUTHOR | QUALITY OMBUDSMAN, SONOS



Deji Bryce Olukotun is the author of two novels, including *After the Flare*, which won the 2018 Philip K. Dick Special Citation. He works for the audio technology company Sonos, where he leads sustainability and the Sonos Foundation, which focuses on ecoacoustics and music education.

Before Sonos, Deji championed digital rights around the world at Access Now, a tech nonprofit. He graduated from Stanford Law School and Yale College.

MIKA ELIZABETH ONO

**DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, QUALCOMM INSTITUTE,
UC SAN DIEGO**



Mika Elizabeth Ono is director of communications for the Qualcomm Institute, where she provides strategic leadership in the development and execution of comprehensive communications, promotion, and public relations programs.

Prior to QI, Mika worked at the University of Redlands, where she was appointed chief communications officer and worked closely with the president and president's cabinet to address opportunities and challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to Redlands, Mika spent 16 years at one of the world's largest biomedical research institutes – Scripps Research in La Jolla, California – where she headed the communications department and served on the executive leadership team. She has also worked in staff or freelance roles

for The Rockefeller University, Rockefeller Center, *Essence* magazine, Bristol-Myers Squibb, and the Lowy Medical Research Institute. A cookbook she co-authored, *Ancient Wisdom, Modern Kitchen: Recipes from the East for Health, Healing, and Long Life*, won the San Diego Book Award.

Mika holds a BA in English literature from Reed College (phi beta kappa) and a master's in international affairs from The Fletcher School at Tufts/Harvard University.

LIZ ORNITZ

VIDEO JOURNALIST & PRODUCER | FIRE 2026 PHOTOGRAPHER & TEAM LEAD



Liz Ornitz is a multidisciplinary filmmaker and photographer based in New York. She specializes in capturing the intersection of technology, science, and social impact.

Liz's work spans journalism, documentary, and commercial and event coverage and has appeared in outlets including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune*, *Bustle*, and *More Perfect Union*.

BARRY O'SULLIVAN

PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK



Professor Barry O'Sullivan, FAAAI, FAAIA, FEurAI, FIAE, FICS, MRIA, is an award-winning academic working in the fields of artificial intelligence, constraint programming, operations research, AI/data ethics, and public policy. He contributes to several global Track II AI diplomacy efforts at the interface of military, defence, intelligence, and AI.

Barry is a full professor at the School of Computer Science & IT at University College Cork and a member of its governing body. He is founding director of the Insight SFI Research Centre for Data Analytics at UCC and director of the SFI Centre for Research Training in AI. He is an adjunct professor at Monash University.

Barry is a fellow and a past president of the European AI Association (EurAI). He is also a fellow and a member of the Executive Council of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI). He chairs the advisory board of the GRACE project at Europol and advises the Leuven.ai institute (KULeuven, Belgium) and the Computational Sustainability Network (Cornell University, USA).

In July 2018, Barry was appointed vice chair of the European Commission High-Level Expert Group on AI. In 2019, the HLEG-AI published "Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI" (April) and "Policy & Investment Recommendations for Trustworthy AI" (June). In 2019, Barry became an advisor on AI to the European Commission's Joint Research Centre.

Barry is a member of the digital group at the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA). The IIEA is Ireland's leading international affairs think tank. It is an independent, not-for-profit organization with charitable status. The IIEA provides a forum for all those interested in EU and international affairs to engage in debate and discussion and to evaluate and share policy options.

Barry is senior technology advisor at INHR, a US-registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to improving access to the United Nations and enhancing the effectiveness of small and mid-sized states and NGOs. INHR offers strategic advice, training, research, and capacity-building to maximize the impact of your interaction with UN agencies in Geneva and New York and bilateral presence in Brussels and Washington. INHR are training experts – supporting diplomatic skills for governments and advising on

In 2019, Barry was appointed by Ireland's minister for health to the Health Research Consent effective use of artificial intelligence in military, intelligence, counterterrorism, and in humanitarian settings. Declaration Committee. In 2020, he was appointed chair of the oversight board of Health Data Research UK (North). In 2021, he was appointed by the minister for health as chair of the National Research Ethics Committee for Medical Devices. In 2022, he was appointed by the minister for Trade Promotion, Digital & Company Regulation to the Enterprise Digital Advisory Forum.

ILEANA OVALLE

 **SETHURAMAN PANCHANATHAN**

**PROFESSOR OF TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION,
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY | DIRECTOR
FMR.), NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**



The Honorable Sethuraman Panchanathan is a computer scientist and engineer. He is a leader in the fields of science, engineering, and education, with more than three decades of experience in higher education and government. Throughout his career, he has designed and built knowledge enterprises aimed at advancing research innovation, strategic partnerships, entrepreneurship, global development, and economic growth.

From 2020 to 2025, Panchanathan served as the 15th director of the US National Science Foundation (NSF), a \$9 billion independent federal agency and the only government agency charged with advancing all fields of scientific discovery, technological innovation, and STEM education. During his tenure, he established the first new directorate in 31 years – the Directorate for Technology, Innovation and Partnerships – aimed at delivering “Innovation Everywhere for Everyone” by accelerating the translation of science and technology for economic progress, national security, and societal impact.

Panchanathan currently serves as the university professor of technology and innovation at Arizona State University, where he has held a faculty appointment since 1997. His previous roles at ASU include leading the university’s research portfolio as the executive vice president of the ASU Knowledge Enterprise and the chief research and innovation officer. Under his leadership, ASU increased its research performance fivefold, earning recognition as the fastest-growing and most innovative research university in the US.

Panchanathan has received numerous recognitions for his scientific work during his career; in 2025, he was awarded the Padma Shri, one of the highest civilian awards bestowed by the Government of India, in recognition of his distinguished contributions to science. He is a fellow of the Indian National Academy of Engineering and the National Academy of Inventors, as well as a member of the National Academy of Engineering. In April 2026, Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego appointed him to lead the Phoenix Quantum Strategy to unite government, industry, and academia to accelerate development in quantum computing, communication, and sensing.

Panchanathan received his PhD in electrical and computing engineering from the University of Ottawa. He is married to Sarada "Soumya" Panchanathan, an academic pediatrician and informatician, who has taught medical students, pediatric residents, and informatics fellows. They have two adult children, Amritha and Roshan, and three grandchildren.

2026 FiReFellow

ALIA PAYNE

**GRADUATE STUDENT, CLIMATE SCIENCE & POLICY,
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON**

Alia Payne is a graduate student at the University of Washington focused on climate science and policy. Currently, she is part of a UW research team modeling the potential ecosystem-level impacts of large-scale ocean iron fertilization (a carbon dioxide removal strategy) in the North Pacific. She is pursuing both a graduate certificate in climate science through the UW program on climate change and a master’s degree through the UW School of Marine and Environmental Affairs. She is also helping to teach a course on climate governance.



With a background spanning field science, expedition filmmaking, and nearly a decade of wilderness guiding, she is especially skilled at navigating complex projects in remote and dynamic settings. She has done research on lake cores to reconstruct glacial history in the Peruvian Andes and spent weeks at sea sailing in the South Pacific studying shifts in the Deep Chlorophyll Maximum.

As a professional whitewater rafting guide, Alia has safely navigated wild rivers from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to the Sierra Nevada. As a filmmaker, Alia has documented women scientists and adventurers, kayaking 1,000 miles as part of an expedition focused on salmon conservation and working with an interdisciplinary research team studying humpback whale songs in Hawaii.

VANESSA PEGUEROS

BOARD DIRECTOR, LIVEPERSON, BECU & PRISIDIO



Vanessa Pegueros is an accomplished technology executive with over 30 years of experience. Currently, she serves as a corporate board director of the public company Liveperson (Nasdaq: LPSN), Boeing Employee Credit Union, and Prisdio. Formerly, she was on the board of Carbon Black (NASDAQ: CBLK) and was part of the transaction to sell Carbon Black to VMware. Vanessa is also very active in angel investing and is a venture partner for Flying Fish Partners.

Vanessa has held senior leadership positions at organizations such as DocuSign, Expedia, US Bank, and AT&T Wireless. Her expertise spans various domains, including technology architecture and engineering, risk management, cybersecurity, and compliance. Vanessa has a proven track record of successfully building and leading high-performance cybersecurity teams, implementing robust security frameworks and controls, and driving cultural change to foster a strong security mindset within organizations.

Vanessa's educational background includes an MBA from Stanford University, an MS in telecommunication from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and a BS in engineering from UC Berkeley. She also holds various cybersecurity certifications, including CISSP, CRISC, CISM, and GSEC. Relative to her board work, she holds the National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) Director Professionalism certification.

SAMUEL PERRY

PRESIDENT, ASCENDANCE VENTURES



Sam Perry is an early-stage investor and advisor to startup companies, especially those introducing disruptive technologies in media, electronic commerce, social networking, and clean technology.

Sam's purpose is to improve the use of information technology to make massive improvements to the human condition – for example, by radically changing the way we measure health, manage fuel costs, or use water. He shepherded Reuters' investment in Yahoo and, more recently, was an early-stage investor in Tesla Motors, the maker of fine electric automobiles.

With a background in journalism, the distinct value Sam brings as an investor is a trusted, varied, and nontraditional network and a keen ability to uncover hidden yet important truths.

Sam is an experienced co-founder, investor, business development executive, and board member and advisor. His primary focus is on media-related businesses, including software and internet technology.

 **MOLLY PETERSON**

EDITOR, CALMATTERS | BOARD PRESIDENT, SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS



Molly Peterson is an award-winning journalist and editor in Los Angeles, with decades of experience in environmental, disaster, and public-health reporting. She serves as an editor at the nonpartisan nonprofit newsroom CalMatters and is president of the board for the Society of Environmental Journalists.

Molly's reporting has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Guardian*, and on NPR. She is also a non-practicing lawyer.

Molly's work includes a podcast about the toxic airborne pollution threatening communities surrounding California's Salton Sea.

[**Note:** FiReFilms selected *The Lake* (Sundance Film Festival US Documentary Special Jury Award: Impact for Change) as our 2026 FiRe Featured Film, with an exclusive screening offered only to FiRe attendees. Molly Peterson will host scientist-subject Ben Abbott and *Grow the Flow* managing director Jake Dreyfous for a post-screening Q&A.]

JOHN PETOTE

FOUNDER, SANTA BARBARA ANGEL ALLIANCE



John Petote is an angel investor who has invested in 75 startup and early-stage companies as well as various VC funds and real-estate partnerships. His private company investments include organizations from the following industries: information technology, Internet marketing, shared economy, biotech, medical devices, consumer goods, and financial institutions.

John is the founder of CIO Solutions and currently serves as the company's chairman. CIO Solutions designs and implements customized cloud-based IT solutions and also provides IT management services to SMB and enterprise organizations.

John has held sales and technical-related positions in a variety of industries. He currently serves on the boards of directors for Apeel Sciences, FutureInReview.com, UCSB Economic Forecast Project, Central Coast MIT Forum, United Boys and Girls Clubs of Santa Barbara County, and the South Coast Business & Technology Awards. Past board memberships include Savings.com, TeraMatrix, CMC Communications, and We Teach Sports. John also serves as an active member of the Santa Barbara Downtown Rotary Club.

John's primary skills include assessing investable startup organizations, mentoring, strategic planning, business development, and creative problem solving. He graduated with honors from the ICM School of Business (Pittsburgh).

 **FiReStarter**

KEVIN POMPLUN

CEO & Co-FOUNDER, LENS



Southern California native Kevin Pomplun's first company, SkyGrid, won iPhone News App of the Year before being acquired. Kevin then went to Facebook, leading mobile teams across iPhone, Android, and mobile web.

After Facebook, Kevin founded Go, a mobile-first auto club app with maps, insurance, and on-demand towing which was featured as an iPhone App of the Day. He now leads LENS, whose mission is to end traffic accidents.

SWAIN PORTER

CEO & CO-FOUNDER, FEV ANALYTICS



Swain Porter is CEO and co-founder of FEV Analytics. A serial entrepreneur, Swain is also an active angel investor and startup mentor who solves problems with technology and great people. He started his career at Immunex (later acquired by Amgen), where he contributed to the development of ENBREL®, the fastest-growing biologic drug ever created.

After working as a technology consultant at Microsoft from 1996 to 2000, Swain founded Catalytic Software, a global software services company specializing in technology solutions for the media, technology, and telecom industries. He developed a 50-acre, high-profile IT campus in India that included state-of-the-art business facilities and accommodation for employees and visiting clients – an award-winning project endorsed by the prime minister of India.

Since selling Catalytic, Swain has devoted himself to creating revolutionary technology through the creation of FEV Analytics. He has been featured in the *Wall Street Journal* ("Indiana Jones and the Temple of Geeks," by Kara Swisher), the *New York Times*, *WIRED*, *Worth* magazine, and a documentary for the BBC. He is a 40 Under 40 Honoree and an Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year finalist. Swain holds a BS in molecular biology from Willamette University.



BRETT QUEENER

MANAGING DIRECTOR & PARTNER, BONFIRE VENTURES



Brett Queener is a partner at Bonfire Ventures, a seed-stage firm backing founders reshaping how businesses operate as AI rewires every workflow and every team. With more than \$1B in AUM and two decades investing in business software, Bonfire leads seed rounds and commits deeply to a small number of companies each year – bringing hard-earned pattern recognition and a steady presence from the earliest days onward.

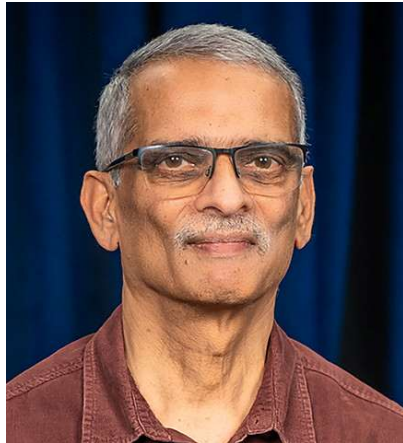
Brett's entire career has been focused on growing software companies fast and built to last. He lives at the intersection of product and GTM, digging deep with founders to help them build scalable businesses and become more effective leaders. He started his software career at Siebel Systems, helping build a juggernaut of alliances and marketing organizations in the on-premise world. He then joined Salesforce.com, where he spent 12 years running revenue operations, then products, and leading several of the company's larger acquired business units. He then tested his pre-revenue entrepreneur mettle as COO of SmartRecruiters, which had a successful exit to SAP.

CHRISTOPHER RAGGIO

CEO, FEDEROV

 **RAMESH RAO**

**DIRECTOR, QUALCOMM INSTITUTE | DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR ECE,
UC SAN DIEGO**



In his capacity as UC San Diego director of the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology (Calit2), Professor Ramesh Rao is also involved on a day-to-day basis with a wide variety of research initiatives, including the development and deployment of sensor networks for civilian, as well as homeland security initiatives.

Ramesh also supervises research on the integration of various wireless standards, such as Bluetooth, Wi-Fi (802.11), CDMA and third-generation (3G) wireless networks (CDMA2000, W-CDMA). As a researcher in the wireless field, Rao's contributions include the development of energy-efficient communication techniques to support mobile multimedia users.

Rao served on a US government panel to review the current status of research, development, and applications in wireless communications in the United States, Japan, and Western Europe, with a view toward evaluating the competitive status of US efforts. In April 2004, Rao was appointed the first holder of the QUALCOMM Endowed Chair in Telecommunications.

 **DRUMMOND REED**

DIRECTOR, FIRST PERSON COOPERATIVE



Drummond Reed has spent over three decades in internet identity, security, privacy, and trust infrastructure. He is currently leading the First Person Project as a director of the First Person Cooperative.

From 2021 to 2025, Drummond was the director of Trust Services at Gen (formerly Avast) after its acquisition of Evernym, where he was chief trust officer. He is co-author of the book *Self-Sovereign Identity* (Manning Publications, 2021) and co-editor of the "W3C Decentralized Identifiers (DID) 1.0" specification. He currently serves as governance lead for the Ayra Association.

Drummond is a founding board member of the OpenWallet Foundation and Trust Over IP (ToIP), where he serves as co-chair of the Technology Stack Working Group, the Concepts and Terminology Working Group, and the Decentralized Trust Graph Working Group. In 2002, he received the Digital Identity Pioneer Award from Digital ID World, and in 2013 he was cited as an OASIS Distinguished Contributor.

2026 FiReFellow

PAUL RICKETTS

2026 FIREFELLOW | INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT



Paul Ricketts is excited about joining Future in Review for the first time this year as a FiReFellow.

Paul has spent his career with early-stage (seed / Series A / Series B) startups in and out of the United States, mostly in fintech and product leadership roles. He led product at Go, which evolved from a lead aggregator to MGA to full-stack insurer operating across all 50 states in three years.

At Nearside, Paul was VP of Product and Design and launched and scaled successful checking account, lending, incorporation, and other products for the 57m small businesses in the US that aren't served by legacy financial services providers.

In addition to ongoing consulting on product, strategy, and commercialization, Paul is looking for a meaningful challenge to run hard at with the right team. He's a systems thinker and a generalist drawn to projects, both professional and extracurricular, that expose him to people and ideas that break his pre-existing paradigms and reframe the constraints around big, unsolved problems.

Paul has accumulated a lot of reps and built operational expertise helping to build young companies but remains a searcher and a learner at heart.

KURLING ROBINSON

FOUNDER, CATALYST WORKS

RANDE ROGERS

SUSAN ROCKEFELLER



Susan Rockefeller is a documentary filmmaker, artist, and conservationist. She is the founder of Musings (www.musingsmag.com), a digital magazine that showcases responsible innovation and provides inspiration and action for a better world.

Susan sits on the boards of the Asian Cultural Council, Oceana, the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture, the We Are Family Foundation, the Land and Garden Preserve, and the David Rockefeller Fund. She is a member of the Council of Foreign Relations and a mission board member of Imagine.

Susan is a principal of Louverture films and a member of the film committee for the Museum of Modern Art and of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Susan is also an avid painter of landscapes and abstract mindscapes.

GARY ROSHAK

MANAGING PARTNER, SYNTHESIS WORKS

Gary Roshak is a proven entrepreneur, global executive, and wireless industry pioneer. A creative leader and design thinker, he is a senior executive specializing in positioning businesses – including early-stage, publicly traded and Tech 50 – for growth, increased shareholder value, and leadership within their global sphere of influence.

Gary is a versatile general manager and T-shaped individual with strong technology and market instincts



and a clear history of identifying strategic opportunities and then taking a hands-on role in operationalizing the vision.

Gary has demonstrated a knack for finding fast-moving streams early and then jumping in to create organization from chaos. He is a strong team member who delivers results at all levels, from ideation to global business solutions.

Gary's specialties are deep domain experience in mobile, digital media, and online marketing sectors, with an exceptional ability to develop and launch internet and mobile industry services for over 20 years.

General management and interim executive management in multiple functional roles include corporate strategy, mergers & acquisitions, post-acquisition integration, innovation management, strategic marketing, and business & corporate development.

2026 FiReFellow

ALEXA RUBIO

**2026 FIREFELLOW | STUDENT OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING,
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND**



A returning FiReFellow at Future in Review, Alexa Rubio is a junior at the University of Maryland studying mechanical engineering with a background in biology. She previously worked as an operations intern at Kerecis, where she supported cross-functional healthcare operations and contributed to data-driven initiatives across clinical and business teams.

Alexa currently works as a pediatric medical assistant at Inova, providing care to underserved communities and gaining firsthand experience in patient-centered healthcare delivery. This summer, she will be working as an engineering quality assistant at Synolus, where she looks forward to gaining experience in quality systems and product development within a startup environment.

Alexa's work is driven by an interest in applying engineering and emerging technologies to improve healthcare systems, increase accessibility, and develop practical solutions to real-world challenges.

 **STUART SANDIN**

**PROFESSOR, SCIENCE, SCRIPPS INSTITUTION OF OCEANOGRAPHY
| DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR MARINE BIODIVERSITY & CONSERVATION**



Stuart Sandin, PhD, is a quantitative ecologist with specific interests in population and community ecology. He is a professor of marine ecology at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego and the Oliver Chair in marine biodiversity and conservation science. He also serves as the director of the Center for Marine Biodiversity and Conservation, a program based at Scripps promoting interdisciplinary research and educational approaches to maintain the integrity of ocean ecosystems and manage their use in the face of rapid and inevitable global change.

Stuart's research addresses questions in which ecology can most effectively inform marine management. What have been the impacts of human activities on marine ecosystems? How have changes in the structure of these ecosystems affected their functioning, especially related to important ecosystem services? Finally, how can ecological insights best be applied to develop creative and effective solutions to marine management problems?

Stuart firmly believes that novel and fundamental ecological discoveries are yet to be learned, and that such discoveries hold promise to enhance current management strategies. His research focuses largely on the ecology of coral reefs, with the goal of finding effective management and restoration approaches for this imperiled ecosystem.

ALI SCATTERGOOD

FILMMAKER & FOUNDER, OAK LIGHT FILMS



Ali Scattergood is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and photographer. In the fall of 2023, her feature documentary film *Healing Waters*, about the renowned photographer Linda Troeller (directed and edited), took home the Audience Choice award for best film at the Albuquerque Film Festival. It has since won several awards at other festivals around the country. In 2022, her short film *Climate Diaries; Heather's Story* (directed by herself and Berit Anderson), on the climate crisis, won Best Documentary Short, Best Female Director, and Best Cinematography in several film festivals across the USA and Europe. Ali produced and directed a web series for the Washington Department of Health, part of a larger campaign on COVID-19 vaccine awareness, which aired on primetime television during the 2022 Winter Olympics. In spring 2023, Ali had a solo art show, "Liminal Moments," in Pioneer Square, Seattle, showcasing some of her latest fine-art photography work.

With experience in filmmaking and photography projects around the world, Ali has worked on both post- and production teams with a number of renowned filmmakers and shows, including Ken Burns and the team at Florentine Films and projects for Netflix, Disney, A&E Networks, Hulu, Nat Geo Wild, and Warner Brothers Discovery. Ken Burns projects include: *The Mayo Clinic: Faith, Hope, Science*, the Emmy-nominated series *The Story of Cancer: The Emperor of All Maladies*, *The Biography of Jackie Robinson*, *The Address*, and the Emmy-nominated miniseries *The Vietnam War*. In 2018, Ali launched her own boutique production company, Oak Light Films (www.oaklightfilms.com), which specializes in nonfiction storytelling for clients in the entertainment, education, and impact media sectors.

Ali's photography work, both fine-art and documentary, has been exhibited in shows and publications across the United States and France. She has been fortunate enough to photograph public figures including Spiritual Leader His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, musician Wynton Marsalis, filmmaker Ken Burns, author and physician Siddhartha Mukherjee, and the Martha Graham Dance Company in NYC. In 2019, she was invited and worked as a photojournalist for the Pan-American Games in Lima, Peru.

Ali is an alumna of the Global Shapers, the World Economic Forum's international network of young leaders. She has spoken on panels such as Seattle Documentary Association's industry events, Woman in Film & Seattle International Film Festival's "The Art of Documentary Filmmaking," and the Future of Cinema Film Festival for youth hosted by Interlochen Arts Academy in Traverse City, MI. Currently based in Seattle, Ali enjoys working in all areas of production. She is available for video and photography productions globally.

DONNA SCATTERGOOD

CHO, MED VENTURES



Donna Scattergood, PhD, RN, created "s'good muffins" and founded www.sgoodmuffin.com, and the s'good team. S'good Muffin sold to S'good Life in 2017. She received her doctorate in nursing from the University of Virginia in 1988.

Trained in scientifically based healthcare, Donna is open-minded and honors the body's innate capacity for healing, the role of lifestyle factors in influencing health, and the appropriate uses of supplements, herbs, and other

holistic modalities. She founded both S'good muffin and Vitalution LLC – The Vitality Revolution to help harness vitality, our finest asset – through lifestyle changes.

Donna is a member of the American Holistic Nursing Assoc. (sigma theta tau) and the Institute of Functional Medicine. Certificates include lifestyle educator for First Line Therapy, medical QiGong, Reiki II practitioner, and therapeutic touch practitioner; Application of Functional Medicine in Clinical Practice: Institute of Functional Medicine; integrative health coaching: Duke Center for Integrative Medicine; Heartmath practitioner; lifestyle educator for First Line Therapy; Chopra's Primordial Sound Meditation; Benson's Relaxation Response, and others. She is a published author and has been a holistic wellness practitioner for more than 30 years, a participant or investigator in several meditation and health studies, an international consultant for healthcare organizational development, adjunct professor at several universities, recipient of several scholarly awards, and a consultant who's helped hundreds of people achieve their personal and organizational goals.

FiReStarter

DAVID SCHMIDT

**CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER & CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER,
MUSSEL POLYMERS**



David Schmidt is a chemical manufacturing and specialty materials expert who understands technologies and their applications and builds businesses around them. He is chief financial officer and chief operations officer of Mussel Polymers Inc., a biomaterials company pioneering next-generation adhesive technologies inspired by mussel adhesion chemistry that solves the unsolvable. David's expertise spans financial projections, risk assessment, and capital acquisition, ensuring sustainable growth in competitive industries.

Prior to Mussel Polymers, David led several growth initiatives for Honeywell Specialty Materials, where he successfully launched several semiconductor, flat-panel display, life-science, and other alternative energy technologies. He also initiated an internal venture capital fund to propel innovative solutions in energy capture, conversion, and storage, among others; and ran the single largest growth platform, which was ultimately acquired.

David guided Plasmion Corp., a semiconductor manufacturing equipment company, as chief operations officer through a revenue ramp of seven times and several rounds of financing. He was responsible for both finance and operations at publicly traded medical-device company Hydromer Inc. and held leadership positions at Film Specialties Inc., a plastics and specialty coatings business.

David has coached and developed several global teams across multiple continents in segmentation and value-proposition development, which has translated into several hundred million dollars of revenues and profits. He has done this both for businesses and educational institutions. He has served as board member and chair for public companies, including a novel fuel-cell business that leverages the semiconductor supply chain and a medical oncology-diagnosis capital equipment business. He is a graduate of Lehigh University and currently mentors and advises existing advanced materials businesses that are in a position to grow and scale.

 **RYAN B. SCHOLL**

**REAR ADMIRAL, US NAVY (RET.) | EVP DEFENSE-US,
KRAKEN TECHNOLOGY GROUP**



Ryan "Doc" Scholl is a senior executive with Kraken Technology, building the US subsidiary with extensive experience in strategic leadership, operational excellence, and financial stewardship.

Doc has a proven track record in leading high-stakes initiatives across defense, aviation, and maritime industries. He is an accomplished leader with 36 years in high-level roles, including seven C-suite equivalent positions in the US Navy and US commercial sector.

FiRe Team

SCOTT SCHRAMKE

CTO, FUTURE IN REVIEW & STRATEGIC NEWS SERVICE



Scott Schramke is the chief technology officer for the Strategic News Service and manages the IT needs of the various SNS enterprises, including the Future in Review (FiRe) conferences, Pattern Inc., SNS special events, INVNT/IP, FiReFilms, and Orca Relief Citizens' Alliance.

 **LARRY SMARR**

DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR EMERITUS, CSE, UC SAN DIEGO



Larry Smarr is a national leader in scientific computing and internet cyberinfrastructure (CI). After earning his PhD in physics in 1975, he carried out pioneering research on black holes and computational astrophysics.

Larry has provided national leadership in advanced CI, serving over the last two decades as PI on multiple National Science Foundation CI research grants. These grants were unified in 2023 to form the National Research Platform (NRP), NSF's largest distributed academic AI / machine learning / data science CI, led by the San Diego Supercomputer Center.

Larry has also been an innovator in the quantified-self movement, including personalized surgery planning and observation of his gut microbiome ecological dynamics. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering, as well as a fellow of the American Physical Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has served on top-level advisory committees to NIH, NASA, NSF, and DOE. He is now a distinguished professor emeritus in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of California, San Diego.

WILLIAM SOWARD

CEO, TITAN SEAL



Bill Soward is CEO at Titan Seal, an early-stage company that uses the blockchain to digitally certify important documents. He is also executive director of ShelterTech, a nonprofit solving the biggest technology challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness. Previously, he served for five years as chief operating officer at Lecorpio, a global leader in cloud-based (SaaS) enterprise intellectual-property management software that merged with Anaqua in July 2017.

Prior to Lecorpio, Bill served as CEO and president of Adaptive Insights (formally Adaptive Planning), the global leader in cloud-based budgeting, forecasting, and reporting, which was recognized as #1 in customer satisfaction by Gartner. Adaptive Insights was acquired by Workday for \$1.6 billion in 2018. Before Adaptive Insights, Bill was general manager of FRS, a business unit of S1 Corp., providing financial institutions worldwide with enterprise risk and regulatory compliance solutions. At S1, Bill transformed FRS into S1's most successful business unit, more than doubling revenues while building profitable and sustainable customer relationships with global financial institutions.

Additionally, as a member of S1's executive team, Bill spearheaded the buildout of S1's European operations and served as interim CEO of S1 Europe as well as S1's Edify business unit. He also held a variety of management roles at Edify Corp. prior to its acquisition by S1 and played an instrumental role in that company's acquisition by S1. Earlier in his career, Bill worked at ROLM / Siemens A.G. and IBM Corp. Bill received his bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of California – Berkeley.

DAVID SPARK

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, FOUNDER & HOST, CISO SERIES



David Spark is the founder and executive producer of the CISO Series, a media network for cybersecurity professionals. He also co-hosts many of the shows. David is a veteran tech journalist who's appeared in many media outlets, including *eWEEK*, *Wired News*, *Forbes*, *PCWorld*, *Clearchannel*, and *TechTV* (formerly ZDTV).

David is the author of *Three Feet from Seven Figures: One-on-One Engagement Techniques to Qualify More Leads at Trade Shows*. Outside of tech, security, and marketing, David squandered over a dozen years working as a touring standup comedian, a San Francisco tour guide, and a comedy writer for The Second City in Chicago.

David is also the founder and host of the San Diego Cyber Group, which hosts the largest monthly meetup of cybersecurity professionals in the San Diego area.

PAYSON R. STEVENS

FELLOW, CLARKE CENTER FOR HUMAN IMAGINATION ,
UC SAN DIEGO

JON TAIT



A recognized expert in business strategy, trade, and regulation, Daniella Taveau has previously represented the United States at the World Trade Organization, all US Free Trade agreements, and multiple intergovernmental organizations.

In addition to her role as president of Bold Text Strategies, Daniella is the chief operating officer of Embassy Series, an organization fostering international understanding through musical diplomacy.

She's an executive in residence at the Robert H. Smith School of Business, serves on the Stimson Center Loomis innovation council and multiple executive boards, and was formerly a nonresident senior fellow for the Atlantic Council.

TATIANA TORRES

FiReStarter

 **SONIA TRIGUEROS** **CEO & CO-FOUNDER, NIVD**



Sonia Trigueros, PhD, a distinguished molecular biologist with academic affiliations to the University of Oxford, Harvard University, and the University of Barcelona, is the founder of NIVD (Nano In Vitro Diagnostics), a deep-tech startup at the forefront of nano *in vitro* diagnostics. Her vision gave rise to a platform that utilizes nanosensors for early disease detection, offering real-time diagnostics – even before symptoms manifest.

Sonia's leadership at NIVD underscores the vital role women play in bridging science and technology with patient-centric solutions. The company – headquartered in London, with a state-of-the-art R&D center at the Barcelona Science Park – focuses on areas with profound global impact, including sepsis being its first project *cum* product, oncology, infectious diseases, and autoimmune disorders. Her work not only advances diagnostic capabilities but also exemplifies how women leaders are paving the way for a more innovative and equitable future in healthcare.

2026 FiRe Team

ANN VERTOVEC

**FiRE 2026 FiReFILMS ASSOCIATE | ATTENDING PHYSICIAN,
OSHER AFFILIATE FACILITY, NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE**



Ann Vertovec, MD, turned to integrative medicine after observing the growing epidemic of chronic lifestyle diseases, including diabetes, obesity, and anxiety. As an emergency physician, Ann has limited time with patients to discuss preventative care, but she emphasizes nutrition, exercise, nature, and relaxation techniques.

Ann educates her colleagues and medical students / residents on these topics to help promote wellness for all and to mitigate career burnout. Ann also lectures on topics related to planetary health, including sustainable eating, native trees, and strengthening the focus of the environment and health in medicine.

LEAH VILLEGAS

PETRA VORSTEHER

FOUNDING PARTNER, AI.GROUP GLOBAL



Petra Vorsteher co-founded the AI.GROUP (AI.HAMBURG, AI.FUND, AI.IMPACT) to bring international AI expertise to businesses and accelerate the adoption of AI. She also co-founded AI.INVEST and AI.FUND to support the growth of promising AI startups with venture capital and expertise. She co-founded the AI STARTUP HUB in Hamburg, which is funded by the German government, and the Transatlantic AI Exchange to deepen the exchange between the US and Germany between experts in the AI ecosystem.

A pioneer in the mobile industry, Petra is one of the first women globally to co-found a mobile company (2005) and has been successful in growing Smaato to become one of the largest independent mobile companies in the world and the largest independent global mobile ad and RTB exchange, with headquarters in San Francisco and offices in New York, Hamburg, Singapore, and Jakarta.

As a founding member of Intershop in 1996, Petra was instrumental in growing the company from a startup to a publicly listed company with a market cap of \$12 billion. As VP of business development and strategic alliances, Petra had global responsibility for all strategic, business, and technical partnerships.

Petra has over 30 years of business experience in the US, Europe, and Asia. She is a Silicon Valley veteran since 1981, one of the best globally networked women executives. She sits on several boards and has been appointed to international honorary positions. She is AI chair at GABA, the German American Business Assoc., a member of the Committee for Innovation and Research at the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce, a board member of Hamburg@work and the Amerikazentrum, and vice president at the American Club. She is on the global leadership team of Women in Wireless, where she facilitates the organization's global expansion. She was appointed Hamburg ambassador to San Francisco by the former governor and first mayor of Hamburg, Olaf Scholz, later Germany's chancellor. Petra was appointed international ambassador of the Technical University of Hamburg (TUHH) by the president. She is on the board of ECIU University (the European Consortium of Innovative Universities), an EU-funded university with a new challenge-based educational system on European scale.

Petra was named to Mobile Women to Watch by *Mobile Marketer* (2010), Top Female Executive by *Mobile Entertainment* (2010), Women Entrepreneurs Who Launched a Successful Mobile Startup in *Forbes* (2012), and One of the Most Powerful and Most Influential Women in the Mobile Advertising Industry by *Business Insider* (2015).



IAN WALKER

FOUNDER, HQI



The founder of HQI, Ian Walker is a precision-medicine business builder with extensive P&L and global leadership experience. He has successfully built and led global and regional business units and teams to develop and introduce new drugs, devices, diagnostics, and services for the benefit of patients worldwide.

Ian's passion is to bring new health technologies to patients by formulating and driving innovative and operationally successful strategy through organizations, particularly by creating positive and performance-focused culture and cross-functional team leadership and translating consumer and scientific insights into world-class products and services.

Aside from precision medicine, Ian's specialties include personalized medicine, oncology, respiratory, cardiovascular, medical devices, molecular diagnostics, NGS, sequencing, genomics, genomic profiling, strategy, marketing, business development, product development, innovation, consumer insights, human factors, design thinking, reimbursement, health economics, portfolio strategy, commercial operations, and global launch. Ian lives in Basel, Switzerland.

 **ANDREW WALLIS OBE** **CEO, UNSEEN**



Andrew Wallis OBE is the CEO and founder of Unseen, a charity that believes modern slavery can and must be eradicated. The organization provides secure housing and a wide range of services to over 300 survivors of human trafficking at any given time. Unseen also operates the UK Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline, which has helped identify nearly 30,000 potential victims of exploitation over the past six years.

Unseen collaborates with businesses, governments, academics, and other entities to eradicate modern slavery. Andrew chaired the Centre for Social Justice's "It Happens Here" report, which played a catalytic role in the development of the UK Modern Slavery Act of 2015. In recognition of his work combating human trafficking, he was awarded an OBE that same year.

Throughout his career, Andrew has faced diverse challenges, from assembling flat-pack furniture for Unseen's first safe house to advising global businesses on how to effectively tackle forced labor in their supply chains. He is a recognized world expert on modern slavery and frequently speaks at conferences and in the media. He has been described as "the loveliest disrupter you could hope to meet."

 **JODY R. WESTBY** **CEO, GLOBAL CYBER RISK LLC**



Drawing upon a unique combination of more than 20 years of technical, legal, policy, and business experience, Jody Westby, Esq., founded Global Cyber Risk LLC (GCR) in 2000. GCR provides first-tier advisory and technical services to organizations in the areas of cyber governance, privacy, cybersecurity, incident response, and digital asset inventories and data mapping. Her team has deep expertise in cybersecurity risk assessments against best practices and standards, including industrial control and SCADA systems used in manufacturing, utility grids, and critical infrastructure sectors. Jody also is a professional blogger for Forbes and writes a regular column for *Leader's Edge* magazine on cybersecurity issues.

Jody is a member of the bars of the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, and Colorado. She serves as chair of the American Bar Association's (ABA) Privacy and Computer Crime Committee (Science & Technology

Law Section) and co-chair of the Cybercrime Committee (Criminal Justice Section) and has served four terms on the ABA President's Cybersecurity Task Force. She co-chaired the World Federation of Scientists' Permanent Monitoring Panel on Information Security and served on the ITU Secretary-General's High Level Experts Group on Cybersecurity.

Jody is the author of seven books, all published by the American Bar Association. Her latest publication, *D&O Guide to Cyber Governance: Fiduciary Duties in the Digital Age*, builds on her 15 years of experience in the governance of cyber risks and widely recognized series of governance surveys and reports. She led the development of the International Toolkit on Cybercrime Legislation and was editor and co-author of the 2010 UN publication "The Quest for Cyber Peace."

Previously, she launched In-Q-Tel for the CIA, was senior managing director at PricewaterhouseCoopers, was senior fellow and director of IT Studies for the Progress and Freedom Foundation and was director of domestic policy for the US Chamber of Commerce. Jody practiced law at Shearman & Sterling and Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison.

Jody earned a BA, *summa cum laude*, from the University of Tulsa and a JD, *magna cum laude*, from Georgetown University Law Center and was named to the Order of the Coif. She is also a selected member of the American Bar Foundation and the Cosmos Club.

MARCO WETTIG FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, INFOMOLA

Marco Wettig is the founding and sole managing director of Infomola GmbH, a German company registered in Eschborn, Germany. Infomola provides consulting and IT services for business process support as well as for the implementation of digital business innovations, with a focus on the energy, media, nutrition, and health industries.

2026 FiReFellow

LUKE WINKENHOFER 2026 FIREFELLOW | BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT



Luke Winkenhofer is a third-year biomedical engineering student at Cal Poly, SLO, with a strong interest in wearable devices, prosthetics, and the future of medical technology. Luke is eager to contribute to innovation in the medical industry, with experience in translational research and healthcare technology development. Through his coursework, he has developed a solid foundation in engineering principles, such as biomechanics, materials, coding, and data analysis. Luke is passionate about contributing to better patient outcomes and is actively looking to connect with leaders who are shaping the next generation of technology.

JEAN A. WOOLDRIDGE FOUNDER, ST. CLOUD COMMUNICATIONS



Jean A. Wooldridge, MPH, founded St. Cloud Communications, a small consultancy near Seattle, to focus on emerging technologies for consumer and global public health and to foster strategies and connections between private and public sectors. She is passionate about accelerating the adoption of "quantified self" technology to support dignified consumer choice in end-of-life issues for the world's aging populations.

Selected talks include "Radical Digital Literacy" (NIH communication directors) and "Digital Literacy: The Citizen and the Patient" (Pan American World Health Organization and International E-Learning Summit).

Jean's non-research publications include invited chapters on bellwether industries and symbiotic stewardships for technology and healthcare for the Amsterdam IOS Press series, edited by R. Bushko, on "Future Health Technology." Jean was nominated for the Distinguished Alumni for Masters in Public Health Program (EDP) at the University of Washington, linking private and public sectors and strategic visioning of online collaborations for complex health problems.

Jean was a member of the US DHHS "Healthy People 2010" health communication and IT workgroup. She held research affiliate status at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle and was a co-principal investigator in NIH behavioral research. She was "loaned" to the US National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland, as a strategic advisor for a \$57M initiative in communication technologies. Previously, she directed the regional Pacific Cancer Information Service, part of a federal network of call centers, outreach, and communications research. Her team won over \$21M in contracts and developed the network's first relational database. She is proud that this group later won the sole source, multi-year contract (\$55M) for the entire US.

Jean serves on the board of the SNS Future in Review (FiRe) conference and the IEEE Medical Technology Policy Committee. She was formerly on the faculty for the Future Health Technology Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and was an advisor for ACE's E-Learning conference. She has attended TED since 1994.

Reasons for hope and joy: FiRe/SNS, TED/MED, Pop!Tech, neurodiversity, data visualization for planetary decision-making, friends and family, chamber music, hiking (Northwest, New Mexico), and sailing (BVI).

 **AMIR ZARRINPAR** PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, ZARRINPAR LAB, UC SAN DIEGO



Amir Zarrinpar, MD, PhD, DABOM, AGAF, is the Stuart and Barbara Brody Chair in Circadian Biology and professor of Gastroenterology at UC San Diego, where he directs the Center for Circadian Biology and co-directs the Center for Microbiome Innovation. He is a physician-scientist and board-certified gastroenterologist whose work sits at the intersection of circadian biology, gut physiology, metabolism, and the gut microbiome.

Amir earned his AB in psychology and biology from Harvard University and his MD/PhD from UC San Diego. His research focuses on understanding how microbial functions influence human health and disease, including obesity, diabetes, steatohepatitis, inflammatory bowel disease, cancer, aging, and rare genetic disorders. His laboratory has demonstrated that genetically engineered native gut bacteria can be used to functionally manipulate the gut microbiome and treat chronic disease, creating a platform to better understand and therapeutically target the microbe-host interface.

Amir's work has been supported by the NIH, including NIBIB, NCI, NHLBI, NIDDK, and NIAID, as well as by the American Federation for Aging Research, the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, and the National Phenylketonuria Alliance. His research impact has been recognized by election to the American Society for Clinical Investigation, the Litwin IBD Pioneers Award, the American Gastroenterological Association Microbiome Junior Investigator Award, and the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases Liver Scholar Award.