

LEADERS of INFLUENCE in **TECHNOLOGY 2024**



**SHIRIN ALIPANAH**  
META



**NAVID ALIPOUR**  
CUREMETRIX



**ASOKAN ASHOK**  
UNFOLDLABS



**SUZANNA BITTNER**  
C3 RISK & INSURANCE  
SERVICES



**KIMBRA BROOKSTEIN**  
INTUIT



**ALEX BURAK**  
IVY ENERGY



**SEAN CAPPS**  
DIGITAL FIRE  
PREVENTION



**KEVIN CARROLL**  
TECH SAN DIEGO



**MICHAEL CHAGALA**  
RANK HARVEST SEO



**JOHN COOPER**  
BIRDS EYE  
AERIAL DRONES



**CARRIE CRAIG**  
BOSE CORPORATION



**SAM DRIBIN**  
CUREMETRIX



**HEATHER DUEITT**  
GLOBAL TEKMED



**LISA EASTERLY**  
SAN DIEGO CCOE



**JUSTIN FORTIER**  
FVC LABS



**BRIAN J. FRIEDMAN**  
SOFTCLOUDS.



**JEFF GAINES**  
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DEL REY SYSTEMS &  
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**JAY GARCIA**  
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TIGHTIES



**JEREMY GLASER**  
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**DIANNA HE MURRAY**  
BAIN & COMPANY



**LARRY HOEHN**  
BIRD ROCK SYSTEMS



**SUNNY JAIN**  
FLORA BY SUN  
GENOMICS



**TANYA KUHN**  
IVY ENERGY



**RAZELLE KURZROCK**  
CUREMATCH



**YINYIN LIU**  
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**SEBASTIAN LUCIER**  
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**ELIZABETH MCKEWON**  
XCEPTIONAL



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# LEADERS of INFLUENCE in TECHNOLOGY 2024



**SHIRIN ALIPANAH**  
Technology Partner  
Meta

**S**hirin Alipanah is a transformative leader whose expertise seamlessly spans across industries, merging the cutting-edge worlds of digital transformation, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and digital marketing with the nuanced dynamics of other sectors. Her innovative approach and strategic foresight have not only advanced technology and gender equality within the tech industry but also subtly influenced strategies in adjacent fields, demonstrating the universal applicability of her methods. Recognized with numerous awards and industry accolades, Shirin's ability to apply technological advancements to drive success across various domains showcases her versatile leadership. Her insights, shared at global events, inspire a broad spectrum of industries to embrace innovation, illustrating how digital solutions can revolutionize traditional practices.



**NAVID ALIPOUR**  
CEO  
CureMetrix

**N**avid Alipour is the Co-Founder and CEO of CureMetrix with a focus on Women's health. CureMetrix AI detects breast cancer and identifies Breast Arterial Calcifications (BAC) from the same mammogram. He is also the Co-Founder and CEO of CureMatch, a company focused on personalized medicine & combination therapy in oncology. The CureMatch Decision Support System guides in the selection of cancer drugs that are customized for individual patients based on their molecular tumor profile. Through the founding of Analytics Ventures, an AI focused VC fund, Navid focuses on the convergence of AI and the life sciences to prolong lives & save lives, while reducing wasteful spend. Navid serves on several Boards such as Tech San Diego, CureMetrix, CureMatch, and AlphaTrAI. He is a sought-after panelist, judge, speaker, and moderator on the topics of venture capital, artificial intelligence, healthcare, and entrepreneurship.



**ASOKAN ASHOK**  
CEO  
UnfoldLabs

**W**ith an illustrious career spanning over three decades, Asokan Ashok, the visionary CEO of UnfoldLabs, is a stalwart technology leader & innovator, catapulted the company to unparalleled success. His unwavering passion for groundbreaking products & solutions, coupled with smart business intelligence & industry prowess, has made him an exceptional leader. Ashok's strategic foresight & technological expertise have become the driving force behind the triumphs of UnfoldLabs. Recognized with prestigious awards throughout his career, Ashok's influence extends beyond UnfoldLabs. A technology enthusiast, his thought leadership is showcased in esteemed publications like Forbes Technology Council & Straight Talk. As a distinguished thought leader, Ashok graces industry conferences, events & webinars, sharing his unparalleled insights on technology & leadership. Committed to propelling sustainability & humanity forward through technologies, Ashok is dedicated to empowering people globally.



**SUZANNA BITTNER**  
Director of Project Management  
Office  
C3 Risk & Insurance Services

**S**uzanna Bittner, a certified Project Management Professional (PMP), is an expert in navigating complex projects in regulated industries, with a particular focus on the insurance sector. She has successfully implemented various new software systems for C3 Risk & Insurance Services, including Salesforce, MiEdge, Zoom Info, Asana, and Ninety. Suzanna is instrumental in driving operational efficiency improvements and played a key role in implementing the agency's initial round of process automation bots (RPA). These bots enhance efficiency, freeing up our team to concentrate on high-level, customer-centric tasks. Additionally, Suzanna collaborates with an expert team to manage C3's enterprise-level data and implement robust cybersecurity measures to ensure the company's security.



**KIMBRA BROOKSTEIN**  
Staff Program Manager, DEI  
Intuit

**K**imbra Brookstein is Staff Program Manager for DEI in Tech and leads the Tech Women @ Intuit initiative globally. TWI is an internal initiative focused on attracting, engaging and developing women and underrepresented groups in the tech ecosystem. In this role, she utilizes her passion both at the local and global levels to help carry out strategic programming across the company. In 2021, Kimbra was named to the Board of Directors of #LatinaGeeks as Vice Chair and named as a "Women of Influence in Technology" by SDBJ and won the Athena Pinnacle Award for "Individual In Technology." In 2022 and 2023, she was named "Top 50 Women of Influence in Technology" by SDBJ. In 2023, Kimbra was named "Women in Tech ERG Leader of the Year" by Women-Tech Network. She is a connector with deep ties to the SD Tech Scene and is passionate about providing pathways for underrepresented groups in tech. Kimbra sat on the Athena TSIG Committee for three years and is a Founding Member of the San Diego Tech Women's Summit.



**ALEX BURAK**  
Vice President of Engineering  
Ivy Energy

**A**lex Burak Dogan is the Vice President of Engineering at Ivy Energy, where he leads with a strategic vision to drive the engineering team's culture toward excellence, innovation, and collaboration. He plays a pivotal role in team building and management, developing visionary roadmaps, and ensuring technical solutions are customer-focused and aligned with business objectives. In 2013, Burak received the Promising Young Scientist Award for his research about renewable energy. Fast-forward to today, he contributes to efforts that evolve the way communities create, use, and think about energy with a hands-on leadership approach, marrying his ambition for environmental sustainability with his passion for developing beautiful, innovative solutions.



**SEAN CAPPS**  
CEO/Founder  
Digital Fire Prevention

**S**ean Capps brings over 28 years of fire prevention into the tech world. The Fire Prevention industry is a \$72 billion-plus industry that is a disheveled mess of hardcopy paperwork, antiquated processes and completely nonexistent communications between organizations trying to keep up with a maze of national safety codes. While the industry stands to nearly double in size in the next few years as populations and cities continue to grow, no one has figured out how to bring that industry into the 21st century as a functional digital ecosystem. A local San Diegan with a vision to make our city a safer and more compliant place to live is revolutionizing the future of fire safety. He has created a digital platform (first and only digital platform) that shares compliance data across the entire ecosystem.



**KEVIN CARROLL**  
Executive Director  
Tech San Diego

**K**evin Carroll, as the Executive Director of Tech San Diego, brings over 20 years of executive leadership experience garnered from esteemed organizations like TechAmerica, the American Electronics Association, and CONNECT. With a profound understanding of industry dynamics, Kevin adeptly navigates the intricacies of the regional technology landscape, championing best practices and fostering growth opportunities for regional tech companies. Beyond managing all aspects of Tech San Diego's operations, he has been a relentless advocate for amplifying the influence of regional tech entities in shaping public policy. Kevin's role in creating Tech San Diego reflects not only his professional commitment but also his personal passion for the regional tech community. His multifaceted expertise, coupled with a fervent dedication to advancing the interests of the tech community, positions him as a distinguished leader shaping the future of technology in the region.



**MICHAEL CHAGALA**  
CEO  
Rank Harvest SEO

**M**ichael Chagala, Founder and CEO of Rank Harvest SEO, brings an extraordinary 16-year legacy in enterprise-level search engine optimization to his company's clients. At the helm of an award-winning digital agency recognized for its avant-garde innovation and performance excellence, Michael showcases his technological vision through platforms adept at handling intricate niche ranking challenges, driving product launches, and skillfully revitalizing damaged SEO landscapes. Beyond conventional boundaries, Michael's tech acumen is evident with a strategic \$30K investment in premium virtual real estate within Decentraland, the groundbreaking blockchain-powered metaverse. Michael's influence is found in Forbes, Wired, and Greentech. Michael continues to make outstanding contributions to the dynamic search marketing ecosystem, spotlighting his forward-thinking and mastery of industry best practices amid relentless changes in the technology landscape.



**JOHN COOPER**  
Director of Flight Operations  
Birds Eye Aerial Drones

**F**rom AV maestro to Director of Flight Operations, John Cooper merges his passions at Birds Eye Aerial Drones. Leading 70-plus UAS and crafting missions, he navigates skies under complex FAA regulations and performs certified "Beyond Line of Sight" operations & military airspace operations. As a Skydio X2 instructor, John empowers his team for success. Proficient in both high-tech UAS and traditional flight, he bridges the gap between pixels and propellers. His keen eye for sensor technology unlocks the potential of drones, from mapping intricate landscapes to capturing stunning thermal imagery. John's journey began at PSAV, leading award-winning AV productions, mastering P&L and team building. Early aviation roots blossomed at the Golden State Flying Club, where he even fueled the MCAS Miramar Airshow. Now, at BEAD, John's passion takes flight, commanding innovation, and excellence with every mission. John, the pilot, technologist, and leader, soars at the forefront of aerial innovation.





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**MICHAEL MONROE**  
Booz Allen Senior Associate,  
Data Science and Analytics

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**TECHNOLOGY**  
2024



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**CARRIE CRAIG**

*Sr Director Global Application Delivery*  
Bose Corporation

Carrie Craig is an organizational change leader with a record of success bridging business needs with innovative technology solutions. Her deep experience leading global digital transformations and realizing large-scale initiatives which consistently focused on attaining tangible ROI. Earlier in her career, Carrie served in the United States Marine Corps as a Logistic Officer. She has been honored with numerous personal service awards for meritorious service during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Carrie was named "A Women Who Sets the Standard" by The International Women's Review Board and she has been honored by the Cambridge Who's Who Registry of Executives and Professionals. Carrie has been the recipient of multiple WD-40 Company people choice awards. She was honored to receive the 2022 SnapLogic Application Innovation Award. She services on the Board of Directors for Boys and Girls Club of Greater San Diego and Gary Sinise Foundation- San Diego Chapter.



**SAM DRIBIN**

*Chief Technology Officer*  
CureMetrix

Sam Dribin has over 15 years of experience in the software industry. Sam is currently the Chief Technology Officer at CureMetrix. Prior to joining CureMetrix, Sam was a software architect at Intervolve Incorporated for thirteen years. Sam also worked as a software engineer at Pharsight Corporation for three years. Sam has a passion for developing innovative software solutions and has played a key role in the success of their previous companies. Sam is a talented leader and motivator and is committed to helping CureMetrix continue to grow and succeed. Sam Dribin has a master's degree in Neurobiology from Duke University School of Medicine and a BA in Biology from Northwestern University.



**HEATHER DUEITT**

*Vice President, Marketing*  
Global TekMed

A visionary executive with an impressive two decade track record spanning two coasts, having worked at global agencies like Edelman and client-side organizations including Global TekMed, MyPoint Credit Union, and more. Renowned for turning business visions into ROI-driven success stories, she excels in data-driven strategies, AI implementation, and strategic marketing planning with an extensive portfolio that includes Samsung, Dove, and Global TekMed, all while incorporating the latest technology. Currently, as Vice President of Marketing at Global TekMed, she drives growth in Veteran technology services, ensuring deserving Veterans access their rightful benefits. This accomplished professional, with over 19 honors and awards, including recognition as a San Diego Magazine Woman of the Year top-five Finalist and Judge, adjunct professor at New York University, Forbes Contributor, and recently Certified AI Transformation Leader, is a driving force in shaping the future of technology.



**LISA EASTERLY**

*CEO*  
San Diego CCOE

Lisa Easterly serves as President and CEO of Cyber Center of Excellence (CCOE), a San Diego-based nonprofit dedicated to growing the regional cyber economy and creating a more secure digital community for all. She helped stand-up and manage CCOE since inception, helping grow San Diego's cyber ecosystem from 100 to 1,000 cyber companies and more than doubling the industry's total economic impact to \$4 billion annually in just 10 years. She is passionate about leading CCOE and the San Diego cyber community in heeding the call to develop the next generation of cyber warriors, defenses, and innovations. Prior to joining CCOE, she was the Vice President of Marketing for San Diego Regional EDC, Business Development Manager for Latham & Watkins LLP and Founding Board Member of CleanTech San Diego. She has an MBA and B.S. in Finance and Economics from the University of Florida.



**JUSTIN FORTIER**

*Founder and CEO/CTO*  
FYC Labs

Justin Fortier, a tech entrepreneur and founder of multiple successful California-based companies, led FYC Labs as CEO/CTO to acquisition in 2020. The boutique design agency, with clients like Remax, National University, Budweiser, and Pepsi Co., gained international recognition for web design and development. Justin, named CEO of the year finalist twice by the San Diego Business Journal, also holds advisory roles at various ventures. He volunteers for entrepreneurial support and is a devoted father of two, enjoying fishing, hiking, and hockey. Featured twice on Fox Business News, he earned finalist spots in 40 Next Top Business Leaders Under 40 and Mentor of the Year 2024. FYC Labs received accolades, including a spot on the Inc. 5000 List of Fastest-Growing Private Companies in America by Inc Magazine and recognition as a top IT Services provider in Artificial Intelligence by Inc Magazine Power Partner Awards.



**BRIAN J. FRIEDMAN**

*GVP - Global Strategic Sales*  
SoftClouds

Brian Friedman, a trailblazer at the forefront of innovation in the dynamic world of digital transformation, serves as a catalyst for growth, guiding SoftClouds towards remarkable achievements. His leadership experience as SoftClouds' Global Vice President of Strategic Sales forms the cornerstone of SoftClouds success. His visionary guidance sets fresh industry standards in CRM & CX solutions and fosters a culture of innovation within the organization. Brian's commitment to employee satisfaction & client satisfaction fosters a vibrant team culture, driving SoftClouds to distinguish itself as an industry leader in innovation and service quality. His insightful articles, such as "How Technology, Innovation & CX Transform the Utility Industry," & "New Technologies Handle Field Service Management Challenges," reflect his profound understanding of the industry, shedding light on trends and driving progress.



**JEFF GAINES**

*CEO*  
Interlaced

As the CEO of Interlaced, Jeff Gaines has revolutionized the way fast-growing startups leverage technology to scale, demonstrating a commitment to innovation and excellence. Under his leadership, Interlaced has thrived through data-driven decision-making, business development, process optimization, and effective budget management. Jeff's strategic foresight not only guides the company's operations and partnerships but also enriches the broader tech community through his role as a board member of Connect, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting San Diego's entrepreneurs and innovators. From engineering management and systems engineering to founding his own creative agency, Jeff's career trajectory showcases his technological expertise and entrepreneurial spirit. Today, Jeff empowers teams and clients to achieve their missions using cutting-edge tools and practices. Jeff's dedication to fostering an environment of growth and learning makes him a prime example of leadership in tech.



**KEN GARBER**

*President and CEO*  
Del Rey Systems & Technology, Inc

Ken Garber, current CEO and President of DEL REY Systems & Technology, Inc., served 30 years of combined active and reserve duty as a Navy Submarine Officer. He served on the USS Aspro (SSN 648) and USS La Jolla (SSN 701). His final tour was to OPNAV N81 in the Pentagon. Ken was the Chairman of the Board for STEP (Support the Enlisted Project), which provides emergency financial and transition assistance grants to active duty and recently discharged enlisted military and their families. Most recently, Ken was elected to the National Defense Industry Association (NDIA) San Diego Board of Directors and is currently the Department of the Navy Gold Coast Program Chair. Mr. Garber graduated from the University of the Pacific in 1984 (BSEE), studied at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography and UCSD's EE department, receiving his MBA from UCLA in 2002.



**JAY GARCIA**

*Sr. Business Development Manager and Head of SparkED*  
Alteryx

Jay Garcia is a seasoned professional with over 15 years of experience in program management, education, community outreach, and talent development, with a strong focus on technology. At Fortinet, he led award-winning talent creation and upskilling programs in the cybersecurity industry, leveraging a versatile skill set acquired during his 20-year military career. Prior to this role, Jay held diverse leadership positions in the US Marine Corps, contributing to recruiting, higher education programs, and sales support operations. In his current role at Alteryx, Jay spearheads the SparkED Data Analytics Education Program for the US-West & LATAM, and Alteryx's DoD Skillbridge Program. He also serves as an Advisory Committee Member for the College of Professional & Continuing Education (CPaCE) at CSU Long Beach, and is recognized as a Forbes Coaches Council Member, a LinkedIn Top Voice, and a George W. Bush Institute Scholar.



**AARON GIBNEY**

*VP, Battle Management Command and Control*  
EpiSci (EpiSys Science, Inc.)

Aaron "Vandal" Gibney is VP, Battle Management Command and Control (BMC2) at EpiSci where he is responsible for growing the company's opportunities in the BMC2 sector. BMC2 integrates software and hardware systems and delivers human-trusted solutions for improved and faster decision-making capabilities. Retired Colonel Gibney served 24 years in the US Air Force (USAF) and contributes extensive experience in the Air and Space fields as well as operational-level joint planning. Gibney is a graduate of the USAF Weapons School, the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, and the Chief of Staff of the USAF's Blue Horizons Fellowship. As a career air battle manager, he has commanded at the squadron and group level and flew hundreds of combat hours over Afghanistan and Iraq. As a Colonel, Gibney led headquarters USAF's Futures and Concepts Division at the Pentagon; then commanded the 505th Combat Training Group at Nellis Air Force Base, NV.





# Recognizing Success

Foley is proud to congratulate our colleague, Steve Millendorf on being honored for the *San Diego Business Journal's* Leaders of Influence in Technology .



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# LEADERS of INFLUENCE in TECHNOLOGY 2024



**KRYSTAL GILLIS**  
Founder and CEO  
Tighties

Krystal Gillis, the founder and CEO of Tighties™ orthopedic, tech-enabled activewear, is a seasoned entrepreneur and business leader. Krystal's career trajectory has been a dynamic blend of entrepreneurial ventures and corporate experience from sales for a large payroll company to founding her first business in payroll software at 24. After successfully building and selling her first venture, she transitioned to corporate roles in the medical devices sector. In 2017, she took on a consulting role, overseeing the launch of five companies, three products and a foundation before the inception of Tighties in 2022 during her work on a product launch for an orthopedic company in San Diego. As the driving force behind Tighties, Krystal is deeply involved in every aspect of the business from technology innovation and product development to project management and finance. With a strong focus on focus on health and wellness, she created Tighties for anyone committed to an active lifestyle.



**JEREMY GLASER**  
Member  
Mintz

Mintz Member Jeremy Glaser serves as Co-chair of the firm's Venture Capital & Emerging Companies Practice. Jeremy has over three decades of experience representing technology-based companies principally in the life sciences, software, mobile applications, and clean energy fields. He represents both issuers and underwriters in a wide variety of securities transactions, including IPOs, special purpose acquisition companies (SPACs), secondary offerings, and private placements, and represents venture capital firms, hedge funds and their portfolio companies in venture capital and PIPE financings. He has deep experience representing buyers and sellers in acquisitions and dispositions of public and private companies. Jeremy is also a key contributor to MintzEdge, an online resource for entrepreneurs that includes useful tools and information for starting and growing a company.



**DIANNA HE MURRAY**  
Executive Coach & Core  
Innovation Leader  
Bain & Company

Dianna He Murray is an Executive Coach, published author, and leader on the Core Innovation Team at Bain & Company. She has a history of successful leadership in the technology industry, demonstrating a clear ability to drive change and impact. As an executive coach, Dianna is a trusted sounding board for leaders at organizations such as Airbnb, Dropbox, Sephora, and others looking to realize their full potential. As a leader at Bain, she oversees a large portfolio of digital products, and most recently, spearheaded a project that greatly impacts how the firm delivers all digital work for clients. She has been named Influential Leader of the Year in the data analytics division of Blue Cross Blue Shield, was a recipient of the Zell Fellowship at the Kellogg School of Management, and has been a champion of women in tech throughout her career. Dianna can be reached at joyandclaritylife@gmail.com.



**LARRY HOEHN**  
Vice President of Services  
Bird Rock Systems

With over a quarter-century of experience in Enterprise IT, Larry Hoehn sets the standard for humility and expertise. His journey is marked by a consistent drive to excel with a down-to-earth demeanor that resonates with both his teams and customers. Larry's thoughtful approach to leadership enables him to lead high-performance teams, providing best-in-class service that's both reliable and innovative. Larry is raising up the next generation of IT and Cyber Security leaders. As a seasoned professional, his expertise spans areas such as disaster recovery, regulatory compliance, and Data Center operations and security. Larry's commitment to excellence is further exemplified by his active membership in esteemed organizations like InfraGard, HTCIA, ISACA, and ISSA. His integrity is the cornerstone of his reputation, making him a trusted figure in the industry. He is a leader who constantly seeks improvement, offers help, and ensures that the collective journey is one of progress and success.



**SUNNY JAIN**  
Founder and CEO  
Floré by Sun Genomics

With over 20 years of molecular and microbiology experience, Sun Genomics' founder and CEO Sunny Jain originally had the idea for Floré after struggling to solve his own young son's gut health issues with generic probiotics from the shelves. Sunny took it upon himself to create a custom probiotic that worked for his son, and now aims to do the same for the hundreds of millions of people who suffer from gut health issues worldwide. Before starting Sun Genomics in 2016, Sunny worked at Illumina for seven years. He was part of the team to establish the Illumina Clinical Services Laboratory and went on to sequence the first whole human genome in a CLIA-certified, CAP-accredited laboratory. Prior to Illumina, Sunny worked for Labcorp in the molecular oncology laboratory and has over 20 years of experience in commercializing biomarkers.



**TANYA KUHN**  
Head of Client Experience  
Ivy Energy

Tanya Kuhn has been appointed as the Head of Client Experience at Ivy Energy, embodying a steadfast dedication to excellence. In her role, she spearheads the Ivy team's efforts to provide unparalleled service to both clients and residents. Her distinguished career is highlighted by her acute emphasis on enhancing client experience, alongside her contributions to marketing, innovation, and improving operational efficiencies. This has established her as an influential figure within Ivy Energy. Her career path is characterized by a variety of significant positions, including Sales Manager, Business Development Manager, and Marketing Executive, spanning multiple sectors such as B2B and B2C markets, financial services, publishing, consumer goods, and branding. Tanya is equally passionate about environmental sustainability, a principle that aligns with Ivy Energy's core mission.



**RAZELLE KURZROCK**  
Chief Medical Advisor & Co-  
Founder  
CureMatch

Razelle Kurzrock, MD, is a world leader in precision medicine and immunotherapy. As a medical oncologist/researcher, she is recognized as one of the most important voices in precision medicine and one of the most highly cited scientists globally. Dr. Kurzrock is known for founding and chairing the largest Phase 1 clinical trials department in the world while at the MD Anderson Cancer Center. More recently, at the University of California, Dr. Kurzrock founded and led the Rare Tumor Clinic and the Center for Personalized Cancer Therapy. Dr. Kurzrock has brought oversight to >500 clinical trials, with many agents yielding FDA approvals. She has authored >900 peer-reviewed paper with an exception Hirsch index (h-index) score of 136 (>77,000 citations). Her strong record of competitive funding is comprised of ~\$125 million in lifetime funding. She has four children, two Basenjis (dogs) and is married to Philip Cohen, MD, who is a dermatologist.



**YINYIN LIU**  
VP of AI  
Seismic

Yinyin Liu, Ph.D., is an artificial intelligence technologist and entrepreneur with over 15 years of experience building AI products for consumers, enterprises, and open-source AI communities. Currently, she is Vice President of AI at Seismic, focusing on infusing AI into transformative enablement solutions for enterprises. Prior to Seismic, Yinyin co-founded and served as the Chief Technology Officer of XOKind, a seed-stage, venture-backed AI startup. Before founding XOKind, Yinyin was the Head of Data Science at Intel AI, where she established and led a global team of data scientists and AI researchers. Her team worked on workload optimization for AI software and hardware, research in Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Reinforcement Learning (RL) and building open-source tools in NLP/RL/Model compression. She also drove Intel's participation in Partnership on AI to tackle issues in FTA (fair, transparent, and accountable) AI and AI for Social Good.



**SEBASTIAN LUCIER**  
Member  
Mintz

Sebastian Lucier, Member, Mintz, is a highly technical attorney who fully understands legal nuances and how to use the law to advance a company's strategic plan. He has deep ties to San Diego's start-up community and significant experience relating to financing, corporate formation and governance, and mergers and acquisitions. His mergers and acquisitions practice provides practical solutions and guidance to founders and other stakeholders wishing to recognize the value they've built in their businesses. Sebastian is very active at his alma mater, the University of San Diego School of Law, where he teaches young lawyers to support entrepreneurs and the start-up community as an adjunct professor. Sebastian is also actively involved in the MintzEdge website, an online resource for entrepreneurs.



**ELIZABETH MCKEWN**  
Director of Sales and Marketing  
Xceptional

Elizabeth McKewon, Board Member, and Director of Sales and Marketing became an owner of Xceptional in 2007. She is currently one of two female board members and has actively helped grow and build Xceptional into an award-winning MSP. In 2018, after a successful 20+ year career as a practicing attorney, Elizabeth made a career change and joined Xceptional. Coming from a non-technical background has given Elizabeth an ability to relate to clients that find technology complex and overwhelming. Elizabeth leverages her previous experience to counsel clients, understand their unique business, operational, and IT needs, and explain why the technology is needed, and how it will positively impact the client's business. Since 2019, she has been the top producing salesperson for Xceptional and is responsible for large, strategic client relationships. Additionally, since Betsy's tenure with the company, Xceptional has seen year-over-year revenue growth.





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Michael Chagala  
Founder & CEO, Rank Harvest





LEADERS of INFLUENCE in

TECHNOLOGY 2024



**JOHN MERRITT**  
SVP & CIO  
YMCA of San Diego County

John Merritt, SVP & CIO, has spearheaded a transformative journey within the IT department, aligning technology with core business objectives to drive innovation and growth. Under his leadership, the Y achieved a landmark digital transformation by migrating to cloud-based solutions, significantly enhancing the customer experience, data security, and operational efficiency. Merritt's strategic focus on integrating artificial intelligence and machine learning will optimize internal processes and lead to the development of customer-centric solutions, increased satisfaction, and opening new revenue streams. His commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning and collaboration across departments has elevated the IT team's performance and agility. Merritt's visionary approach and impactful leadership have been instrumental in positioning the YMCA of San Diego County at the forefront of technological advancement for nonprofits.



**STEVE MILLENDORF**  
Partner  
Foley & Lardner LLP

Steve Millendorf is an exemplary leader in the technology field whose contributions to the fields of privacy, cybersecurity, and technology transactions have been invaluable to both his clients and the broader community. With over two decades of experience as an engineer and an attorney, Steve possesses a unique blend of technical proficiency and legal acumen. His practice centers on counseling clients across various industries on privacy, cybersecurity, and intellectual property matters. Steve's expertise extends to compliance with various privacy and security laws, including GDPR, CCPA, and Virginia CDPA. Steve's impressive engineering background underscores his unparalleled expertise in technology-related legal matters. His tenure at Qualcomm, where he led the design and development of security features for a range of chip devices, demonstrates his commitment to pushing the boundaries of innovation.



**OSCAR MONCADA**  
Co-Founder and CEO  
Stratus10

Oscar Moncada's technology journey commenced at age 13, programming on mainframes at IBM via an internship. Driven by a passion for tech, he studied AI in the early 2000s and later held impactful roles at Events.com, Mirum (then, Digitaria), and FICO. Achieving the AWS Solutions Architect credential in 2016, he stood among the earliest recipients at No. 2,663. As Technology Director at Events.com, Oscar crafted a resilient cloud infrastructure pivotal to substantial growth. Recognizing the demand for cloud expertise, he co-founded Stratus10 in 2017. Oscar's commitment to empowering San Diego's businesses, coupled with his adept leadership, propelled Stratus10 to the forefront of AWS Partners. One of 18 national partners proficient in Migration, DevOps, and the Education sector, Stratus10 boasts the most AWS designations among San Diego-based firms. Since 2019, Oscar's San Diego-based team has guided local startups and global enterprises through the complexities of cloud computing.



**MICHAEL MONROE**  
Senior Associate, Data Science  
and Analytics  
Booz Allen Hamilton

Scott Sautter leads Booz Allen's San Diego Engineering and Technology team, providing Digital Engineering, Cybersecurity, Network Engineering, IT Infrastructure, and C4ISR integration solutions to the Navy and Marine Corps. As a leader of Booz Allen's large San Diego office, Scott is focused on broadening the firm's capabilities in the region, particularly through IT transformation, Innovation, and Speed to Capability. Over the past 25 years, Scott has helped expand Booz Allen's technical service offerings to enhance our Nation's armed services' warfighting capabilities. His team delivers secure infrastructure solutions, enterprise network operations, IT strategy, Digital Engineering, and C4ISR solutions to a broad range of Department of Defense clients. Scott holds a B.S. in electrical engineering from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, and is a Certified Systems Engineering Professional through the International Council on Systems Engineering.



**SEAN NAM**  
Chief Technology Officer  
Ivy Energy

Sean Nam is the CTO at Ivy Energy where he oversees the Product, Engineering, and IT & Security departments. As the first full-time engineering hire, he helped build the original MVP. He led the effort to transition to a more scalable platform with modern tools and languages. He oversaw efforts to update our security posture as well as modernize our entire infrastructure stack. Since then, he has focused on establishing new teams, maturing the organization, and implementing new processes. Sean has a history of combining his passion of entrepreneurship and technology. In the early 2010's, he built a small business by publishing over 50 mobile apps and games and amassing over one million downloads. In 2016, he received an Excellence Award from the Korean Armed Forces for his software development efforts while completing his Korean military service. Today, he is focused on supporting the mission in all areas of business and technology.



Sound is

Power

**Carrie  
Craig**

Senior Director Global  
Application Delivery

**Congratulations Carrie Craig** for being recognized as a Leader of Influence in Technology by the San Diego Business Journal. Her impressive track record includes bridging business needs with innovative, streamlined, and integrated technology solutions. She adeptly translates vision and broad objectives into clear, actionable processes, programs, and procedures within the technology ecosystem. Kudos to her outstanding contributions!

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**BEN NATHAN**  
Chief Technology and  
Transformation Officer  
Cortica

Ben Nathan has served as Cortica's chief technology and transformation officer since 2019. He leads Cortica's digital strategy and services, including information security technology enablement, electronic health records, software development, scheduling, enrollment, analytics, product development, marketing, and client experience. While at Cortica, Ben leveraged his extensive expertise as a healthcare technology executive to create Axon, the world's leading technology platform for autism and neurodevelopment care. Axon's critical functions include complex care coordination, intelligent scheduling, clinical insights and decision support, family care management, progress tracking, insurance billing, and clinical data warehousing. Overall, Axon has contributed to better quantitative outcomes for the children Cortica serves, higher family satisfaction with services, and lower-than-average therapy utilization. Ben holds a master's degree in technology management from Columbia University.



**STEVEN PAGAN**  
Director of Technical Services  
Xceptional

Steven has more than 16 years of experience leading and supporting the development, implementation, and support of global IT solutions. Having started off his career as a network engineer, Steven joined Xceptional in the early 2000s, acting as the primary project and technical lead for multifaceted projects. As his career progressed, Steven transitioned into increasingly demanding roles with a global scope, enabling him to deepen his engineering knowledge while delving further into Project Management. These experiences molded him into a versatile professional. In 2021, Steven had a full circle moment by returning to Xceptional where he climbed the ranks to assume the role of Director of Technical Services. He now oversees a team of engineers in multiple national locations, working to optimize service delivery and refining service operations to align with Xceptional's standards for client satisfaction.



**SCOTT PAINTER**  
Owner  
Birds Eye Aerial Drones

Scott Painter, a visionary leader and retired US Navy Chief, revolutionized the drone industry by founding Birds Eye Aerial Drones (BEAD) ten years ago. Leveraging his 23 years of military expertise, including a notable tour in Afghanistan and MBA from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, Painter has propelled his company to the forefront of drone technology, employing and training numerous professionals in the industry. BEAD excels in deploying cutting-edge technology, maintaining a leading position in the ever-evolving drone sector. Beyond his entrepreneurial success, Painter's dedication to education is evident. He has imparted drone technology knowledge at Southwest College and on his own time, has educated over 3,000 individuals from public, private, and educational sectors on safe and responsible drone use. Painter's journey reflects a remarkable blend of innovation, leadership, and commitment to community service, underlining his role in shaping the future of drone applications.



**ALLY PERLINA**  
Chief Science Officer  
CureMatch

Ally Perlina is a proven executive leader who has dedicated nearly two decades of industry experience to solving challenging problems in precision medicine, health-tech, and pharmaceutical fields to improve human health with molecular-level personalization. She is a visionary innovator with a track record of translating complex data into actionable insights delivered as scalable AI products by integrating analytics with systems biology and knowledge management techniques. As Chief Translation Science Office (CTSO) of Viome, Ally developed unique methodology for automated pathway analysis personalizing nutraceuticals at scale. Previously, at Human Longevity, Inc. (HLI), co-founded by Craig Venter, Ally spearheaded the Comprehensive Cancer Program creating novel analytics for clinical decision support. At tumor boards, she provided mechanistic rationale for drug and trial prioritization.



**NICO PETRUZZELLI**  
IT & Project Manager  
Options For All

Nico Petruzzelli demonstrates remarkable leadership and innovation in technology management. Under Nico's direction, IT security has been significantly upgraded, bolstering the organization's defenses against cyber threats and enhancing data integrity. This achievement is complemented by Nico's successful oversight of device upgrades for over 350 staff members, optimizing productivity and efficiency. Nico's strategic acumen was evident in vendor renegotiations, resulting in annual savings of over \$180K, showcasing an exceptional ability to combine technical expertise with fiscal responsibility. Additionally, as a Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM), he is committed to mastery of IT project management. These accomplishments collectively highlight Nico's influential role in advancing technological excellence and operational efficiency, directly impacting the lives of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities served by his employer, Options For All.



CONGRATULATIONS

SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL  
**LEADERS  
of INFLUENCE in  
TECHNOLOGY**  
2024

Congratulations to **Nimer Saikaly** for being selected  
as a 2024 Leader of Influence in Technology!



**Nimer Saikaly** founded Ciprus Consulting  
to support not-for-profit organizations  
with dedication, expertise, and a genuine  
commitment to their success.

We understand the nuances of not-for-profit work and are  
passionate about helping you leverage technology to achieve  
your mission more effectively and efficiently.

If your not-for-profit organization deploys more than 100  
computers, we offer a wide range of managed IT services  
and our full expertise.

For all other not-for-profits, we are happy to discuss your  
current situation and offer suggestions on how to best work  
with you and your current suppliers.

[www.ciprusconsulting.com](http://www.ciprusconsulting.com) | [nimer@ciprusconsulting.com](mailto:nimer@ciprusconsulting.com)

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LEADERS of INFLUENCE in

TECHNOLOGY 2024



**SANJIV PRABHAKARAN**  
*President and CEO*  
Bytes Inc.

Mr. Prabhakaran is a seasoned executive with over 20 years of leadership experience across a wide range of industries and technologies, which he applies to bring the latest technology to his clients. His background includes solving operational challenges for small to large companies through the development and implementation of custom software solutions aimed at process management and technology architecture targeting fleet management and business management within the IoT, FinTech, healthcare, landscape, property management, business cleaning, and financial industries. In early 2002, Mr. Prabhakaran founded Bytes, Inc. to provide low cost and rapid software outsourcing, resource augmentation, quality assurance and project management services. He holds nine U.S. patents under his belt for mapping and fleet management.



**SAI REDDY**  
*CEO and Founder*  
CamerEye

Sai Reddy is the Founder and CEO of CamerEye, a leading AI Smart Pool System that scales across the entire pool lifecycle for easier and smarter construction monitoring, water safety, pool maintenance. Sai is an accomplished technology entrepreneur who previously was part of the founding team at PXISE, an AI-based data software that pioneered the use of prediction and smart controls for large renewable power plants. PXISE was acquired by Yokogawa, a giant automation manufacturer, in 2020. Sai is an inventor of 8 patents and has authored over 15 publications, awarded multiple technology and leadership awards and sits on various pool industry advisory committees and boards, including ASTM, NDPA, and PHTA. He is also a passionate water lover, an avid swimmer, surfer and sailor whose vision is to bring game-changing tech solutions to outdoor spaces.



**JOE ROHNER**  
*Vice President of Artificial Intelligence*  
Booz Allen Hamilton

Joe Rohner is a leader in Booz Allen's Artificial Intelligence business, the single largest provider of AI services to the federal government. Sitting in the Chief Technology Office, he helps clients apply AI to yield better mission outcomes through adoption and strategy; engineering and model development; quantum services; generative AI solutions; and AI systems. Joe's teams deliver AI solutions to clients in the western U.S. and the Pacific, including Hawaii, Japan, and Korea. Joe is Booz Allen's firmwide AI Adoption and Talent lead responsible for the transformation, strategy and execution of training, recruiting, and retaining the largest AI workforce supporting the federal government. He recently launched a firmwide AI curriculum across the firm that spanned literacy to expert competencies to accelerate transformation. Joe has also provided leadership to the world's premier data science competition for social good, the Data Science Bowl®, presented by Booz Allen and Kaggle.



**ROMEL ROMERO**  
*Tech Founder*  
Ojt Connect

Tech founder and philanthropist Romel Romero, boasting over seven years of experience in mobile app and website development, is the visionary behind Good Day Communications and Dipster Development. In 2023, he earned recognition as an Honorary Listee of Marquis Who's Who Of America and served as a keynote speaker at Polytechnic University of the Philippines Unisan. Romero's influence extends beyond borders, as evidenced by features on CNN Philippines, ABS-CBN News, and Manila Times, where he advocates for global impact and innovation. Passionate about driving social change, Romero actively contributes to meaningful initiatives. Alongside his entrepreneurial pursuits, he generously donates tablets for distance learning to rural universities and spearheads an on-the-job training program for computer science and business graduates. These endeavors underscore his dedication to both personal fulfillment and societal betterment.



**DEAN ROSENBERG**  
*NuFund Venture Group Board Member and Fund Co-Manager*  
NuFund Venture Group

Dean Rosenberg, with over 30 years of entrepreneurial spirit in San Diego, has notably influenced the technology and startup ecosystem. As Powur PBC's Chief Technology Officer, he's played a pivotal role in transforming Powur into the fastest-growing national solar company in the USA. His leadership extended to serving on the Company's Board of Directors, exemplifying his commitment to clean energy and innovative technology. At NuFund Venture Group, Dean has been instrumental in growing one of the most dynamic early-stage investment groups, overseeing over \$15M in annual investments. His presidency at Tech Coast Angels San Diego significantly enhanced the chapter's activity and outreach, fostering a more inclusive and vibrant investment community. Dean's multifaceted career, from pioneering startups to empowering early-stage companies, marks him as a leading figure in San Diego's technology and investment landscapes.



SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL  
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2024

**Shirin Alipanah** stands at the forefront of the real estate revolution, blending her expertise with visionary technology to redefine the property landscape. Her experience has fueled innovations that leverage AI and the Metaverse, offering immersive experiences that transform the way we interact with real estate.

Her work with eXp Realty, transcends traditional brokerage boundaries, marking her as a pivotal figure in tech-driven real estate solutions. Shirin's approach has not only streamlined property transactions but also enhanced the client experience, making it more efficient and engaging.

A staunch advocate for diversity and inclusion, Shirin's influence extends beyond technology, inspiring a more inclusive, dynamic future for the industry. Her mentorship and leadership have empowered individuals to explore new frontiers in technology and real estate.

Shirin Alipanah's contributions are crafting the future of real estate, marrying innovation with human-centric solutions. Connect with Shirin to explore the next horizon in real estate technology at [shirinsellshomes@gmail.com](mailto:shirinsellshomes@gmail.com) or **858-214-9910**.

DRE# 01863232



**SHIRIN ALIPANAH**  
— REAL ESTATE —

*Beyond your Property Journey*





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**SAM ROY**  
Head of IT Operations  
Cortica

Sam Roy began his tenure at Cortica in 2019 and currently serves as the company's head of IT operations. He oversees critical functions including IT infrastructure, support, DevOps, cyber security, and software development, with a focus on improving Cortica's client experience and teammate experience and broadening healthcare access for the families that Cortica serves nationwide. Sam's areas of expertise include generating technical transformation roadmaps, executing strategic technology and transformation initiatives, building omnichannel communications, automating complex business processes, creating and enhancing applications, streamlining business processes, and aligning IT initiatives with company revenue, margin, customer service, patient care, and patient outcomes goals. Sam holds numerous IT certifications, including a CISSP, and received a bachelor's degree in computer science from California State University, Monterey Bay.



**EPIPHANY RYU**  
Chief Operating Officer  
EpiSci (EpiSys Science, Inc.)

Epihany Ryu is Chief Operating Officer for EpiSci, a software company that develops next generation, Tactical AI autonomy solutions for national security problems. As COO, she is responsible for scaling business operations, spearheading cross-functional collaboration, streamlining processes, and turning strategy into reality. Ms. Ryu has dedicated her professional career to helping organizations realize their full potential. Prior to joining EpiSci, Ms. Ryu worked in design thinking and strategy consulting in the Bay Area. Her leadership and operational expertise play a pivotal role in EpiSci's success, positioning the company at the forefront of innovation in the dynamic landscape of autonomy and artificial intelligence for defense. She graduated from the Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley with a B.S. in Business Administration and has a Certificate in Technology Entrepreneurship from the UC Berkeley Sutardja Center for Entrepreneurship & Technology.



**BO RYU**  
Founder, President, and CEO  
EpiSci (EpiSys Science, Inc.)

Dr. Bo Ryu founded EpiSci in 2012 with the vision of delivering breakthroughs and "epiphanies" for a wide range of defense, space, and commercial applications by leveraging systems science and creating interdisciplinary solutions across the sense, decide, and act paradigm to advance trusted autonomy. With over two decades of experience in the defense industry with DOD sponsors such as DARPA, AFWERX, ONR, ARL, AFRL and NASA, Dr. Ryu has been leveraging this experience to advance the innovations and commercialization at EpiSci. Dr. Ryu holds 15 U.S. and international patents. He is the author/co-author of more than 60 peer-reviewed publications in the areas of wireless communications and networking, cognitive sensing and signal processing, and machine learning based network management. He is the recipient of two performance recognition awards for technical achievements on DARPA's Adaptive C4ISR Node program. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia University in Electrical Engineering.



**NIMER SAIKALY**  
President  
Ciprus Consulting

Nimer Saikaly is passionate about the non-profit sector, boasting 20 years of IT expertise. He specializes in crafting cost-effective IT infrastructures tailored to non-profits' needs. Leveraging cloud computing, business process optimization, and disaster recovery solutions, Nimer ensures efficient goal achievement. Beyond tech skills, he employs organizational and leadership prowess to drive impactful outcomes. Nimer's strategic approach boosts staff productivity, fortifies IT security, and optimizes operations while respecting budget constraints. His track record of transformative initiatives underscores his ability to deliver measurable results. Dedicated to advancing technology for social good, Nimer is poised to inspire change and drive innovation in San Diego's community.



**SCOTT SAUTTER**  
Vice President  
Booz Allen Hamilton

Scott Sautter leads Booz Allen's San Diego Engineering and Technology team, providing Digital Engineering, Cybersecurity, Network Engineering, IT Infrastructure, and C4ISR integration solutions to the Navy and Marine Corps. As a leader of Booz Allen's large San Diego office, Scott is focused on broadening the firm's capabilities in the region, particularly through IT transformation, Innovation, and Speed to Capability. Over the past 25 years, Scott has helped expand Booz Allen's technical service offerings to enhance our Nation's armed services' warfighting capabilities. His team delivers secure infrastructure solutions, enterprise network operations, IT strategy, Digital Engineering, and C4ISR solutions to a broad range of Department of Defense clients. Scott holds a B.S. in electrical engineering from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, and is a Certified Systems Engineering Professional through the International Council on Systems Engineering.











**Scott Painter**  
Founder & CEO



**John Cooper**  
Director of Flight Ops

- Flight Planning
- Project Mgmt
- Aerial Photography/Videography
- Aerial Data/LiDAR
- Ground Ops & Logistics
- BVLOS operations
- Video Documentation
- Airspace Coordination
- Topography & Survey
- Emergency Response
- Post Processing
- Mapping
- Analytics
- Inspection

**Drone Service Provider: Bridging Gaps with Technology**



**CONGRATULATIONS**

Congratulations to **Ken Garber** for being selected as a Leader of Influence in Technology by the San Diego Business Journal.



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**DINA SEGAL**  
Chief Legal Officer  
Gusto, Inc.

Dina Segal is Chief Legal Officer at Gusto, Inc., a technology company that runs payroll, benefits and HR services for over 300,000 small and medium businesses. Dina empowers a team of approximately 50 legal, compliance and government affairs professionals and is a leader on Gusto's executive team. Dina is a seasoned public and private company lawyer and strategic advisor with extensive experience in building companies and technology in regulated industries. Dina is also a leader and board member of SunLaw, Inc. (sunlaw.org), a non-profit dynamic community that supports, educates, and advances women in house counsel. Dina is not just a leader in law, she is a leader in business and in her community. She brings a diversity of thought, collaborative attitude, and deep business acumen to help solve some of the most complex legal challenges, get deals done and help create products that help small and medium sized businesses.



**NATHAN SHORT**  
Director of Information  
Technology  
Encinitas Union School District

Nathan Short, Director of Information Technology for the Encinitas Union School District, has been re-tooling public school content filters over the past 6 years to alert response teams when self-harm concerns crop up on student devices. Initially, no one would entertain the concept. Now, traction has been gaining. Short has been working with the FBI on expanding to include indicators that might lead to preventing mass casualty events. This has led to FBI seminars that are bringing attention to this for other school districts to potentially adopt. Short has been working with government agencies to forge relationships that improve response times related to cyber security. At a recent cyber security symposium, the idea that "you can't surge trust" bore fruit when Short was able to rapidly escalate the detection of a cyber event to the right people to prevent what could have turned into a ransomware event.



**WALID SOUSSOU**  
CEO  
Quantum Applied Science &  
Research (QUASAR), Inc.

Dr. Walid Soussou, CEO of Quantum Applied Science & Research (QUASAR) and Founder/CEO of Wearable Sensing, leads both companies in their mission to facilitate non-invasive brain monitoring across the lifespan, from delicate neonatal to elderly care, and even in extreme aeronautical environments. Dr. Soussou joined QUASAR as a Research Scientist in 2008 and quickly moved up to VP, heading up the launch of QUASAR's dry electrode product, and then to CEO in 2015. He also led the spinoff of Wearable Sensing in 2013 with the goal of commercializing QUASAR's technology globally. He leverages his PhD in Neuroscience from the University of Southern California to develop impactful real-world applications of QUASAR's revolutionary sensor technology in the realms of medicine, military, education, and enterprise. Dr. Soussou has raised over \$15M in research funding from the National Institute of Health, National Science Foundation, DARPA, NASA, and Department of Defense.



**PEDRO SUAREZ**  
Member  
Mintz

Pedro Suarez, Member, Mintz, focuses on all aspects of patent law, including IP portfolio development and management, preparation and prosecution of patent applications, freedom to operate and infringement opinions, patent monetization, litigation including Inter Partes Reviews (IPRs), with an emphasis on wireless, software, artificial intelligence, machine learning/neural networks, computer security, and medical devices. He has extensive experience in handling patent matters for emerging and global high-technology companies as well as universities and draws on his litigation experience to develop high-value patent portfolios. Pedro has also litigated patent infringement and validity disputes before several US district courts, in matters involving multiple patents and complex technologies. More recently, Pedro represented a Finnish-based patent owner in an IPR, in which all claims of the patent were found valid.



**LINDSEY SWEENEY**  
Technical Program Manager  
Northrop Grumman

Lindsey is a Technical Program Manager at Northrop Grumman for a large portfolio of space satellite composite busses and cutting-edge ceramic composite structures. She defines requirements, manages all aspects of technical design and manufacturing, as well as overseeing program status and performance. She has a background of over eight years in structural analysis engineering with expertise in composites analysis. She received her bachelor's and master's degree from UCLA in Aerospace Engineering and Materials Science Engineering respectively. Committed to professional growth, Lindsey is the current president of the San Diego Chapter of AIAA (American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics). In her spare time, she volunteers on the San Diego Mountain Rescue Team as a rescue member. She is also a San Diego native.



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**Interlaced is proud to congratulate  
Jeff Gaines, CEO, on being named as a  
Leader of Influence in Technology!**

Interlaced is a technology services provider that empowers startups nationwide—whether your teams are remote or hybrid, Interlaced has you covered with fast, reliable, and skilled IT services.

**This is the  
lighter, brighter  
side of IT.**



**Congratulations to Nico Petruzzelli for being selected as one of the  
first San Diego Business Journal's Leaders of Influence in Technology!**

Nico Petruzzelli, in his role as the IT & Project Manager at Options For All, demonstrates outstanding leadership and technological innovation. With Nico leading the way, significant advancements have been made in IT security, enhancing the organization's resilience against cyber threats and raising data security standards. Managing device upgrades for a team of 350 members, Nico has streamlined operations, boosting productivity and efficiency. His negotiation skills have resulted in substantial annual savings of over \$180K, showcasing his ability to blend technical expertise with financial acumen. Possessing the esteemed Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) certification, Nico's achievements underscore his pivotal role in driving technological excellence and operational efficiency, directly benefiting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities supported by Options For All.

"Nico came to Options For All as an IT intern, and now he oversees the IT team, budget, and technology services and support for over 350 employees across the state of CA. His insatiable curiosity, love of learning, and customer-focused approach have enabled him to bring our organization from a technologically antiquated state to a modern, well-equipped, and secure technology environment. We're fortunate to have such a rising star on our team," said Brian Zotti, CEO of Options For All.





LEADERS of INFLUENCE in

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**ALYSSA THORNLEY**  
Director of Sales  
SmartBug Media

Alyssa is a seasoned leader in the technology sector with a proven track record of driving impactful initiatives through strategic vision, innovative thinking, and collaborative leadership. With a blended background in non-profits such as Teach For America and in fast-growing EdTech SaaS companies, Alyssa has led growth efforts through M&A integrations, supporting tech and revenue teams in integrating processes while remaining on track to aggressive growth. From scaling sales teams and optimizing operational efficiency to spearheading strategic initiatives and integrating cross-functional processes, she works with SMB tech companies throughout the San area to assess revenue operations and implement solutions that support scale cost effectively.



**STEVEN TOMITA**  
Director of Innovation -  
Engineering and Technology  
Booz Allen Hamilton

Steven Tomita is a director of innovation who solves mission problems through an integrated, systems-of-systems approach. His teams adapt and apply innovations, emerging use-case discoveries, and existing solutions to generate new value by drawing on a wide range of technologies and disciplines. His in-depth technical experience and entrepreneurship across multiple functional domains including cyber, digital engineering, artificial intelligence, and software development enables Steven to introduce innovative solutions that deliver on critical mission needs. Recent innovations include bringing Digital Engineering and Software Development pipelines into a single automated agile release train with ontologically aligned digital threads and a GenAI solution that addresses the unworkable/unavoidable problems around classification and releasability. Steven earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and a master's degree from Hawaii Pacific.



**KRIS VIRTUE**  
VP Cybersecurity  
Qualcomm

Kris Virtue is Head of Global Information Security and Risk Management at Qualcomm, where he oversees the organization's Cyber Security and Threat Management team. In this role, he has responsibility for incident response, threat intelligence, security monitoring and application security. Virtue also manages the Qualcomm IT eDiscovery collections team which partners with Qualcomm's litigation department to manage legal hold data collection and preservation. In addition to his security related duties, Virtue is also responsible for the IT organization supporting Qualcomm's Government Technologies business unit, providing IT service delivery across the stack. Over his nearly 27-year tenure with Qualcomm, he has held numerous roles within IT, including leadership roles across all aspects of the information security program, middleware, and data integration teams.



**BEN WHITEHILL**  
VP, Information Technology  
TrueCare

Ben Whitehill's leadership at TrueCare has been a gamechanger. Over the course of a short period, he led the IT and security team through development of a strategic plan comprised of many goals and initiatives that have completely transformed the technology and cybersecurity landscape at TrueCare. Together they created a highly reliable and far more resilient/secure infrastructure while continuing to innovate in support of the best patient, provider and workforce experience possible. Ben leads with a people-first, growth/positive mindset. This approach along with his partnership with the business has helped TrueCare overcome many technical debt challenges of the past and has enabled streamlined and rapid growth for the future. Adoption of change has been positive and TrueCare's culture of innovation has never been stronger. Ben knows everything we do starts and ends with people. This is where he leads from, and no other mission will ever be more important.



**DOUG WINTER**  
Cofounder & CEO  
Seismic

Doug Winter is the Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of Seismic, the global leader in enablement. A veteran entrepreneur, Doug was also a co-founder of Objectiva Software Solutions. He served as COO and general manager at EMC Document Sciences until founding Seismic in 2010. In collaboration with his co-founders, Doug has grown Seismic from a small startup to an international organization with "unicorn" status, serving more than 2,200 businesses around the world. At the helm of Seismic, Doug has been recognized as a top CEO by several media groups and industry associations, including the San Diego Union-Tribune, San Diego Business Journal, Comparably, and more. Named on the Goldman Sachs Entrepreneur of the Year and SD500 lists, under Doug's leadership, Seismic is well-known for its exceptional workplace culture with awards from Forbes, Fortune, and Newsweek, to name a few.



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Xceptional congratulates



Elizabeth McKewon  
&  
Steven Pagan

on being named

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the Y

YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING & BELONGING

CONGRATULATIONS  
JOHN MERRITT,  
Chief Information Officer

30+ years experience  
Human-focused futurist & strategist  
Award-winning Technology Leader  
Well-known locally & nationally

"It is crucially important to drive tech equity across our San Diego communities."

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ymcasd.org

