

# CIO OF THE YEAR AWARDS



CHICAGO CIO OF THE YEAR  
**ORBIE**  
AWARDS



**CHICAGO**CIO

A SPECIAL SECTION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHICAGO CIO LEADERSHIP ASSOCIATION



**FROM OUR CHAIR**

InspireCIO Yvonne Scott discusses the "new normal" in the remote workplace.



**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

Pat Gelsinger talks about the importance of IT innovation.



**LEADERSHIP AWARD**

Paul Martin explains what makes a successful CIO.

The annual Chicago CIO of the Year® ORBIE® Awards program honors chief information officers who have demonstrated excellence in technology leadership. Winners in the Global, Large Enterprise, Enterprise, Corporate, Public Sector and Nonprofit categories will be announced August 14 at a virtual Awards ceremony.



**CRAIN'SCONTENTSTUDIO**  
CHICAGO

## CONGRATULATIONS 2020

### CHICAGO CIO OF THE YEAR® AWARDS NOMINEES

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UL

**NEERU ARORA**  
Volkswagen Financial

**NANCY BERCE**  
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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**KARRIEM SHAKOOR**  
UL

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**PAUL SLAGER**  
Digital Check Corporation

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**MIKE SORENSEN**  
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**BRIAN WILKINSON**  
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**SCOTT ZULPO**  
Baxter Credit Union BCU

# CIOs ENABLE LARGEST REMOTE WORK EXPERIMENT IN HISTORY



2020 CIO CHAIR

## YVONNE SCOTT

Chair, ChicagoCIO  
CIO, Crowe LLP

At the beginning of 2020, no one could have imagined the enormous change we would all experience in the first year of this new decade.

By mid-March, Chief Information Officers everywhere realized their systems and teams would be stretched beyond belief in the largest work-from-home experiment in the history of the world. Thanks to cloud-first systems, tools and services created by technology innovators we have held virtual meetings, had food and goods delivered to our doors, and remained connected to colleagues, friends and loved ones. We have adapted, survived and adjusted to a new way of living and working.

CIOs led this overnight virtual transformation from office-based to remote work. Without their planning and implementation of the systems and services to support remote work, conducting business would be nearly impossible under these circumstances. Because of the demands COVID-19 placed on businesses, there's greater appreciation for

CIOs and the technological sophistication required to provide secure, available and scalable systems to enable digital business.

ChicagoCIO is an executive peer leadership network focused on helping CIOs maximize their leadership effectiveness, create value, reduce risk and share success. Convening Chicagoland's leading CIOs in member-led, non-commercial programs, CIOs build meaningful professional relationships with colleagues facing similar challenges, solving problems and avoiding pitfalls.

From the beginning of this crisis, ChicagoCIO members have participated in regular local ZOOM collaborations and national ZOOM calls featuring CIOs from industry, higher education, healthcare and technology. In any gathering of CIOs, the answer is in the room. The challenge one CIO is facing has likely been solved by another CIO. What was their experience? What did they learn? What would they do differently? How could other

CIOs benefit from sharing their experiences?

Peer-based leadership groups have incredible ROI when leaders share a common problem set. The vertical/industry and size/scale may be different, but approaches to effective leadership and problem solving are universal. Every leader's perspective is valuable and contributes to the conversation - and everyone wins when leaders engage and share ideas, experiences and best practices.

For over twenty years, InspireCIO has been inspiring CIO success through the annual CIO of the Year ORBIE

Awards - but this is just the tip of the iceberg. By joining ChicagoCIO, technology executives take their leadership to the next level through year-round, member-led programs and interaction. The power of CIOs working together - across public and private business, government, education, healthcare and nonprofit organizations - creates enormous value for CIOs, businesses and the community at large.

Together, we are transforming our organizations with technology and enriching our region and our world. On behalf of ChicagoCIO, congratulations to the

nominees and finalists on their accomplishments and thank you to the sponsors, underwriters and staff who make the ORBIE Awards possible.

Sincerely,

## CONGRATULATIONS

To our Chief Information Officer, Paul Slager,

Congratulations from your fellow employees, your channel partners, our worldwide customers, and from our owners and directors, on being named a finalist for CIO of the Year in Chicagoland. This is a well-deserved honor for a stellar technician, strategist, and leader.

Deepest thanks and appreciation from all of us on the Digital Check global team!



**DIGITAL**  
**CHECK**

www.digitalcheck.com

Digital Check has been proudly headquartered in the Chicagoland area since its incorporation over 60 years ago. Digital Check is the leading worldwide provider of check scanners and peripherals for the banking industry. Our TellerScan®, CheXpress®, and SmartSource® lines of scanners provide the industry's most reliable performance with superior MICR and image quality. Digital Check's software delivers image enhancement and deposit-processing technologies that help clients reduce costs and improve efficiency.

# TECHNOLOGISTS CAN HARNESS INNOVATION AS A FORCE FOR GOOD



**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**PAT GELSINGER**  
CEO  
VMware

Industry pioneer Pat Gelsinger credits his early years as a farm boy in Pennsylvania for his deep sense of hard work, a passion for learning, and the wonder of technical innovation. That framework has led to a distinguished career, including as the first

CTO at Intel. He is currently CEO at cloud powerhouse VMware, Inc.

As keynote speaker at the 2020 Chicago CIO of the Year ORBIE Awards, Gelsinger recently shared his thoughts on the evolution of the industry.

**Q: How has the role of the CIO changed as companies undertook the massive work-at-home initiative in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak?**

**A:** The role of the CIO has been elevated faster than anyone could have imagined. The future of work has changed as working from home becomes the norm and work is more distributed. CIOs must continue to build infrastructure and deliver collaboration and other tools optimized for new workforce set-ups.

**Q: What is the future of cloud computing? What role will it play in remote work?**

**A:** Lately, we've seen a "cloud gold rush"—huge increases in demand. Given the pandemic, I expect this trend to continue if not

**"CIOs will be increasingly responsible for culture change."**

accelerate. We need more processing power, more data storage, and more application development capacity. The flexibility of the cloud is crucial to accommodate such a rapid shift to remote work. But the demand for cloud security will accelerate as fast as demand for the cloud itself.

**Q: What will the role of the CIO look like in 5 years, 10 years?**

**A:** The CIO will be tied directly to the corporate vision and strategy, more than ever before. Right now,

everyone is scrambling to figure out a "new normal" for their employees. Much of that will be determined by the CIO and the ability

to enable remote work. And many of these changes will be permanent. CIOs will have to ask themselves, "How can we empower employees to collaborate effectively?" And "How can we protect against threats?" Many companies are embracing new subscription models and CIOs must lead this cross-functional effort. Finally, corporate boards are looking to CIOs for guidance while holding them accountable to secure the company brand.

**Q: What advice would you give to CIOs?**

**A:** The days of CIOs fully controlling all IT spend and decision-making are over. Line-of-business managers continue to gain greater control over IT decisions, with very different priorities than CIOs. Yet the common ground among all leaders is to increase business agility by connecting the customers' apps, data, and management across every cloud provider.

Historians will look back on 2020 as a time when the best of humanity shone bright, just as we laid bare some of the harshest realities that divide us. As technologists, we must ALL play a role in helping to ensure tech innovation is harnessed as a force for good. As CIOs, understand that your work is more meaningful than ever and many changes you're implementing now will be permanent. We need you to be thoughtful and empathetic as CIOs will be increasingly responsible for culture change.

# SUCCESSFUL CIOs INSPIRE TEAMWORK, NEW IDEAS



**LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT**

**PAUL MARTIN**  
SVP and CIO  
Baxter International

Ask Paul Martin what makes a good leader and he easily clicks off a list of must-have qualities: Trustworthy, forward-thinking, collaborative, inspirational, and communicative. A good leader must also be a mentor and a coach.

"Be passionate about bringing out the best in your team," says Martin, winner of the 2020 Chicago CIO Leadership Award. "Lift the hearts and minds of others to do great things."

As CIO at Baxter International, Martin leads a team of 1,400 IT professionals worldwide. He joined Baxter in 2011.

Martin started his 40-year career at Texas Instruments and since then has held leadership roles at a number of companies, including as Global CIO at Rexam, a U.K.-based packaging company.

Eric Foster, who previously worked at Baxter for Martin, calls him a standout leader. "Paul understands the importance of building strong teams to deliver great results. He helps his team members reach their full potential and empowers them to deliver their best," says Foster, executive vice president and

CIO, Donnelley Financial Solutions.

Martin's focus on teamwork and innovation recently enabled Baxter's need for a rapid transition to remote work. "We were prepared," he says. The company had already invested in collaborative virtual tools to drive productivity when the global pandemic hit.

**"Lift the hearts and minds of others to do great things."**

Most of the office-based workforce transitioned to remote work at the flip of a switch over one weekend. "We leveraged technology," Martin says, crediting his team for the quick and flexible response.

Reflecting on his long career, he says the role of the CIO has changed dramatically. The job started as a kind of "back office

manager" to keep the network infrastructure connected and deliver reports on time. The CIO today must prepare teams to take advantage of digital technology advances that generate a high volume of data at an incredible speed.

Martin's leadership extends well beyond his day job. He is an independent corporate board

director at Unisys and at BCU (Baxter Credit Union). Martin believes CIO representation on company boards will accelerate amid the growing need for qualified technology expertise and oversight.

Following that career arc, Martin plans to retire from Baxter in 2020 and commit more time to corporate board work. He will

also continue to support the local CIO community, as well as volunteering as a trustee at Rush University Medical Center and the Ravinia Festival.

As a leader, Martin is passionate about inclusion. In 2012, he co-founded the Baxter Black Alliance, an employee resource group focused on attracting, engaging and retaining qualified Black professionals. He also sat on the advisory board at Howard University to help faculty develop a curriculum to create a pipeline of IT leaders.

Martin has won numerous awards. In 2017, he was inducted into the CIO Hall of Fame — a lifelong goal of his. But the 2020 Chicago CIO Leadership Award has special meaning. "This is a recognition by my peers for the body of work they have seen me do," he says. "That's important to me."

**R** Russell Reynolds ASSOCIATES

**Congratulations** to the Winners and Nominees of the Chicago CIO of the Year Awards!

Russell Reynolds Associates is a global leadership advisory and search firm. Our 470+ consultants in 46 offices work with public, private and nonprofit organizations across all industries and regions. We help our clients build teams of transformational leaders who can meet today's challenges and anticipate the digital, economic and political trends that are reshaping the global business environment. From helping boards with their structure, culture and effectiveness to identifying, assessing and defining the best leadership for organizations, our teams bring their decades of expertise to help clients address their most complex leadership issues. We exist to improve the way the world is led. [www.russellreynolds.com](http://www.russellreynolds.com)

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# GLOBAL FINALISTS

Over \$5 billion annual revenue and multinational operations



**Danielle (Dani) Brown** has been in the IT industry for over 20 years, focusing on the design and delivery of cross-functional transformational programs and technology initiatives that impact financial and operational performance. She spent much of her earlier career in IT roles with DuPont, including a three-year assignment in Singapore. Earlier this year, she was appointed to the board for the PRA Group (Nasdaq: PRAA), a global leader in acquiring and collecting nonperforming loans.

## BRUNSWICK

**DANIELLE BROWN**  
VP and CIO  
Brunswick

### SUCCESS STORY

My greatest success is creating an environment where IT staff have the freedom, confidence and opportunity to contribute to their highest potential. Teams continue to evolve and build upon their skills, learning new emerging technologies and how to apply technology to business needs and opportunities. We have created an environment where leaders are energized, enabled and are valued contributors to the company. The growth of others is important to me, because a large part of my success is because others have "poured into me." Therefore, it is my responsibility and privilege to "pour into others."



**Rajeev Khanna** has more than 25 years of experience in engineering, architecture and operations. Previously, he was vice president of global infrastructure services at Expedia, where he led the implementation of innovative solutions based on emerging technologies. Before that, he led the global infrastructure production services at Asurion, an electronic device protection insurance company. He also spent 14 years with UBS AG, and earlier in his career held technical and business leadership positions with Pencom Systems, Bankers Trust and Ingersoll-Rand.



**RAJEEV KHANNA**  
SVP and CTO  
Aon

### SUCCESS STORY

At Aon, Rajeev Khanna has been critical in delivering innovative solutions for our clients, providing secure, flexible and reliable technology to our colleagues, and re-investing our technology spend into revenue-generating platforms.

He and his team delivered all of this while stabilizing the organization—driving efficiencies that reduced costs, aligned the hearts and minds of our technology and business colleagues, and positioned us for our continued evolution. Technologists across the firm have benefited from his clarity of purpose in implementing new solutions and removing the barriers that have siloed these teams in the past.



**DAN SIMPSON**  
Global CIO  
Grant Thornton International

**Dan Simpson** has over 30 years of experience in software development and information technology. With nearly 20 years as a CIO, he has led several business and technology transformation programs from vision/strategy through implementation. He has broad industry experience in professional services, insurance, healthcare and technology. As chairman of the Grant Thornton Innovation Council, he leads the network's efforts to collaborate and innovate across 140 member firms.



### SUCCESS STORY

As global CIO and chair of the Innovation Council, Dan Simpson is helping Grant Thornton think and work differently. Under his leadership, Grant Thornton launched the Global Innovation Council to answer one question: "What are we doing about innovation?"

Eight months later, the Innovation Exchange was launched with four market-ready solutions. Today there are 40 market-ready innovations, 68 active member firms and 400 active users.

The value of innovation sharing is expected to be three to four times what an innovation can generate in only one market. The cost to share is relatively small, leading to both higher network revenues and profitability.



**Ehren Powell** has spent most of his career with GE, beginning in 2000 as a member of GE Aviation's IT leadership program. Since then, he has held technology leadership positions within GE Aviation's supply chain, sales and marketing teams. In 2005, he was named the IT leader for services, global enterprise resource planning, and business intelligence platforms for GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy. He later joined GE Transportation as the CIO for services before becoming the CIO of GE's services businesses in 2017.



**EHREN POWELL**  
VP and CIO  
GE Healthcare

### SUCCESS STORY

I have the greatest impact when I use my cross-business vantage point to identify opportunities where technology can improve results among operating teams and show senior leaders where process disconnects or resource allocation contribute to challenges. For example, I was on the shop floor observing operations when it became clear that our commercial teams were unaware of the impact that quoting certain products had on our supply chain. Within 24 hours, we brought the necessary teams together to highlight this disconnect, and put controls in place to prevent the problem from reoccurring.



**Jason Ruger** was the only CIO-level staff member retained by Google after its 2012 acquisition of Motorola Mobility. He joined Motorola in 2006 and previously ran its security and IT strategy functions. Before that, he was director at a big-data analytics company and earlier in his career was an IT consultant. He serves on the board of a local school and is a founding member of a group that has raised over \$700,000 to fight cancer.



**JASON RUGER**  
CIO Motorola Division  
Motorola

### SUCCESS STORY

Smartphones can make users feel dumb; they are complex and don't come with user manuals. We built a privacy-centric system that allows over 100 million customers in 20 countries to share device usage information with Motorola. We then used artificial intelligence to share highly relevant suggestions for specific customers. This increased customer engagement by 800 percent, helping Motorola customers get the most out of their smartphones (like longer battery life or better photos). Building a trusted, personalized, predictive and persistent relationship with our millions of end-users is my greatest accomplishment.

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# LARGE ENTERPRISE

Over \$2 billion annual revenue

# FINALISTS



**GEORGE LESKO**  
CIO  
Ferrara

**George Lesko** has exploited technology to enable business growth across industries, including consumer products, retail, telecom, distribution, direct-selling and construction equipment. He has led digital transformations for Fortune 500 and mid-market companies as well as privately held entities, and has been the IT leader for multiple M&A deals—from due diligence through systems integration—in North America, Europe and Asia. He has built information security awareness and capability, and currently serves on the cybersecurity board at Rutgers University.



## SUCCESS STORY

Ferrara is a significant player in the candy and sweet snacks category. We have an ambitious growth agenda and IT continues to play a key role in this resurgence. Our rapid growth through acquisition demanded that we undergo digital transformation in several areas of our business. We took on digital transformation across product commercialization, quality, food safety and sales forecasting. We also integrated the Nestle confections business three months ahead of schedule. I am proud to be part of the amazing team that made this happen.



**KEVIN LOWELL**  
SVP IT  
U.S. Cellular

**Kevin Lowell** joined U.S. Cellular in 2003, and prior to his current position served as vice president of its engineering and network operations. In that role, he was responsible for ensuring the quality of the company's high-speed network so that customers would have an excellent wireless experience. Previously, he held leadership positions at Sprint PCS, including director of network field operations. He is currently a doctoral candidate at Fielding Graduate University in Santa Barbara, Calif.



## SUCCESS STORY

My greatest accomplishment: leading a turnaround in the culture, contribution and strategic role of the IT organization. We achieve excellent results and deliver value through significant operational changes like MVP, Agile and time to value. We deliver on time and on budget, day in and day out; we create new technology-centered products and services in our newly-created development platform; we educate the organization on the capabilities we're enabling with the latest artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies; and we establish the technology direction for the company.



**NEVILLE RADEMEYER**  
Global CIO  
Ipsos

**Neville Rademeyer** is an internationally recognized transformational executive with extensive business and IT experience. Before joining Ipsos in 2013, he was CFO at ISACA, an international professional association focused on IT governance. Prior to that, he was vice president of engineering at Microsoft, joint CIO at The Walt Disney Co., and held various senior and CIO roles with BMW (SA), Solo Cup Co. and Molson Coors. Early in his career he focused on information technology with an entrepreneurial flair.



## SUCCESS STORY

My greatest success has been the development and implementation of a comprehensive IT strategy that identified and delivered value across our business, while ensuring exceptional availability of our systems and reliability of our information and insights. This was achieved through major transformative digital initiatives, technology upgrades and migrations, mergers and integrations that were delivered successfully and seamlessly by a highly motivated and exceptional IT team. This team is now an integral part of the business, internally providing the systems needed and externally providing the innovative and complex capabilities to securely deliver the results from our research to our clients.



**RICH VOINOVICH**  
SVP IT  
Equity Residential

**Rich Voinovich** has been with Equity Residential for nearly 15 years, previously holding consulting and project management roles with ADP and Intuit Real Estate Solutions. His career has been focused on business process engineering—aligning technology with business strategy to reduce costs, increase efficiencies and improve quality. He has also partnered with business units to translate strategic goals into innovative process and technology solutions. He is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP).



## SUCCESS STORY

Great leaders are made great by the team they lead and the partnerships they build. I've worked hard to create relationships, build trust and make every member of my team feel valued. This has built a mutual respect and drives a shared vision for SimpliClTy – leveraging technology to simplify and automate business processes with a focus on a remarkable user experience. My team goes above and beyond because of the confidence they have in me as their leader, as well as our shared passion to drive change.

## Congratulations, Chicago CIO of the Year® Winners & Nominees!



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# ENTERPRISE FINALISTS

Over \$500 million annual revenue



**Neeru Arora** has been an industry leader for nearly 20 years, with prior roles at Aon, McKinsey & Co., UBS and the Chicago Board of Trade. Her ability to drive large-scale transformation has resulted in longstanding success on an international and domestic level. In 2017, she received the Chicago CIO ORBIE award, which honors excellence in technology leadership. She is a founding member of the Future of Work Community, a private, advice-sharing network and a learning resource.

**VW CREDIT, INC.**

**NEERU ARORA**  
SVP and CIO  
Volkswagen Credit

## SUCCESS STORY

At Volkswagen Credit, we are the key to mobility. My team is self-disrupting and transforming IT to meet the quickly changing needs of a business in the throes of rapid disruption. I'm linking our technology strategy to the larger macro innovation trends of fintech, connecting customers and autonomous vehicles. Our success is contagious, attracting the rest of the company toward customer-centric thinking to deliver innovative products for our powerhouse brands and making Volkswagen Credit's technology team the number one choice for digital innovation across our global group.



**BILL ROCHOLL**  
CIO  
CCC Information  
Services

**Bill Rocholl** has over 25 years of technology experience, most recently at CS Technology as the principal consultant in the CIO advisory and strategy practice. He has led large-scale technology operations organizations in high-transaction and high-availability processing industries, developing and implementing enterprise strategies, leading global transformations, and process improvement in support of revenue growth. Earlier in his career he worked for Hewitt Associates, Aviva, The Royal Bank of Scotland, ABN Amro, Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, RR Donnelley and Bell Laboratories.

## SUCCESS STORY

Customer satisfaction is paramount at CCC. We work to perpetually earn the trust and expand expectations of our customers through exceptional service, insights and innovation.

CCC created a transformative digital experience to support claims operations and engagement from first notice of loss through claim resolution. Our technology powers operations at 25,000 repair facilities daily and we have processed more than a trillion miles of driving data.

We developed a hybrid cloud approach to servicing our customers, enabling scale and growth to better deliver on CCC's commitment to customer service.

I'm proud to be part of the CCC team.



**Sean Freeburger** previously spent 24 years at Accenture, serving both client-facing and internal IT roles. He led global sales, business intelligence, delivery excellence, quality assurance and application architecture, and delivered business outcomes using innovation and proven best practices. Prior to joining Accenture's IT organization, he spent 10 years in consulting, focused on transportation and travel services clients. During that time, he worked on large global system implementation projects that leveraged multiple technology platforms.

**HURON**

**SEAN FREEBURGER**  
Corporate VP and CIO  
Huron

## SUCCESS STORY

For a CIO to truly be successful, it's critical that they attract, retain and develop top talent that can implement the technology and drive meaningful change for an organization and its clients. I pride myself on developing deep connections with my team and encouraging them to grow both personally and professionally. Fostering an inclusive and collaborative culture has enabled Huron to build a foundation for our own transformation. This collaborative approach enables us to drive innovation, accelerate growth and achieve efficiencies to better serve our clients' evolving needs now and in the future.



**Andy Jurczyk** has more than 30 years of experience in the technology field. Previous positions include global CIO, director of operations, senior network manager and senior systems engineer. He pioneered the use of private cloud services that have enabled a fully mobile workforce. He and his team focus on providing world-class client service to the firm and its clients in technology, training, security, operations, systems availability, and innovative flexible access to these systems.

**Seyfarth**

**ANDY JURCZYK**  
CIO  
Seyfarth Shaw

## SUCCESS STORY

I think my greatest accomplishment is the team that I've built to support our organization. Years ago as part of a leadership program, I was assigned a topic to present to the group; it was titled followership. The basic premise of it is that everyone has to follow somebody. How you do that is very important to your leadership capability, but most important is what you do to get others to follow you. My style has embodied that philosophy, and has helped me create a world-class team and culture that allows us to thrive and innovate.



**Howie Piersma** has worked in IT at Pepper Construction for 35 years, the last 18 years as group vice president. He oversees technicians, software developers, networking and security managers, systems support and business analysts. He recently completed a term as chair of the Associated General Contractors' technology steering committee. He is a frequent speaker on project management collaboration, and for the past 25 years has lectured at Northwestern University on the use of technology in the construction industry.

**Pepper Construction**  
Tomorrow Transformed

**HOWARD PIERSMA**  
VP IT  
Pepper Construction

## SUCCESS STORY

As vice president of IT, my biggest achievement has been the successful migration to our current enterprise resource planning (ERP) system – more specifically, leading my team through research, design and implementation of the complex infrastructure required. A key differentiator during this migration was a focus on developing the knowledge and skill sets of my team required to manage the system. Instead of hiring outside consultants, we worked directly with engineers and technicians from the various hardware and software manufacturers involved. This resulted in having in-house experts providing support and database administrator services at a significant ongoing cost savings.

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# CORPORATE FINALISTS

Up to \$500 million annual revenue



**Jeanine L. Charlton** has more than 25 years of Fortune 100 technology leadership experience in the automotive, transportation, supply chain and manufacturing industries. Previously, she was at the forefront of IT and business integration at DXC Technology, Hewlett Packard Enterprise and Electronic Data Systems, enabling multiple enterprise and government transformations. She has advised several boards on technology issues, and for more than 15 years has been a mentor in Mentium's global leadership development program.

**JEANINE L. CHARLTON**  
SVP, CTO and CDO  
Merchants Fleet



## SUCCESS STORY

Regarded as an innovator, Jeanine L. Charlton is known for pushing the envelope on growth while creating a culture that celebrates both innovation and collaboration. A hallmark of her leadership is her ability to lead large cultural changes in growing organizations. She is recognized for her innovative approach to creating cultures, processes and applications to successfully drive business results.

Charlton has transformed Merchants Fleet's technology operating model by shifting to Agile, instituting strong governance, and formalizing product owners across the company. Her leadership on Agile decreased overall technology spend by 45 percent annually with increased throughput and on-time deliveries.



**Paul Slager** has over a decade of IT leadership experience in banking, health care, engineering and insurance. Previously, he participated in a global expansion, assisted with a half-dozen M&A deals and oversaw a 1,300 percent technology practice growth. Early in his career, he held a variety of technical level IT positions, which helped him understand the challenges and opportunities that exist in IT. In addition to being a project management professional he holds several technology certifications.

**PAUL SLAGER**  
CIO  
Digital Check



## SUCCESS STORY

My focus has been on building a diverse team not based on their technical abilities but rather their ability to serve the current and future needs of the business. We can train individuals on new technology, but recruiting for passion, integrity, kindness and authenticity has led to incredible success and lasting friendships.

My incredibly talented team is my biggest accomplishment. Without them I wouldn't be able to satisfy my career goal of improving the lives of customers and fellow employees through technology by eliminating remedial tasks so we all can do more thoughtful work.



**DR. HELEN SUN**  
CTO  
STATS Perform



**Dr. Helen Sun** has a 22-year record as a technology strategist and thought leader, including previous roles with JPMorgan Chase, Motorola Solutions, Salesforce and Oracle. She holds a doctorate in education technology and information systems, and has published three books on big data and advanced analytics. The Chicago Business Journal recognized her as "Business Woman of the Year," and she has been a featured speaker at the University of Chicago's "Women in Analytics" symposium.

## SUCCESS STORY

Helen is the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at Stats Perform, overseeing product, engineering, artificial intelligence, and data production teams. Helen joined Stats Perform in 2018 with over 22 years of experience as a technology strategist and thought leader, most recently serving as the CTO of JPMorgan Chase's Commercial Banking division. Helen has been a Chicago Business Journal "Business Woman of the Year" and is part of Crain's Tech 50 of 2018. Helen received a Ph.D. in Education Technology and Information Systems from The University of Toledo.



**JOHN WALLS**  
SVP and CIO  
ADM Investor Services



ADM Investor Services, Inc.

**John Walls** has 28 years of IT experience, including leadership roles in operations, application development and support, and demand management. Additional non-IT executive roles helped him view technology through the eyes of the user, and to create solutions to meet business needs and drive results. Early in his career, he developed systems to automate the activities of his then-employer, a local trading firm; the order entry system is still in use today. He also designed systems for accounting, treasury, operations and compliance.

## SUCCESS STORY

My greatest success has been changing the way that IT is viewed within the company and by our customers. We are no longer a service provider; we are part of the solution. We have built a team of talented technology professionals that collaborates with others to apply technology to solve business needs. This is particularly relevant now, when nearly every part of the company seeks technical help with their digital transformation.

# THE FOREFRONT OF LEADERSHIP

The University of Chicago Medicine congratulates Heather Nelson, MHA, CHCIO, for being named a finalist in the public sector category of the 2020 Chicago CIO of the Year® ORBIE® Awards. This honor recognizes the strong leadership role she has played in driving innovative changes in the healthcare sector that have enabled our faculty and staff to better care for our patients, their families and our community. We are proud of Heather's accomplishments and thank her for her commitment to healthcare in Chicago.



AT THE FOREFRONT  
**UChicago**  
Medicine



**Heather Nelson, MHA, CHCIO**  
Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer

UChicagoMedicine.org



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# NONPROFIT FINALISTS — PUBLIC SECTOR FINALISTS

Not-for-profit organizations

Government and education organizations



**JONATHAN BEYER**  
Executive for IT  
Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America

**Jonathan Beyer** has more than 23 years of experience in IT, enterprise businesses and not-for-profits, including the last 12 years with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He began his career in the information security group at Andersen Consulting (now Accenture), and continued at Arthur Andersen as an architecture lead. He then served as vice president of infrastructure and technology operations at two Chicago-area startups. He is currently a board member for St. Michael Parish School in Wheaton.



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

## SUCCESS STORY

Prior to 2008, the organization struggled with more than 500 independent constituent lists, databases and 15 enterprise systems. In 2008, my team began to implement a centralized CRM system, created a data management function and migrated all systems and lists. We consolidated data management staff and redeployed to missional activities, improved business processes that created operating efficiencies and vastly improved constituent relations. This has afforded us the opportunity to enhance constituent engagement through centralized direct-mail functions, emails and subscription services that facilitated the organization's \$198 million campaign, improved donor retention, increased the growth of online giving and grew direct fundraising income.



**KEVIN BOYD**  
Associate VP and CIO  
University Of Chicago

**Kevin B. Boyd** has a background that includes leading infrastructure teams, product management, project management, quality assurance and ecommerce. Prior to his current role, he spent six years as executive director and CIO for the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. Earlier experience includes Tribune Publishing Co., CNA Financial, United Airlines, Bank One and W.W. Grainger. For nine years, he was an adjunct professor at Northwestern University, teaching classes in ecommerce and working with students on entrepreneurship-related independent study projects.



## SUCCESS STORY

Research is core to the mission of the University and sensitive data is increasingly a part of that research. The IT team partnered with groups across the university to enable and protect sensitive research. The secure data enclave (SDE) supports faculty and researchers working with sensitive data. It ensures that restricted information is secure and appropriately protected using a combination of secure virtual environments and secure high-performance computing environments. Research in the SDE has the potential to transform the way we understand the world, advancing fields like the social sciences, economics and the biomedical sciences.



**MARYANN BYRDAK**  
CIO  
Feeding America

**Maryann Byrdak** spent the first 25 years of her career managing restaurant and retail transformation initiatives, which prepared her for her current role leading technology transformation at the nation's largest hunger-relief and food rescue organization. She was part of the executive team at Potbelly that guided the IT department through many digital and customer experience innovations. Before that, she held leadership roles at Fortune 500 companies, including POS implementations at Sears, merchandising transformations at OfficeMax, and merger integrations between OfficeMax and Office Depot.



## SUCCESS STORY

I joined Feeding America last year as the organization's first executive CIO, where I have the privilege to define a technology strategy that aligns with our mission of ending hunger in America. I oversee an incredible team that collaborates with the Feeding America network of food banks to identify impactful initiatives. We focus on building a data-driven food sourcing platform to optimize the process of distributing 7 billion pounds of food to 37 million people facing hunger. Food insecurity exists in every community in the country, and our innovations will help provide enough meals to close the gap.



**JOHN MOHR**  
CIO  
John D. and Catherine T.  
MacArthur Foundation

**John Mohr** joined the MacArthur Foundation in 2012. Prior to that, he held IT director positions at the University of Chicago and IT leadership positions at emerging technology firms. He contributes to the IT community through the Technology Affinity Group, an association of global foundation CIOs leveraging their collective experiences to advance the philanthropic sector. A past board member, he currently serves on the organization's cybersecurity working group. He also speaks frequently to professional groups on emerging IT topics and issues.



## SUCCESS STORY

I am proud to be a trusted business partner for my peers, our global team and networks. Such trust is years in the making, built by supplying reliable systems and support with more than 99.9 percent availability. Such trust develops from a commitment to building high-performing teams and developing real relationships.

This value was made clear when our president said, "We're in a crisis, but not in an operational emergency thanks to IT."

There has been no greater moment for me than this one, knowing that, with my team, we enabled mission continuity on a global level when it was needed most.



**ROBERT SARKIS**  
CIO  
American Hospital  
Association

**Robert Sarkis** joined the AHA in 2017. His experience spans multiple industries including manufacturing, distribution, retail, insurance and technology. Previously, he served as CIO at Fellowes Brands, a global manufacturer and distributor of business and consumer products, and CIO at The Pampered Chef, a subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway. Earlier roles include CIO at CompuSystems and vice president of enterprise application development at Solo Cup. Born and raised Northern Lebanon, he is a dual citizen and multilingual.



## SUCCESS STORY

For the past two and a half years, it has been my privilege to serve as CIO of the AHA, a phenomenal organization with an incredible culture and a mission to serve the 5,000 hospitals and health care systems and advance health and well-being for all.

Many kudos to my team for transforming our technology environment, leading the agile wave, modernizing our organization and enriching the AHA's membership value.

We take great pride in our colleagues' support and recognition of our results. It's a humbling experience to think our work enables their efforts to serve our members who tirelessly deliver care to patients and communities everywhere.



**DIEGO FERRAR**  
Managing Deputy  
Commissioner and CIO  
Chicago Department of  
Aviation

**Diego Ferrer** is an IT industry veteran with consulting and entrepreneurial business experience in telecommunications, electronic engineering and automotive manufacturing supplies. He has more than 25 years of technical experience in the IT industry and has extensive experience with IT strategic planning. He has managed teams of technology specialists, and managed services provided to customers. He is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) and holds certifications from IBM, VMware, Microsoft and CompTIA.



**RON GUERRIER**  
Secretary of Innovation  
& Technology and CIO  
State of Illinois

**Ron Guerrier** has more than 20 years of experience managing technology in the private sector, and has served as CIO for multibillion-dollar companies such as Express Scripts and Farmers Insurance Group. Earlier in his career, he spent 19 years at Toyota North America, rising from a customer service representative to IT manager to chief technology officer to vice president and CIO. He has earned numerous honors and awards, and has written articles for publications such as Entrepreneur, CIO Review and Fortune.



**HEATHER NELSON**  
SVP and CIO  
UChicago Medicine

**Heather Nelson** has spent the last two decades in health care IT, joining UChicago Medicine in 2014. Previously she held IT leadership roles with Baystate Health in Springfield, Mass.—including a stint at interim CIO—and Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids, Mich. She is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives and the Society for Information Management, and is a Certified Healthcare CIO (CHCIO). As a volunteer, she provides IT consulting services to the Misericordia leadership team in Chicago.



**MICHAEL PEGUES**  
CIO  
City of Aurora

**Michael Pegues** was appointed to his role in 2017 by Aurora Mayor Richard C. Irvin. An Aurora native and U.S. Army veteran, he began his career in IT support for AT&T and PepsiCo in the Chicago area, then as a civilian automation officer with the U.S. Army in Italy. He later held senior IT positions at Hewlett-Packard (France), Vodafone (Hungary) and Morgan Stanley (Hungary, New York City). In 2019, he was nominated for the IoT World Series Smart Cities Summit Leader of the Year award.



## SUCCESS STORY

One success story that comes to mind is how my team and I have worked to improve the resiliency of the IT infrastructure at O'Hare and Midway airports. Over the past 12 months, we assessed all assets related to the airports' IT connectivity, developed and are working to implement a plan to improve efficiency at all points along the data path. These critical enhancements will strengthen the IT operations for all airport staff, partner agencies and passengers.

## SUCCESS STORY

The Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT) is the youngest agency consolidating technology administration and maintenance of more than 50 agencies under the state CIO.

The DoIT playbook outlines our new mission statement. It also highlights our guiding principles and our five foundational priorities along with a new federated IT alignment model.

DoIT fosters a can-do culture of accountability and continuous improvement and is action-oriented. Examples include expanding financial reporting and cloud-based infrastructure to renewed STEM community engagement to progress with statewide broadband. Let's go!

## SUCCESS STORY

My greatest accomplishment in my current role is being moved into my current role. I was named interim CIO when my predecessor resigned and knew the organization would be executing an external search. The seven-month search led to me being offered the role permanently as the first female CIO in the organization's history. The support I have received from colleagues, peers and my teams has continued to inspire and empower me these past few years. Building relationships at all levels of the organization to move us forward collectively is important to me.

## SUCCESS STORY

In February 2019, we introduced the first-ever citywide digital plan, or technology road map as it's sometimes called. The strategic planning process will enable Aurora to proactively identify both its strengths—which should be leveraged—and areas for improvements across city departments, functions and services. It's a smart, achievable plan that will guide the city to obtain its goals for the next three to five years, and position it as a regional technology hub for the Fox Valley region and the rest of Illinois.

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