

CIO

OF THE YEAR

AWARDS



CHICAGO CIO OF THE YEAR
ORBIE
AWARDS

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, Large Corporate, Corporate and Public Sector categories will be announced May 14 at a virtual Awards ceremony.



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FROM OUR CHAIR

Inspire CIO Chair Lisa Dykstra discusses the elevated role of CIO post pandemic



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

A conversation with IBM President Jim Whitehurst



LEADERSHIP AWARD

Linda Jojo talks teamwork and innovation

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2021 CIO of the Year Awards

CIO CHAIR

Pandemic Elevates CIO's Strategic Role in 2021



LISA DYKSTRA
SVP & CIO
Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

Since last March Chief Information Officers everywhere have enabled the largest work-from-home experiment in the history of the world. Thanks to these innovative technology leaders, organizations have implemented and scaled technology solutions to weather the pandemic disruption and emerge as stronger organizations.

Technology has enabled our new virtual lives; provided access to healthcare, entertainment, food, and products delivered to our homes; and connected us with colleagues, friends and loved ones. Technology has helped us adapt, adjust, and survive our new abnormal. Without the leadership, planning, and foresight of CIOs, conducting business would be impossible under these circumstances.

ChicagoCIO brings together leading CIOs of Chicagoland's largest organizations to help CIOs maximize their leadership effectiveness, create value, reduce risk and share success. Through member-led, non-commercial programs, CIOs build meaningful professional relationships with colleagues facing similar challenges, solving problems and avoiding pitfalls.

Throughout this crisis, ChicagoCIO members have collaborated locally and nationally with CIOs from across industries. 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 knowledge?

As the CIO, you are transforming your organization into a digital business, no matter what industry. The best way to sharpen your leadership acumen is to join a premier peer leadership network with other leaders. The industries and size may be different, but winning approaches to effective leadership and problem solving are transferrable. Every leader's perspective is valuable and contributes to the conversation - and everyone wins when leaders engage, 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 everyone.

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.

Lisa Dykstra

LISA DYKSTRA
2021 Chair, ChicagoCIO
SVP & CIO - Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

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CONGRATULATIONS, GUS!



ATI Physical Therapy would like to congratulate fellow team member Augustus "Gus" Oakes for being named a CIO of the Year finalist.

With your leadership in information and technology, we deliver exceptional results and experiences for our patients every day.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



JIM WHITEHURST, President, IBM

A Conversation with IBM President Jim Whitehurst

By Jane Adler

Industry leader Jim Whitehurst is an advocate for open principles as a catalyst for business innovation. In fact, he published a book in 2015 with Harvard Business Review Press titled: "The Open Organization: Igniting Passion and Performance."

As current president at IBM, Whitehurst is responsible for the IBM Cloud and Cognitive Software organization and Corporate Strategy. Prior to IBM, he was president and CEO at Red Hat, the world's leading provider of open-source enterprise software solutions.

As keynote speaker at the 2021 Chicago CIO of the Year ORBIE Awards, Whitehurst recently shared his thoughts on industry innovations.

unique security, regulatory and compliance needs of a particular industry, like the IBM Cloud for Financial Services. So today it's really more about where applications are built than where they reside. And that's why having a hybrid cloud fabric to integrate these growing cloud ecosystems is so important.

Q: What advances can we expect in cognitive software?

A: We're right in the middle of a "Cambrian explosion" of AI advances, from machine learning capabilities to the development of neuro-symbolic AI. All of which is enabling businesses to drive more insight and value from their AI models. The biggest advances are in areas like automation, including key business processes like

"In many companies, technology is the primary source of competitive advantage."

Q: What trends do you see in Cloud computing?

A: I think we're seeing the very definition of cloud computing change. It used to be that cloud computing was all about giant data centers that hosted applications. But today cloud is becoming a computing model in which the processing can happen anywhere data is produced: in a data center, on premise, at a factory, in a retail store, or even in a car. We're also seeing the rise of highly specialized, industry-specific clouds tailored to the

customer service, but also IT operations themselves; modernization, especially the ability to integrate and analyze key data; prediction, particularly around planning, budgeting and forecasting; and security, such as enabling detection and response to threats across multi-cloud environments.

Q: How will the role of the CIO change amid these trends?

A: In today's economy, companies increasingly compete on the basis of digital innovation. CIOs are responsible for building the

engines of that innovation. So, the CIO's role has expanded well beyond automating back-office functions and driving operational efficiency. In many companies, technology is the primary source of competitive advantage. And that means the CIO has much greater influence in defining and executing business strategy.

Q: What lessons have you learned from the work-from-home shift during the pandemic?

A: Too many lessons to list here. But we've gained a new understanding of how important culture is to business strategy. And we've learned how different — and difficult — it is to affect culture in a remote-only work environment. For example, we're missing all the subtle, non-verbal cues that communicate so much in the workplace. So, we've had to be very thoughtful about how to replace those interactions.

Q: What changes are here to stay?

A: We've seen a number of industries take huge steps forward in digital capability,

from digital banking to telemedicine. These changes — and the consumer behaviors that drove them — are here to stay. And that's a good thing.

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

A: As more competitive advantage is driven by innovation, I think the responsibilities of the CIO will continue to expand and evolve. It's becoming a position of business leadership, not just technology leadership.

Q: What advice would you give to CIOs?

A: Think short- and long-term. Speed is critical, of course. But remember that the technology decisions you make today, during this time of accelerated digital transformation, will dictate your competitiveness for decades. So be quick, but wise. Lay the technological foundations for future success. And be open to innovation coming from multiple sources, including your business partners, customers and in some cases, your competitors.



Success is defined by hard work and vigorous commitment. It's measured by achievements that go beyond the bottom line. And it's rewarded by the recognition of your peers for a job well done.

We are proud to congratulate Allen Smith, finalist for the The Chicago CIO of the Year® ORBIE® Award for his excellence in technology leadership.

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LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT

LINDA JOJO
EVP Technology & Chief Digital Officer
United Airlines, Inc.



Teamwork Accelerates Innovation

By Jane Adler

Technology leadership was put to the test this year like at no other time. A quick pivot to an online environment created a big challenge: How to keep business up and running.

“We got scrappy,” says Linda Jojo, winner of the 2021 Chicago CIO Leadership Award. “We rallied.”

United Airlines Chief Digital Officer Jojo credits her 2,000-person team for a quick response. “We accelerated innovation,” she says.

A few examples: Within 30 days into the pandemic, the airline had touchless kiosks for customers to check their bags. An app was created to help travelers navigate COVID protocols and requirements. Artificial intelligence helps check travel documents to reduce the workload of agents and contact centers. An “agent on demand” now allows customers

to upgrade their tickets or change seat assignments without waiting in line to talk to an agent in person.

Another challenge has been managing a remote workforce. United never shut down, but Jojo’s team of developers and support staff worked mostly from home. “My

tactics changed,” she says. Meetings and check-ins had to be scheduled, unlike informal encounters when work was in person.

Jojo is honored to receive this year’s Chicago CIO Leadership Award. “This recognition validates the incredible work the team here at United has been doing and I have had the privilege to lead,” she says.

“Leadership is really about having a great team,” says Jojo, who believes leaders should surround themselves with people from diverse backgrounds with different experiences. “We are stronger together than any individual.”

Over her career, Jojo has worked in a variety of industries.

“We are stronger together than any individual.”

Prior to joining United in 2014, Jojo was the chief information officer at Rogers Communications, Canada’s leading wireless, cable and media company. She has also held other technology leadership roles including at GE.

Jojo’s varied career has been an advantage. Though her professional life took off in other industries she landed at an

airline, bringing unique insights and experiences to her role at United. “It makes a difference,” she says.

Diversity is a priority for Jojo. Ever since she attended college at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, she was struck by the lack of women and people of diverse backgrounds in

technology. To make a difference and prepare young people for careers in technology, she focuses on two organizations.

Jojo is Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of Chicago’s Adler Planetarium. “Everybody can look up,” she says. “It’s about getting young people excited about math and science while they’re learning about the sky and the stars.”

Her other passion is helping her alma mater attract qualified women and people of color to enroll there. She is a member of the Board of Trustees at the school.

Looking ahead, Jojo sees the CIO role becoming more customer centric and strategic. The pandemic has highlighted

technology as a pivotal engine of corporate growth. “No matter what industry you’re in, technology is critical,” she says.

Reflecting on the past year, Jojo was looking forward to more in-person meetings as the pandemic subsides. She was recently planning a trip to Denver. “Everyone is excited,” she says. “We’re travelling again.”

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ABHI DHAR
EVP & CITO
TransUnion

Abhi Dhar has more than 25 years of experience in a wide array of technology and related roles, including product development, digital product management and information security in complex and regulated technology environments. He joined TransUnion in 2019 from Packyge, a last-mile delivery startup he founded. Before that, he held IT management roles at Walgreens, TravelClick, Cendant Corp., PriceWaterhouseCoopers and AT&T. He co-invented a patent for a communication device that triggers notifications and routes a customer to a prescription-ready location, and is a frequent speaker on technology topics at industry events.



SUCCESS STORY

“Last year, I made the case to our board that we evolve our technology paradigm—to re-think how we work and provision infrastructure by moving to cloud-based technologies. This mission is more than just a move to the cloud, but rather an opportunity to fundamentally change how we deliver our solutions. Our board approved a more than \$200 million investment over three years to migrate our infrastructure to the cloud and automate the way we work. With this effort we’re upskilling our people with cloud-based capabilities that furthers their development as a world-class team that’s trained and comfortable operating in that future.”



SVEN KRAUSE
CIO
Hillrom

Sven Krause is a digitally immersed technology and finance executive with deep experience in enterprise-wide transformation programs. He has a 20-year record of delivering value-centered transformation programs in the life sciences, pharma and medical device industries, guiding teams that are leveraging new technologies to help improve operating models, business processes and overall business performance. He joined Hillrom in June 2020 following a 17-year career with Ernst & Young, most recently as a partner/principal and leader of its Americas SAP Life Sciences advisory.



SUCCESS STORY

“Digital transformation is not about technology, it’s about people. When I joined Hillrom, our digital journey was ongoing with the usual challenges. To guarantee the success of the journey, we had to take one step back to ultimately make two steps forward. We strategically aligned our leadership team, added new talent, refocused the scope and goals of our journey around our purpose, and calibrated our partners. We’re now moving full-steam ahead delighting our customers, our employees and our caregivers, and you’ll hear about it in the market as we’re advancing connected care.”



KULDIP MOHANTY
CIO
HUB International

Kuldip Mohanty is a seasoned global business technology executive with over 25 years of experience and expertise in delivering business transformation and operational efficiency with technology. Earlier in his career, he held several global leadership roles across North America, Europe and Asia in the workforce solutions, financial services and outsourcing industries where he gained experiences spanning across technology strategy, global delivery, business transformation programs and P&L leadership. He joined HUB International in January 2020.



SUCCESS STORY

“Every leader’s success is a manifestation of their team’s success. My greatest achievement is creating a cohesive culture where every member of my IT team feels empowered, has a voice and has a clear line of sight to how their contributions make an impact on the enterprise. We’ve created an environment where IT is viewed as a business partner that’s built on the premise of trust fostered by open communication and transparency. Leadership is a privilege, and it’s my responsibility to enable a platform for my team to succeed and thrive.”



KRIS RAO
CIO & CDO
HNI Corp.

Kris Rao has more than 20 years of management and leadership experience driving profitable transformation initiatives in his current role at HNI Corp., as well as previously with Ricoh USA, Hospira, Motorola and Oracle. He has managed budgets of more than \$160 million and globally dispensed staffs totaling over 900. He has had repeated success defining enterprise technology, vision, strategy and roadmaps to bolster top- and bottom-line growth at global high tech, health/pharmaceutical and manufacturing companies. Most recently he was named by the MIT Sloan School of Business as one of the top four CIOs in the United States.



SUCCESS STORY

“HNI is embarking on a digital transformation journey to improve revenues, reduce costs and improve customer satisfaction. After my first 60 days, we restructured IT to align with the business and become more agile, reconstructed the portfolio to focus on business results, recruited talent, drove business and IT agility bootcamps and established governance to monetize business results. After establishing a foundation, we championed digital initiatives that have successfully delivered visible business results. The biggest achievement was taking IT from waterfall project focus to MVP using agility, innovation, short-burst sprints, experimentation, fail early/fail fast and collaboration—while having fun in the process.”



EDWARD WAGONER
CIO Digital
JLL

Edward Wagoner, a 24-year veteran of JLL, now spends more time with clients, leveraging his unique expertise to help them create, implement and manage their digital strategies. This follows more than 15 years of being globally responsible for all aspects of JLL’s technology, including business strategy, marketing, development, deployment and support. Prior to his global CIO role, he was CIO for the company’s Americas region overseeing the management and delivery to clients and account teams in North, Central and South American markets. Earlier in his career, he held financial management roles with MetLife, Insignia Financial Group and KPMG Peat Marwick.



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Congratulations Abhi Dhar

For being named a 2021 Chicago
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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

"The pandemic created an unprecedented test of the Feeding America network and resolve. Demand skyrocketed while our supply chain was disrupted. I'm deeply proud and humbled to be leading our technology team's response, in partnership with the incredible commitment and generosity from our donors, to rise and meet the needs of the moment. The technology team quickly adapted to evolve the way we use data and technology to find food sources; innovate and evolve our systems; and equitably get food to the people that need it the most. At the same time, we continued advancing our technology modernization journey."



BOBBIE BYRNE
CIO
Advocate Aurora Health



Bobbie Byrne is board certified in both pediatrics and clinical informatics. She is currently responsible for all IT applications, information security, infrastructure, clinical informatics, data warehousing and business intelligence across the Advocate Aurora Health's 25-hospital system. Previously, she served as Edward Elmhurst Health's chief medical officer and before that its chief information officer. Earlier in her career she was a senior vice president - clinical solutions for Eclipsys Corp. (now Allscripts) and was a health care consultant at Cap Gemini Ernst and Young. She is active in the informatics work of the American Academy of Pediatrics, having served on the organization's physician advisory council for informatics.

SUCCESS STORY

"Everyone has their 2020 COVID-19 story. There are heroes all around us. For Advocate Aurora Health HIT, our hero story is delivering everything required for patient care excellence in COVID along with completion of a very strategic single patient record project. Even our lab, overwhelmed with new COVID testing volume and requirements changed systems in 2020. The proof of this success was that less than 10 days after the last go-live—at a time when we would normally be stabilizing—we turned to our brand-new single patient record to run our mass vaccine program."



SUJA CHANDRASEKARAN
CDO & CIO
CommonSpirit Health



Suja Chandrasekaran is an industry-recognized digital transformation leader and value creator. Before joining CommonSpirit Health in 2019, she held chief of information and digital technologies positions at Walmart, Kimberly-Clark, Nestle S.A and The Timberland Co. She has a reputation as a talent developer and mentor for tech and business leaders, women in technology, Asian American leaders, startup founders/CEOs and others, and is the founder/facilitator of T200 - Women CXOs in Tech, focused on lifting women in technology. She serves as a non-executive director on the boards of American Eagle Outfitters, Barry Callebaut and digital supply chain technologies company Blume Global.

SUCCESS STORY

"Suja Chandrasekaran led the organization with resiliency and empathy to accomplish the mission of serving millions of patients in an unprecedented pandemic. She rapidly accelerated the digital transformation and enabled virtual care platforms that provided care to patients in a safe and timely manner, saving lives and improving outcomes. The successful response to COVID-19 with minimal disruption to operations, care providers, and the patient experience, was one of the major accomplishments of her leadership. In addition, she launched several employee engagement initiatives for well-being of her team."



KEVIN LOWELL
SVP IT
U.S. Cellular



Kevin Lowell ensures that U.S. Cellular's information systems support a first-class wireless experience for customers. He oversees all areas of IT, including application development and delivery, infrastructure, enterprise analytics and cybersecurity. He joined the company 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.

SUCCESS STORY

"My greatest accomplishment is creating and sustaining an inclusive and diverse culture where people can do great work in service of something bigger than themselves. Here's what we did: We created a program for aspiring leaders, and the results have been outstanding. We've attracted, trained and supported diverse cohorts, and many of these diverse 'graduates' have been promoted into leadership roles. These engaged and inspired associates are getting outstanding results, and they're doing it in an environment where all associates are empowered to reach their potential."



MARVIN RICHARDSON
SVP & CIO
Health Care Service Corporation



Marvin Richardson has helped oversee several successful projects at HCSC, including the launch of a multiyear initiative to modernize and enhance its claims platform, and a new customer engagement program that enables advocates to provide personalized service and build lasting trust and relationships with members. Before joining HCSC in 2016, he served as chief technology officer for Aon and Electronic Data Systems. He also worked as a technology leader at Oracle and was co-founder and leader at two successful startups. He has been recognized as InfoWorld's "CTO of the Year" for Consulting Services and was named by CTO Magazine one of the "Top 25 Most Influential CTOs."

SUCCESS STORY

"In March 2020, IT moved all HCSC employees to remote work arrangements for the first time in history. Teams swiftly deployed over 20,000 pieces of equipment, 6,000 new digital security tokens and increased network traffic capacity by 400 percent. We created a COVID-19 tech triage center to solve technical issues during the move and deployed advanced cybersecurity monitoring and response capabilities across the company. Our team's continued resiliency and flexibility enabled us to accomplish all this while improving our timely project delivery measure to 92 percent, shrinking our program spending where needed, retaining all staff and breaking company records for system reliability."



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TIM DICKSON
CIO
Generac Power Systems



Tim Dickson joined Generac last August, where he is creating and executing an enterprise-wide IT strategy and digital architecture as the company transitions to a global energy technology solutions company. Prior to that, he spent two years as vice president of digital business platforms at Laureate Education, a \$5 billion enterprise consisting of 65 international university institutions. He previously served as the vice president of front office IT at Motorola Solutions and before that as a divisional CIO leading emerging technologies, M&A and user experience for Dell, Inc.

SUCCESS STORY

“As the first CIO at Generac and reporting directly to the CEO, IT has been elevated. The new mission, vision and purpose to become a strategic enabler for achieving business growth is well underway, and we’re starting to see some early, encouraging results. With this new responsibility, I’ve both challenged and inspired the IT organization to do more and go faster, and they’ve responded. They have deep aspirations and have taken advantage of the recent leadership and technical training to transform themselves and become a trusted, valued and innovative partner of the business.”



GRETCHEN HORN
SVP & CTO
Brookfield Properties, Retail Group



Gretchen Horn has spent her entire career as an IT professional, starting out as a software developer/architect and over time moving into leadership roles. Today, her mission is operational excellence that enables IT to support the business agility necessary for our rapidly evolving world. In earlier years she worked in a variety of industry verticals both as a consultant and full-time employee, gaining business acumen in multiple disciplines. For the past 14-plus years her focus has been retail real estate—leading technical initiatives that drive revenue, optimize performance and provide exceptional experiences for partners, tenants and shoppers.

SUCCESS STORY

“My team is composed of many diverse talents. Every single IT product and service requires collaboration across multiple teams, and everyone is typically juggling multiple concurrent projects. I provide a space where every contribution is valued, trust is at the center of everything and growth opportunities are abundant. I encourage my team to think beyond the technology and to focus on value-driven business outcomes. Directly defining success provides tangible insights into the value of IT. More importantly, it also provides an opportunity for each individual to see the direct impact of their efforts toward our company’s successes.”



ANSON JOHNSON
VP & CIO
United States Gypsum - USG



Anson Johnson is responsible for the development and execution of USG’s IT strategy. He oversees a team of more than 170 with accountability for the company’s IT architecture and risk management, IT program management, digital innovation, customer-facing systems and end-user support. He joined USG in 2013 as director of IT. Prior to that, he held leadership roles with Stericycle and Waste Management. He is an executive sponsor of USG’s Defend The Rock (military and veteran) Employee Resource Group, and serves on the board for College Church and Outreach Community Ministries.

SUCCESS STORY

“The year 2020 was a difficult one for many firms, but for the USG IT team it was a Cinderella story. We solidified a seat at the table that determines the future at USG—a seat earned through trust, hard work, leaders with grit, commitment to our employees and real business value delivery. IT reduced total costs by just under 40 percent, improved employee engagement and delivered new technology solutions within USG and to our external customers. We’re now sought out as super communicators that partner with business leaders to solve real problems that drive the future of our company.”



ED RYBICKI
SVP & CIO
Vyair Medical



Ed Rybicki has more than 20 years of IT experience setting and executing technology strategies for private-equity, private and public global corporations across a broad range of industries. In his current role, he is responsible for Vyair’s technology initiatives including software, infrastructure, application development tools and processes, operations and cybersecurity. He also guides the overall direction for the company’s health care technology products, sponsors the creation of a data and analytics platform, and focuses on how technology can create value in companies and their customers. Previously, he was CIO at Merieux Nutrisciences, a global laboratory services company.

SUCCESS STORY

“We ramped up all facets of IT to handle the unprecedented surge in business demand for respiratory products during the COVID-19 pandemic. Within 90 days, we scaled up production of six ventilator product lines to over 20 times, measured against any historical period of Vyair. Simultaneously with the applications and infrastructure ramp-up, we built a cloud-based enterprise data platform and harmonized data from 12 ERPs into one portal for analytics. This initiative, called Project Insight, was the cornerstone in giving all of Vyair the analysis it needed to ramp up the business to meet the global demand for respiratory products.”



RICH VOINOVICH
SVP IT
Equity Residential



Rich Voinovich has been with Equity Residential for nearly 16 years and is currently responsible for all facets of IT leadership including application and infrastructure operations, IT support, application development, project management and unified communications. His career has been focused on business process engineering, aligning technology with business strategy to reduce costs, increase efficiencies and improve quality. He excels in partnering with business units to translate strategic goals into innovative process and technology solutions. Prior to joining Equity Residential he held consulting and project management roles with ADP and Intuit.

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 simplicity—leveraging technology to simplify and automate business processes with a focus.”



JANET ZELENKA
EVP, CIO & CFO
Stericycle

SUCCESS STORY

My success story is grounded in a commitment to service. I’m proud to work at Stericycle, where, as a provider of regulated waste services, we “protect what matters” by helping our customers safely dispose of infected medical waste. I’ve achieved professional success as both a CFO and CIO of two public companies, but what matters most is making the world a better place. As a Trustee of Rockford University, I’ve worked to advance technology’s positive impact on education and sponsored the establishment of an Esports team and technology sports center on campus.

Janet Zelenka has a strong breadth of expertise across corporate finance, accounting, IT and operations. She joined Stericycle in June 2019 as executive vice president and CFO, and one year later assumed the additional role of CIO—responsible for the financial management of the \$3.5 billion global services company and for advancing the company’s technology-enabled transformation. Previously, she spent 15 years with Essendant, in roles that included CFO and CIO, and prior to that she spent 16 years at SBC/ Ameritech (AT&T) in a range of IT, financial and operational roles. She serves on Rockford University’s Board of Trustees.



CONGRATULATIONS



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BRAD BODELL
SVP & CIO
Trustmark Insurance



Brad Bodell is not afraid to “learn fast, fail fast and innovate,” thanks to having over 20 years in IT leadership, including previous positions with CNO Financial Group and MetLife. He joined Trustmark in 2018, bringing a transformation focus that has helped the company prosper even in the midst of a pandemic. A massive undertaking to move applications from the data center in the company’s Lake Forest headquarters to the cloud is nearly complete. And under his leadership, Trustmark has launched a talent development plan to help IT associates learn new skills and advance within the company.



MICHELLE KASSON
VP & CIO
The AZEK Company



Michelle Kasson has more than 25 years of corporate IT experience, spanning the consumer product goods, food and pharmaceutical industries. Before joining AZEK Co. in 2019 she was IT director at the J.M. Smucker Co. for 11 years, and before that spent 17 years in a variety of IT roles with Procter & Gamble, where her early IT growth was shaped. Her primary responsibility currently is IT strategy, services and operations across the entire AZEK portfolio of companies and brands, including developing IT solutions to further drive efficiencies, accelerate innovation and promote operational excellence.



BRIDGET QUINLAN
VP IT
Life Fitness



Bridget Quinlan has 20 years of IT experience in application design, architecture, analytics, strategy and program management. In her career at Life Fitness, she has developed and implemented complex multi-faceted IT strategies, identified and created transformational organizational capabilities, designed and led both acquisitions and divestitures from IT due diligence through system integration, and has led large-scale, cross-functional programs. She is also a mentor, a leader for gender equality in the workplace and a board member of a local community nonprofit organization serving low-income families.



ALLEN SMITH
CIO
Baker Tilly US



Allen Smith has served as the Baker Tilly’s CIO for nearly 20 years, leading all technology strategy and execution across the firm and also serving in senior leadership roles for Baker Tilly International. Under his technology leadership, the firm’s revenue has grown by more than 1,000 percent and he has established a strong track record of results by creating and fostering a culture driven by collaboration and camaraderie among his team. Prior to joining Baker Tilly, he served in senior leadership and technology roles in a variety of organizations, including technology start-ups, hyper-growth enterprises and outsource service providers.



TIM WALTER
SVP & CIO
Randa Apparel & Accessories



Tim Walter is an IT business leader with over 20 years of experience and a proven record operating large-scale e-commerce websites, digital marketing, global Internet infrastructure and enterprise business applications. He joined Randa in 2017 where he is responsible for all technology of the company’s wholesale and direct-to-consumer business. Previously, he held CIO/technology roles at The Packaging Wholesalers, XSport Fitness, RMG Network’s Mall Media Division, CrossCom National and Uline Shipping Supplies. While at CrossCom, his leadership resulted in a 2010 CIO 100 Innovation Award for online mapping technology used to monitor service staff across the entire United States.

SUCCESS STORY

“My focus on empowering our talent has been my greatest accomplishment since I arrived at Trustmark. I’ve done this by re-architecting our job families to provide associates with clear visibility to their career options. In addition, we’ve created personalized training recommendations based on self-reported skills. By better aligning our skills to the roles, we’ve seen a large jump in in the morale of IT associates. Coupled with our focus on greater communication to associates, IT morale jumped 41 percent from 2019 to 2020 and helped Trustmark win a Chicago Tribune Top Workplace award in 2020.”

SUCCESS STORY

“My greatest accomplishment is onboarding to a fast-moving train and arriving on time with my luggage! My first year included integrating an acquisition, an IPO, remediating 75 percent of the IT material weakness, replacing the service desk, implementing a managed security service and driving a new culture of accountability in the IT team. This is all possible because the AZEK leadership team is inspiring and makes it easy to choose to work on the meaningful projects. It’s an amazing culture of teamwork and forward progress.”

SUCCESS STORY

“The wholesale transformation of our company’s fundamental IT operations was our most invigorating recent success. Our former parent company’s decision to divest catalyzed a complex orchestration to decouple our shared enterprise IT ecosystem and reimplement our own IT systems and corresponding processes, while also transitioning from data centers into new cloud environments. We built entirely new infrastructure, security and help desk operations from the ground up to deliver purpose-built IT services. The incremental value returned by this transformation initiative to our now independent company has been significant, and is evidenced by substantially stronger customer service metrics, turnaround times and system performance.”

SUCCESS STORY

“My greatest accomplishment is the team I’ve created, retaining critical talent and inspiring them to execute on the technology vision that’s propelled Baker Tilly from being the 24th largest to the 10th largest accounting firm in the US. Creating an environment that develops and retains talent is key. Fostering personal experiences and opportunities for one-on-one interactions with all team members is critical. Sometimes we can be blinded by the desire to partner with other business leaders and miss the opportunity to do the same with our own team. The relationships I’ve built drive team engagement, performance and firm results.”

SUCCESS STORY

“Shortly after joining Randa, I realized the need to modernize our environment and build stronger relationships across the company. My team and I worked to become trusted and reliable strategic partners. The role of the IT department changed from being viewed as a utility, to that of a business enabler. Our emphasis began with business processes and building customer engagement. From building actionable reporting, expanding B2B and omni-channel, to our new direct-to-consumer e-commerce offerings, our success and collaboration continue to grow with the company.”



NICOLE WHITE
CIO
Redwood Logistics

SUCCESS STORY

“My biggest success story is building a strategy and a team to execute on leveraging our proprietary integration platform to provide cloud-based solutions as a replacement for monolithic operating systems. This allows us to utilize the best technology paired with data science to drive operational excellence across our own organization and for our customers’ supply chains. The Redwood leadership team provides the passion and support that motivates the technology team to excel at building digital freight solutions for the supply chain industry. We wouldn’t have been successful without this level of support or my innovative team.”

Nicole White joined Redwood in 2019 with an extensive background in IT. Previously, she served as vice president of IT for both DCLI and REZ-1 (now Blume Global). She also served as vice president of IT strategic projects for XPO Logistics, where she worked on acquisition, integration and technology strategy. Throughout her career, she has been responsible for transforming multiple organizations’ back-end processes to successfully integrate acquisition, improving legacy infrastructure, as well as successfully leveraging data to drive better decisions.



Congratulations on Your Nomination



Madhu Reddy, SVP & CIO, has been named a 2021 Chicago CIO of the Year ORBIE Awards Corporate Finalist! His excellence in technology leadership helps guide Republic Bank forward.



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SUNITHA CHAMARTI
CIO
ReedGroup

Sunitha Chamarti has a track record of aligning business strategy, innovation and technology while balancing assessment of IT's effectiveness to deliver business benefits. She has managed cross-functional teams and championed a people-first culture to promote innovation, transparency and accountability. Her experience spans multiple industries—including transportation, utilities, retail, insurance and banking—and across Asia Pacific, Europe, Canada and South America. She has led transformational initiatives, M&A integrations and deployed modern engineering practices, while supporting infrastructure, operations and service management.



SUSAN CZARNECKI
CIO
Golub Capital LLC

Susan Czarnecki is responsible for designing and delivering state-of-the-art technology solutions to create efficiency, mitigate risk and grow revenue for the firm. She also defines, manages and executes a robust cybersecurity and data governance programs, while overseeing the technology solutions department's infrastructure, team and vendor relationships. Prior to joining Golub in 2010, she was an executive director at Morgan Stanley, and before that held technology management roles at Van Kampen Investments, Budget Rent-a-Car and First Chicago.



AUGUSTUS OAKES
CIO
ATI

Augustus Oakes oversees all critical IT functions at ATI, including business applications, technology services, interoperability, IT security, and cloud and digital technologies. He took on his current role last August after serving as interim CIO and before that vice president of business technology—a role he assumed when he joined the company in 2018. Over the last two years, he and his team have modernized and re-tooled ATI's IT capability and infrastructure, utilizing novel cloud and digital technologies to support the company's growth and operational efficiencies. Previously, he held IT management jobs at KPMG, Walgreens and Jones Lang LaSalle.



PINKY RAINA
Head of IT, CFO & CHRO
U.S. Soccer Federation

Pinky Raina has spent the last two years leading the finance, human resources and IT functions at U.S. Soccer Federation. She has extensive experience in change management and facilitating continuous improvement initiatives across all the functions she has led. Before moving to the sporting and entertainment industry, she led finance and IT in public and private corporations in the manufacturing industry, including the Marmon Group and IDEX Corp. She was recently featured in SheBelieves, a movement to encourage young women and girls to reach their dreams—athletic or otherwise—inspired by the U.S. Soccer Women's National Team.



MADHU REDDY
SVP & CIO
Republic Bank of Chicago

Madhu Reddy is responsible for all elements of IT and digital at Republic Bank, including strategy, innovation, solution delivery, operations and cybersecurity. With more than 20 years of multinational and multicultural work experience in the banking industry, he has a holistic approach to technology and data analytics use with sensitivity to cultural, political and organizational issues. He has delivered outstanding value by taking calculated risks, creating competitive differentiation, operational effectiveness, profitable business growth and bottom-line impact. By building/galvanizing high-impact teams, he has developed IT strategy and translated business needs into technical solutions in a complex environment under tight budget constraints.



SUCCESS STORY

"ReedGroup technology was on a two-year journey to driving stability and reliability while supporting significant growth in 2019, while handling a 130 percent increase in call volumes due to COVID-19. Technology teams successfully migrated to Amazon Web Services (AWS) and implemented digital platforms to simultaneously drive self-service and operational stability. In addition, teams moved to scaled agile delivery methodology that significantly helped time to market and customer centricity."

SUCCESS STORY

"I am very proud of the role our technology solutions team played in seamlessly pivoting to a 100 percent work-from-home environment when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Our team had previously ensured we had a 'work from anywhere, anytime' architecture, and last spring, we ensured that hundreds of employees—many in Chicagoland—were equipped with the hardware, support, security solutions and enhanced network and video-conferencing capabilities needed to facilitate a period of heightened productivity remotely. We achieved this while also executing on an ambitious agenda of strategic technology projects."

SUCCESS STORY

"My most significant accomplishment has been cultivating a winning team—one that I am proud to lead, and one that helps enable ATI Physical Therapy deliver exceptional patient care every day! I am also proud of our technology journey, one that started with building trust and alignment with our business; transforming our core (elevating our people, moving to the cloud, and focused strategy and execution) and finally helping support our business, providers and patients with technology solutions, including our world-class electronic medical records. Very proud of the team and value delivered!"

SUCCESS STORY

"The speed at which I drove change in our highly fragmented and siloed technology organization has been critical to our success. We were thoughtful and intentional in outlining and refreshing our 30-60-90-day plans. We have now created a collaborative and cross-functional technology organization at US Soccer that is re-defining our organization's technology strategy and building the foundation to execute against that strategy at record speed. With an eye to adding diversity to the technology landscape, we are also inaugural hosts to UIC's Chicago 'Sprinternships,' a program to help launch women into technology careers."

SUCCESS STORY

"I am proud of leading and transforming a reactive IT function into a high-performance customer-focused business partner. Modernizing our technology and innovating to ensure our digital capabilities drive our company strategy of enabling great customer experiences. The team had an outsized impact that is truly outstanding by all measures and is serving the organization extremely well, winning us accolades. We delivered business outcomes by creating cross-functional teams to leverage data analytics, automation, and innovation. We've got a team that moves fast, in anticipation of changes in our customer's needs and our organization."



RAJ SAMPOORNAM
SVP & CIO
Byline Bank

SUCCESS STORY

"My greatest success is when IT finds new ways to execute our bank's vision and mission, to be the bank our customers deserve, contributing to local communities and assisting our customers. I felt proud when our IT team developed an innovative and automated solution to process PPP loans during the pandemic. We were able to pivot priorities and collaborate with the business units to get our customers access to PPP loans in a short period of time. This solution helped the timely processing of over 3,700 customer applications resulting in \$635 million in PPP loans that retained more than 56,000 jobs."

Raj Sampoornam has more than 24 years of IT experience, and is currently responsible for Byline Bank's technology and digital strategy, overseeing its IT infrastructure, applications and analytics, business analysis and technology operations teams. He joined Byline in 2017 as director of enterprise applications and analytics, and was promoted to his current role in 2018. Previously, he spent more than 15 years at Banco Popular, where he headed the business intelligence and analytics team and contributed to several transformative initiatives and M&A activities. He began his career helping organizations solve their business problems by developing custom software and analytics solutions.



CONGRATULATIONS

to **Kevin Lowell**, a 2021 Chicago CIO of the Year® ORBIE® Award finalist. UScellular™ is proud of your leadership and contributions in a difficult year. It is an honor to have you represent our company as an award finalist. *Thank you for all your hard work.*



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SCOT BERKEY
CIO
Illinois Housing
Development Authority

Scott Berkey is recognized as a servant-leader, value-driven executive with over 30 years of experience in executive leadership roles, organizational change management, management consulting, technology services, outsourcing, and large program and project management. He has a strong industry record of success in providing strategic direction to executive management and boards. He is currently responsible for all aspects of IT at IHDA, including enterprise business continuity planning and the enterprise COVID-19 Incident Command Team. He also co-chairs the largest COVID rental and mortgage assistance program in the nation, which is distributing over \$450 million to Illinois residents in need.



SUCCESS STORY

"The distribution in 2020 of over \$330 million of Federal CARES funds for emergency rental and mortgage assistance kept over 56,000 families from losing their homes. No other state in the nation was as effective or was able to create the paper-free technology platform that IHDA put into place. We kept families from becoming homeless, kept children in their schools and kept homes with the owners who had responsibly paid their mortgages—in some cases for decades. IT had a seat at the table and IHDA's IT team delivered."



TRACY HARRINGTON
SVP & CIO
Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago

Tracy Harrington began her career with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago in 1995 and her tenure has encompassed multiple areas of management within bank supervision, application development, program management, operations and risk management. She was promoted to assistant vice president in 2009, to vice president in 2012 and to her current role in 2015. On behalf of the Federal Reserve System, she is responsible for FedLine, the electronic access solution used by financial institutions to conduct daily payments transactions. She oversees all strategic and operational aspects of the FedLine business including architecture, security, portfolio management, product and pricing, application development and operations.



SUCCESS STORY

"As SVP and CIO, I'm responsible for ensuring secure, reliable access for approximately 10,000 financial institutions to conduct more than \$4 trillion each day in payments, contributing to financial stability for the country. Payments include wire transfers, securities transfers, ACH, check and cash, which are critical to the U.S. economy. In recent years, the greatest accomplishment has been executing on the strategy to deliver the next generation of FedLine solutions with higher levels of security, resiliency, availability and innovation to set the foundation to process payments 24x7x365 in future years."



HEATHER NELSON
SVP & CIO
UChicago Medicine

Heather Nelson has spent the last two decades in health care IT, joining UChicago Medicine in 2014 as executive director of applications systems. She was named interim vice president/CIO in 2017, then vice president/CIO in 2018, and promoted to SVP/CIO in 2019. Previously she held IT leadership roles with Baystate Health in Springfield, Mass.—including a stint as 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 health care CIO. As a volunteer, she provides IT consulting services to the Misericordia leadership team in Chicago.



MICHAEL PEGUES
CIO
City of Aurora Illinois

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 his current position, he drives processes and technology change to enhance public administration and safety, promote economic development and civic engagement within Illinois' second largest city.



JOHN SUDDUTH
CIO & Dir. IT
Metropolitan Water
Reclamation District of
Greater Chicago

John Sudduth has more than 25 years of IT experience and is skilled in defining organizational structure, resource requirements and mission/vision alignment. His industry IT experience includes professional services, legal, retail, government and health care. As an IT leader, he has used his CIO roles to make IT a value adding partner rather than a cost center. Since assuming the CIO role at MWRD in 2015, he has completely revamped internal controls and has implemented a standardized IT governance framework resulting in the reduction of IT audit findings from 23 to zero in four years.



SUCCESS STORY

"My greatest accomplishment at MWRD has been transforming an IT department that was traditionally looked at as a break/fix help desk, into a department that's a strategic thought partner with the business. The COVID-19 pandemic really put my team to the test when we were tasked with building a remote work solution over the span of a weekend. I consider this my greatest recent accomplishment because the work that the IT department did enabled MWRD to continue its critical mission of protecting Cook County's water supply during one of the most challenging periods of our lifetime."

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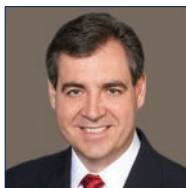
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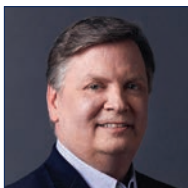
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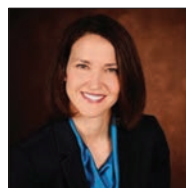
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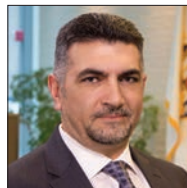
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