

# CHICAGOCISO ORBIE AWARDS

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The annual ChicagoCISO ORBIE® Awards honors chief information security officers who have demonstrated excellence in security leadership. Winners in the Super Global, Global, Large Enterprise, Enterprise, and Large Corporate categories will be announced May 7 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile.

## INSIDE



**ANGELA WILLIAMS**  
2026 ChicagoCISO Chair



**WALTER LEFMANN**  
2026 Leadership Award  
Recipient



CHICAGOCISO  
**ORBIE**  
AWARDS

# CONGRATULATIONS 2026 CHICAGOCISO ORBIE NOMINEES

<b>ZAKI ABBAS</b> Brookfield	<b>ERIK DECKER</b> Intermountain Health	<b>RICARDO LAFOSSE</b> KraftHeinz	<b>PETER NAUMOVSKI</b> AbbVie	<b>BILL PODBORNY</b> Constellation Brands	<b>RICHARD RUSHING</b> Motorola Mobility, a Lenovo Company
<b>JONATHAN ALUMBAUGH</b> Baker McKenzie	<b>BRIAN EKKEBUS</b> USG Corporation	<b>NIDHI LUTHRA</b> Baxter International	<b>EDWIN NG</b> Hyatt	<b>ERIC POOLE</b> Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago	<b>JOHN SANDER</b> Wesco
<b>GREG BEE</b> Hagerty Insurance	<b>IGOR FEY</b> Basis Technologies	<b>DAN MANLEY</b> CME Group	<b>AMIR NIAZ</b> Culligan International	<b>STEPHEN POWELL</b> Fairlife	<b>BRADLEY SCHAUFENBUEL</b> Paychex, Inc.
<b>AMY BOGAC</b> Baker Tilly	<b>MIKE GORDON</b> McDonald's	<b>LINDA MARCONE</b> Crate & Barrel	<b>CHRISTOPHER NOREIKIS</b> Merieux NutriSciences	<b>DAN PUTZ</b> UL Research Institutes and UL Standards and Engagement	<b>BRAD SKIBITZKI</b> Zebra Technologies
<b>AMAHDY BRADLEY</b> Berlin Packaging	<b>ERIK HART</b> Cushman & Wakefield	<b>JJ MARKEE</b> DanaHER	<b>KEVIN NOVAK</b> Old National Bancorp	<b>NITIN RAINA</b> Thoughtworks	<b>CHRIS TYBERG</b> Abbott
<b>JACK BURBACK</b> Wintrust Financial Corporation	<b>AL IMRAN HUSAIN</b> MillerKnoll	<b>CARL MCDONALD</b> Reyes Holdings	<b>ELIZABETH OGUNTI</b> JBT Corporation	<b>KYLE RANKIN</b> CCC Intelligent Solutions	<b>PAOLO VALLOTTI</b> Henry Schein
<b>JOHN-PAUL CALABIO</b> Grainger	<b>JOHN JANACHOWSKI</b> AAR Corp	<b>RIZWAN MIR</b> Perrigo	<b>JASPER OSSENTJUK</b> NielsenIQ (NIQ)	<b>MICHAEL REINECK</b> Robert W. Baird	<b>BORIS VOLTCHENKO</b> Reynolds Consumer Products
<b>THOMAS CLARK</b> Nuveen	<b>SHAUN KHALFAN</b> Paypal	<b>SHEFALI MOOKENCHERRY</b> University of Illinois Chicago	<b>SUSAN PAYNE</b> Alliant Credit Union	<b>ERICK RUDIAK</b> Walgreens Boots Alliance	<b>ANGELA WILLIAMS</b> UL Solutions
<b>TOM DAGER</b> ADM (Archer Daniels Midland Company)	<b>MAHMOOD KHAN</b> CNA Financial	<b>MATT MORTON</b> The University of Chicago	<b>JEFF PEARL</b> Astellas Pharma	<b>DEVIN RUDNICKI</b> Fitch Group	<b>TELLIS WILLIAMS</b> Dream Exchange, Inc.

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## 2026 ChicagoCISO Chair ▶▶ Angela Williams

### 34 Chicago CISOs beat executive isolation



Even the strongest executives can feel isolated at times. When chief information security officers (CISOs) discuss challenges with trusted peers, isolation turns into clarity and confidence.

ChicagoCISO brings together top CISOs from Chicago's leading organizations to build meaningful relationships, share what's working, and create real business value. While industries and organization sizes may differ, the challenges of leadership—and the power of connection—are universal.

The Inspire Leadership Network connects CISOs with over 2,000 C-suite executives across more than 50 chapters, spanning public, private, and nonprofit organizations across North America. Beyond CISOs, Inspire also serves communities for chief information officers (CIOs) and chief marketing officers (CMOs).

For more than 25 years, the ORBIE Awards have honored C-suite

executives for leadership, innovation, and excellence. I encourage you to attend the 2026 Chicago ORBIE Awards to meet and support these outstanding security leaders.

On behalf of ChicagoCISO, congratulations to all nominees and finalists on these achievements. Special thanks to the awards partners, chapter underwriters, and staff whose support makes the ChicagoCISO ORBIE Awards possible.

Angela Williams  
2026 Chair, ChicagoCISO  
SVP, CISO, UL Solutions



## Every breach has an identity story.

For more than 25 years, MajorKey has operationalized identity security at enterprise scale to reduce risk and stop breaches before they start.



Explore outcome-driven identity security at [majorkeytech.com](https://majorkeytech.com)



Congratulations to the 2026 Chicago CISO of the Year Award Winners and Finalists!



## When resilience is built in, risk stays out

With AI-led intelligence and adaptive defense built into every layer, we ensure that protection is not an afterthought but a design principle.

Lead with cyber confidence

# Leadership Award Recipient ▶▶ Walter Lefmann

## Beyond the firewall: For Walter Lefmann, security leadership is about people, not just threats



Walter Lefmann, the recipient of the Chicago CISO Leadership Award, has played a leading role in Chicago's cybersecurity community. He spent 17 years at CTC Trading Group, a capital markets trading firm, where he retired last May as director of security, following roles at Goldman Sachs, Hull Trading Company and Motorola. Lefmann, who holds a Ph.D. in physics from Columbia University, had an unconventional jumping-off point for a career in information security, starting out as a physicist doing postdoctoral work at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory.

Lefmann now devotes himself to community service, volunteering in board positions at organizations such as the Docent Institute, a group focused on cybersecurity and STEM education; ChicagoFIRST, a nonprofit involved in private sector resilience and emergency management planning; the FBI InfraGard Chicago Board, which fosters collaboration between the private sector and the FBI; and ChiBurrCon, an event targeting the concerns of IT and cybersecurity professionals.

Crain's spoke with him recently.

### Q. How did you get started in cybersecurity?

I didn't enter cybersecurity directly. I entered IT – I joined Motorola as a Resolution Center Senior Engineer. That was basically a help desk, but a super help desk. Our little team of four to six people was expected to solve problems at first contact. And we did that 72% to 73% of the time, which most help desk managers would tear out their own teeth with rusty pliers to achieve.

Over two years, I took 13,000 calls and learned a lot about customer service and the business. Went on to a trading firm after that and learned in the financial industry, mostly as a tech person, but within six months, they put me in charge of security. In all cases, I viewed security as just another way to serve the business.

### Q. Keeping in mind the balance between technology, engineering and security, how should CISOs position themselves in the C-suite?

You always have to start from "I'm a business executive – these are the tools I am handed to do that job." In the end, you have to think like a CEO, like a CFO.

Management requires leadership, but also a whole other pile of skills. And then there is executive management, which is yet another new set of skills, focus and communication that you have to get straight and understand. It's a whole new audience.

**"In the security world, we just always have to go faster. The distance between when a vulnerability was found and when it started to be used in real attacks went from months to weeks to days to hours, and now, with AI, it could be minutes."**

### Q. Why has public-private collaboration been such a consistent thread in your work?

Sometime in the 1980s, I took an exam that measured Henry Murray's psychogenic factors – the internal needs that make you seek out what you want to do that makes you happy. One of those factors is your need to nurture others, and that was off the chart. Teaching and some of the things I did in academe – during graduate school, I volunteered as a New York City Auxiliary Police Officer and Sergeant – were just to help the community.

The NYPD Auxiliary experience taught me a key life lesson. When you look at a government organization from the outside, you say, "Why isn't this working? This is all broken." When you get on the inside, I've discovered the only reason it works at all is the heart and soul, blood, sweat, and tears that these people put into that job. So, I'd like to help them.

I'd like to leave the world better than I came to it. That's why we founded ChiBurrCon—to build the next generation of security professionals and give them career coaching and education, from high school students to deputy CISOs

### Q. Capital markets firms like CTC Trading Group face unique threats. What cybersecurity lessons apply to mid-market companies across industries?

The key is to really, really, really know your business. Regulations just are, and security is necessary. And nine times out of ten, it's really about communication. I had to audit our applications to ensure compliance with SEC requirements, and when I started the process, our developers weren't all fully aware of the regulations. I'd come through with an audit and explain to them. "This identity has to travel through your application, and you have to understand who authenticated to do that" – or as I like to point out. "The SEC needs to know there's a human being that can be sent to jail for whatever your code did."

Educating at the front end development rather than at the backend audit builds a cycle that leads to success with the least friction.

### Q. When it comes to generative AI, where do you see the greatest risk organizations are underestimating right now?

The single biggest risk and the single biggest cost to any company is not having a plan and not getting the ROI out of it. From the security point of view, it's more of the same and building on fundamentals. We just always have to go faster. The distance between when a vulnerability was found and when it started to be used in real attacks went from months to weeks to days to hours, and now, with AI, it could be minutes.

### Q. Outside of your professional life, you enjoy scuba diving in Lake Michigan and around the world, and singing in a chorus. How do these activities counterbalance the demands of your career?

They keep me sane. Being able to step back is not only a survival skill for yourself, but it's also a survival skill for your team. I always made them take all the paid time off they were entitled to. Don't trade it for cash – the time is much more precious. As a cybersecurity leader, if you don't step back, you're going to burn out or lose your family.

### Q. How has Chicago influenced your career?

I'm a New York City boy, born and raised. But I've fallen in love with Chicago, and in terms of the security community, I know of none better. It's big enough to be really vital and have a lot of practitioners interacting, but it is very tightly knit. We all share things. There's a little informal dinner group – we try to get together once a month – and it's a vibrant community that is very giving. You want advice, you throw something out on that email list, and you'll get Fortune 500 company CISOs coming back to you with answers. It's been formative in my career.

# Super Global Finalists ▶▶ Over \$9 billion annual revenue & multi-national operations



**JP CALABIO**  
VP & CISO  
Grainger

JP Calabio serves as Vice President and Chief Information

Security Officer at W.W. Grainger, Inc., a \$17.9 billion distributor operating across North America and Japan. He leads the company's cybersecurity strategy, security risk management, architecture and engineering, and security operations, safeguarding critical assets while enabling business growth. With more than 20 years of experience, he has served as CISO for multiple Fortune 500 organizations, building high-performing security programs across complex, highly regulated global industries.



**Success Story:** Under JP's leadership, Grainger's Information Security team delivered measurable, enterprise-wide progress, positioning cybersecurity as a strategic business capability. The team established stronger governance, modernized security operations and drove consistent execution across the enterprise. Executive and Board engagement increased through disciplined, transparent reporting and clear accountability for cyber risk. Grainger's security and compliance program now meaningfully supports competitive differentiation and customer trust. Collectively, these outcomes reflect sustained leadership focus, operational rigor and effective cross-functional collaboration.



**THOMAS DAGER**  
VP & CISO  
ADM

Thomas Dager serves as Chief Information

Security Officer at Archer Daniels Midland Company, a Fortune 50 global leader in agricultural processing and nutrition. He leads enterprise cybersecurity strategy, risk governance, and resilience across a complex international footprint. With more than 20 years of experience spanning military service, law enforcement, and executive security leadership, Dager is known for aligning cybersecurity with business value, strengthening operational maturity and building high-performing global teams.



**Success Story:** Under my leadership, ADM's Global Information and Cybersecurity organization has evolved into a globally integrated, business-aligned function with clear governance, accountability and operational consistency. The team aligns to the NIST Cybersecurity Framework 2.0, establishing measurable maturity baselines and advancing initiatives in Zero Trust, Identity and Access Management, Cloud Security and OT/IT convergence. We strengthened incident response capabilities and integrated threat intelligence to enhance detection and response speed. Through collaboration and leadership development, we built a unified, high-performing culture that transformed cybersecurity into a strategic business enabler.



**ERIK HART**  
CISO  
Cushman & Wakefield

Erik Hart leads global information security for

Cushman & Wakefield, one of the world's largest commercial real estate services firms. With more than 20 years of experience across multiple industries, he is a recognized thought leader in cybersecurity and risk management. Erik also serves in advisory roles for several organizations in the information security ecosystem, including Mimecast, CrowdStrike, First Women's Bank, Redleg and Western Illinois University.



**Success Story:** In partnership with the business, we built centralized security services to address core internal needs and client-driven requirements. These services operate through a single intake model and dedicated team, ensuring consistent, high-quality delivery and responsiveness year-round. By standardizing requests and ownership, we reduced ad hoc work, improved turnaround times and increased accountability. The model has been well received by both internal stakeholders and clients, while significantly lowering delivery costs compared to our previous decentralized approach.



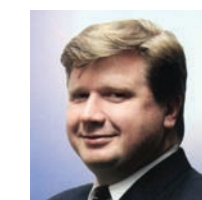
**MAHMOOD KHAN**  
SVP & CISO  
CNA Financial

Mahmood Khan is SVP and Global CISO at CNA

Financial where he leads global cybersecurity and business continuity programs with a focus on enterprise resilience and risk management. With more than 25 years of experience, he has built and scaled high performing security organizations across financial services and aviation. He is an award-winning security executive and a trusted advisor driving enterprise secure business transformation.



**Success Story:** As Global CISO, I set out to transform cybersecurity from a reactive function into a strategic business enabler. Over five years, I scaled the team from 18 security professionals to more than 120 employees, supported by a resilient leadership model and trusted partners. This enabled new capabilities, including a recently established AI security group, allowing the business to accelerate innovation while managing emerging risk. By automating core security operations, we improved speed and efficiency, focusing on high value threats. Through strong governance and continuous maturity, we built a high-performing, award winning program recognized by multiple industry organizations.



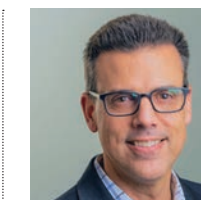
**RICHARD RUSHING**  
CISO  
Motorola  
Mobility, a  
Lenovo  
Company

Richard Rushing is the Chief Information Security Officer for Motorola Mobility, a Lenovo Company. He leads an international team to address mobile device threats, targeted attacks, incident response, and cybercrime.

Rushing participates in security councils and working groups, setting standards and policies. A sought-after speaker, he presents at leading security conferences worldwide, sharing his expertise on protecting intellectual property and navigating emerging and existing security challenges.



**Success Story:** Under my leadership, Motorola Mobility fostered a proactive security culture through employee education and engagement. We developed tailored training modules and interactive campaigns to reinforce security best practices. Open communication channels, including regular newsletters and forums, facilitated shared responsibility. Recognizing and rewarding employees for security contributions incentivized positive behavior. These efforts significantly increased security awareness, improved incident reporting and strengthened our security posture. Most of my team has remained with me for 17 years, continuing to innovate and lead in security awareness.



**JOHN SANDER**  
VP & CISO  
Wesco

John Sander is Vice President and Chief

Information Security Officer for Wesco. He aligns security strategy with business objectives, enabling growth while protecting critical information and operations. Known for disciplined execution, talent development and cultural leadership, John has built a mature, award-winning security program recognized for innovation, operational excellence and best-in-class alignment with industry frameworks through global programs, trusted partnerships and sustained measurable outcomes across complex, distributed enterprises worldwide.



**Success Story:** As Vice President and Chief Information Security Officer, John Sander has built a resilient, business-aligned security organization that enables growth while reducing enterprise risk. Through disciplined operations, strategic modernization and strong leadership, he has strengthened cyber resilience, minimized service disruption and elevated security as a trusted business partner. His focus on culture, talent development, and measurable outcomes has produced a mature, best-in-class security program recognized for innovation, operational excellence and sustained impact across the enterprise.

# CONGRATULATIONS, KYLE!

CCC Intelligent Solutions congratulates our Chief Information Security Officer Kyle Rankin on being named a finalist in the 2026 ChicagoCISO ORBIE Awards!

Thank you for your leadership. Learn more at [cccis.com](https://cccis.com)



# Global Finalists ▶▶ Over \$5 billion annual revenue & multi-national operations



**AMAHDY BRADLEY**  
CISO  
Berlin  
Packaging

Amahdy has more than thirty-five years of experience in Information Technology, IT Governance and Cybersecurity. He has worked across multiple industries, including consulting, advertising, government sponsored banking, manufacturing, and supply chain management and logistics. He also served for thirty years in the United States Army Reserve, retiring in 2020 at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. His military service included deployments in support of Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.



**BRIAN EKKEBUS**  
IT Director & CISO  
USG  
Corporation

With over 25 years of cybersecurity leadership, I have built two enterprise security programs from the ground up—first in highly regulated financial services, and currently in manufacturing, where resilience and continuous operations are paramount. I bring deep hands-on and leadership experience in audit, risk management, and compliance and I thrive in the challenge of developing the next generation of security professionals.



**RIZWAN MIR**  
VP Global CISO & IT ERM  
Perrigo

Rizwan Mir is the Global Vice President and Chief Information Security Officer at Perrigo, leading enterprise cybersecurity and IT risk management. With more than 20 years of global experience across pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, technology, retail and public-sector organizations, he has built and transformed security programs for complex, regulated enterprises. Rizwan serves on Perrigo's AI Governance Committee and is recognized for advancing secure digital transformation, strengthening risk culture and developing high-performing, business-aligned security teams.



**BRADLEY SCHAUFENBUEL**  
VP & CISO  
Paychex, Inc.

Bradley J. Schaufenbuel is currently Vice President and Chief Information Security Officer at Paychex. He has almost 30 years of experience in the information security field at companies in the financial services and technology verticals, has written numerous books and professional journal articles, possesses an MBA, a JD and an LLM, maintains over two dozen professional certifications, serves as an advisor to multiple venture capital firms and cybersecurity startups, and regularly speaks at industry conferences.



**BRAD SKIBITZKI**  
CISO  
Zebra  
Technologies



**ERIK DECKER**  
VP & CISO  
Intermountain  
Health

Erik Decker leads Cybersecurity for Intermountain Health, a multi-state integrated delivery network based in Salt Lake City, Utah. He brings 26 years of IT experience and 19 years in cybersecurity. A longtime advocate for protecting the nation's critical infrastructure, Erik has served as Chair of the Health Industry Cyber Working Group, led and authored multiple HHS cybersecurity frameworks (HICP, Hospital Resiliency Landscape Analysis, and HPH Cybersecurity Performance Goals) and has testified before Congress three times.



**IMRAN HUSAIN**  
CISO  
MillerKnoll

Al Imran Husain is a seasoned cybersecurity executive with over 23 years of experience leading enterprise security strategy, risk management and compliance programs across complex global environments. As a Global CISO, he builds and mentors high-performing teams that safeguard critical systems while enabling business growth and operational resilience. Known for his collaborative leadership style, he champions cybersecurity as a strategic business pillar, aligning technology, people and process to reduce risk and strengthen organizational trust.



**SHEFALI MOOKENCHERRY**  
CISO & Chief  
Privacy Officer  
University of  
Illinois Chicago

Shefali Mookencherry is a seasoned Chief Information Security Officer and Chief Privacy Officer with expertise in cybersecurity, privacy, and risk management. She leads enterprise security strategy, incident response, and regulatory compliance while aligning security with business outcomes. Known for pragmatic leadership, Shefali partners with executives and boards to strengthen resilience, protect data, and enable innovation across complex, highly regulated environments through transformation initiatives, programs, and advisory relationships built on accountability and continuous improvement.



**AMIR NIAZ**  
VP & Global  
CISO  
Culligan  
International

Amir Niaz is the Global CISO of Culligan, leading the company's global cybersecurity strategy and strengthening resilience across its digital ecosystem. He oversees risk management, regulatory readiness, and the modernization of security programs while regularly advising executive leadership. Amir drives proactive defense, enhances governance and promotes a strong security culture that protects employees, customers, and operations. His leadership reflects a strategic, business-aligned approach to safeguarding Culligan's worldwide footprint.



**Success Story:** My team's most significant accomplishment has been the establishment of a comprehensive security program and governance framework built on repeatable, scalable processes. These efforts have resulted in high maturity ratings in recent independent cybersecurity assessments. We have also cultivated strong, enduring partnerships with key internal stakeholders and customers by consistently demonstrating our commitment to measurable outcomes and to safeguarding the confidentiality, integrity and availability of their data. Additional achievements include being recognized as a leader among our peers in the packaging manufacturing industry for cybersecurity maturity, as well as demonstrating rapid detection and containment capabilities to effectively mitigate emerging threats.

**Success Story:** Our measurable security outcomes are the result of a decade-long transformation of mindset and culture across the enterprise. By reinforcing that security is a shared responsibility and a core business competency—not just an IT function—we established the foundation for sustained risk reduction and smart investment. Through consistent messaging, clear branding, and business-focused communication, we overcame early resistance and built broad ownership of security outcomes. This cultural shift has enabled continuous maturation of our security program while simultaneously strengthening operations, collaboration and long-term business value.

**Success Story:** In one of my roles, I encountered operational technology environments with inconsistent security practices and limited awareness of plant-floor cyber risks. I developed the organization's first risk-based Operational Technology cybersecurity roadmap, I partnered closely with engineering, operations, and maintenance teams to integrate security into daily plant culture. In a limited period of 18 months, the team operationalized practical controls such as segmentation, asset visibility and security monitoring, while coaching plant personnel on cyber risks. These efforts strengthened operational resilience, reduced the likelihood of disruptions from cyber incidents and established a sustainable culture of shared accountability for cybersecurity across manufacturing sites.

**Success Story:** My team's greatest accomplishments under my leadership include raising our cybersecurity program maturity level from an independently verified composite CMMI score of 2.59 to 4.00, building a state-of-the-art cyber fusion center and subsequently insourcing security operations, resulting in a reduction of our mean time to respond to threats to under five minutes, implementing a security champions program that has substantially reduced our software security defect rate, and building a semi-isolated recovery site and digital forensic cleanroom, cutting the time to recover from a ransomware attack from weeks to days or hours. These actions have significantly strengthened Paychex's overall security posture.

**Success Story:** The words of Andrea Palm, the Deputy Secretary of HHS under Biden's Administration, profoundly impacted me. I'm proud and humbled by them. "Erik, over the last five years as Chair of the Cyber Working Group, you have been instrumental in voicing the urgent need for greater cybersecurity across the healthcare sector. Your leadership, expertise, and dedication have helped healthcare organizations across the country secure their systems and protect our patients. As your tenure as Chair comes to an end, I hope you have time to reflect on the fact that, our country, and our patients, are safer because of you."

**Success Story:** It's not about the job—it's about the people. A career is only as meaningful as those who take the journey with you. For over 23 years, I've been fortunate to work alongside exceptional professionals in cybersecurity. I'm a senior cyber leader with deep expertise in strategy, risk management, compliance, privacy, and securing complex environments. I build high-performing, trusted teams that protect systems and data while enabling business objectives. Cybersecurity is complex and ever-evolving—but it's the people, collaboration, and shared mission that make the work truly impactful.

**Success Story:** My success reflects the multifaceted approach I adapted to establish a strong foundation of trust and credibility with the University and Hospital leadership, staff, employees, community, business partners, and suppliers, leading to more effective collaborations and a greater impact on my information security team's reputation and reach. It's a cumulative result of demonstrating influence, reliability, consistency, expertise, and transparency in my actions. We deployed cutting-edge threat detection technologies, empowered employees to respond to potential threats, achieved the highest percentage of security training completion, and implemented a multi-layered defense strategy that significantly strengthened the University's security hygiene and maturity.

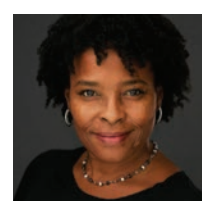
**Success Story:** As Global CISO, Amir Niaz has transformed Culligan's security program into a model of resilience and innovation. He united global teams behind a clear vision, completing critical modernization initiatives that strengthened defenses and advanced NIST maturity, while pioneering AI-driven protection and adaptive user education. His leadership empowers people, elevates standards, and inspires a culture of vigilance. Beyond the enterprise, Amir champions women in cybersecurity and equips seniors with vital digital-safety skills—proving that true security leadership uplifts both business and community.

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LEGENDARY LEADERS.  
LASTING CONNECTIONS.



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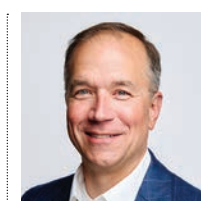


**ELIZABETH OGUNTI**  
CISO  
JBT  
Corporation

A seasoned Cybersecurity/GRC professional with over 25 years of experience in IT, information security, IT audit, risk and compliance. Starting my career as IT support, my career has meandered through many aspects of the information technology domain. A visionary leader with a proven track record of developing and implementing robust cybersecurity strategies and engaging compliance experience to protect an enterprise's assets. I am a mentor and enjoy sharing my knowledge and experience with rising talent.

✦ JBT Marel

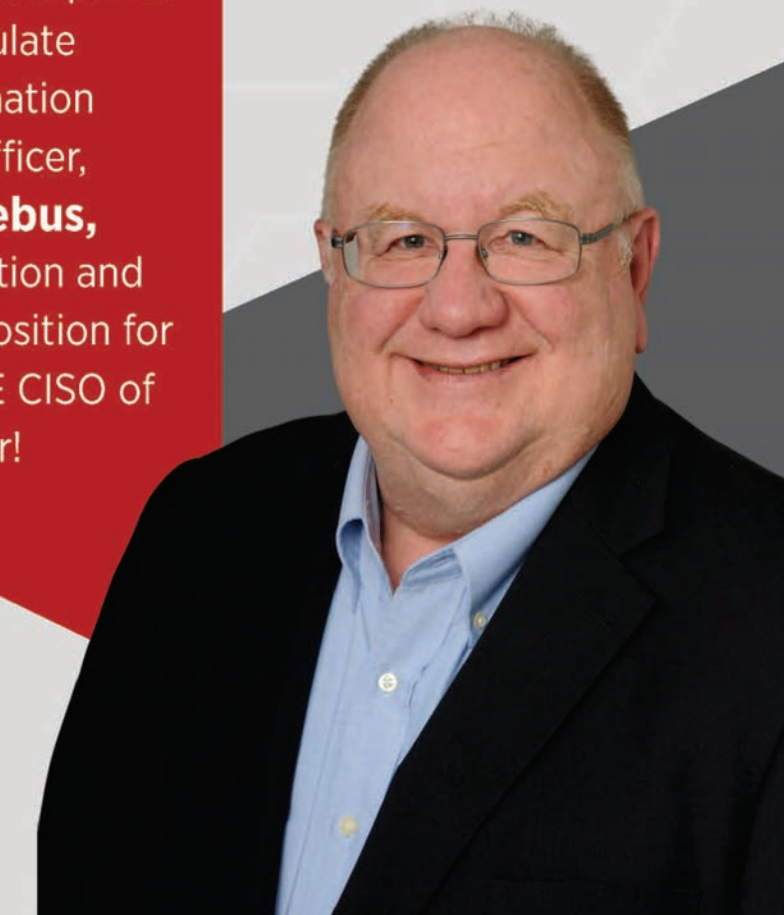
**Success Story:** My team was thrust into security compliance roles with little training. The team was successful in 2025 by remediating approximately 120 material weakness ITGC controls, updating policies and standards to reflect the compliance requirements and ensuring the key financial reports are complete and accurate for our financial department's 10K filing in February. This was a major accomplishment for the team in one year. It exhibits flexibility and determination to get the job done.



**MICHAEL REINECK**  
Director, IT  
Security  
Baird



USG Corporation is proud to congratulate Chief Information Security Officer, **Brian Ekkebus**, on his nomination and global finalist position for Chicago ORBIE CISO of the Year!



# Enterprise Finalists

Over \$2.5 billion annual revenue

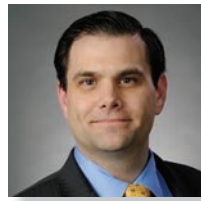


**MATT MORTON**  
AVP & CISO  
University of Chicago

Matt is the Assistant Vice President and CISO at the University of Chicago and leads the Security Engineering, Operations, IAM and Information Administration parts of the Office of the CISO. Previously CISO for the University of Nebraska System, he also consulted at Vantage Technology. With 18 in security leadership, he holds multiple certifications. He speaks on AI security and governance, is completing a doctorate and enjoys fly fishing, hiking and attending his children's events.



**Success Story:** The University of Chicago's security team partnered with the development group to deliver PhoenixAI, an internally built generative AI platform certified as fully HIPAA-compliant for administrative, clinical, and general research. Security was integrated into every phase of development, followed by comprehensive internal and independent external assessments. The team also completed NIST framework assessments across 39 departments, certified secure research environments to federal standards, advanced a major Active Directory modernization, and launched SailPoint identity governance — collectively reducing institutional risk while enabling groundbreaking research.



**KEVIN NOVAK**  
Chief Information Security & Technology Risk Officer  
Old National Bancorp

Kevin Novak is the Chief Information Security Officer for Old National Bancorp where he is responsible for information security, technology risk management, enterprise data governance, business resilience, crisis management, and records management. He is the former security leader at Breakwater Solutions, Northern Trust, Servis1st, University of Chicago Medical Center and Discover Financial. Kevin is a National Sector Chief for InfraGard, Committee Member of Chicago CISO of the Year, and a co-founder of ChiBrCon.



**Success Story:** During my tenure, we've modernized our SOC, deployed new a new IAM model, delayed a new data protection strategy, enhanced third party risk management, deployed a new GRC, improved our cyber hygiene and defenses, and grew the team and budget significantly. Through continuous evolution of our program's maturity and control efficacy, we've moved the needle to an acceptable maturity rating and are on track to hit target maturity scores within the next year. We recognize the battle will never be won and that there will always be room for improvement, but we're proud of what we've achieved so far.



**STEPHEN POWELL**  
Director, Cybersecurity & Compliance  
Fairlife

Stephen Powell is the Director of Cybersecurity & Compliance at fairlife, serving as the company's senior cybersecurity leader responsible for enterprise risk, governance, and security strategy. He brings prior leadership experience from EY, Relativity, Indeed, and The Options Clearing Corporation. Stephen holds a BA in Finance from Michigan State University and an MBA from Wayne State University. He lives in Chicago with his wife and three children.



**Success Story:** My greatest accomplishment has been the formal establishment of the cybersecurity program at fairlife. I built foundational structure and governance where little previously existed, introducing disciplined change management and access management practices to reduce risk and improve operational stability. At the same time, I aligned the long-term cybersecurity strategy with key business initiatives to ensure security enabled growth rather than constrained it. This work transformed cybersecurity into a formal, integrated enterprise capability that supports both day-to-day operations and fairlife's strategic objectives.

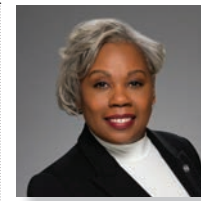


**DEVIN RUDNICKI**  
CISO  
Fitch Group

Devin Rudnicki is Chief Information Security Officer of Fitch Group, a global financial information services firm and parent of Fitch Ratings. She oversees enterprise-wide information security across all business units. Previously, she led Application Security at Fitch Group and held leadership roles at the Options Clearing Corporation. Devin holds a B.S. in Mathematics from DePaul University and multiple security certifications, and is an active advisor and mentor within the cybersecurity community.



**Success Story:** As generative AI surged in 2023, I united leaders across Technology & Data, Legal, Compliance, and the business to establish Fitch's first AI Review Panel — a firm-wide model for responsible AI that has evaluated 500+ AI experimentation, development, and deployment proposals since inception. That foundation enabled the secure launch of our internal GenAI platform in 2024, now used by over 90% of employees and powering 9+ production applications. In 2025, these controls matured into a formal AI Agent security framework, reinforced by a 15%+ increase in cybersecurity investment, positioning Fitch to support secured, scaled operationalization of Agentic AI in 2026.



**ANGELA WILLIAMS**  
SVP & CISO  
UL Solutions

Angela C. Williams is a highly respected cybersecurity executive and is the current Senior Vice President, Chief Information Security Officer at UL Solutions. She leads the global cybersecurity strategy, protecting critical assets and enabling secure digital transformation across the enterprise. Known for building high-performing teams and driving measurable risk reduction, Angela is a trusted advisor to business leaders and a recognized champion for advancing cybersecurity maturity, operational resilience and innovative, business-aligned security practices.



**Success Story:** Angela C. Williams leads high-performance, diverse teams to address global cybersecurity, data privacy, and regulatory challenges. Under her leadership, she has strengthened an organization's ability to identify and manage risk, reduced the time to detect and contain threats, expanded workforce education, and established meaningful metrics that guide risk-based decisions. These critical capabilities have increased operational resilience and elevated confidence in the security posture. Just as importantly, Angela's team has transformed the business's experience with cybersecurity—shifting perceptions from a control function to a strategic partner. This cultural shift has increased trust, collaboration, and support for the overall cybersecurity strategy.

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**GREG BEE**  
CISO  
Hagerty Insurance

Greg Bee is a cybersecurity executive and Chief Information Security Officer at Hagerty Insurance. He specializes in enterprise risk management, regulatory compliance, and security program transformation. Greg holds certifications for CISO, CISM, CRISC, CISA, CGEIT, ISO27001 Implementation. He earned a B.S. in Computer Science and MBA from Illinois State University and is on the ISU Cyber Security Board. Greg has been recognized by Security Current as a Top 100 CISO in the United States (2021-2026).



**Success Story:** In 2025, the Cybersecurity organization delivered transformative progress aligned to business objectives. We achieved ISO27001/2 certification, validating the maturity of our governance and control environment. End-to-end GRC automation enhanced real-time risk-time risk visibility and enterprise decision-making. Targeted control hardening, including advanced email security, threat detection, threat intelligence, automated incident response, drove a 50% reduction in cyber incidents and improved MTD and MTTC. We strengthened identity security through adaptive, risk-based MFA while maintaining a seamless user experience. Additionally, automation of vulnerability management and remediation workflows accelerated risk reduction, marking a year of measurable security maturity and operational excellence.



**ERIC POOLE**  
CISO  
Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago

Eric Poole is a CISO with over 15 years of information security experience in the financial services and legal industries. He has a background in engineering and has been building secure solutions in the cloud for nearly a decade. Eric has a passion for enabling business success through the secure use of technology and enjoys the lifelong learning opportunities that security provides.



**Success Story:** Since assuming responsibility for the Bank's Identity Access Management (IAM) function in 2024, the Security team has strengthened privileged access management and reinforced system security. Through proactive leadership and strategic enhancements, IAM processes have been optimized, restoring confidence in financial reporting and positioning the Bank for continued resilience and future security excellence.



**NITIN RAINA**  
CISO  
Thoughtworks

Nitin is a Global Operations leader at Thoughtworks with 25+ years of experience in IT, Security and Risk leadership. A specialist in organizational trade-offs and cybersecurity prioritization, he ensures security programs align with strategic business goals. Nitin is a Board Qualified Technology Executive (QTE) with CISSP and CISM designations, holding B.S. in Electronics Engineering and Telecommunication.



**Success Story:** At Thoughtworks, we've redefined enterprise resilience by scaling a world-class cybersecurity program built on innovation and inclusivity. In just 18 months, we achieved ISO 27001/2:2022 certification across all of our 48 global offices—a record-breaking timeline. By prioritizing continuous monitoring, detection and response, we've proactively mitigated security risks and vulnerabilities. Central to our success is always our people; we are proud to maintain close to 50% WUGM representation in our global security team. These milestones reflect our unwavering commitment to safeguarding our clients and leading the global security community through diversity and excellence.



**KYLE RANKIN**  
CISO  
CCC Intelligent Solutions

Kyle Rankin, VP & CISO at CCC Intelligent Solutions Holdings Inc., leads secure enterprise modernization and AI-driven security. With 19+ years across multiple industries and a secure-by-design focus, he advances Zero Trust, cloud-native controls and automated compliance. A U.S. Air Force veteran, he's known for turning complex requirements into practical, future-ready solutions that drive growth and strengthen trust.



**Success Story:** Under my leadership, the team transformed our approach from traditional TVMP to a fully modernized RVM program. We shifted from volume-driven patching to business-aligned risk reduction by prioritizing vulnerabilities based on exploitability, asset value, and downstream impact. This change accelerated remediation, reduced noise and focused teams on what truly matters. By pairing modern tooling with clear governance and transparent communication, we built a prevention-first culture that now anticipates issues instead of reacting to them. This transformation strengthened resilience, improved cross-functional trust, and positioned security as a strategic partner to the business.

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### Congratulations, Kevin!



**Kevin Novak**  
Chief Information Security Officer  
Senior Vice President

### Congratulations on being named a Finalist for the 2026 ChicagoCISO ORBIE Awards.

As a long-standing expert in information security, you help make Old National a strong and stable bank. Your leadership is filled with insights, energy, and a commitment to keeping our clients' information confidential and secure. Thank you for all you do!

# Congratulations to the 2026 Chicago CISO of the Year® Award winners and nominees.

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# 2026 Who's Who of ChicagoCISO



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