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HOUSTONCIO  
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AWARDS

The annual HoustonCIO ORBIE® Awards honors chief information officers who have demonstrated excellence in technology leadership. Winners in the Super Global, Global, Large Enterprise, Enterprise, Large Corporate & Corporate categories will be announced April 24 at Marriott Marquis Houston.



**LEADERSHIP AWARD  
RECIPIENT & KEYNOTE**

Leadership Award recipient:  
SLB CIO Sebastien Lehnerr  
on building a global career in  
technology  
**PG 4**



**FROM THE CHAIR**

80 Houston CIOs beat  
executive isolation  
**PG 3**

# CONGRATULATIONS 2026 HOUSTONCIO ORBIE NOMINEES

**JOHN ALAWNEH**  
Katy ISD

**MATTHEW ALMAND**  
Texas A&M University

**VERONICA ALVAREZ**  
P97 Networks

**SUMIT ANAND**  
Academy Sports + Outdoors

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CVR Energy, Inc.

**MARK CAMPBELL**  
Houston Rockets

**JOE CARROLL**  
CITGO Petroleum

**HARI CHANDRASEKARAN**  
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**MARTIN CHRISTENSEN**  
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**JAMES DRUZHNIK**  
Group 1 Automotive

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**UMAR FAROOQ**  
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**BRANNON KUYKENDALL**  
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## 80 Houston CIOs beat executive isolation

Even the strongest executives can feel isolated at times. When chief information officers (CIOs) face challenges with trusted peers, isolation transforms into clarity and confidence.

HoustonCIO brings together top CIOs from Houston'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 CIOs with over 2,000 C-suite executives across more than 50 chapters, spanning public, private, and nonprofit organizations across North America. Beyond CIOs, Inspire also serves communities for chief information security officers (CISOs) and chief marketing officers (CMOs).

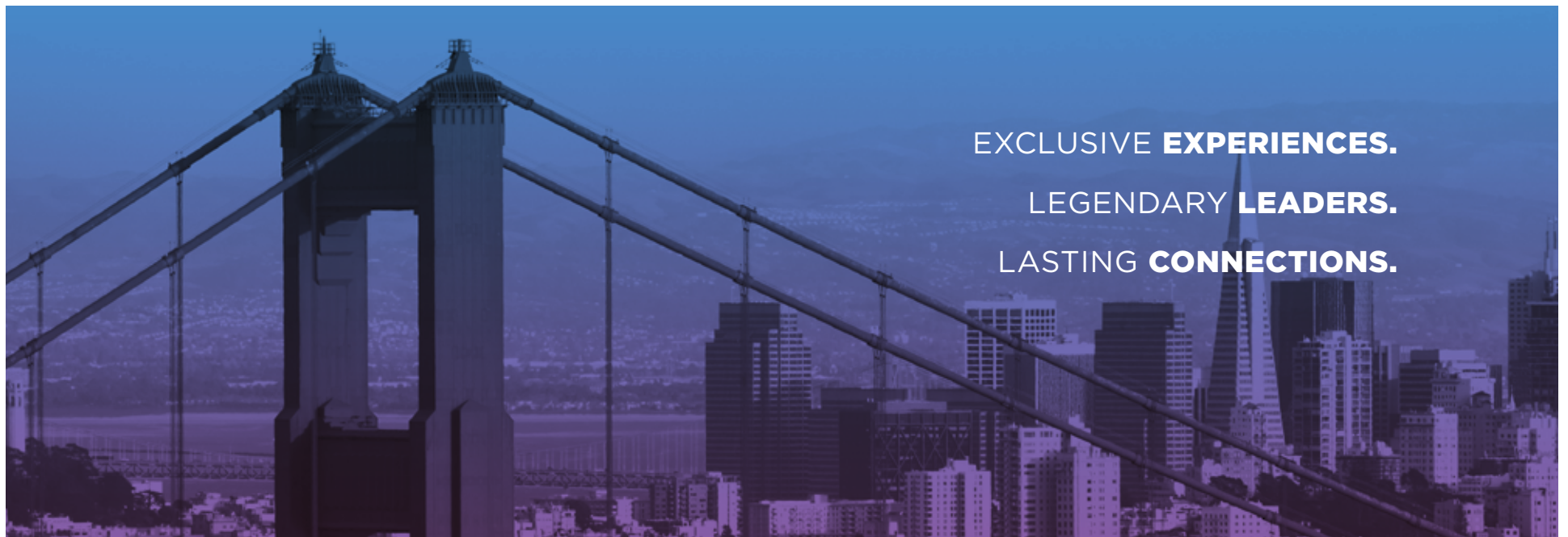
For more than 25 years, the ORBIE Awards have honored C-suite executives for leadership, innovation, and excellence. I encourage you to attend the 2026 Houston ORBIE Awards to meet and support these outstanding technology leaders.

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

Sincerely,

**Anthony Dayao**

2026 Chair, HoustonCIO  
CIO, Motiva



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# Sebastien Lehnherr

CIO | SLB

## SLB CIO Sebastien Lehnherr on building a global career in technology

By The Business Journals Content Studio

Sebastien Lehnherr's path to becoming chief information officer at SLB began long before boardrooms and global strategy. It started with curiosity.

At 10 years old, Lehnherr was already learning to code, inspired by his father's work in technology. That early exposure sparked a lifelong passion for building — whether through software, electronics or the technology teams that power both.

"I always loved creating things," Lehnherr said. "Software gives you the ability to build quickly, and electronics is the foundation that makes it all possible."

That curiosity and drive underpin his leadership as CIO of SLB, one of the world's leading energy technology companies. In recognition of his impact, Lehnherr has been named a recipient of the HoustonCIO ORBIE Leadership Award — an honor he views not as an individual achievement, but as a reflection of his entire team.

"This award belongs to my team more than me," he said. "Leadership is about what we accomplish together."

### A career shaped by global perspective

Lehnherr began his career as an engineer, working with Schneider Electric. He later worked in roles with the French Trade Commission, where he led information technology for the organization across Italy, Austria, Albania, Switzerland and Spain. But it was his decision to join SLB that would define much of his professional journey.

Over the course of 25 years, Lehnherr has held roles across North America, Europe and the Middle East, gaining a global perspective that continues to shape his leadership.

"It's been a fantastic journey," he said. "I never expected to stay with one company this long, but SLB has always been forward-thinking, especially when it comes to technology, diversity and innovation."

One of the most pivotal moments in his career came

when he stepped away from SLB after nearly two decades. Serving as chief operations officer of a European technology company gave him new perspective — and ultimately reaffirmed the unique culture and talent within SLB.

"That experience helped me grow as a leader," he said. "It also made me realize the strength of SLB's people and mission."

After a year, he returned to SLB in the role of CIO. In doing so, he became the first leader in SLB's history to have served the company as both CISO and CIO. That cybersecurity foundation, he said, is increasingly critical in today's environment.

"Cybersecurity is central to everything we do," Lehnherr said. "As CIO, you're responsible for enabling innovation while ensuring the right governance and protection are in place."

### Navigating a rapidly evolving technology landscape

Throughout Lehnherr's career, the role of technology has transformed dramatically.

"Twenty-five years ago, many organizations didn't fully understand the value of digital," he said. "Today, it's a fundamental building block for performance."

That shift has only accelerated with the rise of artificial intelligence, which Lehnherr describes as exciting and complex.

"AI presents enormous opportunities — from generative AI to autonomous systems — but it also brings challenges in governance, regulation and responsible use," he said.

For global organizations like SLB, operating across more than 100 countries, those challenges are amplified by evolving data and AI regulations, as well as the constant need to stay ahead of cybersecurity threats.

But for Lehnherr, one of the most pressing challenges isn't technological; it's human.

"No leader delivers results without their team," he said. "Attracting, developing and retaining the right

talent is critical."

### Building the next generation of leaders

As CIO, Lehnherr sees his role not just as a technology leader, but as a builder of people and culture.

"My job is to create an environment where people can excel," he said. "Often, that means removing obstacles so my team can do their best work."

He emphasizes collaboration over individual achievement, encouraging his teams to focus on collective outcomes and shared success. A strong advocate for inclusion, Lehnherr credits SLB's diverse, multicultural workforce as a key driver of innovation.

"When you bring together different perspectives and ways of thinking, you create better solutions," he said. "That's part of our DNA."

He also sees a responsibility to prepare the workforce for the future, particularly as AI reshapes how work is done.

"It's not just about implementing technology," he said. "It's about helping people understand how to use it responsibly and effectively. Education and upskilling are essential."

### Leadership beyond the workplace

For Lehnherr, leadership extends beyond corporate performance.

Through community engagement and partnerships with schools, he and his team are inspiring the next generation of technologists.

"Leadership is about the impact you have, not just within your organization, but in the broader community," he said.

As he reflects on receiving the ORBIE Leadership Award, Lehnherr remains focused on what matters most: empowering people, advancing technology responsibly and driving meaningful impact at scale.

"At the end of the day, it's about what we build together," he said.

# Congratulations to the 2026 Houston CIO of the Year® Award winners and nominees.

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## Graham Crisp

SVP & CIO,  
TechnipFMC



Graham Crisp is Senior Vice President and CIO at TechnipFMC, where he leads global Information & Digital Services spanning enterprise applications, infrastructure, and cybersecurity. Appointed CIO in 2021, he joined TechnipFMC in 2018 after a 33-year career at Baker Hughes in senior IT leadership roles. Graham brings deep expertise in global operations, large-scale transformation, sourcing, and vendor management. He resides in Houston, Texas, with his wife, Gail.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, the team drove enterprise strategy through Lean Portfolio Management, accelerating decision-making and business value. We achieved ISO 27001 certification, streamlined cybersecurity, and mitigated infrastructure risk through disciplined lifecycle management. By partnering closely with the business, we simplified the application landscape, improved performance, and cleared operational backlogs. Furthermore, we advanced digital maturity by scaling AI adoption and integrating agile tooling. These initiatives enabled real-time, data-driven decisions establishing a resilient foundation for sustained innovation and global growth.



## Justin Hooper

CTO, Head of Infrastructure,  
IT Operations &  
Enterprise Architecture,  
Sysco Foods



Based in Houston, Justin Hooper serves as the CTO & Head of Infrastructure, Operations, and Architecture at Sysco Foods. A transformative technology executive, Justin previously led global IT operations at Ingram Micro and Cardinal Health. He has a distinguished record of managing technology innovation and transformation overseeing large global organizations, driving strategies for public and private cloud hosting, automation in build & run activities and cost controls. He is an award-winning leader recognized for modernization & operational excellence.

**SUCCESS STORY:** When I stepped into my role, Sysco had strong technical talent but lacked consistent execution and foundational discipline. We focused on fixing the basics first—establishing core ITSM practices, clear ownership, and meaningful metrics. A trusted CMDB was built using 27 independent data sources to automate asset discovery, eliminate blind spots, and reduce risk. With this foundation in place, we modernized over 854 global network endpoints, built a cost-effective private cloud across six data centers, and applied AI and automation to improve support and operational stability. The result is greater visibility, stronger control, and a technology foundation built to scale.



## Billy-Joe Lafortune

General Manager, L48  
Digital Technologies &  
Global Strategy,  
ConocoPhillips



Billy-Joe Lafortune is GM, Lower 48 Digital Technologies and Global Strategy at ConocoPhillips. With 20+ years of experience, she has held multiple IT leadership roles across the Canadian business unit and corporate functions. She serves on the board of Inside Education in Calgary and sponsors ConocoPhillips' Girls Talk Tech and the Midland, Texas New Hire employee resource group. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce and an MBA from Royal Roads University in Victoria, British Columbia.

**SUCCESS STORY:** I'm grateful to work with a team that delivers meaningful, measurable impact across the organization. Together with our business partners, we've applied advanced analytics, automation and AI to enhance operational performance, strengthen cybersecurity and improve reliability across key systems. Our work has contributed to new value opportunities, reduced costs and created more resilient digital foundations that support daily operations. Just as importantly, we've built a culture where collaboration, inclusion and continuous learning drive better outcomes for the organization. I'm proud of what we have accomplished and remain focused on ensuring technology continues to support long-term growth and resilience at ConocoPhillips.



## Siva Pothi

CIO & COO,  
TP Global Technology  
Services



Siva Pothi is a growth-focused technology executive at TP, leading enterprise and client-facing technology organizations spanning cloud, cybersecurity, applications, data, and digital platforms. He is known for building high-performing global teams, scaling technology-driven services, and aligning IT strategy with business outcomes. His leadership philosophy emphasizes clarity, empowerment, and disciplined execution to drive growth, resilience, and innovation.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Together with an exceptional TP technology team, we transformed IT into a strategic growth partner for the business. The team modernized core platforms, strengthened security and resiliency, and launched new Technology-as-a-Service capabilities that expanded how TP serves clients. By investing in global talent, early-career programs, and clear career pathways, the organization improved speed, collaboration, and engagement. Most importantly, the team shifted the perception of IT, from a support function to a trusted partner that enables innovation, scalability, and meaningful business impact across TP.



## Soumya Seetharam

CDIO,  
Corning Incorporated



Soumya Seetharam was appointed Senior Vice President and Chief Digital and Information Officer (CDIO) at Corning in November 2022. She leads the company's Digital and Information Technology organization, advancing technology capabilities while driving operational excellence. She partners with business and functional leaders to enable enterprise strategy through data, AI, and digital platforms. Previously, she held senior leadership roles at Intel, Schlumberger, and GE. She holds degrees from Bangalore University, Carnegie Mellon, and Harvard Business School.

**SUCCESS STORY:** The implementation of a modern, integrated global ERP system is one of Corning Digital & IT's most significant accomplishments. This multi-year transformation replaced dozens of legacy systems across businesses and geographies, unifying processes and data across manufacturing, supply chain, finance, procurement, and commercial operations. Corning now operates more effectively as "One Corning," with improved efficiency, accuracy, and automation. The transformation also reshaped how the business experiences IT, with customer satisfaction improving by 262% and employee engagement rising to over 92%, reinforcing technology's role as a trusted enabler of enterprise performance and long-term competitive advantage.



## John Thomson

VP & CIO,  
KBR



John Thomson serves as Vice President and Chief Information Officer at KBR and has held the role since December 2015. He has more than three decades of global IT leadership with a strong foundation in government, offshore, and hydrocarbons. He focuses on outcomes that matter: resilient operations, secure delivery, modern platforms, and teams that can execute at scale. His approach centers on developing people, simplifying technology, and delivering measurable value to the enterprise.

**SUCCESS STORY:** It is an honor to lead the team that delivers technology for KBR. Our results start with our people. We have built a culture grounded in empathy, accountability, and continuous development, so every colleague has the support, tools, and opportunities to grow. We measure success in outcomes: dependable services, stronger security, faster delivery, and disciplined cost stewardship. When we invest in capability and trust, individuals step up, teams collaborate, and we respond faster to change. That approach strengthens performance, improves resilience, and reinforces responsible leadership for our customers and communities.



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## Alexis Collins

CIO, US,  
Norton Rose Fulbright



As CIO of Norton Rose Fulbright US, Alexis Collins is responsible for shaping and executing the firm's technology vision to support our strategic objectives. Her role encompasses oversight of all IT functions, including infrastructure, enterprise applications, project services, customer service, and information governance. Prior to joining Norton Rose Fulbright, Alexis served as CIO at TETRA Technologies and previously spent 15 years at Halliburton, elevating to the position of Director of IT for the Western Hemisphere.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Norton Rose Fulbright is a full-service global law firm recognized for our strong industry focus and top-tier legal services across all sectors. In IT, our mission is to support the firm's elite global brand by providing best-in-class technology, with the necessary training, delivered with white-glove service so that we can support our lawyers in delivering the world-class legal service our clients expect. We achieve this by executing on our cloud transformation, relentless focus on cybersecurity, and rigorous quality assurance. Focus on service KPIs and continuous improvement further serve to protect our brand and drive financial performance through cost optimization.



## Tyler Falkenhagen

CIO,  
JERA Americas



Tyler Falkenhagen is Chief Information Officer at JERA Americas, where he leads technology and digital initiatives supporting the company's commercial, operational, and growth strategies. He is focused on transforming IT into a strategic business partner through data, cybersecurity, and practical applications of AI. Prior to JERA Americas, Tyler served as CIO and CTO at Shell Energy. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from The University of Texas at Austin.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under Tyler Falkenhagen's leadership, the JERA Americas IT team transformed technology into a strategic enabler of business performance. The team modernized core operations, strengthened cybersecurity and governance, and introduced data and AI-driven capabilities that improved decision-making during periods of volatility. By revamping IT ways of working, investing in employee development, and deploying practical Generative AI solutions across corporate functions and power plants, IT increased efficiency, resilience, and confidence across the organization. These efforts elevated IT from a service function to a trusted business partner supporting growth, operational excellence, and long-term value.



## Brannon Kuykendall

CTO,  
Crane Worldwide Logistics



Brannon Kuykendall is a Chief Technology Officer based in Houston, Texas, with a track record of leading high-performing engineering organizations and delivering scalable, secure technology platforms. He specializes in aligning technology strategy with business outcomes, modernizing infrastructure, and driving innovation across cloud, data, software, AI, and data platforms. Brannon is known for building strong teams, executing with discipline, and translating complex technical challenges into measurable value.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Delivered significant enterprise transformation by achieving ISO 27001:2022 and UK Cyber Essentials certification, strengthening global security and customer trust. Led a multi-cloud migration with AWS as the primary platform to balance resilience, advanced analytics, AI capabilities, and regional compliance. Implemented real-time data streaming platforms to enable real time analytics, alerts, and dynamic supply-chain response. Reimagined our next-generation client visibility portal, providing end-to-end shipment tracking and performance insights. Deployed AI and automation solutions to increase speed, accuracy, and emissions reporting. Modernized the global network using a Zero Trust architecture.



## Maria O'Neill

CITO,  
Oceaneering



Maria F. O'Neill is a visionary technology leader and CITO at Oceaneering International, spearheading a global team to revolutionize ERP, ignite innovative data strategies, and fortify cybersecurity. Celebrated for forging dynamic relationships and delivering game-changing tech solutions, Maria's impact spans previous CIO roles at ABS and BP, and founding two successful IT start-ups. With advanced degrees from Texas Tech, she is an active contributor to industry conversations on topics like digital transformation and IT leadership.

**SUCCESS STORY:** In three years, Maria O'Neill transformed IT at Oceaneering from a maintenance-focused group into a strategic powerhouse driving global business growth. She unified our ERP platform, accelerating HR, finance, and supply chain operations, and elevated cybersecurity to surpass NIST and CMMC standards, broadening contract opportunities. My disciplined AI strategy launched pilots that delivered real-time insights and boosted productivity, including 98%+ accurate cash forecasting. Above all, Maria fostered a culture of trust, transparency, and proactive partnership, ensuring IT is engaged early and strategically. We are now faster, safer, and more resilient in the digital era.



## Kara Pelecky

CIO & SVP,  
American Bureau of  
Shipping



Kara Pelecky is a global CIO and transformational technology leader with deep experience in energy, nuclear, manufacturing, and maritime industries. She has led complex, multi-billion-dollar programs, including enabling the GCC's first nuclear power plants, driving divestiture-ready transformation at Stanley Security, and modernizing technology at the American Bureau of Shipping. Known for positive, people-centered leadership, Kara specializes in building digital, data, and cyber capabilities that move organizations confidently through critical stages of change.

**SUCCESS STORY:** With a vision to modernize IT, I started by co-creating a unifying technology vision with business leaders, explicitly tying our work to safety, client value, and growth. I then challenged my team to step forward as experts—bringing options, recommendations, and insight, not just tickets and timelines. As we delivered visible wins, individual contributors began leading conversations as trusted partners. Their confidence—and the business's confidence in them—grew. Those early examples of "being brave" created a ripple effect, inspiring others to rely on their expertise and lean into challenge rather than step back from it.

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## Sumit Anand

CIO,  
Academy Sports &  
Outdoors



Sumit Anand has served as EVP, CIO of Academy Sports and Outdoors since March 2025. Prior to Academy, he served in a variety of executive roles for At Home from 2018 to 2025 including CIO and Head of Strategy, SVP of Business and Technology Transformation at Signet Jewelers from 2015 to 2018 and in leadership roles at Accenture from 2007 to 2015. Mr. Anand holds a M.S. in Information Systems from the University of Colorado.

**SUCCESS STORY:** It has been a privilege leading the IT, Digital Delivery and Cyber teams at Academy Sports + Outdoors, guided by a performing while transforming mindset. Over the past year, we improved Enterprise PMO delivery metrics significantly while strengthening our core and digital platforms. We scaled Generative AI across the enterprise—from content and imagery to workflow automation and conversational search—making emerging technology a growth engine. We have had a relentless focus on people development and have upskilled more than 100 team members in Agile and consulting skills, accelerating cultural transformation and positioning IT as a trusted and strategic business partner.



## Jennifer Charbonneau

VP, Business  
Transformation,  
Chord Energy



Jennifer Charbonneau is Vice President of Business Transformation at Chord Energy, where she leads enterprise initiatives spanning AI, data, analytics, PMO, and innovation. With more than 20 years of experience in the oil and gas industry, she has held senior leadership roles across operations, EH&S, supply chain, and engineering. Jennifer began her career at Halliburton and holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from Cal Poly Pomona.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Over the past two years, we built Chord Energy's Business Transformation organization from the ground up, spanning AI, data science, analytics, PMO, and innovation. Together, we've delivered high-impact projects while building enterprise-wide capability through open, self-selected learning programs. Our teams exceeded free cash flow targets, with employee-led initiatives generating even more on top of that. Today, over half the organization actively engages in data and AI learning, creating momentum that continues to accelerate. This combination of value delivery and capability building has positioned Chord for sustained innovation and performance.



## Martin Christensen

CDIO,  
CenterPoint Energy



Current: Chief Digital & Information Officer at CenterPoint Energy previously serving as Senior Vice President and Chief Information Security Officer (CISO). Extensive leadership experience in transforming organizations by improving customer experiences, delivering effective and efficient use of digital resources and reducing enterprise risk. Marty had an extensive career at Ford Motor Company, where he held multiple Global leadership roles focused on building enterprise and industry capability.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Technology Resiliency and the efforts to build solutions that provide proactive and reactive resilience tooling such as our improved Outage Tracker for customers to understand status, Communications solutions that allow proactive communications to customers, Visualization/mapping solutions improvements that enable technicians and operations to respond to outages, AI & Innovation - Process automation, personal productivity innovation solutions, and customer & call center innovation solutions that provide efficiencies and effectiveness in operations and strategy



## Calvin Leong

VP, Information & Digital  
Technology,  
DNOW L.P.



As the unified leader of IT and Digital Technology for the newly combined DNOW and MRC Global, Calvin Leong is spearheading the strategic integration of two global entities. Currently leading the mission-critical synergies, revenue, and operational initiatives, Calvin Leong operates on the principle that people are the organization's greatest asset and fostering trust and accountability to empowers teams to navigate uncertainty and turn constant change into a sustainable competitive advantage for the company.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Leading the digital integration of DNOW and MRC Global, I transformed a high-stakes merger into a strategic win. My "people-first" philosophy drove the successful remediation of a critical ERP implementation, a primary focus in our 2026 earnings. By prioritizing trust and accountability, my team accelerated consolidative initiatives to achieve annual cost synergies, exceeding expectations for that goal in year one. We turned "constant change" into a competitive advantage, leveraging our combined talents & platform to create new revenue streams and empower our workforce to navigate uncertainty, proving that technology is the engine of organizational resilience and growth.



## Melanie Kirkwood Ruiz

CIO,  
ABM Industries



Melanie Kirkwood Ruiz serves as Chief Information Officer of ABM, leading enterprise technology strategy and transformation across a global organization. Recognized among the Forbes CIO Next, she drives innovation, data enablement, and operational modernization to fuel growth and elevate client and team member experience. Melanie also serves as an independent board director for UGI Corporation, advising on strategy, cyber, AI and governance. She holds an MBA from Northwestern Kellogg and engineering degrees from Cornell University.

**SUCCESS STORY:** As CIO, I believe technology must shape enterprise strategy, not simply support it. Under my leadership, ABM's technology organization evolved from a tactical function into a strategic growth engine driving measurable business impact across a global enterprise. This philosophy led to creating ABM Connect, empowering our frontline workforce with real time intelligence that strengthens client relationships and modernizes service delivery. We led a massive digital transformation across the enterprise unifying a modern technology ecosystem and launched ABM Next to institutionalize innovation. Today, Technology fuels revenue growth, resilience, and competitive differentiation, positioning ABM as a technology forward industry leader.



## Garreth Speer

CIO,  
Landry's Inc



Garreth Speer is Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer at Landry's, Inc., leading enterprise technology across a diversified food, hospitality, and entertainment organization. He is known for a disciplined, people-first leadership style and a strong focus on profitability, efficiency, and execution. Garreth has led large-scale enterprise transformations leveraging shared services, data, and AI to deliver measurable business value and consistent operations across a complex, multi-brand portfolio.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, I embedded the guiding principle of "Standardize, Centralize, Simplify" into how we operate IT, including the adoption of a shared services model that brought consistency and scalability across a highly diverse enterprise. We launched an Enterprise Data & AI strategy focused on measurable business outcomes, creating a trusted data foundation and advanced analytics capabilities. A key result was an AI-powered pricing intelligence solution spanning 100,000+ SKUs that recovered lost revenue and strengthened margin protection. In parallel, we delivered a Customer 360, customer-centric view, enabling personalized engagement, improved marketing ROI, and stronger cross-business experiences that support sustained growth.



## **Terrence Gee**

Rice University vice president for technology solutions & services and chief information officer

# Celebrating Leadership in Technology and Service

**Rice University proudly recognizes Terrence Gee, vice president for technology solutions & services and chief information officer, as a finalist for the 2026 Houston CIO ORBIE Awards, Enterprise category.**

Technology is a catalyst for Rice's research, education and global mission. Through a commitment to partnership and service, Terrence is transforming our digital landscape — ensuring our systems are as world-class as our research.

By bridging our main Houston campus with our growing global network, his leadership is modernizing our digital foundation to empower discovery and create a seamless experience for our community.



# ENTERPRISE FINALISTS

OVER \$1 BILLION  
IN ANNUAL REVENUE



## Keefe Andrews

VP, IT,  
SpawGlass



Keefe has been providing IT support and leadership for SpawGlass for over 20 years. He enjoys unlocking the power of technology for his team members and family. When he is not busy working with his team to deliver the absolute best construction experience, he can be found at home spending time with his wife and 4 kids gardening, exploring nature, and seeking out new regional experiences.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Our team streamlined operations by maximizing existing technology. We simplified safety participation so that our subcontractors scan a QR code to complete daily job-site risk assessments, improving accountability and site visibility. We have also streamlined timesheet entry, fully automated the onboarding of IT services for new hires, and provided key insights on operational metrics leading to increased profitability.



## Terrence Gee

CIO,  
Rice University



Terrence M. Gee is Chief Information Officer at Rice University, where he leads Technology Solutions & Services and advances the university's digital strategy in support of teaching, research, and student success. He oversees enterprise technology, research & academic computing, and information security, while enabling innovation through enterprise architecture and the responsible adoption of AI and automation. Terrence focuses on building trusted digital foundations that strengthen institutional capability and enable exceptional experiences across the Rice community.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Our team is working closely with faculty, staff, and campus leaders to build a more connected and reliable digital foundation that clearly supports the university's mission. We are strengthening core systems, establishing digital trust through clearer governance and operational practices, and advancing priorities that support research, teaching, and student services. New capabilities in automation and AI are helping teams rethink workflows and improve service delivery. Just as important, we are listening and collaborating to rebuild trust across campus. While much work remains, we have established a shared direction and a durable foundation for enhancing the Rice Experience.



## Stephen Liverman

VP, Information &  
Operations Technology,  
TPC Group LLC



Stephen Liverman is an accomplished IT executive with extensive global experience leading enterprise technology organizations across the petrochemical and energy sectors. He has managed 200+ professionals and budgets exceeding \$100 million, driving digital transformation through ERP modernization, cybersecurity, infrastructure optimization, and AI strategy. A collaborative change leader, Stephen has delivered significant cost savings, led mergers and divestitures, and aligned IT strategy with business objectives to enable operational excellence and sustainable growth.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Spearheaded a multi-year enterprise transformation—"Operation Spend Smart"—to modernize applications, infrastructure, and cybersecurity across purchasing, capital projects, maintenance, turnarounds, and warehouse operations. Secured Board approval for an \$8M investment to drive \$15M in annual savings; delivered under budget at \$7.8M and exceeded expectations with a \$18M+ annual run-rate and \$34M+ in three-year savings. Implemented Oracle EBS (Projects, EAM, Inventory, Services Procurement, Time & Labor), embedding disciplined processes and elevating organizational capability. The program's exceptional ROI and operational impact led leadership to extend the initiative, positioning technology as a sustained competitive advantage.



## Ken Piddington

Chief Digital, Technology  
& Integration Officer,  
RelaDyne



Ken Piddington is a transformational technology executive and Chief Digital, Technology & Integration Officer at RelaDyne. He leads enterprise technology, digital strategy, M&A integration, and ESG, aligning innovation with business performance. Ken has driven scalable growth, operational excellence, and measurable shareholder value across multiple industries. An award-winning industry thought leader, he is recognized for building scalable platforms, accelerating value realization, and developing high-impact enterprise leaders.

**SUCCESS STORY:** RelaWay Dispatch Platform — Route Optimization & Operational Excellence To elevate logistics performance, we designed and launched RelaWay, a proprietary dispatch and route optimization platform that transformed how our lubricant distribution network operates. Previously reliant on manual processes, routing lacked real-time visibility and consistency. In less than a year, we partnered with operations to deploy RelaWay across multiple regions. By integrating telematics, delivery data, and machine learning, the platform dynamically optimizes daily routes based on demand and operational constraints. RelaWay improved load efficiency, reduced empty miles, and enhanced delivery reliability, advancing our shift toward digital, data-driven operations and strengthening customer satisfaction.



## David Riggan

Deputy CIO,  
BMC Software



David Riggan is the CIO of BMC Software with 35+ years of international IT leadership experience. He leads BMC's global IT organization and is widely recognized for driving enterprise-wide innovation across AI, cloud modernization, automation, and digital transformation. Known for building internal capabilities and delivering measurable business impact, David has led initiatives that improve productivity, accelerate decision-making, and modernize the way BMC's teams operate worldwide.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, IT delivered transformative results that advanced BMC's strategic goals and operational excellence. Project ROME, an 18-month Quote-to-Cash transformation integrating 50+ applications, now generates \$18M in annualized value through improved billing accuracy, faster revenue recognition, and better customer experience. We scaled automation to 1M+ workflows, eliminating 480,000+ manual hours (~230 FTEs) and driving \$18M in cost avoidance. Cybersecurity innovation—including a real-time data hub analyzing billions of daily events—enabled zero major breaches and earned recognition as a Forbes Most Cybersecure Company and CIO 100 Award.



## Scott Turner

CIO,  
Expro



Scott Turner is a senior technology executive with more than 30 years of global IT leadership experience, including seven years as CIO for Expro. He has a proven track record of modernizing enterprise systems, leading cloud and ERP transformations, and driving multimillion-dollar efficiencies across operations, finance, and supply chain. Scott is known for building high-performing global teams and aligning technology strategy with business growth and operational excellence.

**SUCCESS STORY:** This year, our IT team delivered transformative initiatives that strengthened security, streamlined operations, and elevated productivity across the enterprise. We modernized our cybersecurity platform with advanced data protection and Zero Trust capabilities, integrated two acquisitions onto our enterprise systems, and enhanced our document management environment with AI-driven search. Operational efficiency improved through new analytics dashboards, optimized Source-to-Pay workflows, and automated financial processes. These achievements—delivered despite tight resources—reflect the dedication, innovation, and resilience of our global IT team,

# CELEBRATING LEADERSHIP THAT POWERS INNOVATION

JERA Americas proudly congratulates Chief Information Officer Tyler Falkenhagen on being named a finalist for the 2026 Houston CIO ORBIE Awards. This recognition reflects his forward-looking vision, strategic technology leadership and unwavering commitment to driving innovation across our business.



**Jera**  
AMERICAS

# LARGE CORPORATE FINALISTS

OVER \$500 MILLION  
IN ANNUAL REVENUE



## Jim Bailey

SVP & CIO,  
UPS Industrial Services



Jim Bailey is a Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer who operates at the intersection of technology, enterprise value, and execution. He partners with executive leadership and Boards to modernize operating models, strengthen cybersecurity, and ensure technology investments improve margin, resilience, and scalability. Known for disciplined capital allocation and hands-on leadership, he builds accountable teams that deliver measurable business impact in complex industrial environments.

**SUCCESS STORY:** As CIO of UPS Industrial Services, Jim led the complete post-divestiture carve-out and rebuild of the company's technology foundation under compressed timelines with zero operational disruption. He reset governance, strengthened cybersecurity, simplified core platforms, and introduced targeted automation to improve execution speed and visibility across the enterprise. The result was a more resilient, disciplined operating model that enabled the company to scale confidently while building a leadership team capable of sustaining performance.



## Darryl Daniel

CTO,  
Houston Airport System



Darryl Daniel is Chief Technology Officer for Houston Airport System, where he leads enterprise technology, cybersecurity, communications, and the Technology PMO supporting IAH, HOU, and Ellington Airport/Houston Spaceport. With 25 years of experience in airport systems and consulting, he has led major aviation programs nationwide. Darryl currently serves as Chair of ACI-NA's Business Information Technology Committee and holds PMP, IAP, commercial pilot credentials, and an undergrad degree in engineering and a graduate degree in business.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, the technology organization has transformed culture and innovation into measurable performance in the public sector. Despite competing with private industry for talent, we recruit on mission and retain through a purpose-driven culture focused on enhancing the passenger experience. I've embedded a customer-first mindset, elevating technology from a support role to a strategic enabler. Performance is managed through KPIs and OKRs, powered by our in-house Passenger Journey Score platform, which provides real-time insight into key passenger touchpoints. By aligning people, data, and purpose, we deliver measurable results and demonstrate that world-class innovation begins with service-driven leadership.



## Marcus Manning

CIO,  
Smart Financial Credit Union



Marcus Manning is a well-rounded strategic and innovative leader. He is currently the Chief Information Officer and Head of Cybersecurity for Smart Financial Credit Union. Marcus has held several executive roles throughout his career. Marcus is a governing Board Member for the Texas Technology Summit. He is a visionary leader with a strong passion for people and a dedicated focus on strategic execution. In his spare time, Marcus enjoys reading, running, golf, and family time.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, Smart Financial has achieved significant growth and financial success. As a strategic and forward-thinking leader, I lead strategic innovation, AI governance, and cybersecurity resilience. I successfully led and continue to lead our digital transformation journey. I recently spearheaded initiatives to increase member satisfaction scores by reducing friction in our account opening process. I also lead initiatives to reduce fraud and increase account security using AI and behavioral biometrics technology to prevent financial crime. I have significantly improved employee morale and employee engagement by leading with empathy and a spirit of excellence.



## Raymond Mitten

VP, Advanced Digital Technologies,  
Imperative Chemical Partners



Raymond drives AI innovation and digital modernization at Imperative Chemical Partners by blending science and technology with an unconventional fine arts foundation from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. This unique alignment fuels his revolutionary approach to data partnerships with energy supermajors. A 25-year AI visionary and published contributor, he pioneered STATISTICA at StatSoft and led initiatives at ConocoPhillips, building solution ecosystems essential for operational efficiency to Unlock Hidden Energy.

**SUCCESS STORY:** As VP of Advanced Digital Technologies at Imperative Chemical Partners, I lead digital transformation, data modernization, cybersecurity, and AI innovation across international operations. We built a secure, cloud-native lakehouse that unifies lab, field, operational, and financial data into real-time AI insights. While IT operations remain essential, my focus is revolutionizing the energy sector through AI and performance optimization to Unlock Hidden Energy, improve asset uptime, and enhance safety. By insourcing digital talent, standardizing data, and delivering intuitive analytics and mobile workflows, we strengthen customer trust and position technology as a strategic engine for growth.



## Kevin Weiland

IT Director ,  
HJ Baker Sr.



Kevin Weiland, Sr. Director of IT and Business Systems at H.J. Baker, leads global technology operations from The Woodlands, Texas. He supports global Sulphur marketing operations in the US, Europe and Asia. Kevin recently delivered multiple six figures in annual savings through data center consolidation, optimizing internet providers, and other software license resizing efforts. He manages a local and hybrid team providing 24/7 support, and recently deployed AI agents for helpdesk and ERP systems support.

**SUCCESS STORY:** I delivered \$270,000 in annual savings by optimizing Microsoft licensing, resizing internet contracts, and executing a data center consolidation of Sage ERP and Rail Car logistics to Azure. I further standardized operations by integrating Canada into Sage. Simultaneously, I hardened our security posture through Application Whitelisting, Ransomware Prevention, Browser Security, MFA, and a 24/7 Security Operations Center. These initiatives retired legacy hardware risks and secured 24/7 availability for H.J. Baker's global logistics and manufacturing operations.

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STEPHEN LIVERMAN

TPC GROUP VP INFORMATION AND OPERATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

ON BEING NAMED A  
2026 HOUSTON CISO ORBIE AWARDS FINALIST!



## Leadership. Expertise. Impact.

For more than 25 years, Ann Delenela has earned distinction as a trusted authority in information security — shaping strategy, strengthening resilience, and elevating the standards of cyber protection for Entergy and across our industry. As vice president and chief information security officer for Entergy, her vision and broad knowledge continue to set the benchmark for effective cybersecurity stewardship.

We proudly celebrate Ann's selection as a finalist for the 2026 Houston CISO ORBIE Awards, recognizing her exceptional expertise and steady leadership.



A message from Entergy Corporation © 2026 Entergy Services, LLC. All rights reserved.

# CORPORATE FINALISTS

UP TO \$500 MILLION  
IN ANNUAL REVENUE



**John Baker**

CIO & CISO,  
Lexitas



John Baker is the CIO and CISO at Lexitas, where he leads enterprise technology and cybersecurity. John evolved IT from a traditional support function into a strategic business partner, delivering scalable, secure, and data-driven platforms. He champions cloud modernization, data management, and security, while introducing emerging capabilities like generative and agentic AI to drive operational efficiency and business insight. He is known for aligning technology and risk management with business outcomes and building high-performing teams.

**SUCCESS STORY:** The team evolved from a small group supporting a few hundred employees with routine IT services into an advanced technology organization supporting more than 50 acquisitions over six years. Today, it delivers leading-edge capabilities, including generative and agentic AI solutions. To integrate acquisitions at scale, the IT team leveraged platforms such as Boomi Master Data Hub, Salesforce, NetSuite, and Power BI to identify, cleanse, and consolidate hundreds of thousands of customer records. This effort eliminated duplicates, corrected critical data, ensured accurate post-acquisition customer service, and enabled reliable internal reporting on customer issues and sales performance across the growing enterprise globally.



**Jeff Green**

CIO,  
Strike



Jeff Green is a transformational technology executive with over 25 years of experience leading enterprise IT strategy, digital transformation, and operational modernization. As Chief Information Officer, he is known for aligning technology with business priorities to drive efficiency, reliability, and growth. A hands-on servant leader, Jeff builds high-performing teams, fosters cross-functional collaboration, and delivers measurable business value through disciplined execution and innovation.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, the IT team has delivered outcomes that went beyond technology by strengthening collaboration, resilience, and shared purpose. We modernized the IT foundation to help employees work more efficiently, securely, and in a more connected way, with a strong focus on empowering people rather than just deploying systems. Security became a shared responsibility, improving confidence and trust across the organization. We also streamlined critical business and operational processes, freeing teams from manual work and enabling greater focus on strategic priorities. The lasting impact has been improved efficiency, reliability, and a workforce better equipped to support the company's future.



**Tony Keo**

Director, IT,  
Race Rock



Born and raised in Houston, I have over 15 years of experience in technology. Starting from the helpdesk and moving my way through various infrastructure and operations roles, I was able to meet some amazing people who have helped me become the leader I am today.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Helping companies realize that technology is a force multiplier has been my passion since the beginning my career on the help desk, even if I didn't know how to articulate it. Taking this idea and partnering it with my leadership philosophy of the game of business is infinite, has allowed me to focus on building teams and systems that will outlive my time with them. My success story is measured by the people that still call me to ask for guidance when they are struggling, in the same way I ask my mentors.



**Michael Lewis**

CTO,  
Management Controls



Michael Lewis is a technology executive with more than 30 years of experience leading enterprise SaaS platforms for global, asset-intensive industries. As Chief Technology Officer at Management Controls, Michael oversees product, engineering, AI strategy, and infrastructure, modernizing platforms to scale securely and deliver measurable business value. Michael is known for building high-performing teams, partnering closely with customers, and translating complex technology into practical outcomes.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Management Controls, Inc. is an enterprise SaaS company helping heavy industry organizations manage contractor work, spend, and compliance at scale. Our team's signature accomplishment was building myTrack, a modern AI-enhanced solution to connect owners and contractors through a single system. The platform improves visibility, accelerates settlement processes, and delivers real time insights across desktop and mobile. With myTrack, contractors complete daily processes faster, while owners gain earlier insight into costs - improving productivity and keeping crews focused on safety and execution. Our greatest success has been delivering measurable value through a deeply aligned and innovative team.



**Joseph Paulraj**

CDO,  
Capital Farm Credit



From Associate Software Developer to Chief Digital Officer, my 18-year technology journey has been driven by innovation, transformation, and business impact. As an influencer in the Farm Credit System, I align business and IT strategies to drive growth, efficiency, and customer success. By leveraging emerging technologies and a Digital-First approach, I have led industry-leading adoption, streamlined operations, and enhanced customer experience, transforming agricultural finance through continuous innovation and modernization.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Our biggest success is making the digital transformation for Capital Farm Credit, and the partnerships we are creating along the way - not just in Texas, but across the entire Farm Credit System. My passion for innovation and business transformation has redefined how Texas ag and rural communities access financial services. By surpassing industry benchmarks in digital loan closures, we've made credit quicker, easier, and more efficient. This impact led to my recent promotion as Capital Farm Credit's youngest, first-ever IT Executive (Chief Digital Officer), driving technology transformation in an institution serving Texas agriculture for over 100 years.



**Misty Witmer**

Director & CIO,  
Galveston County



Misty Witmer is the Director/Chief Information Officer for Galveston County's Department of Enterprise Services, where she leads enterprise technology strategy, cybersecurity, infrastructure, and digital modernization efforts. She is known for building high-performing teams, strengthening operational resilience, and aligning technology with organizational mission and service delivery. Misty is passionate about developing future leaders, continuous improvement, enterprise service delivery and advancing innovative, responsible technology practices in the public sector.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, Galveston County's technology organization evolved into a unified enterprise service team supporting all County departments. We modernized core infrastructure, strengthened cybersecurity, and improved network and systems reliability to reduce risk and ensure continuity of critical public services. My team also laid the groundwork for major digital transformation initiatives, including ERP modernization, improved data governance, public safety system replacements and judicial system migrations. Beyond technology, we built a culture of collaboration, accountability, and service excellence - ensuring county staff have dependable tools and secure systems to better serve the community every day.



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nominees and winners of the  
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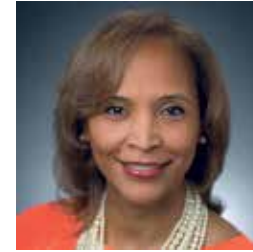
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