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# SOUTH FLORIDA BUSINESS JOURNAL

2026

# SOUTHFLORIDA ORBIE® AWARDS

The annual South Florida ORBIE® Awards honors chief information officers who have demonstrated excellence in technology leadership. Winners in the Global, Large Enterprise, Enterprise, Large Corporate & Corporate categories will be announced May 29 at The Diplomat Beach Resort.

 **SOUTHFLORIDACIO**



## FROM THE CHAIR

Leading Through  
Acceleration: The  
Evolving Mandate of  
Technology Leadership



## LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT & KEYNOTE

Leadership Award recipient: Carrier  
Chief Digital Officer Bobby George  
on career-defining moments and the  
challenges ahead

# CONGRATULATIONS 2026 SOUTH FLORIDA ORBIE NOMINEES

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Corporation (SBA)

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**DENISE WALKER**  
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**SASHA SECO ALVAREZ**  
ANF Group

**POLLY XU**  
Otis Worldwide Corporation

## Leading Through Acceleration: The Evolving Mandate of Technology Leadership

We are living in an era where technology is no longer only enabling business; it is defining it. Today's CIOs face rising expectations to move faster, create measurable value, and anticipate what comes next, across digital transformation, platform modernization, enterprise architecture, cybersecurity, data, and AI-driven operating models. The leaders recognized this year at the 2026 South Florida ORBIE Awards show how disciplined execution, strategic foresight, and innovation work together to translate velocity into sustained advantage.

SouthFloridaCIO brings together technology leaders from the region's most dynamic organizations to foster meaningful connections, exchange practical insights, and elevate the impact of IT leadership. While industries and enterprise environments vary, our shared responsibility is clear: to lead with intent, design organizations that can adapt quickly, and deliver measurable business value through technology.

As part of the Inspire Leadership Network, SouthFloridaCIO is connected to a powerful community of more

than 2,000 C suite executives across over 50 chapters throughout North America, representing public, private, and nonprofit organizations. Inspire also supports dedicated communities for chief information security officers (CISOs) and chief marketing officers (CMOs), underscoring the importance of strong partnerships across the executive team.

For more than 25 years, the ORBIE Awards have recognized C suite executives who demonstrate leadership excellence, innovation, and business impact. I invite you to join us at the 2026 South Florida ORBIE Awards to honor the technology leaders shaping the future of their organizations and our region.

On behalf of SouthFloridaCIO, congratulations to all nominees and finalists on these well deserved achievements. I also extend my sincere thanks to our awards partners, chapter underwriters, and Inspire staff whose ongoing support makes the SouthFloridaCIO ORBIE Awards possible.



Sincerely,

**Tricia Ferreira**

2026 Chair, SouthFloridaCIO  
SVP, World Fuel



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# Bobby George

SVP & Chief Digital Officer | Carrier Global Corporation

South Florida ORBIE Leadership Award recipient Bobby George on career-defining moments and the challenges ahead

By The Business Journals Content Studio

Bobby George takes pride in having contributed to many “big moments” throughout his career, helping organizations drive meaningful transformation. But he emphasized that “helping people grow, opening doors and leaving organizations stronger and more forward-looking than when I found them” is how he would like to be remembered.

George’s career has spanned more than 25 years of driving digital innovation and business impact for organizations such as Abbott (formerly St. Jude Medical) and GE. He currently serves as the Senior Vice President and Chief Digital Officer at Carrier Global, a leader in intelligent climate and energy solutions.

In recognition of his accomplishments, George will receive the Leadership Award as part of the 2026 South Florida ORBIE Awards ceremony at The Diplomat Beach Resort on May 29. The program honors Chief Information Officers and Chief Digital Officers who have demonstrated excellence in technology leadership.

## DEFINING MOMENTS

One milestone that defined George’s work approach was leading global services for St. Jude Medical. This position helped him expand beyond technology into full operating responsibility. “Growing the business, improving margins and reshaping the service model gave me a deeper appreciation for the connection between strategy, execution and

**“It wasn’t just about standing up systems and capabilities, it was about helping create new energy, ambition and a more modern digital foundation inside a company with more than 100 years of history.”**

customer impact,” he said. “That was a period of real growth for me as a leader.”

That growth propelled George during his time at GE, when he helped implement digital transformation at industrial scale across multiple departments. The experience “shaped how I think about technology, not as an end, but as a lever for productivity, innovation and better business outcomes,” George said.

## MOVING THE BUSINESS FORWARD

George’s current role with Carrier encompasses a dual function. “The CIO side means I’m accountable for a global technology estate,” George said. “The CDO side means I’m responsible for how we turn that infrastructure into competitive advantage, AI, data platforms, digital products, connected building and cold chain solutions. The role is at the intersection of technology, business transformation and enterprise risk, which is where I believe the CIO/CDO function belongs today.”

George is especially proud of helping Carrier become an independent public company. Carrier debuted its IPO in 2020 as a separate entity from United Technologies, in part to focus on its core businesses and digital offerings. “That was a special chapter,” George said. “It wasn’t just about standing up systems and capabilities, it was about helping create new energy, ambition and a more modern digital foundation inside a company with more than 100 years of history.”

## TODAY’S TECH LEADERS MUST FACE DOWN A “CONSTANT TENSION”

Even after its successful transition to a public company, Carrier’s leadership team still faces many complex challenges.

One of the top technology challenges facing leaders today is “the velocity of AI,” George said. “Every CEO is asking their CIO to deploy AI at scale while simultaneously asking them not to break anything. Those two imperatives are in constant tension.”

It’s not only a matter of remaining competitive while minimizing risk. It’s also a matter of talent and future skills. “The skills I need today — AI engineering, data product management, applied ML (machine learning) — didn’t exist as job categories five years ago. You’re building an organization for a future that’s still being defined,” George said. “A key to unlocking this is making my Chief Human Resources Officer a partner in this skills transformation journey.”

## LEADING WITH LASTING IMPACT

George looks back with pride on his career accomplishments that made a tangible business impact. But his work as a leader is something he’s equally proud of on a personal level.

“Serving on innovation committees and in venture advisory roles has given me the chance to stay connected to new ideas and help others think bigger about what’s possible,” he said. “Just as meaningful to me is the talent I’ve had the privilege to build and support over the years. Seeing people I’ve worked with go on to flourish in other organizations and bigger roles is one of the most rewarding parts of my career.”

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

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## CONGRATULATIONS

**Gatha Sadhir**

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT  
GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY

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# GLOBAL FINALISTS

OVER \$1B ANNUAL REVENUE & MULTI-NATIONAL OPERATIONS



## Shawna Cartwright

SVP & CIO, Enterprise Technology, Cushman & Wakefield



Shawna is the Enterprise Technology CIO for Cushman & Wakefield, leading the strategic alignment and execution of enterprise applications, data, and AI initiatives across Finance, Legal, Marketing, Procurement, and People functions. She oversees the Technology PMO and Intelligent Automation, driving integrated delivery and scalable innovation. With more than 25 years of global experience, Shawna is recognized for bridging business and technology, building high-performing teams, and delivering measurable enterprise value and sustainable growth.

**SUCCESS STORY:** In 2025, Enterprise Technology at Cushman & Wakefield moved from operational support to enterprise acceleration & innovation. We modernized our financial and data architecture to enable AI-ready analytics, transformed digital marketing into a demand-generation engine outperforming competitors in generative search visibility, and deployed AI-driven contract intelligence to reduce revenue leakage and uncover upsell opportunities. At the same time, we executed a complex global divestiture with zero disruption and redesigned our automation portfolio, reducing operating costs by more than 60%. The result: stronger revenue velocity, structural cost discipline, and a scalable foundation for AI-enabled growth across the enterprise.



## Michael Delgado

Global CIO, Unique Vacations - Sandals/Beaches Resorts



Michael Delgado is the Global CIO for a global hospitality and travel enterprise, leading technology strategy, digital transformation, data/AI enablement, and 24x7 operations across multiple geographies. He has modernized core commerce and enterprise platforms, improved resilience and cybersecurity alignment, and delivered measurable gains in conversion, productivity, and guest satisfaction. Michael is known for outcome-driven leadership, building high-performing teams, and turning technology into a practical growth engine.

**SUCCESS STORY:** As Global CIO, I led a multi-year digital and AI transformation that improved revenue performance, operational efficiency, and guest experience across a global hospitality enterprise. We modernized core booking, pricing, and distribution platforms to deliver 99.99% availability, reduce booking latency by ~40%, and enable real-time pricing and availability across digital and partner channels. We embedded AI into service, marketing, and operations—reducing average handle time ~20%, improving first-contact resolution, and automating thousands of hours of manual work annually. Technology became a measurable growth engine, not a support function.



## Rodrigo Gonzalez Hermosillo

CIO, Softek



Chief Information Officer at Softek with extensive experience leading enterprise-wide digital transformation and technology strategy. I specialize in building adaptable technology ecosystems, advancing cloud and AI adoption, and enabling business innovation at scale. With a strong background in global leadership, governance, and operational excellence, I am passionate about developing teams, enhancing customer experiences, and fostering a collaborative, future-ready organization.

**SUCCESS STORY:** By redefining how IT creates value, our lean organization proved that impact is driven by alignment, not size. We eliminated communication barriers between IT and the business, collaborated to optimize processes, and introduced innovative technology solutions that had not been previously considered. IT evolved from an order-taker into a business-centered partner, proactively proposing solutions aligned to strategic goals. Technical requirements now flow from value-driven designs. Through continuous self-challenge and improvement, we consistently deliver greater business impact. That is what IT organizations are meant to do.



## Jenifer Jones

VP, NAM Technology, Global Data & Analytics, Bacardi



Jenifer Jones is a technology leader with over 20 years of experience, currently holding the roles of North America Regional CIO and Global Data and Analytics Lead at Bacardi. Jenifer is known for fostering collaboration and her passion for using data-driven storytelling to inspire action. Before joining Bacardi Jenifer held leadership roles at IBM, Deloitte & Touche, Estee Lauder and Jellyfish. Jenifer holds advanced degrees in Operations Research and Industrial Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Despite a challenging year, the Bacardi data & technology team excelled. We delivered a seamless office relocation, including network and collaborative spaces, on a tight timeline. We also enhanced data and analytics, supply chain and commercial execution tools, driving data-driven decisions globally. Exceptional budget management, through cost optimization and automation, enabled us to deliver critical services efficiently. My leadership ensured quality and progress, fostering collaboration and innovation to achieve significant business impact.



## Gatha Sadhir

EVP, Global Technology, Jazwares



Gatha Sadhir is Executive Vice President of Global Technology at Jazwares LLC, a Berkshire Hathaway company, leading enterprise-wide digital transformation, innovation, IT, and security. A recognized technology leader, she drives secure, forward-looking strategies that accelerate growth and operational excellence. Previously Global CISO at Carnival Corporation, Gatha brings 25+ years of experience across industries. She holds an MBA, a Computer Engineering degree, and executive certifications from Carnegie Mellon University and Harvard Business School.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, the IT organization transformed into a strategic business partner, delivering enterprise-scale outcomes while fostering a people-first culture. The team led complex cross-functional initiatives, accelerated decision-making, and strengthened stakeholder confidence. We established responsible AI practices, scaled innovation for efficiency and revenue growth, and modernized platforms to improve speed, security, and consistency. People-focused initiatives increased engagement, inclusion, and trust across a global team. By integrating innovation, disciplined execution, and culture, we built a high-performing, future-ready technology organization where results and collaboration reinforce one another. During his tenure, he developed a responsive.



## Luis Suarez

CTO, H.I.G. Capital



Luis Suarez is Chief Technology Officer at H.I.G. Capital, responsible for the firm's global technology program. Since joining in 2005, he has built and scaled a world-class technology organization across more than twenty-five offices worldwide. He previously served as Principal at Forensic Technology Group and held roles at United Technologies and Ryder System. Luis holds a BA from Duke University and both an MS and MBA from the University of Miami.

**SUCCESS STORY:** The most meaningful accomplishment of the past twenty years has been building a world-class technology organization capable of continuously modernizing H.I.G.'s global platform. What began as a small, reactive support group evolved into a mature, globally coordinated team — driven not by technology, but by people. That foundation enabled the team to scale alongside the firm, modernize every layer of its technology footprint, and keep the firm fully operational through major disruptions. That same discipline now positions H.I.G. to lead confidently into an AI-enabled future — with technology serving not as a support function, but as a true competitive differentiator.

# LARGE ENTERPRISE FINALISTS

OVER \$1.5B ANNUAL REVENUE



## Mario Cruz

CTO,  
Watsco Ventures



Mario Cruz is CTO & Director of Watsco Ventures, leading tech strategy for the world's largest HVAC/R distributor. With 20+ years in Fortune-1000 firms and startups, he oversees a great team and champions AI, IoT, FinTech, and digital platforms. A mentor, Maker Faire Miami co-producer, and musician, Mario blends technical expertise with community-building to drive innovation and growth.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Our team introduced AI across core business areas by focusing on practical, measurable outcomes rather than technology for its own sake. We prioritized use cases that improved efficiency, strengthened the customer experience, and reduced manual effort, then built a repeatable playbook: identify a need, prototype quickly, measure outcomes, and scale what works. This framework delivered a 40% reduction in CSR ticket handling, a 15% increase in product-development efficiency, and better customer satisfaction. The playbook now guides all future AI digital initiatives at Watsco and Watsco Ventures, ensuring sustainable, iterative modernization and building confidence in AI's everyday role.



## Domenic DiLullo

CIO,  
Broward County



Domenic S. DiLullo Jr., Chief Information Officer for Broward County, leads enterprise technology strategy for more than 70 lines of business, including Port Everglades, Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, Transportation, and Public Safety. With over 20 years of executive leadership across public and private sectors, Domenic advances cybersecurity, cloud modernization, and AI innovation, while supporting technology & Communication initiatives for the 2025 FIFA Club World Cup and 2026 FIFA World Cup.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, ETS advanced responsible AI adoption and enterprise cybersecurity modernization at scale. We conducted a comprehensive AI assessment spanning tools, data privacy, governance, and public-sector use cases, culminating in a pilot with the County Attorney's Office that measurably improved legal productivity and service quality leading to 40 new AI use cases. Concurrently, our Data Comms team earned the National Association of Counties (NaCO) Achievement Award for implementing a countywide network segmentation strategy. This initiative strengthened zero-trust principles, reduced breach exposure, enforced role-based access controls, and materially enhanced enterprise cybersecurity resilience for one of the nation's largest county governments.



## Spencer Lamy

CIO & CISO,  
NationsBenefits



Spencer Lamy is CIO and CISO at NationsBenefits, where he leads enterprise technology, cybersecurity, AI strategy, and modernization initiatives in a highly regulated healthcare and fintech environment. A seasoned technology executive, he has held CIO, CTO, and CISO roles across banking, healthcare, biotech, telecom, and SaaS organizations. Spencer holds an MBA from Kellogg and a master's in cybersecurity, and is known for aligning technology strategy with growth, resilience, and measurable business value.

**SUCCESS STORY:** I'm proud of building an IT organization that delivers measurable business value through innovation, resilience, and disciplined execution. My team achieved more than \$3.6 million in annual savings, strengthened security through Zero Trust and identity modernization, supported acquisition integration, and improved scalability for a workforce of approximately 4,500 employees. We also streamlined onboarding and automation to support rapid seasonal growth. Together, these efforts reduced risk, improved operational performance, and positioned the organization to grow



## Michael Paseltiner

CIO,  
Independent Living Systems



Michael Paseltiner serves as the CIO for Independent Living Systems (ILS). He is a highly accomplished information technology executive with over 30 years of experience. Michael is responsible for all IT functions, including systems development, infrastructure, systems administration, support, security and project management.

**SUCCESS STORY:** As a managed Medicaid provider to the Florida Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA), monthly reviews of the company's performance against the contract are conducted. Part of the review includes a security risk assessment, performed by AHCA, of the plan's website. Florida Community Care's (the ILS Managed Medicaid plan) website received the first ever perfect score issued by AHCA.



## CJ Slyfield

Chief Product &  
Technology Officer,  
Hunt Military Communities



CJ Slyfield is CPTO at Hunt Military Communities, where he leads technology strategy for the US' largest military housing enterprise, driving financial performance, operational scale, and quality of life of military families. He is an eagle scout with a career spanning NASA, Apple, and TaylorMade-Adidas Golf. He holds a PhD from Cornell, MBA from Kellogg, and BS from UC Berkeley. He is a board member of Hire Heroes USA and an AI-focused VC firm.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Four years ago, IT was a reactive cost center with no analytics, governance, or innovation foundation. Today it is the growth engine of a \$1.5B enterprise. We built a people-first culture aligned to value creation, then deployed a closed-loop automation platform spanning Salesforce, mobile, and ERP, with a real-time analytics layer giving leadership full operational and financial visibility. Revenue doubled in three years. Cash flow grew 277%. Five acquisitions doubled our portfolio from 30,000 to 60,000 homes, absorbing the growth and turnover dropped over 30%. Our business is now the recognized thought leader in operational transformation across our industry.

# ENTERPRISE FINALISTS

OVER \$900M ANNUAL REVENUE



**Jason Ball**

CIO,  
Florida Atlantic University



Jason Ball has over 25 years of experience in IT leadership in higher education. He joined Florida Atlantic University (FAU) in May 2009 as Chief Information Officer. As part of his role at FAU, Jason serves as the chair of the board of Florida Lambda Rail (FLR), Florida's Education and Research Network. Jason is also responsible for overseeing the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Analysis, the official state and federal reporting office for FAU.

**SUCCESS STORY:** The Office of Information Technology (OIT) team at Florida Atlantic has become known as a strategic partner that contributes beyond the traditional operational expectations of a central technology unit. The team provides insights and support for student success initiatives, contributing to Florida Atlantic's rise in state and national rankings, including a recent designation as a top 100 public university. Our research computing team's support for grants, and highly scalable secure research infrastructure, has contributed to Florida Atlantic's designation as a Carnegie R1 top-tier research institution. More recently, our support for AI adoption has impacted recruitment, instruction, and beyond.



**Joe DiPrima**

CIO,  
Cordis



Joe DiPrima is the CIO of Cordis, where he leads global IT strategy, enterprise technology, cybersecurity and GenAI transformation. He has led large-scale ERP transformations, cloud migration, and analytics initiatives across regulated healthcare companies. Joe partners closely with business leaders to deliver modern, secure, and scalable solutions that improve operational performance. He brings deep experience aligning technology, governance, and innovation to support growth, resilience, and value creation across global organizations.

**SUCCESS STORY:** My proudest accomplishment was building the full technology backbone of a newly independent company in under two years. With limited support and resources from the seller, we stood up the IT organization, governance, processes, and policies from scratch—along with infrastructure, core systems, cybersecurity, cloud, and data platforms—while keeping the business running. That foundation enabled commercial growth, operations agility, regulatory compliance, and financial reporting with a modern, scalable, cloud-based architecture. It was a true zero-to-one transformation under tight timelines and budgets—and it positioned Cordis to operate independently and grow.



**Frank Quintana**

CIO,  
City of Miami Beach, FL



Frank Quintana is the Chief Information Officer for the City of Miami Beach, where he leads the strategy, governance, and delivery of technology services supporting all city operations. With more than 28 years of experience across public and private sectors, including professional sports, entertainment, and logistics, he focuses on building strong teams, modernizing technology environments, and using innovation to improve public services and operational efficiency.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, the City of Miami Beach's IT Department has evolved into a strategic partner supporting every city function, from public safety to resident services. Our team of sixty professionals delivers secure, reliable technology that enables city operations while advancing modernization across infrastructure, cybersecurity, data, and digital services. We have maintained stable operating costs while strengthening cybersecurity and improving how residents and visitors access city services. I am most proud of the culture we have built, one that values collaboration, learning, and accountability, allowing our team to grow while delivering meaningful outcomes for the community.



**Denise Walker**

CIO & CTO,  
Starwood Hotels



Denise Walker is a global hospitality technology executive with over 20 years of experience leading enterprise IT operations, digital transformation, and innovation. As CIO/CTO for Starwood Hotels, she oversees technology strategy, IT operations, and cybersecurity, driving scalable growth and exceptional guest experiences. Denise has held senior leadership roles with iconic brands including Royal Caribbean, Brookfield Hospitality/Atlantis Paradise Island, and Virgin Hotels, and is recognized for her human-led, tech-forward approach to transformation.

**SUCCESS STORY:** In 2025, Starwood Hotels' IT organization focused on one principle: technology should simplify the business and protect operational performance. A global team of 36 professionals now manages more than 7,500 endpoints and 100+ enterprise applications supporting hotels and corporate teams worldwide. Through disciplined architecture, integrated guest platforms, and strengthened cybersecurity controls—including 239,000 security patches and 27,000 phishing threats blocked—the team improved operational reliability, enhanced guest engagement, and supported global portfolio expansion. These efforts ensure technology operates as a structural enabler of asset performance, margin protection, and scalable growth.

# LARGE CORPORATE FINALISTS

OVER \$350M ANNUAL REVENUE



**Michael Gussow**

CIO,  
HKS Inc.



Michael Gussow is a Principal and Chief Information Officer at HKS. He enjoys working with customers and clients to develop and execute strategies that accelerate growth, innovation and measurable financial benefits. Having an affinity for solving problems and building coalitions, Michael specializes in leading digital transformations, global enterprise technology operations, and shepherding organizations through the complex process of creating and executing roadmaps that align technology with business strategy.

**SUCCESS STORY:** The IT team is successfully executing one of the firm's most ambitious transformation agendas managing four complex, enterprise initiatives simultaneously across an 8–16 month horizon. We are replacing a customized legacy ERP with a modern unified financial and project planning platform; migrating from an on-premise data infrastructure to cloud accelerating our AI and digital strategy; unlocking billions in federal opportunities through full government practice compliance; and are revitalizing our HRIS platform to align with our strategic needs. The ability to execute at this scale reflects a high-performing team operating with clarity, discipline, and strategic purpose.



**Nelson Martinez**

CIO,  
Town of Davie



Nelson Martinez is the Chief Information Officer for the Town of Davie, where he leads enterprise technology strategy supporting municipal operations, public safety, and digital services for residents and businesses. During his tenure, he has led the modernization of the Town's technology infrastructure, cybersecurity posture, and data-driven services. Nelson holds a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering and an MBA from the University of Miami and maintains CGCIO and CISSP certifications.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Over the past decade, I have led the transformation of the Town of Davie's Information Technology organization, rebuilding the department into a modern enterprise technology team aligned with the Town's strategic vision. We restructured IT into dedicated Applications, Infrastructure, GIS, and Cybersecurity divisions and established strong partnerships with business units to guide proactive technology planning. Our team implemented a layered cybersecurity strategy, modernized critical infrastructure, and built enterprise data centers supporting emergency management and municipal operations. We also implemented a multi-tiered disaster recovery program that protects the Town's data and ensures resilience—achievements made possible by an exceptional and collaborative team.



**Sasha Seco Alvarez**

SVP & CIO,  
ANF Group



Sasha Seco Alvarez is Chief Information Officer & Senior Vice President at ANF Group, where she leads strategy, marketing, information technology, business systems, and data initiatives. She focuses on aligning business strategy, technology, and market positioning to drive operational excellence and growth. Sasha is known for building high-performing teams and leading enterprise transformation, including modernizing digital platforms and implementing cloud-based systems that enable organizations to scale, innovate, and make data-driven decisions in a rapidly evolving industry.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, ANF built a high-performing technology organization while delivering significant transformation initiatives. Starting with no Strategy or IT team, I built the organization from the ground up while implementing a modern SaaS ERP platform that now serves as the operational backbone of the business. The system achieved approximately 95% adoption across the company & replaced fragmented legacy processes with real-time visibility into operations. We also modernized infrastructure & digitized workflows, making the organization more scalable & collaborative. This technology foundation now positions ANF to leverage data, automation, & artificial intelligence to support its next phase of growth & transformation.



**Gana Subramaniyan**

CIO,  
Everise Inc



A results-driven technology leader with 35 years of expertise in global IT infrastructure, Cybersecurity (ISO 27001, PCI DSS HIPPA), and disaster recovery. Skilled in aligning technology with business goals, optimizing service delivery, and driving innovation. Proven ability to lead high-performance teams, implement scalable solutions, and ensure compliance. Adept at translating business needs into actionable strategies, mentoring teams, and fostering collaboration to deliver enterprise-wide impact with measurable efficiency and resilience.

**SUCCESS STORY:** A results-driven leader fostering continuous innovation through AI, automation, and emerging technologies, enabling business growth and operational excellence. Spearheaded cost-saving initiatives, optimizing IT OPEX at industry best percentage of revenue and driving best efficiency gains. Championed delegation-driven leadership, empowering teams to execute a seamless M&A IT integration in five months with zero disruption. Led strategic IT innovations in security, automation, and AI-powered analytics, enhancing client and employee experiences. Adept at talent strategy, ensuring continuous skill evolution and global workforce agility. Passionate about aligning technology with business imperatives to drive competitive advantage and transformation.

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## Mary Banks

Associate VP & CIO,  
Florida Gulf Coast  
University



Mary Banks is an accomplished technology executive and Chief Information Officer at Florida Gulf Coast University, where she leads a \$21M, 120-member IT organization. Known for unifying fragmented teams and delivering major digital transformations—including Workday, network modernization, and AI initiatives—she elevates institutional performance through strategic vision and partnership. A respected statewide leader and mentor, Mary consistently advances innovation, collaboration, and the development of future technology leaders.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Under my leadership, our IT team transformed into a unified, service-driven organization that strengthened collaboration across campus and with external partners. We improved service delivery, expanded student support, and maintained a strong cybersecurity posture. Through strategic partnerships and a people-first leadership approach, we modernized core systems, upgraded network performance, and launched a student-focused portal that improved engagement. These accomplishments reflect our commitment to innovation, teamwork, and trusted partnerships—advancing secure, modern, and student-centered technology for the university's long-term success.



## Joseph Hernandez

CIO,  
FEAM Aero



Joseph Hernandez is CIO of FEAM Aero, where he leads enterprise strategy across technology, cybersecurity, & digital transformation supporting aviation maintenance services for major airlines worldwide. With more than two decades of cross-industry experience spanning aerospace, media, & financial services, he focuses on integrating digital capabilities into operational workflows to drive performance, scalability, & innovation. Joseph also serves as President of the CIO Council of South Florida, advancing mentorship, scholarships, & workforce development across the region's technology community.

**SUCCESS STORY:** Our technology team has partnered with Finance, HR, and Operations professionals across the organization to advance a Digital First operating model that connects technology directly to business objectives. By introducing intelligent automation into work order and billing processes, we improved accuracy, accelerated operational workflows, and strengthened revenue capture. We've built hybrid teams that combine technologists with functional subject matter experts, allowing us to redesign processes and deliver solutions aligned with real business needs. Alongside modern enterprise platforms and strengthened cybersecurity capabilities, these efforts helped shift the organization from project-based transformation to a sustained digital operating rhythm that supports long-term growth.



## Vidette Pires

CIO,  
HairClub



Vidette Pires is CIO of HairClub, where she leads technology strategy, operations, and innovation. Her responsibilities span enterprise solutions, infrastructure, data analytics, cybersecurity, custom software, technical services, and vendor management. She partners with corporate leaders, field teams, and franchise operators, bringing strong board fluency to keep priorities business-led. Vidette is known for modernizing complex IT environments, strengthening resilience, and delivering client-centered solutions. She also supports entrepreneurs, students, and women through her local university technology hub.

**SUCCESS STORY:** HairClub was a well-known brand, but when I joined, years of fully outsourced IT had weakened the business. System stability had eroded, innovation had stalled, data quality had declined, and technical debt had grown. By 2022, the company was in deep distress following COVID. My mandate was to rebuild IT internally, regain control of critical systems, rebuild the team, reduce technical debt, and stabilize. Within three years, IT transformed from a fragmented function into a trusted partner. We reignited through customer analytics, supply chain optimizations, flexible payment options, ERP capabilities, and proved that technology is the foundation of the business.



## Edson Romero

CIO,  
RAS Legal Group



Edson Romero is the Chief Information Officer and Chief Information Security Officer at Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners (RAS Legal Group), where he leads enterprise technology, cybersecurity, and AI-driven innovation for a multinational organization of over 2,000 employees. He specializes in aligning technology strategy with business growth, regulatory compliance, and operational scale. Edson is committed to advancing responsible technology leadership, governance, and the development of future leaders.

**SUCCESS STORY:** My career has been guided by a simple mission: to lead with humility and integrity, setting the example through action while empowering others to grow. As CIO and CISO of RAS Legal Group, I've had the opportunity to help scale our organization from roughly 100 to more than 2,000 employees while modernizing our technology and security platforms and advancing AI and automation initiatives. But the true measure of success isn't systems or scale. It's the people developed along the way. I believe leadership is about creating lasting impact in organizations, communities, and in the lives of those we help elevate.



## Antonio Segovia

CIO,  
DSS, Inc.



Antonio Segovia is the Chief Information Officer at Document Storage Systems, where he leads the technology strategy and operations behind healthcare platforms serving commercial customers and federal programs, including the Department of Veterans Affairs. He focuses on building secure, reliable systems in highly regulated environments. Antonio is passionate about developing strong teams and advancing technology innovation. Outside of work, he is an avid marathon runner who enjoys the discipline and challenge of endurance sports.

**SUCCESS STORY:** I lead the technology organization behind the healthcare platforms our customers rely on every day. One of our most significant achievements has been helping deliver one of the first Electronic Health Record platforms to operate in a FedRAMP High environment. Achieving this level of security and compliance required major investments in architecture, operational discipline, and security practices. It allows us to support federal healthcare programs that demand the highest standards for protecting sensitive information. I am proud of the team that made this possible and of the role our technology plays in supporting healthcare providers and the patients they serve. Our business is now the recognized thought leader in operational transformation across our industry.

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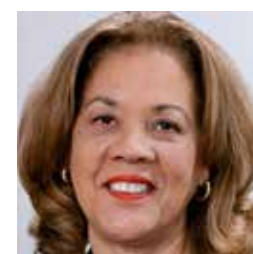
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