The Los Angeles Business Journal presents

CIOs of the Year

2013

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A

n yes, the CIOs! Those executives who somehow find a way to balance forward-thinking technical knowhow with a clear view of their organizations’ “big picture” and bottom lines. The CIOs are often the unsung heroes of business success, but it’s hard to think of an industry-leading company that could survive without one.

It was last year that we started a new tradition of celebrating the cream of the proverbial crop among Los Angeles’ finest with an awards event for those who have with their hands on the steering wheels of new technology. Perhaps it was overdue, but it’s already become one of our most hotly anticipated events.

And so here you have in your hands the documentation of our second annual Los Angeles Business Journal CIO Awards, where we stop for a moment to applaud the IT inventiveness and technological achievements of the corporate space’s hi-tech men and women – the often unsung architects and enablers of our companies’ operational successes.

You can ask virtually any successful CEO or CFO in Los Angeles and they are likely to agree that it’s nearly impossible to quantify the value of the CIOs and IT teams they work so closely with. Indeed, it’s the CIOs who are often charged with providing the operational tools required to match a CEO’s vision for a company.

So for all the great CIOs celebrated by our awards this year, we say thank you and congratulations! Your tireless contributions to the companies you serve and ultimately, our business community as a whole, are appreciated.

This year’s list of superb finalists (all profiled in these pages) – each an example of excellence in the field of corporate technology stewardship – made it even more difficult to arrive at the honorees. We are particularly excited to shine a light on seven particularly outstanding honorees announced in seven categories – “Enterprise CIO of the Year” (500+ Employees), “Corporate Business CIO of the Year” (100 – 500 Employees), “Emerging Business CIO of the Year” (less than 100 Employees), “Government CIO of the Year,” “Non-Profit CIO of the Year,” “IT Team of the Year,” and our very special “CIO Lifetime Achievement Award.” We applaud each of the honorees and finalists!

Best regards,

Matthew A. Toledo
Publisher & CEO

Publisher’s Letter

Congratulations!

California State University, Los Angeles

Congratulates

Peter Quan

as an honoree for

Los Angeles Business Journal’s

CIO of the Year Awards

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JENNIFER TERRILL
TRUE RELIGION BRAND JEANS

Jennifer Terrill, Vice President of IT for True Religion Jeans, is a consummate IT professional on a number of levels. First, she demonstrates a strong leadership focus through strategic thinking and a strong understanding of her company’s goals and objectives, while being flexible and innovative. This focus is cultivated through her team by the continuous communication about the business needs, necessity to be flexible and innovative, secure, fiscally aware, and by reinforcing the importance of strong customer service.

Terrill expertly communicates the company’s technology plans to the entire organization through steering committee meetings, town hall-style events, and regularly scheduled email communications. Each of her communications are strategically crafted so that staff and teams can relate the technology to the problem being solved or to the improvement being made, resulting in a broad appreciation for the IT elements contributing to the business bottom line or impact they have on each employee’s day-to-day work life.

She also fosters and promotes creative thinking within the organization by immersing the IT team into the user experiences, working side-by-side, to create more reasonable productivity improvements, streamline processes with technology automation tools that result in reducing costs, and creating offerings inside and outside the organization for competitive advantage.

Terrill is a great team builder as well, hiring valuable people by making sure to establish clear job duties, matching candidates skills and credentials, and closely matching the creativity, organization, and service skills the candidate demonstrates to ensure a great fit for the IT team and within the True Religion culture. She creates an effective and cohesive organization by making sure the IT team understands not just the “how” of policy, practices and guidelines, but the “why” for both themselves and the user community. She mentors and encourages her team to communicate desired improvements for their roles within the organization, the services and support they offer the organization, and the skills they need to succeed.

JIM CONNOLLY
ZYNX HEALTH

One of the things that makes Zynx Health’s Director of Technology Jim Connolly a great IT person is that he is exceptional at communicating complex technical subjects to non-technical people. This includes Zynx business leaders and executives at Zynx parent company, the Hearst Corporation. His communication style and contribution to company strategy earned recognition from the CTO of Hearst, who cited Zynx’s Technology department as the most cutting-edge across all of the Hearst group’s 200+ subsidiaries.

Connolly is a highly innovative, out-of-the-box thinker. He constantly questions the status quo and always looks for creative ways to make progress. For example, to test out the viability of a new business idea, he quickly set up an online presence for a potential new product line. He was then able to spread the word in relevant industry groups and actually generate critical feedback from potential customers that helped fine-tune the market viability of this product. He also pioneered a system of communicating via powerful visuals at Zynx creating innovative presentations that have been well-received at the highest levels of the organization, helping secure the support required to move projects forward.

He is also very focused on leveraging existing solutions to solve customer problems instead of building everything from scratch. For example, Connolly spearheaded the search for a platform on which Zynx can build its next-generation client portal. After following a very thorough vendor assessment process, he was able to find a highly capable, open-source solution, which could save the company significant development costs and drastically reduce time to market.

Perhaps most important, however, is how Connolly goes out of his way to empower his people. He not only encourages them to stretch into more challenging roles and responsibilities, but also gives them the right balance of autonomy and support that allows the growth to happen organically.
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CIOs OF THE YEAR
2013 Honorees

EMERGING BUSINESS CIO OF THE YEAR
(LESS THAN 100 EMPLOYEES)
HOVIG SAFOIAN
SADA SYSTEMS

Hovig Safoian is a veteran information technology professional with over 35 years of experience leading, consulting and developing innovative information technology solutions for complex and challenging environments.

Having roots as a programmer, Safoian has a deep understanding of the practices that make a technology company excel. Hovig Safoian founded SADA Systems in 2000 and has served as Chief Technical Officer for 13 years, overseeing SADA’s Microsoft and managed Services practices, as well as all of SADA’s internal technological practices. Under Safoian’s guidance, SADA began as an application development company, adding managed IT services expertise to its repertoire shortly after. Over the next few years, SADA Systems began adding more services for various solutions as technology changed and evolved, eventually leading to SADA’s current focus: developing cutting-edge solutions to business problems through the implementation of cloud-focused solutions.

Safoian’s understanding of market trends and the necessity of evolution when working in IT drive the encouragement of the professional development of his teams at SADA. Inspiring as a leader, Safoian allows for sales leadership to deepen and strengthen the relationships between SADA’s partners, Microsoft and Google, and often encourages his teams to drive the execution of various campaigns in accordance with their independent vision. From sales to project management and delivery to support, Safoian is involved each step of the way while empowering the continuous development of the technical skills of the teams he manages, focusing on remaining up to date with shifts in the market as well as any solutions updates that would impact current clients and future business practices.

GOVERNMENT CIO OF THE YEAR
JESSE JUARROS
LOS ANGELES COUNTY, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Jesse Juarros is a Chief Information Officer who gets involved in his organization and its mission at a very deep level. He chairs the 30-member business unit committee, chairs the IT governance committee, and participates actively in weekly director and executive team meetings. In addition, he meets weekly with the director and assistant director to discuss project alignment with business strategy and tactical IT direction.

Juarros recently led the development and launch of the Department’s new interactive website and social media communication platform. Juarros also meets with all 130 members of his IT team on a quarterly basis to ensure they are kept in the loop as to how to best address the Department’s IT needs and to identify how he can help them get the job done. Through this effort Juarros demonstrates his strong commitment to the team and the organization, which sets the tone and well-founded example for others to follow.

Juarros understands the importance of getting business commitment and support on IT initiatives. As such, Juarros implemented a robust structure of IT governance, which incorporates all the appropriate decision makers in each of the business units. Further, this governance structure, in which he is the chair, includes steering opportunities at the executive level to ensure high profile and/or high dollar projects are visible and receive the appropriate guidance. The governance structure and decision workflow underscores his commitment to ensuring decisions surrounding IT are made by the business and are aligned with the strategic focus of the organization. This structure affords Juarros the opportunity to maintain his close business relationships with the business unit leaders and ensures he stays close to the pulse of the operation. His open and honest style motivated his colleagues to also vote him in as chair of the 30-member business unit committee.
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KATHY AUSTIN
ON HER NOMINATION FOR
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER of the YEAR

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Congratulations to Hovig Safoian, CTO of SADA Systems

Named 2013 CTO of the Year

Founded in 2000 by Hovig Safoian, SADA Systems, Inc. is a privately-held global leader in providing cloud computing and strategic IT solutions to organizations worldwide. SADA provides unique enterprise consulting, cloud platform migration, custom application development and change management solutions. Listed on INC 5000 America's Fastest Growing Private Companies 5 years straight and ranked Top 20 in Los Angeles Business Journal Top 100 Fastest Growing Private Companies, SADA prides itself on continuous innovation, strong partnerships and exceptional service.

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Leadership is about managing change, based on a clear vision. Scott Carl, Vice President and Chief Information Officer at Parsons, understands this and has built an organization that effectively carries out this function. The visioning process that Carl enforces continually assesses the strategies of the company, considers business climate and IT trends, weighs in on governance risk and compliance, measures current IT performance and capability, and makes adjustments to the IT Initiative Portfolio on a regular basis. Carl oversees the refinement of the portfolio among senior business leaders. Ultimately, the agreed-upon portfolio feeds project planning, budgetary, and prioritization exercises. With business support in hand, Carl ensures that his staff supports his vision, agrees on the established route to reach it, and constantly provides encouragement and support on that journey.

Carl attends frequent one-on-one meetings with corporate leaders to stay apprised of their particular business needs and to ensure the IT business plan stays in alignment with their strategies. He routinely provides solutions updates to various executive and operational steering committees and uses the meetings to receive and influence business strategy, financial results, and operational strategies. The priority he places on relationships and IT alignment is a key differentiator for ensuring appropriate IT vision and delivery.

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Carl is also a key supporter of Parsons' core value of innovation. He views innovation to be the responsibility of all IS employees, requires that it be a component of all performance assessments, and launched a program in 2012 to make it an engrained focus across the department. Innovation metrics are established and represent a trickle down alignment to goals from the corporate business strategy. Carl rewards and recognizes teams and individuals for their contributions, no matter the size. The process is now engrained across the IS department and has been used as a model for other business units. Power Event and Sistah's Go Red campaign supporting the Go Red for Women movement in Los Angeles.

IT TEAM OF THE YEAR

SCOTT CARL (TEAM LEADER)

PARSONS

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CIO LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

PETER QUAN
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

Throughout his 26 years at Cal State LA, including more than a decade as the University’s Vice President and Chief Technical Officer, Peter Quan has demonstrated a strong leadership focus and the cultivation of that skill through his team by ensuring that the division is staffed with the right skill sets, right number of personnel and minimizing turnover and also making sure that the division have a clear vision, and work on challenging and meaningful projects.

Specifically, Quan has created and implemented, since 2003, a management framework that is loosely based on an International Organization for Standardization (ISO) management model. This framework serves as the foundation and template for all technology-related projects, procedures, policies, position descriptions, individual work plans, and performance evaluations. While specific tasks, steps, controls, or information may vary depending upon the project, document, or plan undertaken, the outcomes remain constant throughout the ITS division - system reliability, accountability to the campus, proactive planning, smarter decision making, and enhanced customer satisfaction. This framework supports an incredibly large number of users – approximately 21,755 students (graduate and undergraduates), 2,200 employees (faculty and staff), 3,400 workstations and five Open Access Labs.

Today Quan’s system remains the overarching model for addressing technology needs of students, faculty and staff, and for developing new initiatives to take advantage of emerging technologies. Under his stewardship, security remains the foundation for the entire strategy. The vision of Information Technology Services is to move toward supporting untethered teaching and learning through the use of robust and innovative technologies. Quan is currently working on new technologies and services he will soon be introducing that are designed to provide the campus with the tools and resources needed to support the success of students, faculty and staff.

Quan continues to provide impeccable overall administrative direction for technology, information assets and information security in support of the University’s strategic plan and technology needs.

The Aerospace Corporation

Dr. William C. Krenz
VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

AND ALL OF THE OTHER NOMINEES OF THE LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL’S CIO AWARDS

We would like to congratulate Jennifer Terrill on her hard work, dedication and award recognition at the 2nd Annual CIO of the Year Awards.

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Doug Albrecht
PORT OF LONG BEACH

Doug Albrecht uses many mechanisms, both structural and functional, to create a close connection with the business of the Port of Long Beach. He is respected as a leader and manager because of his collaborative approach to business issues and his open and positive approach to solutions. He creates strong ties at all levels through informal channels and formal meetings where business managers and staff have the opportunity to present their needs. He is also dedicated to creating a high-performance team that delivers simple and effective solutions.

In 24 years at the Port, he has continuously helped the business to be more effective through the deployment of increasing levels of automation and technology support in response to changes in the business environment. The Port is an ecosystem with many agencies and partners collaborating on large capital projects. Albrecht's vision and understanding of the business along with his long-standing relationships ensure that IT is a supportive component of all port activities.

Chris Amerine
UNION RESCUE MISSION

Chris Amerine, of Union Rescue Mission, is a Chief Information Officer who truly understands what it means to have their systems work closely together, applying innovation as needed. Perhaps most impressively, though, is that he is able to accomplish so much innovation and implementation within a very tight budget for a nonprofit. He puts in the time to get the needed job done, and is willing to collaborate with others to both grow and help them grow. Amerine is thorough in his questioning of new solutions. Recently, for example, he has been exploring the benefits of migrating e-mail to the cloud. While understanding the business needs of the stakeholders, he is looking to the solution as a cost savings and a time reduction for his IT staff. By applying strategy and big picture thinking, staying focused on the needs of his team and clients, and ensuring that his solutions are aligned with the business, he brings great value to the Rescue Mission.

Shawn Aminian
CHILDREN’S INSTITUTE

Shawn Aminian is a highly experienced, solution-oriented technology and business visionary leader. He came to Children’s Institute, a private, nonprofit social service organization, during a time when the Agency was experiencing extremely rapid growth but did not have adequate IT infrastructure or systems to support its users and facilities. The existing IT team had a high degree of skills and knowledge but was disconnected and unempowered. Aminian immediately set out to re-engineer the existing IT business processes, identify and develop the capability to use new tools, and reshape the agency’s physical infrastructure and network access. Aminian’s hands-on management style has now contributed to a more cohesive IT team that is well regarded across the agency. Aminian also re-organized the Help Desk function of the department and developed a more reliable “customer service” plan to better serve the organization’s satellite locations. Today, the IT staff is seen as a responsive and unified team that is committed to helping the agency reach its strategic and service goals.

Kathy Austin
FOREST LAWN

Kathy Austin enjoys fierce loyalty from her team of IT professionals at Forest Lawn due to her loyalty to them personally, her commitment to teams and their individual professional development, and her advocacy for the Technology Services department and its central role in Forest Lawn’s success. An expert at juggling multiple priorities and demands while keeping her team focused on one task at a time to maximize their efficiency and effectiveness, Austin is also a member of the Association’s executive council, comprised of the top 20 executives at the company.

Under Austin’s leadership, Business Process Analysts work at all levels of the organization to improve the customer experience with Forest Lawn, at a time of very difficult stress with the loss of a loved one, and to improve the transparency of all the actions that must occur at time of death. In addition, Austin helped develop the software system now in place at all the publicly traded companies in the cemetery and mortuary industry.

Tom Baker
COMMUNITY BANK

As Chief Information Officer at Community Bank, Tom Baker leads by example and trusts that his team members are experts in their fields, respecting their thoughts and ideas. This, coupled with his always positive and energetic leadership style, has helped foster a strong IT department for the bank.

Running consistent meetings with team members to discuss technology roadmaps for keeping the IT environment secure and current, Baker regularly identifies internal needs and establishes projects that allow his staff to complete their jobs with increased efficiency. In short, Baker is a senior technology leader with a solid reputation for delivering forward-thinking technology initiatives that efficiently meet diverse business, operational and industry needs. He consistently implements top leadership and strategic planning capabilities that serve well in fast-paced environments experiencing rapid change through internal growth, acquisition, and turnaround. Characterized as a talented mentor with the ability to nurture excellent working relationships with senior executives, management teams, customers, vendors, and employees, Baker has proven to be a tremendous contributor to the bank’s successes.

Chris Benson
CITY OF REDONDO BEACH

The Information Technology requirements for the City of Redondo Beach are complex and demanding - the City’s operations run 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year. The IT Department's services to the City stretch beyond the predictable phone, computer and internet needs: the City has its own Fire, Harbor Patrol and Police Departments which all require complex specialized hardware and databases. The City’s IT team of six has a small job to accomplish minimal resources with which to do it. Chris Benson excels in his role as IT Director and does so with enthusiasm, professionalism and quality leadership.

Benson leads by building consensus and creating a collaborative atmosphere in his department. When challenges arise, he doesn’t just delegate to his team, he rolls up his sleeves and dives in with gusto wherever he is needed. When mistakes are made, he doesn’t spend time assigning blame, but rather focuses on how things can be corrected and how the mistake can be avoided in the future.

Gabé Cortina
PROLACTA BIOSCIENCE

When Gabé Cortina first came to Prolacta Bioscience, the network and phones (haggled down by outdated equipment) had a history of technical difficulties and the company did not have a an effective backup or a disaster recovery plan. By rapidly building out a new infrastructure and providing employees with the technology tools they need to be most productive, a first win was established. In addition, previous to Cortina joining Prolacta, the organization had undergone a move that had resulted in a week of lost work. So a forthcoming second move had management very concerned. Enter Cortina, who successfully moved the office with only four hours of downtime. Now Cortina is refactoring the manufacturing system, developing an external user portal, mobilizing the website, and automating laboratory information systems - all critical to the business. Through demonstrating these wins and earning credibility early on, Cortina has helped the entire company function better and has established a platform that enables the IT team to take on greater and more meaningful responsibilities.
MONIQUE EDWARDS  
CITY OF LANCASTER

Monique Edwards, Operations manager for the City of Lancaster, has a unique ability to quickly learn a business process, analyze the workflow and recommend changes to reduce the production time and reduce cost. An example of this is the City’s business license workflow, which at one time took nearly two weeks from the time an application was submitted and is now a one-day turnaround thanks to her efforts.

Due to the credibility Edwards has in the organization, and her proven track record of implementing systems and processes to improve efficiencies and reduce costs, she was selected to spearhead a project to analyze the way the city communicates with its citizens for all services, (such as potholes, tree trimming, code enforcement, etc.) and recommend a system that would enable citizens to contact the city on a variety of platforms. Working with the project team she was able to identify redundancies, and make recommendations that resulted in better service provided to Lancaster citizens.

GINNY DAVIS  
TECHNICOLOR

Ginny Davis manages Technicolor’s worldwide information technology services. She and her team support 15,000 users at 153 sites in 29 countries. In her role as Senior Vice President, Davis serves all of Technicolor’s business units, including entertainment services, which includes Home Entertainment, Post Production, Digital Cinema and the Digital Production – Visual Effect businesses. In addition to the Entertainment Services business group, Davis also supports the Set-top Box & Gateway business as well as Technicolor’s robust Intellectual Property & Licensing business divisions.

Davis manages a team of more than 300 staff along with an additional 170 IT subcontractors. Her team manages a portfolio of more than 150 applications running on 7,500 servers, including several instances of SAP, JBA, Oracle, Business Intelligence, and several ERP and supply chain applications. More than a manager, however, Davis is an innovative leader. She excels at “big picture” challenges like strategic clarity and the alignment of IT with Technicolor’s business interests, needs and realities.

JAMES FIORILLO  
KELLY PIPE CO., LLC

James Fiorillo is constantly coming up with fresh ideas for using data in Kelly Pipe’s ERP system to improve operations. Once he has formulated an approach to a problem or system enhancement, he reviews the idea with his team to obtain agreement as well as identify possible pitfalls. He works with his team to document a technical implementation strategy and provide management with an executive overview outlining project goals and execution strategy. Then Fiorillo follows-up with the various branch managers to set up user training.

Ever hands-on, Fiorillo participates in weekly sales and purchasing calls where he has an opportunity to hear firsthand how system performance is impacting users. This also gives him an opportunity to offer quick solutions to IT issues and technology updates.

Near the end of 2012, Fiorillo successfully launched the Kelly Pipe Mobile Phone App. Working with a team of outside developers, he was able to compile valuable industry information and create a widely excepted customer tool.
CREIGHTON GRENOBLE
ASCENDANT SERVICES, INC.

As a CIO for hire, Creighton Grenoble comes into an organization and helps them do all of the things needed on the informational technology front – and then some. For example, he helped Stephen S. Wise Temple streamline a process for how it manages projects and tickets for its clients. Grenoble helped the Temple look at how it had been aligning with the business, how it was achieving its strategic goals, and what innovative techniques it could use to better manage these elements. From that process, Grenoble never stopped looking at the impact the solutions had both on the strategic outcome and on the Temple’s people. The Temple discovered that through Creighton taking the lead and asking incisive and pointed questions, that win-win solutions could be created.

And Stephen S. Wise Temple is only one example of the kind of strategic success Grenoble has brought to so many organizations now, helping them with alignment, big picture planning, and innovation.

DAVID GIRDNER
ANTROPY, INC.

David Girdner, Managing Partner of Antropy, Inc. has a proven track record of delivering robust, cost effective IT solutions to small businesses throughout Southern California. Girdner founded Antropy in 2001 with his partner Jody Marc Cohn in an attempt to provide a wide variety of Information Technology services to a diverse set of clients ranging from single-user home offices to corporations with multiple locations across the nation. Antropy clients include accounting firms, private K-12 schools, entertainment companies, law firms, and medical practices.

Girdner is committed to providing excellent service and long-lasting IT solutions that fit the needs of each business he works with. He and his team strive to develop partnerships with their clients to ensure the highest levels of service and satisfaction. Always looking for innovative ways to meet the needs of his clients, Girdner has bedrock of principles and is always looking to do the right thing with them.

VIC HERRERA
DTT SURVEILLANCE, INC.

Vic Herrera, Chief Technology Officer of DTT Surveillance, is responsible for supporting the technology initiatives for DTT’s mission-critical infrastructure and administrative functions. He joined DTT early in 2004 to head up DTT’s technology efforts. Since then, he and his department have led a revolution in leadership and standards within DTT Surveillance. Through the adoption of a tailored lean management process, Herrera has been able to increase the department’s throughput as well as the quality of all final products. To maintain this momentum, he has implemented an appropriately sized management structure as well as instituted reporting and communication methods that induce all levels of staff to ‘produce’ at their best. Some soft tactics that have been used in support of this practice include ongoing professional development incentives as well as strategic bonuses to top performing staff. In addition, underperforming staff have been remediated with management through the expression of easily attained, incremental goal for improvement.
STEPHEN S. WISE TEMPLE

DAVID LAM

David Lam, CIO for the Stephen S. Wise Temple, is dedicated to being a strong leader for both the overall organization and his team. He has also taken on leadership for 10 Jewish schools in the Los Angeles area as he builds an IT consortium across the community. Lam has shown his commitment to the organization in several ways. First, as the technology leader for the last 11 years, second, he has graciously taken on a consulting role to accommodate the Temple’s budget and help make the business model work. Third, he is working with other organizations to cut costs across a Jewish school IT consortium.

Lam is always looking for ways to improve the Temple’s business model, such as with the new High Holy Day Form portal project, which he expects to roll out across the other institutions in the consortium. Lam works with all of the business units across the organization to help best meet their needs while looking for cost-effective IT.

PHILIP LIEBERMAN

Philip Lieberman is a highly accomplished security software executive with more than 30 years of industry experience. He has an established track record of finding shortcomings in existing market solutions and filling those gaps with innovative new products. As president and founder of Lieberman Software, Lieberman developed the first products to serve the privileged password management and shared account password management space. Today he continues to introduce new solutions to resolve the security threat of unmanaged privileged accounts.

His company released its first commercial product in 1994, but traces its roots back to 1978 when it was founded as a software consultancy. Since its inception, Lieberman has maintained Lieberman Software as a profitable, management-owned firm. It has consistently provided unique solutions that fill the niche of managing privileged accounts throughout the cross-platform enterprise. Over the years, Lieberman has personally spearheaded the development of business-critical identity management policies and procedures for clients in major vertical market segments such as government, defense, finance, healthcare, energy, and manufacturing.

CITY OF GLENDORA

MATTHEW JESTER

Matthew Jester acts as the Chief Information Officer for the City of Glendora and his technology vision has helped define many of the city’s operations. He has made many improvements for city departments and, most importantly, had a measurable benefit throughout the entire community.

Jester is able to translate his large vision into technology projects that increase service to city residents and also help departments become more efficient in their day-to-day operations. He consistently demonstrates a big picture understanding of the needs of both departments and the community when addressing service challenges. He offers both a technological and management perspective in providing suggestions, technology improvements, and alternatives for change. His technology projects have included upgrades, expansions and maintenance of a city network that has a 99.99% uptime and a variety of other projects. Perhaps his biggest achievement is the Citywide Wireless Project he spearheaded, which created point-to-point communication links to all city facilities, saving the City over $185,000 each year.

LIEBERMAN SOFTWARE

PHILIP LIEBERMAN

DR. WILLIAM KRENZ

The Aerospace Corporation

Dr. William Krenz’s knowledge of his company, the Aerospace Corporation, its goals, and its values, combined with his experience working directly with Aerospace’s customers and learning what they need to develop innovative solutions to the country’s most pressing national security space problems, has served him well in the position as CIO. Aerospace does not manufacture widgets or hardware. The product it delivers to its customers is engineering expertise in the form of analysis and advice. The ability to locate, analyze, and communicate information is critical to all facets of the company’s work. Dr. Krenz’s role of Chief Information Officer is key to ensuring continued corporate success.

Dr. Krenz works diligently to communicate the role information technology plays in contributing to corporate success. Upon becoming CIO, he developed and published the corporation’s first IT strategy, and has worked to incorporate new technology in a way that employees absorb it as a seamless part of their daily routine – perhaps without even realizing they have done so.

David Lam, Network Administrator at RBZ brings his tremendous intellect and technological knowhow to every task he tackles. Those who have worked alongside him, both at RBZ and at previous places of work, refer to Ho as an advocate for people working well together and for solving problems. Ho executes well by both digging into the technical details and finding appropriate technical solutions, and by working with his in-house team and contractors to find a way to navigate complicated moves efficiently and well.

To put it in the words of one of his colleagues, “Nathan Ho was so far ahead of schedule on a recent major move-related project, that the contractor had less to do than was planned.” His ability to take a look at what the business’ needs are, to find appropriate solutions, and make sure that he executes well are key aspects of success when it comes to IT.

Julie Mattern, CIO and co-founder of Gradient X, a mobile advertising company, brings over 15 years of experience to the firm, where she oversees all front-end development, client and internal facing applications. Before founding Gradient X about a year ago, Mattern was co-founder and chief technologist at the Rubicon Project, an online advertising technology company, where she oversaw the engineering and product teams in building the REVV Platform and led the innovation and development of cutting-edge applications. As a team builder, Mattern recognizes talent when she sees it and is able to deploy her talent pool where most efficient, creating a positive and inspiring workplace culture. She uses her previous experience and leadership role at Gradient X to ignite creativity amongst the team. She knows that every person has their own strengths and thinking process and uses that knowledge to challenge her team to reach for more. A strategic decision maker, Mattern is also able to sustain progress and momentum while remaining accountable to her team.

Julie Mattern, CIO

Gradient X

Julie Mattern acts as the Chief Information Officer for the City of Glendora and his technology vision has helped define many of the city’s operations. He has made many improvements for city departments and, most importantly, had a measurable benefit throughout the entire community.

Jester is able to translate his large vision into technology projects that increase service to city residents and also help departments become more efficient in their day-to-day operations. He consistently demonstrates a big picture understanding of the needs of both departments and the community when addressing service challenges. He offers both a technological and management perspective in providing suggestions, technology improvements, and alternatives for change. His technology projects have included upgrades, expansions and maintenance of a city network that has a 99.99% uptime and a variety of other projects. Perhaps his biggest achievement is the Citywide Wireless Project he spearheaded, which created point-to-point communication links to all city facilities, saving the City over $185,000 each year.

LIEBERMAN SOFTWARE

PHILIP LIEBERMAN

DR. WILLIAM KRENZ

THE AEROSPACE CORPORATION

Dr. William Krenz’s knowledge of his company, the Aerospace Corporation, its goals, and its values, combined with his experience working directly with Aerospace’s customers and learning what they need to develop innovative solutions to the country’s most pressing national security space problems, has served him well in the position as CIO. Aerospace does not manufacture widgets or hardware. The product it delivers to its customers is engineering expertise in the form of analysis and advice. The ability to locate, analyze, and communicate information is critical to all facets of the company’s work. Dr. Krenz’s role of Chief Information Officer is key to ensuring continued corporate success.

Dr. Krenz works diligently to communicate the role information technology plays in contributing to corporate success. Upon becoming CIO, he developed and published the corporation’s first IT strategy, and has worked to incorporate new technology in a way that employees absorb it as a seamless part of their daily routine – perhaps without even realizing they have done so.
Dr. Shahzad Munawwar
En Pointe Technologies

Dr. Shahzad Munawwar, CIO at En Pointe Technologies, engages his company’s directors and divisional managers to nurture relationships with key partners and ensures En Pointe is well represented at all major industry events and conferences to foster the establishment of new ties. Dr. Munawwar also continually champions the importance of maintaining an effective VPS (Vendor Partner Specialist) team within En Pointe that focuses on maintaining and further enhancing the company’s business relationships with major partners and vendors.

Dr. Munawwar has a keen eye for determining how emergent innovations will impact the industry landscape. As such, he is able to make timely decisions and devise strategic paths for the overall growth and diversification of the company. He constantly encourages personnel to think outside the box and not only develop new service offerings, but also work to further refine existing offerings. He is a strong believer in early adaptation – thereby setting the cornerstone for R&D practices at the organization.

David Schirmer
City of Beverly Hills

David Schirmer possesses extensive experience in the design, development, implementation and management of large-scale, multi-faceted enterprise IT systems in both the public and private sectors. As the Chief Information Officer of the City of Beverly Hills, Schirmer’s chief area of expertise lies in his ability to analyze existing operational environments and to engineer broad-based strategies for implementing practical solutions on time, within budget, and that meet corporate business objectives. In his current role, he holds overall accountability for the vision, management, oversight and delivery of a $22 million annual budget that provides strategic solutions to mission critical city functions on a 24/7 basis.

Schirmer is particularly accomplished at creating alignment with business. Establishing trust by being candid, transparent and giving credit where it’s due have been among the keys to his success. An example of this would be the newly launched beverlyhills.org website. The intuitive website provides a portal into exploring, living, business, city government and online services.

Raj Rajkotia
Toyota Financial Services

Raj Rajkotia is Chief Engineer and Head of Design and Engineering for Toyota Financial Services in Torrance. As a well-trained Wharton MBA, his credentials are obviously impeccable. Clearly, though, Rajkotia has taken his education and knowledge base to the next level of technical excellence for his organization. He understands what it means to be a manager and a leader, and leads his team through incredibly complex IT projects. Serving on strategic panels about collaborative consortiums and IT, Rajkotia continues to share ideas with other professionals and expand his knowledge base and leverages such experiences to find ways to more innovatively solve problems as a group and lower costs.

Richard Randle
MBSG

A technology consultant at MBSG, Richard Randle motivates people to do the right thing and works both within his company and with other service providers to support each other. A consummate professional, Randle is focused on making sure that his businesses are well taken care of and well supported, always taking time to get to know his clients’ needs and then present them with a plan that meets their strategies and goals — always incorporating the most innovative and best technologies to support the vision in question.

DAVID SCHIRMER
City of Beverly Hills

Raj Rajkotia is Chief Engineer and Head of Design and Engineering for Toyota Financial Services in Torrance. As a well-trained Wharton MBA, his credentials are obviously impeccable. Clearly, though, Rajkotia has taken his education and knowledge base to the next level of technical excellence for his organization. He understands what it means to be a manager and a leader, and leads his team through incredibly complex IT projects. Serving on strategic panels about collaborative consortiums and IT, Rajkotia continues to share ideas with other professionals and expand his knowledge base and leverages such experiences to find ways to more innovatively solve problems as a group and lower costs.

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HERSEL SHOUMER
LA Networks

Herel Shoumer, Principal Consultant with LA Networks, has made his career all about the “win-win.” He looks to lead his customers in the right direction by using his superior technical skills to make sure his customers get what they need. With each project, Shoumer and his team start by looking at the needs of the customer’s business first, and then finding solutions. A dedicated hard worker, Shoumer then locks his focus on finding the right solution at the right price.

Working within the parameters of strategy to get each job done as well as it possibly can be, Shoumer makes himself aware of the big picture scenario with each project and then works down to the solution, always incorporating the most applicable technology and innovations. As an example, Shoumer has worked with the Stephen S. Wise Temple to develop an effective shared phone system across multiple Jewish institutions in Los Angeles at a minimal cost.

Stan Stahl
Citadel Information Group

Stan Stahl, President of the Citadel Information Group, has been committed during his entire career to information security and process improvement. Whether as a pioneer in the development of the first firewalls, or as a current trusted advisor to small and medium business, Stahl works tirelessly to make sure that businesses understand the risk of not properly securing their computers. Further, he understands how to work toward the goal of fulfilling both legal and ethical obligations to secure information. Stahl works with each client and student to make sure that they understand the critical aspects and benefits of securing their systems, making sure that everyone involved can benefit.

Highly respected within the community and by his own team, Stahl is a genuine leader in the CIO space. Whether it is in his own company, with his clients, or as the president of the Los Angeles ISSA, Stahl is dedicated to helping people do the right thing, get better, and enjoy the process at the same time.
KEVIN TONOIAN
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA

Kevin Tonoian currently serves as the Information Technology Manager for the City of Santa Clarita and is responsible for a total staff of 34 inclusive of 27 full-time and 7 part-time positions. In this role he oversees all information technology functions for the City. In 2008, Tonoian assumed responsibility for the City’s Special Districts operation and since 2010 has also been responsible for overseeing the City’s Municipal Election process.

Significant IT accomplishments during his tenure have included the development of an encompassing Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity Program, replacement of the City’s financial and recreation management systems. In 2010, Tonoian assumed responsibility for the City’s Special Districts operation and since 2010 has also been responsible for overseeing the City’s Municipal Election process.

John Stuart, CIO of Beverly Hills Wealth Management (BHWM), has been with the firm since its inception and has rooted it nationally as an independent financial services leader with an enterprise look and feel. Almost 30,000 Registered Investment Advisory firms nationally, similar to BHWM, all strive to define a unique and secure IT and operations strategy for their advisory professionals and clients. Through his pioneering of enterprise tools and services, Stuart has positioned BHWM as the “favorite” home for both advisors and clients that appreciate the boutique investment experience with global banking and Capital Market capabilities. He plays a significant role with the Executive Committee and Board of Directors to tell the BHWM story and define their long-term vision.

Stuart’s cloud-based infrastructure, LEAN Start-up methodologies, and innovative tools allow BHWM to compete with the massive budgets and reach of the globe’s biggest institutions. He is continuing helping service providers and custodians in the market deliver and tailor solutions industry-wide.

JOHN STUART
BEVERLY HILLS WEALTH MANAGEMENT

PAUL SUNOK
AGILE360, A DIVISION OF ENTIYS SOLUTIONS, INC.

Paul Sunok, Director of Agile360, a division of Entisy Solutions, Inc., is always looking forward to help his clients get better at what they do. He examines businesses needs and works to find ways for his company to help them meet them in the best possible way. He’s always asking strategic questions, but more importantly, really wants to help his clients grow and get better.

What tends to most impress client CIO managers about Sunok is that he is always looking to find new and innovative ways to implement better and more effective solutions while staying within the customer budget. He’s always willing to go the extra mile to do the right thing, do it quickly, and do it at the right price. On top of that, his team is dedicated to excellence and repeatedly impresses with their level of skill.

DAVID TSUEN
CITY OF MONTEBELLO

On a day-to-day basis, David Tsuen, Senior Systems Manager for the City of Montebello, adds value through the organization by introducing innovative processes that reduce labor-intensive processes. He has created a Government Efficient Management System (GEMS) that enables the City of Montebello to track Code Enforcement activities, which includes an interactive map for the officers. Another feature of GEMS is the vehicle maintenance data system that enables both the corporate shop and finance staff to track vehicle maintenance activities without the intensive personnel time.

Among his many other accomplishments for the City of Montebello, Tsuen developed the popular Shop Montebello website, shop.cityofmontebello.com. This website brings business resources available to the public via business videos, coupons for citizens and other features to build partnerships with local businesses. Further adding value to the community he serves, Tsuen implements technology at the City’s Senior Center. With his implementation of wireless connections at the Center, local seniors are now engaged in technology, enabling them to learn the use of computers, e-mail, etc.

DAVID WATTS
NETFUSION, INC.

David Watts, the owner of NetFusion, Inc., sets the standard and the tone of consistent, reliable service within his company and regularly reminds his staff “Do it today, not tomorrow” and “perform the work for the client as if you own their business.” Watts is detailed oriented and thorough, and ensures the clients expectations are aligned with his own and those of his team. He is also a great communicator.

With each project, Watts focuses first on clarifying and articulating his client’s business objectives. Secondly, he lays out for his clients how technology can best accomplish those objectives along with the pros and cons of each choice — all within the context of the client’s specific objectives, infrastructure, budget, and compliance requirements. Current on his knowledge, skills and products being offered by many vendors, Watts is searching out the best products and services or “ingredients” and brings them together adding best practices, strategy, and experience to create an outstanding service.
Honorees accept their awards: From left, Business Journal Publisher Matt Toledo, Zachary Schuler of event sponsor Cal Net Technology Group, Peter Quam, Patrick Watson on behalf of Hovig Safoian, Jennifer Terrill, Dan Matthews, Jim Connolly, Jesse Juarros, Scott Carl and Paul Flaherty of event sponsor Robert Half Technology.

Over 250 attendees were on hand at the event, held at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza in Los Angeles on June 5th.