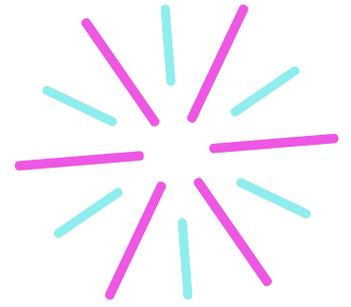


STEP AHEAD

2026 AWARDS

PROFILE BOOK





Congratulations 2026 Awardees!

Culture is the foundation of a thriving manufacturing industry. It comes to life every day on the shop floor, in labs, in corporate offices and in communities across the country through leaders who model excellence in the way they work, collaborate and contribute.

The 2026 STEP Ahead Awardees are those leaders.

This year's awardees are more than accomplished professionals. They are culture drivers who create environments where people are encouraged to reach their full potential. They champion continuous improvement, invest in their teams and set a standard of performance that strengthens both their organization and our industry. From the shop floor to the C-suite, they are building workplaces where talent grows and innovation thrives.

The individuals recognized in these pages represent the very best of our industry. They are advancing new technologies, optimizing processes, leading complex operations and delivering measurable results for their organizations. Just as importantly, they are shaping cultures that develop future leaders and demonstrating the difference strong leadership can make. Their influence extends beyond their companies by serving as visible mentors and role models who inspire the next generation to see manufacturing as a rewarding career.

Through STEP Ahead, the Manufacturing Institute remains committed to recognizing excellence and equipping leaders to build strong workplaces. As you read the inspiring profiles in this book, I encourage you to reflect on the role each of us plays in shaping culture. Whether mentoring a colleague, championing a new idea or creating space for others to lead, every action matters. Together, we can continue building a manufacturing industry that thrives because of the talent and contributions of its people.

Congratulations to the 2026 STEP Ahead Awardees. Your leadership is shaping the future of manufacturing and inspiring those who will follow in your footsteps.

Sincerely,

Nicole Murphy

Chair, 2026 STEP Ahead Awards

Executive Vice President, Pharmaceutical Operations and Technology

Biogen

STEP AHEAD

2026 AWARDS

Jadi Anderson
Åsa Arvidsson
Jami Austin ♦
Michelle Barnhart ★
Monique Bass
Brittany Bauer
Giovanna Benetti
Anna Billey ★
Sador Black
Susan-Rhea Blankenship
Devon Blumer
Christy Bollinger
Jennifer Sarah (JS) Bolton ♦
Maxine Bonaccorsi ♦
Meagan Bosen

Lauren Boyd
Meghan Boyd
Haley Boyker ★
Ayanna Burton
Marie-Josée Cabana
Jessica Carter
Abby Causey
Katelyn Caza Perez ★
Rachael Chant ★
Kylee Coffey
Hillary Cooper ★
Lynsey Copley ★
Shirlyn Cummings ♦
Lauren Curran ★
Jennifer Dagnall
Amanda Dango ★
Bri Danzeisen
Leah Davis
Lesley Denham
Katie Deren

KLN Family Brands
Rockwell Automation
The Lubrizol Corporation
The Timken Company
Dow
Henkel Corporation
IBM
Toyota Motor North America
Eastman Chemical Company
Celanese

Molson Coors Beverage Company
Hydro
Nissan

Kimberly-Clark
Oldcastle Infrastructure, a CRH Company
Bardstown Bourbon Company
Parker Hannifin
AstraZeneca
Nucor
National Gypsum Company
Ford Motor Company
The Timken Company
Novelis
Whirlpool Corporation
GlobalFoundries
Pella Corporation
Biogen
Covestro LLC
Siemens
Evonik Corporation
DENSO
Chevron Phillips Chemical
Cargill
Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc.
The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

Christina Desjardins

Morgan Dill ★
Ashleigh Dix ★
Megan Doege
Rachel Dougherty
Regina Dunagan
Wanda Duran
Dana Espinosa
Hedieh Evans ★

Szilvia Falvai-Sashalmi
Isabelle Ferain ♦
David Fernandes ♦
Michelle Fields
Ariel Foss ★
Brooke Franco
D.J. Gall
Neela Bhargavi Ganduri
Hillary Gargel ★
Shanda Gentry
Lisa Giese
Elianne Gonzalez
Monica Greenhalgh ★
Suzie Guzman
Rachel Hall
Laura Harshberger ♦
Leanna Hasan
Rebecca Hicks
Mindy Hostettler
Taylor Howell ★

Crystal Hyman
Elaine Jackson
Nehali Jain ★
Bonnie Jenkins
Sandy Ibarra Johnson
Shasta Johnson
Dawn Krencisz
Deb Krikorian
Tonya Kuhl

BASE Engineering, a Dover Company
National Gypsum Company
Materion
Kohler Co.
Procter & Gamble
BorgWarner Inc.
Cornerstone Building Brands
Ingredion Inc.
Tilcon Connecticut, a CRH Company
Jabil
GlobalFoundries
Mazda Toyota Manufacturing
HarbisonWalker International
LP Building Solutions
INEOS Olefins & Polymers USA
Vacuworx
GE Healthcare
Dow
LP Building Solutions
Marvin
Samsung Austin Semiconductor
General Motors
The Greenbrier Companies
Nissan
PPG
Filtration Group
Pella Corporation
AstraZeneca
Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories
Trane Technologies
L'Oréal
Antora Energy
GE Appliances, a Haier company
Shaw Industries Group, Inc.
Arkema, Inc.
Momentive Technologies
Riverdale Mills Corporation
Zimmer Biomet

★ Indicates an Emerging Leader

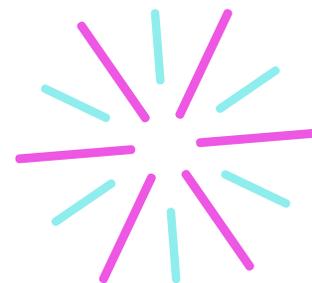
♦ Indicates a Champion

Savannah Kunes	Land O' Lakes
Tanya Lance	Special Products & Mfg. Inc.
Rosalina Larragoiti Ochoa	Lucid Motors
Marietta Lee	The Lee Company
Mary Leslie	The Hershey Company
Emily Litt ★	Dragonfly Energy
Nicole Lopez	O-I Glass, Inc.
Kim Lunceford	Monogram Food Solutions
Soukaina Makni ★	Kohler Co.
Nicole Malson	STRYKER
Leslie Mathis ★	ABB
Catherine Matthews	BAE Systems
Kristina Mauger	The Boeing Company
Megan McKay ◆	Arconic
Angela Mire	Ecolab
Caitlin Moffitt	Altria
Misty Montgomery	ExxonMobil
Brooklyn Mussman ★	The Lubrizol Corporation
Stephanie Nappier	LyondellBasell
Tyler Nash	ABB
Brenda Neely	BASF
Hayley Nguyen ★	Ovintiv Inc.
Cheyenne Novak ★	Ecolab
Bella Oung	Regal Rexnord
Catherine Panagopoulos ◆	Smithfield Foods
Carmel Patulot	Lockheed Martin Corporation
Rachel Pawlawski ★	Evonik Corporation
James Phillips	Biogen
Kelli Poppenhagen	Ovintiv Inc.
Solanda Prather	Pharmavite
Jennifer Rivara	Mazda Toyota Manufacturing
Emily Rockwell	Materion Corporation
Bonita Rogers Montgomery	DENSO
Ana Rosales ◆	Honeywell
Susan Rozak	Saint-Gobain
Marivette Rullan-Semidey ★	The Boeing Company
Lindsay Sabey ◆	L'Oréal
Angelica Salazar	Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories
John Sampson ◆	Dow
Christina Schiavone ★	Kimberly-Clark
Erin Schroering	MasterBrand
Nicole Sebek	Sherwin-Williams
Eric Seip ◆	Ingredion Incorporated
Nisha Shine ◆	Flex
Whitney Shlesinger	McCormick & Company

Nishita Singh	Cheniere Energy
Jennifer Sivak	Allegion
Natalee Smith	Covestro LLC
Jennifer Snee	USG Corporation
Jennifer Solcz	PPG
Margaret Standish-Bruce ★	Sukup Manufacturing Co.
Nima Subramanian	Johnson & Johnson
Alissa Taylor	Qnity Electronics
Diane Tennenhouse	Eli Lilly
Sam Thevanayagam ◆	DeVal Lifecycle Support
Hillary Thomas	Westminster Tool
Kristen Thrash ★	BASF
MaryBeth Tran	Owens Corning
Winnie Tu	Foxconn
Alexandra Waltemyer	Armstrong World Industries
Meganne Wecker	Skyline Furniture Manufacturing
Jeannie Whitfield	Parts Life, Inc.
Ellen Whittingham	Kennametal
Danette Wilder	SealingLife, Inc.
Ashton Williams	Smithfield Foods
Erin Wojcicki	SABIC
Carla Wright	Toyota Motor North America
Christine Young	Caterpillar Inc.
Olawumi Yusuff	Ferrara Candy Company
Cathy T. Zhang ★	Saint-Gobain
Min Zhou	HP Singapore (Private) Limited
Ana Paula Zinn ★	Honeywell

★ Indicates an Emerging Leader

◆ Indicates a Champion



HONOREE

Jadi Anderson

Director, Product Innovation, Kenny's Candy & Confections
KLN Family Brands

“I hope to inspire the next generation by encouraging them to embrace their own story. There’s no right look or career path to follow or way to volunteer within your community. Our individual experiences allow us unique perspectives to challenge, lead and impact change. Someone out there needs your voice and leadership.”

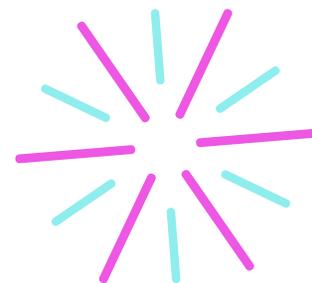
Jadi Anderson drives measurable results through her strategic leadership and long-standing commitment to developing people. Within KLN Family Brands, she has served in many different capacities, each strengthening her ability to drive business impact.

As business manager for NutHeads, she laid the groundwork for long-term partnerships and profitability by building trusted relationships with key co-manufacturing customers and developing structured operational processes. In her role as marketing director at Kenny’s Candy, Jadi led two major brand transformations and identified portfolio gaps that resulted in successful licorice launches, including Blasted Berry, Sourrageous Drops and Minis. In addition to creating brand performance scorecards that generated \$100,000 in annual savings, Jadi’s leadership has advanced hundreds of branded, private label and co-manufacturing projects launched across multiple categories.

Everywhere you look at KLN, Jadi has driven meaningful change, and nowhere is it more evident than in the development of people. From building and mentoring a predominantly female marketing team to offering support and guidance to young professionals within the organization, Jadi empowers manufacturing’s next generation to lead. Like the very best leaders, Jadi sets the tone through her actions. Whether she’s coaching team members, advocating for performance bonuses or celebrating the achievements of others, Jadi strengthens both culture and teams throughout the business. Her commitment to empowering women across the industry can also be seen through her participation in professional organizations like the NCA Women’s Leadership Group and Females in Food.

Jadi brings the same care and intention she shows at work to her community. She is actively involved in the Boys & Girls Club Advisory Board, Perham Rotary, Calvary Lutheran Church and local schools, where she freely lends her time and leadership. And by speaking with local high school students, Jadi encourages young people to consider careers in manufacturing and marketing. Jadi has made a lasting impact at KLN and beyond, bringing integrity and a commitment to serving others to every role she takes on.





HONOREE

Åsa Arvidsson

Regional Vice President, Sales, EMEA North region
Rockwell Automation

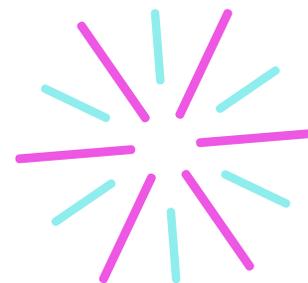
“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that leadership is not defined by titles but by courage, collaboration and authenticity. By sharing my journey, mentoring others and opening doors for underrepresented talent, I want young people—especially girls—to see that they belong in the future of manufacturing.”

Åsa Arvidsson is a transformative manufacturing leader who blends strategic vision with deep cultural intelligence. As regional vice president for Rockwell Automation’s North EMEA region, she leads teams across 36 countries, driving performance, unity and growth in one of the company’s most diverse and complex business areas. Her career, shaped by leadership roles at IBM, Ericsson and Microsoft, reflects the global perspective she brings to modern industrial transformation. A champion of operational excellence, Åsa guided her region through a major organizational redesign, shaping the One North EMEA model and ensuring a cohesive, future-ready structure. Her thoughtful approach to change management strengthened transparency, accountability and alignment across teams navigating new expectations. Even with resource constraints, she delivered strong, reliable results, reinforcing her reputation as a leader who brings stability through clarity, collaboration and rigor.

Recognizing that talent thrives in inclusive environments, Åsa introduced Culture Connect, a framework that unites leaders across country clusters and business units through listening sessions, multilingual leadership roundtables and tailored onboarding. These practices create a workplace where diverse perspectives shape decisions, and where every individual feels valued, included and empowered to contribute.

Åsa is also a global advocate for advancing women in manufacturing. She mentors emerging leaders across EMEA, plays a key role in Rockwell’s 350-member Professional Women’s Council, hosts mentoring circles and shares her voice internationally on strategies to accelerate the inclusion of diverse talent into leadership. Beyond Rockwell, she represents the company in the American Chamber of Commerce in Sweden and is deeply committed to youth outreach, inspiring the next generation through STEAM engagement that has reached more than 250 students in her region over the last two years.





◆ CHAMPION

Jami Austin

Network Optimization Project Manager

The Lubrizol Corporation

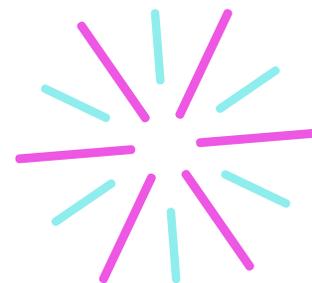
“I am motivated by keeping employees focused, protected and supported, especially when situations become challenging. Guiding others through difficult moments with clarity and care gives my role purpose and reinforces my commitment to creating a safe, steady environment where people can succeed.”

Rooted in empathy, action and a commitment to showing up for her team, Jami Austin’s servant-leadership style is evident in every role she’s held. While Lubrizol’s presence in the South was limited and larger competitors often dominated student attention, Jami used her role as co-op program leader in Texas to adjust messaging to match local understanding, update offerings to include flexible scheduling, reach out to a broader and more diverse candidate pool and become involved with the local Society of Women Engineers. When Jami became a plant manager in California, she carried that same mindset into advocating for her full-time team, pushing for locally aligned wages and securing an average 15% raise for more than 50 employees. The impact of this action was tangible—improving morale, retention and overall well-being.

As an operations leader at the Bayport site in Texas, Jami led three operating units with 40 reports—all male—and inherited a top-down culture where crews lacked trust in their supervisors. She empowered employees to create lists of needs and supervisors to own their shift’s list and drive progress. Over two years, approximately 90% of the items were completed, reinforcing trust and demonstrating leadership was listening. New weekly control room update meetings tailored to each shift focused on current projects and gave space for operators to raise concerns. Her leadership transformed the team dynamic, shifting from compliance to collaboration.

Jami engages with her broader community through consistent, hands-on volunteerism focused on inclusion, accessibility and nourishment. In California, she volunteered with FirstFruits SLO, a nonprofit farm that provides fresh produce to local food banks. In Ohio, Jami supports the Greater Cleveland Sight Center, helping set up and participate in their annual White Cane Walk, which draws 300 to 400 attendees and raises awareness for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. She also has volunteered for the past five years through Be My Eyes, an app that connects sighted individuals with blind or low-vision users who need real-time visual assistance, such as reading a label or navigating a space. Jami embodies allyship, mentorship and the belief that leadership is about lifting others.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Michelle Barnhart

Human Resource Manager
The Timken Company

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that inclusive leadership, resilience and purpose-driven work can transform both people and industry.”

Michelle Barnhart has led The Timken Company in building a culture where inclusion and operational excellence reinforce one another. Since 2021, the Operations Development Program’s human resources functions have been in Michelle’s hands. She designs the program’s curriculum and personally mentors participants, helping them navigate the unique challenges of manufacturing leadership. Over the past two years, Michelle partnered with senior leadership to redesign ODP, strengthening succession planning across the Engineered Bearing and Industrial Motion divisions. Michelle scaled this leadership pipeline for high-potential manufacturing talent from 10 to 17 participants per cohort and guided hiring and development of 29 emerging leaders across 15 plants.

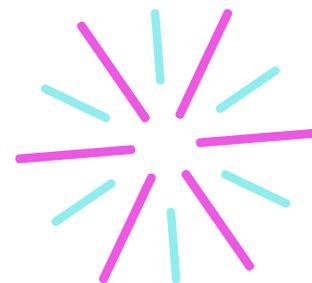
Michelle is also Timken’s only human resources manager globally who is a certified facilitator for the Timken Manufacturing Operations System, the company’s Lean operating system based on the Toyota Production System. She has helped facilitate five waves of TMOS and mentored more than 90 participants. Additionally, she is one of only 10 Timken U.S. leaders certified by Employment Learning Innovations to teach civil-treatment workplace training, further demonstrating her commitment to culture and talent development.

Last year, Michelle launched Timken’s Celebrating Abilities Network, the company’s first employee resource group dedicated to disability, neurodivergence and caregiver inclusion. In its inaugural year, CAN hosted 11 events, drawing a total attendance of 782 and engaging 416 unique participants. These results exceeded expectations for a new ERG and established lasting momentum for accessibility and inclusion across Timken’s U.S. workforce.

As executive chair of the United Way of Lincoln County, North Carolina, Michelle organizes volunteer events and the payroll pledge campaign at her plant, growing the annual campaign from \$61,000 to \$110,000 in three years. Her commitment was recognized in 2024, when she received the Ambassador of United Way Award.

Michelle also contributes to academic scholarship as an adjunct professor and doctoral student in industrial-organizational psychology. In her doctoral work, Michelle researches barriers to manufacturing employment for individuals with physical disabilities, aiming to inform practical approaches to inclusive hiring and workplace accommodations.





HONOREE

Monique Bass

Responsible Care Director
Dow

“I am motivated by the opportunity to support others in achieving their goals and advancing in both their careers and personal lives. Every experience, lesson and challenge we face becomes a tool we can pass forward, empowering others to learn and lead. In supporting one another, we create a ripple effect of growth and purpose.”

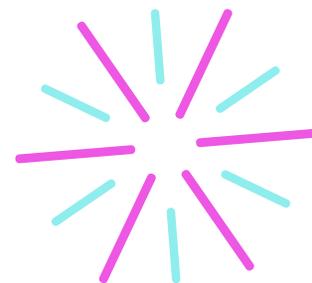
Monique Bass’s strong track record of improving safety, compliance, financial performance and organizational culture across Dow speaks for itself. From 2023 to 2025, she led more than 150 employees to achieve more than \$7 million in productivity savings—\$5 million of which resulted from a detailed assessment of raw material and utility usage. Monique and her team delivered \$2 million in turnaround cost reductions by minimizing reliance on external resources and redefining how resources were allocated. Her team implemented changes methodically over two years, leading to sustainable reductions in operating costs.

Over the past five years, Monique has led a production organization comprising both staff members and shift operators to support employee growth and development. Operators were given opportunities to trial new roles, receive performance assessments and feedback, and then apply and compete for day staff roles as they became available. In her role as financial/admin section chief within Dow’s crisis management structure, Monique led decision-making on critical issues that included pay and benefits during emergencies and consistent application of company policies. Her leadership resulted in the development of a playbook that was adopted across Gulf Coast sites.

In addition to her core responsibilities, Monique has been actively involved in early career recruiting and talent-retention efforts. She addressed challenges in retaining production engineers by revamping the rotational assignment program so new hires would better understand role expectations, easing their transition from college to full-time employment. She also serves on Dow’s Operations Inclusion Council, focused on improving training, hiring and talent promotion in an equitable and balanced manner.

In the community, Monique volunteers for an annual summer youth camp STEM Day, where she helps in facilitating hands-on science experiments to inspire campers to explore scientific and mathematic careers. She is also heavily engaged in her church’s Women’s Ministry.





HONOREE

Brittany Bauer

Senior SHE Specialist
Henkel Corporation

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing women that in a manufacturing environment, you can achieve amazing results regardless of the hurdles you may encounter. I want other people to feel their voice matters by showing what is possible and by sharing personal stories.”

Brittany Bauer is a force behind Henkel Corporation’s award-winning safety culture. As senior safety, health and environmental specialist for the Elgin, Illinois, facility, she drives the systems, training and day-to-day decisions that keep people safe and operations running responsibly.

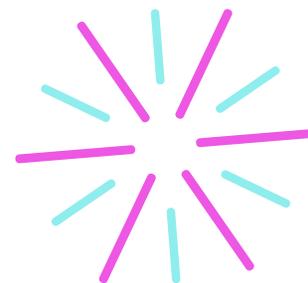
Within the specialty polyurethane adhesive operations organization, Brittany ensures complex regulatory requirements are met, and she has helped build one of the strongest safety cultures across Henkel’s North American facilities. By leading the safety committee and delivering practical, culture-focused training, Brittany has achieved a high-functioning feedback loop dedicated to safe work practices. Under Brittany’s guidance, the Elgin site was awarded the top prize for cultural safety performance across 32 North American adhesives factories.

A true champion of environmental sustainability, Brittany led the adhesive facility to achieve Zero Waste to Landfill status by establishing a new operating model that helped eliminate 150 tons of landfill waste per year by recycling containers, turning metal wastes into scrap steel profits and utilizing additional recycling methods. By discovering that forklift operations within her plant were releasing carbon monoxide, Brittany prompted a switch to electric units that has eliminated the use of fossil fuels and improved air quality for both employees and the community.

For the past decade, Brittany has dedicated her time and energy to coaching tennis, guiding many young women to compete at high school and university levels. Her coaching goes beyond technique as she actively supports and encourages her players to explore STEM pathways as they consider their futures. Within Henkel, Brittany has built a network of women in safety, health and environmental roles who collaborate, problem-solve and support one another through real-world industrial challenges.

Prior to joining Henkel Corporation in 2022, Brittany served first as a lab analyst and then as project manager at PDC Laboratories. She is an environmental science graduate from the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater, where she also competed on the tennis team. Whether on the court or in the workplace, Brittany continuously uplifts others to reach their full potential.





HONOREE

Giovanna Benetti

Demand Planning & Inventory Manager
IBM

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing them that anything is possible. Goals aren’t always a straight line, so map a plan (with intention), adjust along the way and ‘keep swimming.’ It takes courage to act, and with curiosity and collaboration, you can unlock opportunities you didn’t even know existed.”

It’s difficult to fully quantify the influence that Giovanna Benetti has had at IBM. Through her leadership in transforming the company’s supply chain into a digital, AI enabled, end-to-end operation, her work has positively impacted employees in more than 40 countries and clients in more than 170 countries.

In alignment with IBM’s AI strategy, she helped position the supply chain as Client Zero for watsonx, IBM’s next-generation enterprise AI and data platform. She also led the implementation of generative AI in just three months through a four-workstream, cross-functional guild team. This work earned finalist recognition in the 2025 Manufacturing Leadership Council Awards for AI Vision & Strategy, and the same organization named her a winner of the Women in Digital Transformation category, recognizing manufacturing leaders who are driving the industry’s digital transformation and serving as role models and source of inspiration for their peers.

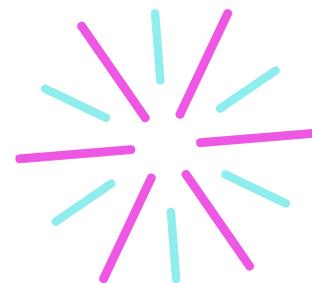
As part of IBM’s broader AI transformation strategy, Giovanna’s leadership has contributed to hundreds of millions in cost avoidance, \$388 million in savings to date and 98% on-time delivery, and she continues to strengthen operational performance globally.

Helping organize an IBM one-day career development summit, supporting more than 30 mentees across six countries and helping launch engagement initiatives like Engage Together are just a few examples of how Giovanna continuously invests in people and commits to individual development. In 2021, in recognition of her people leadership, Giovanna was honored as IBM Manager Champion, and in 2024, she was named as one of the most influential technology leaders across Latin America, Spain and Portugal as a HITEC 50 award recipient.

Beyond IBM, Giovanna lends her time and expertise to efforts supporting the Hispanic community, women and the next generation. She mentors first-generation Hispanic college students through CollegeTrack and early-career women professionals through Laboratoria in Brazil. She is also passionate about elevating awareness of the manufacturing and technology industries, taking leadership roles in organizing the MLCouncil Virtual Tour, speaking in the Generative AI workshop at the 2023 SHPE conference and facilitating the collection of approximately 1,500 resumes during the event’s career fair.

Recognizing her role in shaping the future of manufacturing through innovation and inclusion, Giovanna empowers young women in STEM by using her voice, story and volunteer activities to advocate for diversity and mentorship. One of her manufacturing challenge stories is featured in the book *Hispanic Star Rising—Vol. V: The New Face of Power* (2024).





★ EMERGING LEADER

Anna Billey

Production Engineer
Toyota Motor North America

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that innovation and leadership can create meaningful change. Through hands-on STEM outreach, mentoring and sharing real-world successes, I want young minds to see engineering as a powerful tool for progress and inclusion.”

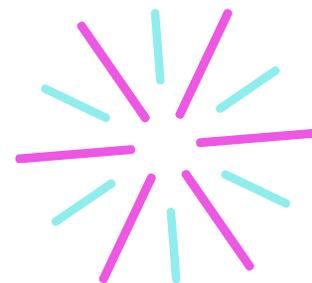
With an investment of only \$25,000, Anna Billey identified and implemented a plan to enhance accuracy, reduce downtime and alleviate labor burdens for Toyota Motor Manufacturing West Virginia. Toyota’s 2.4T main assembly line was seeing an average of 68 engine kickouts caused by false test failures during manual fuel system testing each month. Anna managed every phase of 2025’s internal fuel leak test automation project, leading to a 97% decrease in false failures, a 73% drop in downtime related to testing and annual labor savings of \$242,000—a 0.1-year payback period. Anna’s innovation enhanced process reliability, minimized offline repair risks and improved team efficiency. She gained recognition through Toyota’s global Kaizen network, with other plants showing interest in replicating her solution.

In her final Leadership Development Program rotation, Anna assumed a hybrid safety and production engineering role to strengthen her expertise in safety standards and tools essential for her PE responsibilities. She ensured machine guarding modifications met strict requirements, streamlined approval processes and led the initial trials of the SERENITY software for machine risk assessments at TMMWW. By earning the FS Technician (TÜV Rheinland) certification, Anna advanced technical leadership and supported functional safety change-point approvals. Her efforts enhanced machine safety, improved risk accuracy and empowered the PE team to adopt innovative technologies for continuous improvement and operational excellence.

Beyond her exceptional technical expertise and problem-solving, Anna has an unwavering commitment to developing others. Anna spearheaded targeted recruitment efforts at West Virginia University, University of Charleston, West Virginia State University and Marshall University, leading to the hiring of two Leadership Development Program participants and promoting diversity and inclusion within the organization. She mentored emerging leaders in a Quality Circle, which resulted in measurable improvements in team performance and confidence. She’s also involved in the TERRA business partnering group focused on the environment, Women Influencing and Impacting Toyota and Young Professional, where she champions networking, knowledge sharing and professional development.

Beyond the facility, Anna spearheads STEM outreach and recruitment initiatives through Discover Engineering Day at the Clay Center and Girls’ STEM Day, inspiring more than 200 young girls to explore engineering through hands-on learning and mentorship. These initiatives have been instrumental in breaking down barriers for underrepresented groups and fostering early interest in technical careers. Anna also leads Toyota’s Motorsports outreach program and has coordinated three high-profile community events that showcased Toyota’s technology and strengthened local engagement.





HONOREE

Sador Black

Six Sigma Master Black Belt
Eastman Chemical Company

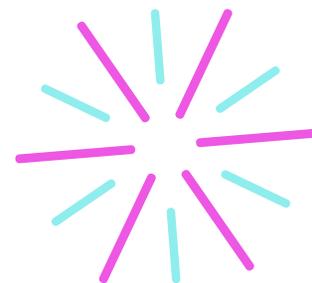
“I am motivated by the impact I make at work and in the community by being a mentor, a role model and a leader. As a role model, I can see how small, intentional efforts expand into transformative opportunities and the potential for new experiences results in both personal development and career development.”

With a career spanning multiple leadership and individual contributor roles at Eastman, Sador Black has driven operational excellence across global initiatives, including process improvements in Latin America and the successful start-up of a specialty plastics manufacturing plant in Kuantan, Malaysia. Sador’s most significant accomplishment may be leading the revitalization of Eastman’s Lean Six Sigma program. Years of diminished focus led to lost expertise in structured problem-solving methodologies, and Eastman asked Sador to channel her experience and Master Black Belt certification to reboot the program. Her strategic approach—“Learn the tools, use the tools”—combined technical rigor with mentorship, and the program has flourished. Over the past three years, she has mentored and certified roughly 58 Six Sigma Belts, leading to more than \$28 million in value across all four of Eastman’s business segments. Sador recently launched a Black Belt Community of Practice to share best practices.

Even more than processes, it’s people that Sador’s experience benefits. As a project manager assessing gender gaps in innovation, Sador developed action plans to close the gap. Recognizing the need for accessible global training, Sador spearheaded the development of virtual learning for 90% of Eastman’s continuous improvement classes, which has eliminated travel costs while broadening reach.

Sador’s community efforts focus on creating spaces for youth development where young women belong. With Girls Inc. of Kingsport, Sador has been a board member—board president during the COVID-19 pandemic—and chair of key fundraising initiatives. She also taught yoga as a certified group fitness instructor and led the Girls on the Run program. Her dedication earned her the Woman of Excellence award. Women’s empowerment is top of mind for Sador through her leadership in the LPGA Amateurs—Tri-Cities Chapter where she is a charter member and has served as president, events chair and currently, treasurer. Her efforts extend to youth outreach via the chapter’s support of the First Tee program, which introduces children to golf and its core values of integrity, respect and perseverance.





HONOREE

Susan-Rhea Blankenship

Senior Principal Engineer
Celanese

“I hope to inspire the next generation by encouraging women to use their voice. It is often difficult to speak up in a room full of senior colleagues, but alternate views are essential to problem-solving and progress.”

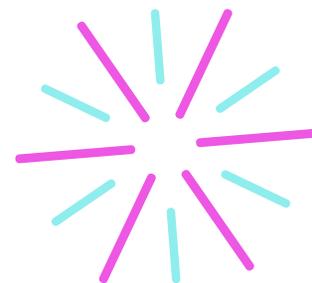
Susan Blankenship has spent two decades shaping the performance and reliability of Celanese’s Narrows, Virginia, facility, the company’s only flake production site in the world. She began her career in 2005 as a chemist in the quality control laboratory and now serves as a senior engineering leader whose expertise guides operations across the plant. As the subject matter expert for acetate flake and preparation manufacturing, Susan led productivity efforts to improve rate through recipe modifications and return to best-practice conditions, resulting in a critical 2-metric-ton flake rate increase in 2023. In 2025, Susan served as the liaison between the Flake Rate Recovery Core Team and the Manufacturing Unit, driving a flake rate increase that created significant business value.

Susan’s leadership touches far more than process optimization. She has helped many of her colleagues grow both professionally and personally through mentorship and adept management of her team. From establishing a weekly technician huddle to discuss opportunities, align priorities and promote teamwork to onboarding new manufacturing quality engineers, Susan’s technical and operations leadership is recognized across the site.

Her drive to develop people naturally extends to her longtime involvement as a member of the Narrows Women’s Impact Network employee relations group, which she co-founded in 2012. Through WIN, Susan has supported programs such as Supplies for Seniors and the New Opportunity School for Women, lending her time and dedication to supporting her community. She has also personally led site volunteer events to sustain the Linus blanket program, which provides handmade blankets to children who are seriously ill, traumatized or otherwise in need. During COVID-19, Susan helped fabricate 20 “wireless on wheels” units that brought broadband access to underserved areas.

Within both Celanese and her community, Susan has made a difference in the lives of others with compassion and servant leadership. Her keen technical acumen and practicality set her apart as a steady guide and a trusted leader who lifts people toward success.





HONOREE

Devon Blumer

Director, Quality & Food Safety
Molson Coors Beverage Company

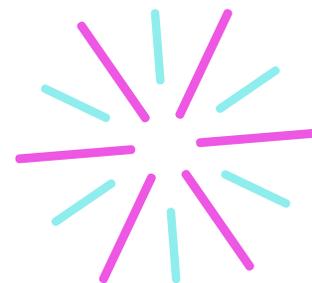
“I hope to inspire the next generation by being my authentic self, showing them that you can learn, grow and advance your career all while being true to yourself and your values. By embracing authenticity, you not only drive meaningful connections between you and your peers but you also influence your teams in the best possible ways.”

When difficult decisions must be made, Devon Blumer is the leader others turn to at Molson Coors Beverage Company. She has driven the modernization of Molson Coors’ quality systems, aligning quality processes across U.S. and Canadian licensee partners and ensuring consistency and mutual understanding in environments that often require delicate negotiation. One of Devon’s most notable achievements was her leadership in transitioning Molson Coors Beverage Company’s operational quality systems from outdated paper-based and legacy platforms—some dating back to the 1970s and 1980s—to the modern Molson Coors Manufacturing System. Launched in 2017 across U.S. breweries and more recently expanded into Canada, Devon was pivotal in shaping its quality control framework and ensured the system was intuitive and actionable for brewery operators. She continues to engage with operational teams, gathering feedback, refining processes and championing user-friendly solutions.

As a mentor and leader, Devon empowers her team by asking thoughtful, strategic questions that spark independent thinking and build confidence. Devon built and nurtured a large cross-functional team that exemplifies true partnership across areas of expertise. When Molson Coors Beverage Company underwent a significant shift in product portfolio and the food safety and regulatory team lost its manager, Devon stepped up without hesitation to integrate those responsibilities into her own. At a time when the team was facing uncertainty, low engagement and strained stakeholder relationships, Devon led with empathy and clarity—listening deeply to both her team and their partners, bridging functional gaps and fostering a renewed sense of shared purpose. In the past, Devon was a member of LAGER, Molson Coors’ LGBTQI+ Business Resource Group, where she served as a vocal advocate for underrepresented communities.

Involvement in her children’s education has consistently been a priority for Devon. She’s served on their parent-teacher organization board since their preschool years and continuing through elementary school.





HONOREE

Christy Bollinger

Plant Manager
Hydro

“I am motivated by seeing people grow. When you help someone see past the barriers and realize they have the capability to knock them down all on their own, it gives me purpose.”

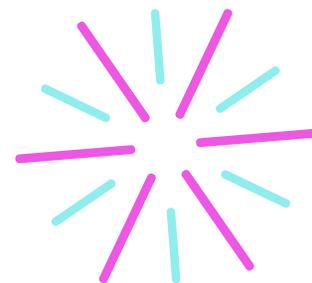
Christy Bollinger’s career at Hydro has been marked by the courage to go first. As Hydro’s first female extrusion plant manager, Christy’s successes are a benchmark for future leaders. As an inaugural Executive Committee member of Hydro’s first employee resource group, RISE (Respect, Include, Support, Empower), Christy played a pivotal role in shaping its mission. As a valued mentor selected to participate in the RISE Mentoring Program’s pilot, Christy inspired others to join the program, helping emerging professionals grow in confidence and capability.

Christy became plant manager of Hydro’s North Liberty, Indiana, facility in 2023 and effected dramatic improvements: 65% reduction in safety incidents, 25% drop in quality claims, 46% decrease in press downtime and a \$2 million overachievement of the business plan. She fostered accountability, encouraged open dialogue and built strong commercial partnerships, enabling her team to perform at their highest level.

The courage behind Christy’s leadership has not gone unnoticed. In 2022, Christy received Hydro Extrusion North America’s highest honor: the President’s Council—a distinction recognizing the top 25 employees out of 5,800 in Extrusion North America. In 2024, Christy was selected for Hydro’s Global Leadership Program, joining 22 other leaders worldwide in an intensive leadership-development experience.

While her career has taken her to different places, building community has always been an important part of Christy’s journey. She began her career at Hydro Extrusions Elkhart, where she initiated a partnership between the plant and the City of Elkhart to support local revitalization efforts. She formed a plant engagement team that volunteered across the community and initiated fundraising for organizations like Roofsit, which supports victims of abuse. Today, Christy volunteers at a women’s shelter, helping women build resumes and develop interview skills to reenter the workforce and support their families. She also helps provide hundreds of meals each week at a local food pantry. Additionally, Christy works to support individuals recovering from addiction, connecting them with resources, employment opportunities and emotional support to rebuild their lives. Christy’s efforts are all about care and inclusion and are an inspiration to others.





◆ CHAMPION

Jennifer Sarah (JS) Bolton

Senior Director, Manufacturing
Nissan

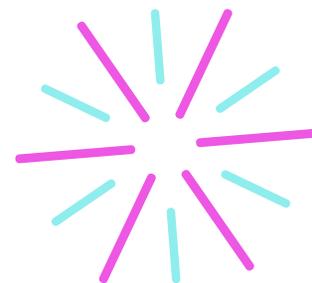
“I am motivated by developing strong teams, mentoring people to realize their potential, coaching them to solve difficult problems and creating opportunities for future success.”

Early in her career, JS Bolton built a reputation for walking the production floor and getting to know employees on a personal level. When she saw no women in lead-technician roles in the 1,000-plus employee Canton body shop, she coached, mentored and advocated to change the norms of hiring and promotion culture. Within a couple years, nine women had been promoted to supervisor. JS’s colleagues and team took note that she would defend fairness, even when it wasn’t easy. From that moment, JS’s influence has brought lasting change in policies, culture and people who now see a place for themselves in manufacturing.

In more recent plant leadership roles at Nissan, JS has scheduled dozens of listening sessions each year simply to hear what’s on people’s minds as well as leading conversations on inclusion, the Nissan Way and the Nissan Leadership Way, which are the company’s values for leading with both the head and the heart. She is a formal and informal mentor and weaves recognition and appreciation into daily routines.

Within Nissan, JS led the Canton plant Women’s Business Synergy Team, built Habitat for Humanity homes and co-led fundraising efforts within the Smyrna plant for disadvantaged youth. Outside the company, she represents Nissan manufacturing as a speaker at high schools, workforce development centers and local universities. Multiple nonprofit boards—including St. Luke’s Community House and the Monroe Carrell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt—benefit from JS’s vision. JS is also president-elect of the Junior League of Nashville. While vice president of community for Junior League, JS led a comprehensive Needs of Nashville study that redefined the League’s mission around childhood literacy and poverty, secured collaborations with 84 nonprofits and awarded 15 grants of up to \$20,000 each.





◆ CHAMPION

Maxine Bonaccorsi

Operations Manager

Kimberly-Clark

“I am motivated by taking on new challenges and seeing my team grow, develop and confidently make decisions that deliver strong results. I take pride in improving processes, raising standards and empowering others to take ownership so we continue to grow and succeed as a high-performing organization.”

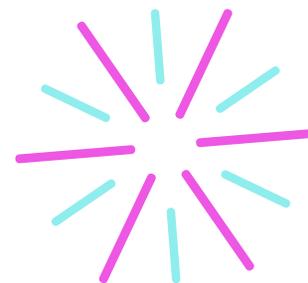
Throughout Maxine Bonaccorsi’s 29-year career at Kimberly-Clark, she has consistently placed people at the heart of her leadership. Maxine is a driving force for development and training across the Northfleet plant and consistently supports team members through technical and leadership degrees and personal development programs. She was instrumental in developing an on-site dual-role capability program. Several employees progressed into new roles, and the program simultaneously created a more agile and resilient workforce with less downtime and improved shift coverage flexibility, while bringing forth a culture of shared ownership and collaboration.

Maxine helped build and volunteered to chair Northfleet’s People Centered Safety Committee, which won a Global Safety Innovation Award last year. The committee has delivered a 50% uplift in compliance, driving higher-quality safety interactions and supporting a period of three years without a reportable injury. Maxine supported a major machine upgrade while ensuring the safety and care of all the teams during the COVID pandemic. She also led the move from “flat” Andrex to the embossed Andrex, the most significant change to the product since its launch in 1958.

With her hallmark concern for team members, Maxine ensures teams understand the “why” behind the work, building trust and understanding, ensuring alignment and helping them feel invested enough to champion the innovation. She’s been recognized with an internal APEX award, the highest award given to teams and individuals within Kimberly-Clark’s Europe, the Middle East and Africa region.

By supporting Northfleet’s partnership with Innovate Her, Maxine has been a part of driving STEM careers for women in the UK. The talks, career fairs, tours and on-site work experience she’s supported with local secondary schools have had a direct impact: Northfleet School for Girls has seen a 70% increase in students taking STEM subjects. One student has applied for work experience at the site, and another chose engineering as her intended career path. Additionally, Maxine supports Northfleet’s on-site graduates and apprentices as well as the facility’s first female on-site engineering apprentice.





HONOREE

Meagan Boson

Senior Vice President, Business Performance
Oldcastle Infrastructure, a CRH Company

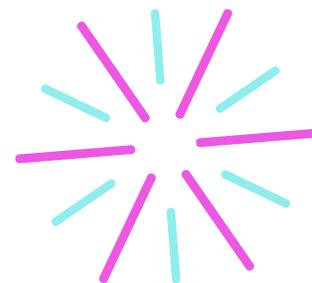
“I am motivated by my faith and the opportunity to create pathways for women in manufacturing. Driving operational excellence while championing faith-centered leadership shows the next generation that they don’t have to choose between career impact and personal values. They can excel at both through intentional, systematic approaches.”

An integral part of the Oldcastle Infrastructure senior leadership team and a driving force within the employee-led Mosaic group, Meagan Boson’s authenticity and humility shine through in everything she does. With a sharp understanding of how emerging technologies can elevate the value her team delivers, Meagan recently introduced AI-driven solutions to the supply chain and engineering functions, significantly boosting back-office efficiency, enhancing the customer experience and streamlining order management. She also led the standardization of new technologies across the manufacturing organization, implementing advanced systems for transportation management, planning and scheduling. Connecting people and ideas, Meagan’s rollout of Oldcastle Solutions helped the company think holistically, break down silos and make individual CRH Company brands (of which Oldcastle Infrastructure is one) more integrated.

Meagan actively seeks opportunities to guide the next generation of leaders by facilitating collaborative workshops and sharing her personal journey through the annual Up Forum conference, connecting emerging talent with business leaders. As a key member of the Mosaic Employee Resource Group, Meagan advocates for inclusion and authenticity, particularly for women and people of color. Her participation in last year’s “Embracing Authenticity” video series provided a powerful example of vulnerability and resilience, inspiring others to embrace their unique perspectives and pursue leadership roles. Her approachable style and willingness to share both successes and challenges make her mentorship especially impactful.

Meagan’s belief in the power of presence and mentorship leads her community actions. Last year, Meagan became a Diamond Sponsor for a high school business development organization, helping them achieve a national championship. Her partnership with Junior Achievement of Georgia provides volunteer opportunities for Oldcastle Infrastructure employees and opens doors for youth to learn about the manufacturing industry. Meagan’s involvement goes beyond sponsorship; she actively engages, mentors and inspires, ensuring that every young person she encounters feels seen, valued and capable of greatness.





HONOREE

Lauren Boyd

Bottling Operations Specialist
Bardstown Bourbon Company

“I am motivated by hitting scheduled targets and delivering results.”

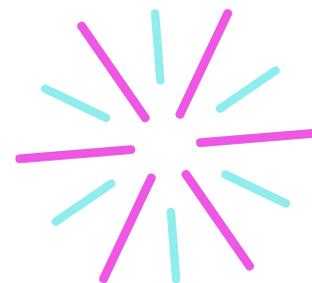
When Lauren Boyd joined Bardstown Bourbon Company, she saw the opportunity to align production efficiency and customer satisfaction, but it would require rebuilding the bottling operations from the ground up. With no established procedures, efficiency standards or training documentation in place, Lauren set to work creating structure and standard operating procedures, training team members across departments and scaling production from a zero-base environment to more than 1 million cases across 60+ customers. She redesigned pallet stacking patterns and lowered inbound glass palletization heights, reducing the risk of operator injuries and improving ergonomic safety. These efforts have enhanced day-to-day operations and strengthened the company’s ability to deliver consistent, premium products at scale.

Lauren is a leader with a door that’s always open. Her communication style is transparent and supportive, creating an environment where her team feels valued and heard. One standout example of Lauren’s mentorship is her work with Katie, who now manages label room printing operations. Early in Katie’s career, she lacked confidence in handling customer communication and technical questions. Lauren coached her daily, and today, Katie confidently manages customer accounts and leads her own team. Beyond individual coaching, Lauren consistently advocates for women and underrepresented employees, shares credit for team success and reminds colleagues to balance professional and personal well-being.

Even outside her distillery duties, Lauren contributes to workforce development by engaging with students interested in manufacturing. She helped host a University of Kentucky class, giving students a full view of the whiskey production process and offering insight into the craftsmanship and complexity of modern manufacturing.

Lauren’s free time goes to supporting others in meaningful ways: donating to humane societies and organizing and participating in disaster relief efforts. When Hurricane Harvey ravaged North Carolina, Lauren coordinated deliveries of essential supplies and worked alongside community volunteers to prepare and serve meals to affected families. Lauren also supports youth programs, encouraging her daughter and other young girls to pursue their passions through cheer, volleyball and basketball.





HONOREE

Meghan Boyd

Business Unit Manager
Parker Hannifin

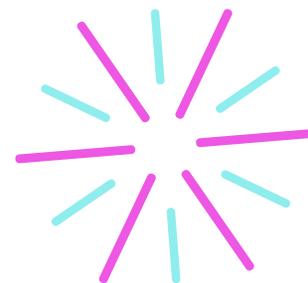
“I am motivated by turning critical challenges into lasting improvements, especially where customer needs and people development intersect. I thrive on building high-performing, inclusive teams, applying Lean rigor to deliver measurable results and mentoring others—particularly emerging leaders—to grow confidence, capability and impact in technical and operational roles.”

In 2023, Meghan Boyd stepped up to reinvigorate and scale the internal start-up business for Parker Aerospace, located at Hill Air Force Base in Utah. She joined at a critical juncture: More than 180 planes were grounded awaiting parts—directly affecting the readiness and strength of the U.S. Air Force military fleet—and the USAF threatened to revoke Parker’s largest contract if improvements weren’t quickly made. Launching into action, Meghan joined the team, prioritized the critical problems, applied Lean continuous improvement and aligned stakeholders to move the program from crisis to stable operations. The team eliminated the backlog of mission-impaired planes within nine months and set the contract back on schedule. Over the subsequent nine months, the team raised production from 130 to 250 units per month and increased parts availability on the shelf by 300%, enabling the USAF to build strategic stock in key tactical regions for mission readiness.

Meghan has shaped a strong, inclusive workplace culture and advanced others’ careers through sustained leadership within Parker’s Peer W business resource group, which supports the attraction, development and retention of women within all levels of the company. As a longtime member of the corporate steering committee and Southern California Hub leader, she launched three chapters spanning seven divisions, created repeatable career development programs and forged community partnerships with FIRST Robotics and the Society of Women Engineers. Her work helped define the framework used by Parker’s BRGs company-wide, while she recruited and developed chapter leaders, coordinated cross-division programming and built a reliable talent pipeline. Beyond Peer W, Meghan mentors successors, first-time engineering managers, interns and recent graduates, strengthening retention and succession planning by creating environments where colleagues feel valued, supported and prepared for higher-impact roles.

Outside of work, Meghan volunteers weekly in her church’s kids’ ministry, supporting new families, children and volunteer leaders during a period of rapid growth and leadership turnover. In her involvement across career, colleagues and community, Meghan puts people first, delivers reliable results and expands opportunities for everyone.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Haley Boyker

Director, On Market Technical
AstraZeneca

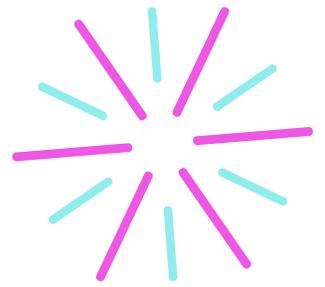
“I hope to inspire the next generation by sharing my journey and showcasing what’s possible. Through opening doors to my workplace, lifting others up and celebrating their wins, I aim to engage authentically with my community; always leading with purpose and inviting others to discover their own ‘why.’”

In fewer than 10 years at AstraZeneca, Haley Boyker has delivered enterprise-scale impact in active pharmaceutical manufacturing, operational excellence and sustainability, lifting performance and people at the same time. During her time as technical lead, Haley’s metrics have been remarkable. She drove the implementation of a second-generation process for high-volume API, delivering an increase in batch size of over 45%, a reduction in process mass intensity of about 50%, a reduction in batch disposals of over 90% and projected productivity savings of more than \$40 million, not to mention a reduction in carbon dioxide of approximately 9 million kg (realized 2026 to 2030). Haley also co-developed a mechanistic digital model via computational fluid dynamics, serving as a primary contributor and coach to data-science partners, enabling science-based scale-up parameter selection. In a previous role, she reduced existing operations cycle time by around 10% and led critical deviation investigations to root cause with durable corrective and preventive actions. Haley’s combination of technical depth, digital fluency and execution excellence has delivered measurable business value while strengthening quality, safety and environmental performance.

As business process owner for Integrated Risk Management, Haley aligns safety, quality and business risks across local, regional and global forums and organizes complex, cross-functional efforts. By setting shared priorities, training staff at all levels of the organization and ensuring compliance with good manufacturing practices, her work fosters trust and psychological safety. She actively leverages teammates’ strengths—seeking creative input from peers and celebrating contributions—and convenes internal and external collaborators to solve difficult challenges.

Cultivating future talent and strengthening STEM awareness locally, Haley leads the site’s Early Talent team, partnering with local schools to host students on site. She has attended the Society of Women Engineers Conference as part of an AstraZeneca delegation. Haley has attended SWE events at local universities as well as an International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering group meeting at Texas A&M to further promote AstraZeneca careers. She is quick to connect colleagues across sites and with external partners.





HONOREE

Ayanna Burton

Product Group Safety Manager
Nucor

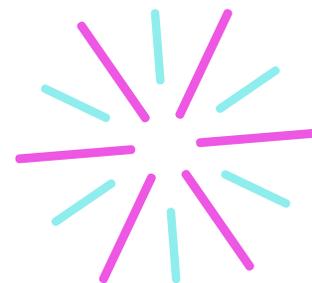
“I am motivated by making a measurable difference—adding value, elevating teammates and building a culture where people thrive. Raising four sons instilled patience and compassion, reinforcing that true leadership means recognizing each person’s unique potential and investing in their growth.”

In her 12 years with Nucor Corporation, Ayanna Burton has advanced through roles from lab technician to product group safety manager for the Rebar Fabrication Group, but her leadership is not defined by titles. At Nucor Steel Louisiana, Ayanna built the safety team from the ground up. She implemented strategic safety protocols, fostered a culture of accountability and led with empathy and precision, directly improving safety metrics and team cohesion. Her recent appointment as product group safety manager reflects her outstanding contributions and the trust she has earned across the company.

Beyond her operational role, Ayanna is a founding member of Steel Magnolias, NSLA’s Women of Nucor chapter, and she has coordinated several volunteer efforts, including constructing a local home with Habitat for Humanity. Ayanna also serves as social responsibility director for the Women in Manufacturing Louisiana chapter and represented Nucor at the 33rd Annual Freedom Awards, hosted by the National Civil Rights Museum. Through these platforms, she advocates for equity and fosters community engagement. She uses her voice to ask thought-provoking questions and challenge conventional thinking, which inspires others to grow both personally and professionally.

Ayanna’s ability to connect with individuals from diverse backgrounds and inspire collective action has made her a respected figure both within and outside of Nucor. Building bridges between industry and community, Ayanna is a member of the Greater Baton Rouge Industry Alliance. Through their Women in Industry Forum, Ayanna mentors female junior and senior high school students who are interested in STEM and industrial careers. Across the board, her influence is felt in every conversation, every initiative and every team she touches.





HONOREE

Marie-Josée Cabana

General Manager, PermaBASE
National Gypsum Company

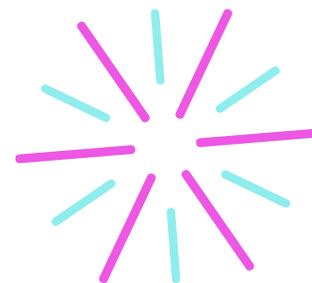
“I am motivated by knowing my work truly matters—keeping people safe, building an inclusive culture and solving meaningful challenges. I’m driven by my team’s success and the opportunity to inspire other women to see manufacturing leadership as a place where they belong and can thrive.”

The success Marie-Josée Cabana has experienced over her 30-year tenure with National Gypsum Company lies in her ability to connect strategic direction with hands-on execution. She has transformed the company’s PermaBASE cement board business with an unwavering commitment to both people and performance. The plants MJ oversees since becoming general manager in 2021 have earned some of the company’s top honors for safety, product quality and productivity, including two Chairman’s Safety Awards. MJ’s strong financial acumen, coupled with her caring, people-first leadership style, has driven record revenue and higher productivity, as well.

MJ advocates for equity and inclusion, ensuring all voices are heard and valued. Through coaching and advocacy, she’s built a culture of collaboration, trust and continuous improvement. MJ is seen as a role model as well as a leader. She trusts in her team members’ expertise, gives them ownership of their work and provides guidance when needed. Beyond daily leadership, MJ mentors emerging leaders across the company. One of MJ’s mentees says, “Marie-Josée is a natural leader—always positive, deeply engaged and consistently focused on empowering others.”

MJ approaches community engagement with the same care, thoughtfulness and commitment she brings to her teams, showing that leadership is not just about business results, but also about fostering opportunity and connection. She can always be counted on to participate in National Gypsum’s annual United Way campaigns, helping provide food, housing and essential services to local families. She also honors her late brother through donations to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation which supports research and programming across the country. By supporting both her team members and her local community, MJ demonstrates that effective leaders create impact beyond their day-to-day roles.





HONOREE

Jessica Carter

Head of Federal Affairs
Ford Motor Company

“I am motivated by driving innovation through policy and leading community-focused initiatives that create tangible opportunities for others. My goal is to leave the industry—and the organizations I serve—stronger than I found them.”

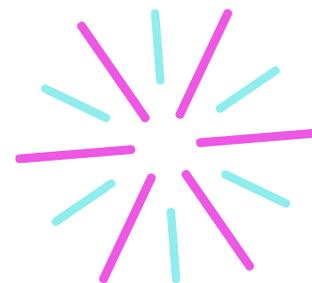
Jessica Carter’s professional mission is to convey Ford Motor Company’s commitment to and investment in American manufacturing and American workers to the country’s most influential figures. She uses her prior experience as a high-ranking staffer on Capitol Hill as today’s head of federal government affairs for Ford. Jessica has a demonstrated track record of unifying both sides of the political aisle by reminding policymakers of the role that manufacturing, and specifically the auto industry, has in our daily lives.

Jessica’s leadership skills were put on display last year, when Congress considered eliminating the production tax credit. Recognizing the foundational importance of these tax credits to incentivizing U.S. manufacturing and securing domestic supply chains, Jessica spearheaded a multifaceted lobbying effort to preserve the credit in the final version of the One Big Beautiful Bill, now law. This campaign involved months of strategic advocacy with congressional committees and high-stakes negotiations with leadership offices. Jessica’s collaborative and focused approach brings people together, highlights the importance of the work Ford does and builds both consensus and common purpose.

A look at Jessica’s process shows her priority to lift up members of her team to lead company initiatives. Recognizing that subject matter expertise and operational success reside on the manufacturing floor, Jessica regularly invites automotive dealers, plant managers and other manufacturing leaders to share their perspectives with key policymakers. She empowers those across all levels of the business to contribute to strategy solutions and be present at critical moments in front of those in power.

Jessica applies her corporate leadership experience to interests outside of her career, as well. On the board of directors for the National Industries for the Blind, Jessica helps identify, create, sustain and improve employment opportunities for thousands of Americans through a nationwide network of associated nonprofit agencies. Jessica’s service on the board is the clearest demonstration of her commitment to creating an inclusive workplace environment that helps to ensure job opportunities are not limited to traditional roles, but are expanded into advanced, knowledge-based manufacturing and service careers for all.





HONOREE

Abby Causey

Plant Manager
The Timken Company

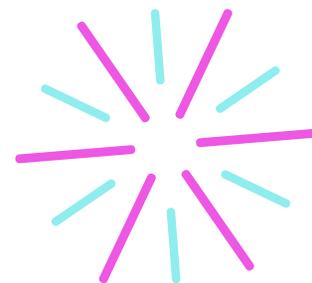
“I hope to inspire the next generation by demonstrating that growth and possibility come from stepping beyond one’s comfort zone. By saying ‘yes’ to opportunities that challenged me, I have experienced meaningful personal and professional growth.”

In her time as plant manager at The Timken Company’s Shiloh facility, Abby Causey has made significant improvements in safety, quality, delivery and workplace culture. Within her first 18 months, safety performance improved by 27%, quality by 53% and delivery by 46%. Abby also shifted company culture, reversing employee surveys from strongly unfavorable to strongly favorable. Abby has built strong relationships by spending time on the plant floor, engaging with and even coaching employees. She established a structured communications cadence that includes quarterly meetings, bimonthly round tables, monthly engagement sessions and daily shift huddles, and she spearheaded facility improvements, such as upgrading the employee break room, adding an outdoor break area and installing new flooring. She also serves as a board member of Timken’s Celebrating Abilities Network employee resource group, which advances inclusion and supports colleagues with disabilities.

As a collaborative leader, Abby continually provides growth opportunities and advocates for promotions. She serves as a mentor and steering committee member for Timken’s Operations Development Program, guiding recent graduates through leadership rotations and representing them on the leadership team. She was a panelist at CAN’s first company-wide event and is currently planning CAN’s second national event. She believes in the power of mentorship, serving in the 2025 STEP Ahead Mentorship Program and actively mentoring emerging talent within her plant. Additionally, she served as a panelist for Timken’s Young Professionals Network event on continuous learning and participated in the BetterUp Coaching pilot group.

Beyond the plant’s walls, Abby has served as a board member for the United Way of Rutherford County, North Carolina, since 2023 and took on co-chair responsibilities in 2025. She manages the Timken Trust Fund’s annual allocation of \$5,000, providing sponsorships for children’s engineering camps, youth sports equipment, a local housing partnership and more. She also oversees the \$125,000 annual Timken Foundation Grant, helping to secure funding for various community improvement projects, and organizes an annual Habitat for Humanity build for plant employees and volunteers.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Katelyn Caza Perez

Associate Process Leader
Novelis

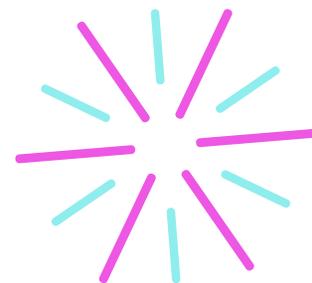
“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with empathy and encouragement, fostering a positive and supportive culture in manufacturing that drives empowerment, collaboration and continuous improvement.”

Katelyn Caza Perez has made remarkable technical contributions that have driven innovation, cost savings and operational excellence at Novelis. In leading the trialing of a new chemical process for a customer-critical cost-savings initiative, Katelyn’s analysis enabled swift decision-making and ensured customer satisfaction. Katelyn supported a second facility in Guthrie, Kentucky, where she prepared and executed extensive trials, analyzed results and optimized operating conditions, demonstrating her ability to scale solutions across sites. Her work directly influenced process improvements that reduced waste and improved efficiency. In addition, Katelyn played a key role in the continuous annealing solution heat-treatment improvement planning cycle, proposing high-impact projects and estimating their benefits. Her efforts to reduce x-ray fluorescence failures led to upstream process changes and new initiatives, improving product quality and reducing rework. These improvements have generated significant cost savings and enhanced production reliability.

As a culture champion, Katelyn’s leadership of the chemical process team has strengthened communication, promoted more equitable work distribution and created meaningful development opportunities for others. She implemented weekly meetings that have become best practices for future leaders. Katelyn’s consistent modeling of Novelis’s cultural beliefs makes her a role model for others and a catalyst for a supportive, empowered workplace. As co-lead of Women in Novelis, she coordinated the International Women’s Day celebration for the Oswego plant—Novelis North America’s largest site—bringing together hundreds of employees to recognize and celebrate women in manufacturing.

Katelyn serves as a mentor for the Pathways in Technology Early College High School and developed a clay-based activity that simulates the aluminum manufacturing process, which she delivered at local elementary school STEM events. Beyond STEM outreach, Katelyn coordinated toiletry and holiday donations and a winter gear drive supporting women and families in crisis. She also volunteers her time to promote literacy in the community as an active board member of the Oswego Bookmobile. Her technical innovation, team leadership, cultural engagement and community service reflect her belief that manufacturing leaders must also be community leaders, building bridges between industry and society.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Rachael Chant

Existing Product Initiative Quality Lead for Dish
Whirlpool Corporation

“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with integrity and always finding a path forward. Manufacturing creates numerous opportunities to learn and grow while directly impacting our community’s role in a global economy. We owe it to the next generation to prioritize long-term stability in every strategy.”

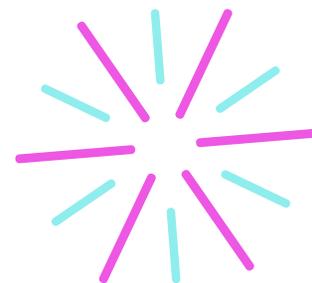
Rachael Chant’s career is distinguished by her nontraditional background in a combination of restaurants and foreclosure law. This unique perspective has instilled a blend of customer focus, critical thinking and bias for action. Since 2024, when Rachael transferred to the Whirlpool Corporation’s dishwasher facility, her team has delivered over 26% of the facility’s savings through labor rebalance and rate-change projects. Working at the company’s premium cooking product factory, when the key process engineer left just before the start of production on a regulatory update for built-in wall ovens, Rachael immediately stepped in. She led uninterrupted market access and prevented significant financial and regulatory penalties, then repurposed the old equipment to reduce stamped-part labor by an incredible 92%.

In cultivating a pipeline of emerging talent while shaping a workplace where diversity and growth are prioritized, Rachael’s leadership shines. Shortly after joining Whirlpool, she participated in the Manufacturing Leadership Development Program, serving as intern lead, providing essential onboarding support and advising fellow engineers as a peer mentor. Rachael continues to mentor several individuals while leading the MLDP Talent Committee. She advocates for diverse talent, recruiting for Whirlpool at numerous Society of Women Engineers annual conferences and National Society of Black Engineers conferences, and she was instrumental in establishing a Whirlpool Women’s Network chapter at the Cleveland, Tennessee, facility.

Rachael engages with the broader community through focused, high-impact volunteerism. She gives her time to support United Way and Habitat for Humanity to improve local infrastructure and living conditions. She implemented a back-to-school supply drive for households facing financial hardship. She also supports the MLDP Adopt-a-Family drive, ensuring area families receive holiday gifts. Most recently, Rachael began volunteering with Soroptimists International, a global nonprofit providing education and training for women and girls, including funding scholarships and raising awareness of human trafficking.

Rachael is a dedicated and caring citizen as well as a compassionate agent of change who actively improves the lives of her neighbors and advocates for women globally. Although her career trajectory and community commitments have been impressive, the title she enjoys the most is “Mom” to a sweet infant son.





HONOREE

Kylee Coffey

Senior Director, Process Integration & Yield Engineering
GlobalFoundries

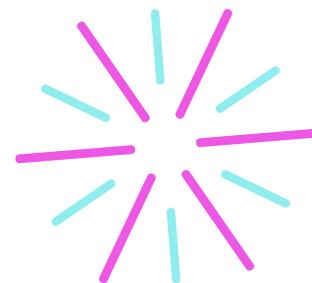
“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing them what’s possible. When women lead in manufacturing, they inspire the next generation to step forward, solve tough problems and shape the future with confidence.”

Over her 24 years at GlobalFoundries, Kylee Coffey has built a career that spans critical leadership roles, major operational achievements and a sustained commitment to mentoring, STEM outreach and inclusive workforce growth. With previous leadership roles that include chief of staff and director of industrial engineering, Kylee is now responsible for yield, integration, characterization, controls and testing at the GF manufacturing facility in Essex Junction, Vermont. She manages a global team of more than 125 people who provide critical, around-the-clock support to the business. Her leadership on a cross-functional initiative to improve factory process yield resulted in line yields increasing to over 98%. This effort translated into approximately \$5 million in annual cost savings for the company. Additionally, Kylee coordinated cross-functional efforts in technology development, capacity planning, yield learning and customer communication and partnership to ensure the successful ramp-up of a critical technology that now drives a significant portion of the site’s revenue and secures the Vermont fab’s standing at the forefront of innovation.

Alongside these operational achievements, Kylee has been instrumental in cultivating talent and an inclusive workplace culture. In addition to leading recruitment and internship partnerships with the University of Vermont, she serves as executive sponsor of the GlobalWomen employee resource group, which now has more than 260 members. Through the GlobalWomen Group Mentoring Program and partnerships with the Society of Women Engineers, Kylee has advanced the professional development of countless women.

Kylee is committed to engaging with and supporting her community, especially when it comes to youth and STEM education. Whether she’s coaching elementary and middle school soccer teams year-round, participating in the FIRST LEGO League by helping students from pre-K through eighth grade explore STEM concepts or volunteering within local schools to introduce students to STEM career opportunities, Kylee embodies a spirit of service that extends far beyond her work at GF.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Hillary Cooper

General Manager, Chicago

Pella Corporation

“I hope to inspire the next generation by demonstrating that women in leadership accelerate change and impact; leading with passion, curiosity and empathy; investing deeply in others; raising the standard, again and again; and widening the path for those who follow.”

Since joining Pella Corporation as general manager of its largest sales subsidiary, Hillary Cooper has reshaped the way her team develops talent and prepares for growth. Her most significant contribution has been building a sustainable talent pipeline for Pella’s Chicago sales sub, a multimillion-dollar operation, with nearly 100 team members across sales and operations.

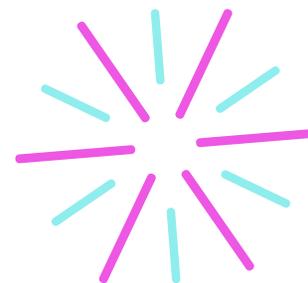
Hillary’s leadership at Pella is reinforced by a long-standing passion for developing women and young professionals. She balances high expectations with support, creating an environment where people feel challenged yet cared for. One team member described Hillary as “one of the best leaders I’ve had in 40 years,” and another said she is someone they would choose to follow anywhere. Hillary’s intentional approach includes a mentorship road map that pairs seasoned sales representatives with new hires, accelerating learning and strengthening succession.

Hillary brings prior experience shaping inclusive cultures, including founding Penske’s Women in Maintenance Business Resource Group, which addressed real barriers like locker-room space, uniforms and allyship training for male leaders. With Pella, Hillary has been involved with the Women’s Leadership Connection BRG, the LEAP program and the Women in Windows network. Hillary formalized a partnership with Northern Illinois University’s sales program, mentoring students and teaching classes, with a particular focus on encouraging women to consider manufacturing careers.

Hillary is deeply committed to building connections between her workplace and the broader community. She has reinvigorated Pella’s Care/Engagement Council at the Chicago branch, which connects team members with their community and celebrates the diversity within it. The group organizes volunteer efforts, such as food and coat drives and local food-bank partnerships, while also hosting cultural luncheons and sharing team traditions. These “little extras,” as Hillary describes them, have helped team members form deeper connections beyond day-to-day work.

Beyond Pella, whether she’s restoring homes through Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago or uplifting women and children with the Daisie Foundation, Hillary spreads compassion to help people feel seen and celebrated.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Lynsey Copley

Senior Manager, Facilities Engineering
Biogen

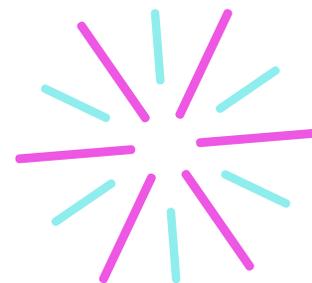
“I hope to inspire the next generation by being visible, authentic and supportive. As an LGBTQ+ woman in STEM, by sharing my journey, advocating for inclusivity and creating opportunities for mentorship, I aim to help others feel confident in pursuing careers in STEM without compromising who they are.”

Lynsey Copley’s proactive approach to problem-solving has saved Biogen work time and resources by many folds. Lynsey led the Water Purification Unit’s water for injection loop release optimization project, a continuous improvement initiative that reduced quality control release sampling from 200 to 30 drops. This technique ultimately saved Biogen hundreds of hours and valuable resources. Her leadership in transitioning Biogen’s cooling towers to a moss-based filtration system eliminated the use of 1,000 pounds of chemicals monthly. This project was pivotal in optimizing system downtimes and achieving savings and underscores Lynsey’s commitment to sustainability.

Lynsey has also proven herself a capable leader in stressful, adverse conditions. She was instrumental in leading the repair of an 18-inch water-line break the week of Thanksgiving 2023. Lynsey kept communication lines open from the manufacturing facility to senior leaders all while making sure production of lifesaving medications was unaffected.

Lynsey actively engages with and gives back to the community and industry through various initiatives. Her role as the site co-lead, and then the global co-lead, of Biogen’s Reach Out LGBTQIA+ Employee Resource Group helped create a supportive environment for employees, allies and parents through events like the Durham and Raleigh Pride outreach and educational panels. She serves on the Early Career Advisory Council for the dean of Engineering at the University of Arkansas, guiding curriculum improvements and mentoring students. She’s also on the board of directors for a nonprofit organization focused on helping families through addiction recovery and for Quest Roundup, an addiction support organization specific to members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Most recently, Lynsey joined the Corporate Advisory Council for the American Indians Science and Engineering Society, hoping to inspire underrepresented individuals to follow their dreams as a STEM professional. While advocating for her fellow employees and community members, she was also pursuing a Master of Biotechnology and an MBA from Johns Hopkins University.





◆ CHAMPION

Shirlyn Cummings

People Development Expert
Covestro LLC

“I hope to inspire the next generation by demonstrating that no one succeeds in a vacuum. True mentorship means pulling others up as we climb. I believe every young woman entering technology and production deserves a sincere welcome and a chorus of supportive voices cheering her on.”

For 40 years, Shirlyn Cummings has been known in the manufacturing community as someone who will challenge practices that limit diverse talent and create pathways where barriers once stood. Through her lens, manufacturing isn't just about production—it's about possibility, and her legacy proves that when barriers fall, brilliance rises.

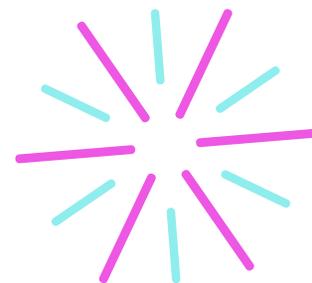
At Covestro, LLC, Shirlyn pioneered flexible work options, family friendly practices, and dedicated lactation facilities long before they became industry standards. As one of Covestro's first female manufacturing directors, she transferred professional achievement into systemic change by establishing comprehensive mentorship programs and employee resource groups for women, veterans, and minority communities. And she elevated equity in manufacturing to a national conversation by advocating on Capitol Hill.

Beyond traditional human resources boundaries, Shirlyn was part of the team that formulated the inaugural Pre-Startup Safety Review training requirements, which reshaped manufacturing safety protocols. Shirlyn is who the Center for Chemical Process Safety/AIChE turned to in developing critical process safety competencies—a testament to her reputation as a crossfunctional innovator.

As a global people-development expert today, Shirlyn's philosophy is that environments where educated and empowered employees bring their authentic selves to work create superior outcomes for companies, families, and communities. Her work continues to inspire industrywide change. Shirlyn was honored with recognition in the 2005 book “Successful Women in Chemistry, Corporate America's Contribution to Science.”

Shirlyn's commitment to nurturing future generations by encouraging confidence, resilience, and practical skills is evident in her community stewardship, as well. She has created scholarship programs for economically challenged students and internship partnerships with local schools. Shirlyn also spearheaded Covestro's Adopt-a-School initiative with one of Goose Creek School District's most underserved schools, James Bowie Elementary, and co-led the hands-on Making Science Make Sense program. She was a tutor at Sterling Municipal Library, served as vice president of the Bay Area Rehabilitation Center for disabled adults, and a former board member of the Goose Creek Education Foundation. The industry is better off for her having inspired a new generation of leaders to follow in her transformative footsteps.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Lauren Curran

Advanced Manufacturing Supervisor
Siemens

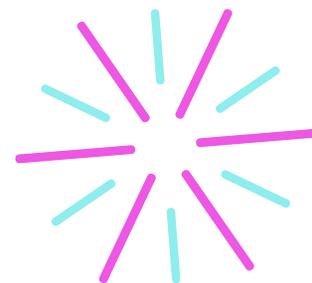
“I am motivated by the people behind the work. Creating environments for teams to work smarter, feel valued and be more confident drives me. When individuals grow, collaborate and see the impact of their contributions, manufacturing is at its strongest. That’s what inspires me every day.”

Lauren Curran’s rapid career progression, innovative mindset and commitment to developing others make her a standout in the manufacturing industry. In just over a year with Siemens Smart Infrastructure Electrical Products, Lauren advanced from industrial engineer to advanced manufacturing supervisor. Her team of 10 engineers is responsible for rolling out new products and scaling the assembly process to meet ambitious goals of doubling or tripling capacity at the Fort Worth E480 Plant. Lauren led the development of the plant’s initial wiring operational flows, enabling the successful delivery of more than 5,500 switchboard sections in its first year. Her strategic initiative, Operation Rattlesnake, achieved a 60% reduction in wiring cycle time and introduced a novel method for wiring retention, transforming both process efficiency and team engagement. More importantly, it energized the wiring team, fostering a sense of ownership and pride that continues to drive performance.

Beyond her technical achievements, Lauren is deeply committed to engaging with the broader community, particularly through her mentorship and support of emerging talent in the manufacturing industry. She actively supports technicians enrolled in technical colleges, fostering a culture of learning, innovation and pride in craftsmanship. She helps these students understand the value of their work, build confidence in their abilities and see a future for themselves in advanced manufacturing.

Lauren regularly invites students and early-career professionals to participate in plant tours, engineering discussions and improvement projects, giving them a front-row seat to the innovation and collaboration that define modern manufacturing. Her ability to connect with individuals from diverse backgrounds has made her a trusted mentor and advocate for workforce development. Lauren represents the next generation of women who are shaping the future of the industry and lifting others as they rise.





HONOREE

Jennifer Dagnall

Site Manager
Evonik Corporation

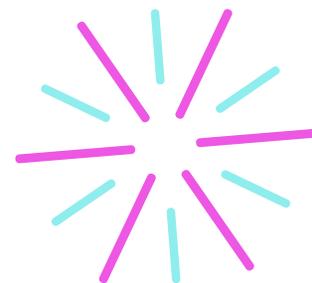
“I hope to inspire the next generation by championing diversity and inclusion and supporting and fostering an environment where women feel empowered to pursue careers in manufacturing. I want to be a role model and advocate, showing that a future where women thrive in manufacturing will prove critical as companies expand their talent pool, particularly in the STEM field.”

Since Jennifer Dagnall joined Evonik Corporation in 2019, her work has enhanced efficiency, reduced complexity in existing processes and driven substantial operational cost savings. During her time at the Birmingham, Alabama, site alone, her work unlocked savings of approximately \$5 million over a three-year period. In her current role as site manager in Little Rock, Arkansas, Jennifer’s influence has taken the annual employee turnover rate from 23% to 12%. The productivity of the Actives area increased by about 22%, and the amount of out-of-specification material dropped by 14%. These improvements reduced the lead time for most products from 42 weeks to fewer than eight weeks, all driven through Jennifer’s strategic restructuring of the site management team, developing necessary skill sets within all teams and identifying critical areas of improvement.

Even before transitioning her career to Evonik, Jennifer was an advocate for women in the workplace. Recognizing the need for accessible leadership development for women at Evonik, Jennifer initiated the company’s first women’s network, the Woman’s Interest Network, in Birmingham and supported other sites in developing their own. She’s coordinated efforts with Evonik’s groW workplace-inclusivity initiative and pioneered a workshop for developing future female leaders. Whether planning a Women in Operations conference or providing career support to women emerging from abusive relationships, Jennifer has consistently worked to drive positive change.

Offsite, Jennifer has made Evonik’s local community support strategy a priority, having initiated corporate sponsorships and employee volunteer hours to support the Lion’s Club Fishing Derby for children with special needs, school supply drives, food bank events and other local outreach efforts. Elsewhere in the community, Jennifer has taken an active role in mentoring girls and young women at her local elementary school and as a trained volunteer coach with the nonprofit Girls on the Run. Her advocacy for STEM careers extends to public speaking engagements with the Society of Women Engineers and the STEM program at the Museum of Discovery in Little Rock, seeking to inspire a new generation to explore these fields and highlighting the power of diverse leadership.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Amanda Dango

Manager, Production Engineering, DENSO Manufacturing Tennessee (DMTN)

DENSO

“I hope to inspire the next generation by being a role model both in manufacturing and in my personal life. Seeing and interacting with women in leadership positions inspired me, so I hope to continue to carry that torch forward.”

Amanda Dango’s career reflects curiosity, determination and a deep commitment to people. In just nine years at DENSO, she has built an impressive record of impact—shaped by technical excellence, global experience and a passion for helping others thrive. Selected into DENSO’s prestigious rotational leadership program after earning her mechanical engineering degree from North Carolina State University, Amanda gained early exposure to production engineering, mechanical design and quality assurance, and she even completed an international assignment in Japan.

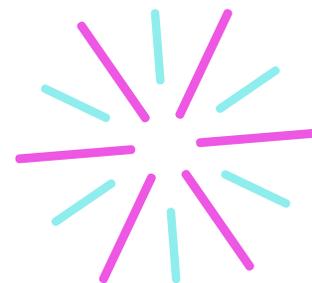
She went on to play a key role in the billion-dollar expansion of DENSO’s Maryville, Tennessee, campus, helping launch four fully automated production lines responsible for producing more than 15 million advanced safety products. Her ability to guide cross-functional teams, manage major capital projects and sustain high efficiency led to her rapid advancement. Now, as manager of production engineering, she leads strategic investments supporting new products and a projected \$400 million sales increase, while mentoring new engineers and developing emerging talent.

Amanda is also a champion of leadership development and engagement across North America. She led a major Clifton Strengths-based initiative that established a shared philosophy and framework for more than 100 leaders and now helps guide regional efforts focused on coaching, one-on-one development and the “total humanity” pillar of DENSO’s excellent factory model. Her team’s 90% engagement survey participation reflects the trust she builds.

Service has always been central to Amanda’s life—from receiving the Matthews Medal in college to her continued involvement with United Way, Girls Inc. and youth advocacy organizations. She represents DENSO at career fairs, leads campus tours for students and community leaders and supports Women in Manufacturing through outreach events and networking initiatives.

Amanda’s story is one of excellence and heart—an engineer, mentor and community leader shaping a stronger, more inclusive future for manufacturing.





HONOREE

Bri Danzeisen

Process Optimization Team Lead
Chevron Phillips Chemical

“I am motivated by the women in my life who modeled hard work, perseverance and empathy. Professionally, I’m energized by collaborating across teams to solve complex problems and by building meaningful relationships with colleagues—supporting one another and celebrating successes together.”

Tasked in 2025 with achieving a \$10 million value-capture target for Chevron Phillips Chemical Company, Bri Danzeisen recognized that success would depend on joining technical solutions with a diverse group of stakeholders empowered to work together. She brought in operations, process controls, technical subject matter experts and business representatives to create a shared vision and open communications channels. Through her leadership, the team is not only on track to meet its ambitious target but also has become a model for cross-functional collaboration and continuous improvement.

In an earlier role as training superintendent, Bri recognized the need for a sustainable pipeline of skilled maintenance technicians and championed the launch of the Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education work/study program for Chevron Phillips at the Orange, Texas, site. She partnered with the local community college to support students pursuing an associate degree in maintenance and led the effort from concept to execution. The program’s first cohort is now in its second year, gaining hands-on experience while completing their education.

Bri takes her ability to unite others to various workplaces and in communities. At Chevron Phillip’s Cedar Bayou facility, Bri serves on the local leadership team for GLOW, the woman-focused employee resource group. She coordinated events, such as the Working Parent Panel and a sitewide Breast Cancer Awareness Walk open to all employees and contractors. While working at the Orange and Port Arthur sites, she was vice chair of the Professional Development Network, where she organized CliftonStrengths assessments, interview workshops with Talent Acquisition, leadership speaker sessions and a leadership-focused book club. Today, Bri participates in GLOW’s Compass program as both a mentor and mentee. She has mentored chemical engineering students through Purdue’s AIChE Alumni Mentorship Program since 2020 and recently volunteered to lead a Daisy Girl Scout Troop.





HONOREE

Leah Davis

Refining Department Manager
Cargill

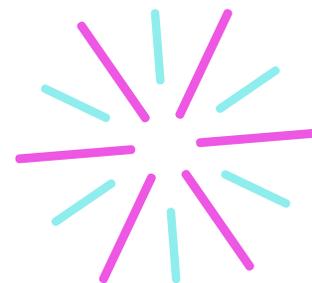
“I hope to inspire the next generation by sharing my own path—the missteps, breakthroughs and defining moments. If talented future leaders can see that growth comes from persistence, curiosity and believing in themselves, I hope they feel empowered to pursue what matters to them with confidence and heart.”

Leah Davis has invested her time in developing a high-performing, expert team, and the mark they’ve left on Cargill, Inc., is significant. When Leah stepped into her current role, she saw that investment in both assets and people was needed. With a focus on developing her team of 30 operators and shift supervisors, Leah partnered with industry experts to optimize the refining lines and adopted a collaborative approach to build the tools her team needed to succeed. She led through a significant reduction in cost of goods manufactured at her Milwaukee site while simultaneously developing a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. Site engagement surged from a 38% participation rate to 94%, signaling a dramatic shift in how employees connect with their work and each other.

Leah had a significant impact on the direction and success of Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate North America from 2019 to 2022 when she led the design and start-up of a state-of-the-art chocolate refining line that exceeded design-run rates by more than 20,000 pounds per day. From 2022 to last year, off-the-line rework rates dropped from 6.1% to 2.2%, with current year performance below 1%—a world-class benchmark. Leah’s team also tackled recipe optimization that delivered more than \$3 million in savings in two years. In 2025, Leah and her team successfully managed a plant closure and seamlessly transitioned 40 new milk chocolate products into production at Milwaukee, then achieved a refining target of 72%—up from 53% the previous year—by increasing uptime while navigating staffing vacancies and ongoing organizational change.

Taking her drive into the community, Leah has been a member of Bayshore Lutheran Church since 2019, where she participates in the bell choir, the multigenerational Cross-Gen program and as organizer for fundraising and donation events that support their inner-city partner church, Hephatha Lutheran Church. Leah also wants to foster young STEM minds, and through her alma mater, she mentored three engineering seniors in 2024 and 2025, bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world application.





HONOREE

Lesley Denham

Manager, Associate Services
Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc.

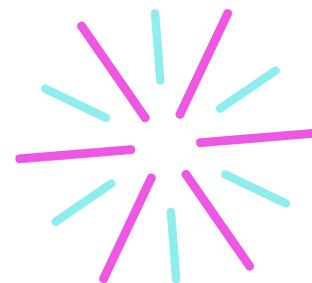
“I hope to inspire the next generation by building genuine relationships. Those relationships create the foundation for valuable progress and lasting impact. I have been guided by mentors at all levels at Subaru who modeled collaboration, integrity and empathy, and my goal is to do the same for others. When people feel heard and supported, great things happen.”

With a 20-year career journey that spans the scope of intern to management leader, it would be difficult to find a Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc., associate who has not been positively impacted by a program, initiative or event Lesley Denham has helped lead or coordinate. One recent accomplishment of note is Lesley’s leadership and coordination of the Clinic, Administrative, and Security Expansion initiative. Marking the first administrative expansion at SIA since the company’s founding in 1989, Lesley partnered with a cross-functional project team that led the planning, construction and relocation of hundreds of administrative associates into the newly developed space. Through strong collaboration, the project was completed successfully and seamlessly, the resulting workspace is modern, efficient and thoughtfully designed to enhance productivity and support employee well-being.

Lesley’s journey through the corporate ranks serves as an inspiration, as she exemplifies perseverance, integrity and commitment to personal and professional growth. Today, Lesley oversees associate recognition across the organization, ensuring that achievements at all levels are acknowledged and celebrated. Within her own team, her leadership style has inspired others to follow in her footsteps. Notably, her current group leader began as contracted staff and has since advanced into a leadership position under her mentorship.

In the Lafayette, Indiana, community, Lesley serves on the United Way of Greater Lafayette board of directors and is an active member of the United Way Campaign Cabinet. She has been instrumental in fostering partnerships, raising awareness and mobilizing resources to support community needs. She also leads SIA’s annual associate-giving campaign for United Way, inspiring participation and generosity across the organization with hundreds of thousands of dollars donated to charitable causes. Additionally, Lesley serves on the board of directors for the SIA Foundation, which provides financial support to local nonprofits and community initiatives. Her ability to unite people, foster connection and create meaningful change reflects the very essence of what it means to be a leader.





HONOREE

Katie Deren

Senior Manager, Global Manufacturing Engineering - Final Finish, Test & Post Cure Systems

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

“I am motivated by leading a team to build something that once did not exist—by being part of creating factories from the ground up, developing the processes that make them run and growing the people and teams who deliver results, building livelihoods and products that improve people’s lives.”

Throughout her career, Katie Deren has held a range of engineering and manufacturing leadership roles, spanning from process engineering to plant management. Now leading the Final Finish and Testing team in the company’s Global Manufacturing Engineering organization, Katie brings deep technical expertise and strong business acumen to The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company.

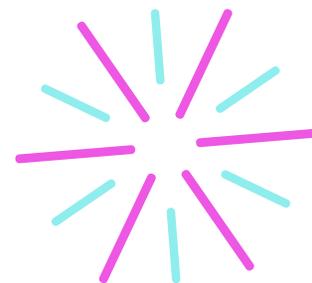
When customers requested specialty processes to add enhanced features to already-completed tires, Katie built and led a multidisciplinary engineering team to deliver a highly automated system, integrating pre- and post-heating, product cleaning, adhesive application, robotic handling, complex controls and advanced data management. In addition to managing requirements and expectations across multiple organizations, this work required Katie to address resource needs that included large capital expenditures, external industrial equipment vendors and engineering contractors. Guiding the project from concept through completion, Katie’s efforts resulted in the expansion of Goodyear’s product leadership capabilities and fulfilled customer demands for tires used on some of the market’s most advanced vehicles.

Katie leads a large, diverse engineering team intentionally structured to strengthen technical performance and individual growth. Katie and her engineering leads actively mentor early-career colleagues, passing on technical expertise and leadership practices that strengthen the entire organization. Leaders at every level, including vice presidents, credit Katie for launching their professional journeys and shaping their careers.

Katie supports the next generation of engineers through hands-on mentorship and a long-standing partnership with The University of Akron, where she has served in multiple advisory capacities. In addition to supporting the university’s Increasing Diversity in Engineering Academics Program, Katie established a fully endowed scholarship for underrepresented students at UA. For her professional contributions and dedicated service, Katie received the Distinguished Engineering Alumni Award in 2024.

Beyond developing engineering talent, Katie is dedicated to strengthening her community. Within Goodyear, she actively promotes a culture of volunteerism. She contributes personally and encourages her teams to engage in the company’s annual Day of Caring and other charitable programs. This commitment to supporting others does not go unnoticed.





HONOREE

Christina Desjardins

Production Engineering Manager
BASE Engineering, a Dover Company

“I hope to inspire the next generation by mentoring and empowering them with the knowledge of what opportunities are out there and how they can be a part of something that could lead to new technologies, growth and innovations that can continue to impact the community and industry around them.”

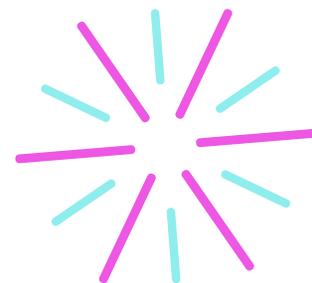
Whenever there is an opportunity to support her colleagues at BASE Engineering and the larger OPW organization, Christina Desjardins is the first to step forward. Throughout her leadership of a major transformation in how production workflows were tracked and managed, Christina kept the needs of the teams in mind, partnering with the production floor to reimagine workspace layouts, streamline processes and implement new systems. Employing her usual collaborative style, as Christina listened to feedback from colleagues at all levels, she advocated for them by recognizing and leveraging their individual strengths and supporting them through challenges. The initiative resulted in a smoother, more level-loaded workflow with reduced stress and improved employee satisfaction while maintaining a 95%+ quality control rate.

In her day-to-day work, Christina makes herself available to mentor team members, including facilitating A3 training sessions, introducing FAST problem-solving techniques and diving into IT infrastructure challenges. With her guidance, employees improve their technical knowledge and confidence and increase their work within a team environment.

Through local STEM programs, community-college advisory roles and university-accreditation initiatives, Christina invests in emerging talent at every level. She has a particular focus on creating opportunities for youth who might not otherwise have access to STEM experiences. At the neighboring Glen Falls Elementary School, she helps run STEM initiatives and participates in breakfast programs that feed the kids who need a nutritious start to their day. In 2024, a group of students were introduced to engineering with a series of activities: designing and building catapults, programming a robotic mouse to navigate a maze and creating bracelets with their names encoded in binary. They then visited BASE Engineering for a tour, met the engineering team, explored hands-on activities that showcased the excitement of engineering and ended with 3D-printed keychains of their school logo to take home—an experience they’ll carry with them as they consider career interests.

Beyond STEM, Christina volunteers with her local church, supporting faith-based youth programs and activities, such as water ski camp and Awana, a weekly children’s group. Her outreach reflects a consistent commitment to giving back and helping others grow, whether through mentorship, education or simply showing up to lend a hand.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Morgan Dill

Reliability Engineer

National Gypsum Company

“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with confidence and curiosity while staying true to who I am. I want other young professionals to see that you can grow, succeed and make a difference by being yourself and embracing every opportunity to learn.”

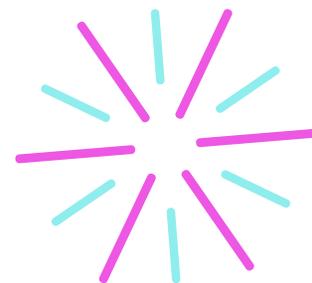
Morgan Dill’s essential work helps to keep National Gypsum Company’s 38 plants and quarries continuously operational. As reliability engineer, Morgan focuses on a reliability-centered maintenance culture using her technical expertise alongside her collaborative, hands-on leadership style. From the ground up, she built the root cause analysis initiative and the lubrication program, changing the way plants identify, prevent and respond to equipment issues. Whether creating process flows and training materials or facilitating on-site workshops and coaching sessions for maintenance teams nationwide, Morgan’s approachable style and clarity in communication help everyone understand what to do and why it matters. As a result, National Gypsum Company has seen reduced unplanned downtime, improved equipment life and strengthened consistency across plants.

As a natural mentor, Morgan is particularly focused on supporting women and early-career employees with practical and personal engagement. She spends time on the floor and encourages open dialogue between technicians and engineers. One mentee said, “Morgan taught me to always share my opinion and stand by it if it’s the right way to do things.”

Bringing life to a typical businesslike mentor arrangement, Morgan uses creative tools, like communication-style quizzes, “positivity tests” that highlight individual strengths and plant tours for new hires. This environment helps teammates feel supported and empowered to make decisions, even in moments of uncertainty. She extends that same spirit of service to the industry, serving as a train-the-trainer volunteer for National Gypsum Company’s corporate root cause program and a track lead for the Society for Maintenance and Reliability Professionals annual conference.

Through volunteer service and professional leadership, Morgan contributes much to her community. She mentors second- and third-grade students through Heart Math Tutoring, helping English-language learners build confidence and foundational math skills. Morgan also supports families and youth at Camp CARE’s (Cancer Ain’t Really the End), fundraising events and youth camps, as well as through contributions to United Way initiatives.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Ashleigh Dix

Emergency Response Team Supervisor
Materion

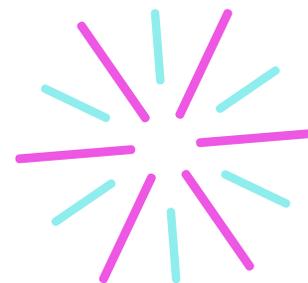
“I am motivated by the members of my team. Their drive and successes push me to give them every opportunity and advancement that I can to help not only the entire team, but also each individual on the team succeed and achieve their personal goals.”

Ashleigh Dix has spent her entire adult life putting her life on the line for the members of her community as a volunteer firefighter with the Helena Fire Department and with Elmore’s emergency response team. At Materion, she has quickly proven herself to be a respected leader, serving as the emergency response team supervisor/EHS professional—the first woman to hold this position. Meanwhile, she continues to better herself by pursuing an environmental science degree.

When Ashleigh took over the emergency response team at Materion, morale and participation were at an all-time low. This facility is a 24/7 operation, the largest employer in the county and the largest beryllium mill in the world. The team has more than 40 first responders capable of responding to medical, fire and rescue and hazardous materials incidents around the clock. Ashleigh has established strong team synergy by reinforcing a paramilitary leadership structure where tactical teams are led by officers. The team has undergone a higher level of attrition due to retirements in recent history, and Ashleigh has been instrumental in onboarding new candidates and getting them trained and certified. She has also established a mentoring program within the team, which is helping to improve retention, engagement and excitement for the process of emergency response.

Safety for first responders within the plant has been something that Ashleigh has fought for, and it’s shown in the amount of support that she has received from administration and business units on-site. Ashleigh has been able to secure advanced equipment for the team, including new turnout gear, thermal-imaging cameras and hazardous-materials training suits. In addition, over the last year, Ashleigh has worked with county resources to bring collaborative trainings to the site, including the Ottawa County drug abuse response team, the Ottawa County SWAT team, Mercy Life Flight and local fire departments. Ashleigh’s leadership has been recognized by her peers, as she was voted Officer of the Year in addition to Medical Responder of the Year.





HONOREE

Megan Doege

Manager, Engineering, Advanced Process and Materials
Kohler Co.

“I hope to inspire the next generation by being a positive, encouraging presence, just as my mentors have been for me. I love helping others discover and embrace their unique talents, connect their passions with purpose and foster curiosity to drive innovation and continuous improvement.”

Through a career spanning two decades, Megan Doege has established herself as a leader in Kohler Co.'s Advanced Process team and operations. She is a vital contributor to raw material strategic planning, cost-out initiatives and product innovation, adding untold value to the business. Her team has introduced products first to market, such as a ceramic lavatory featuring a physical vapor deposition coating with a pearlized finish, created new 3D-printed ceramic lavatories and developed several specialty glazes, one of which has been patented.

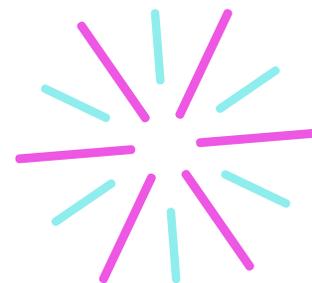
Sustainability efforts are important to Megan, evidenced by her current work. Her innovations focus on water recycling to reduce freshwater consumption in manufacturing and energy reduction by minimizing product mass. She's actively reshaping Kohler's operations through waste reduction and aligning the company with its long-term environmental goals.

Under Megan's leadership, the Advanced Process team has become a launchpad for young engineering talent. Internships frequently evolve into full-time roles within the company, in part because her guidance transforms interns into strong contributors. She mentors and supports slip and glaze engineers globally in addition to those who have been in Kohler's leadership-development training program.

To inspire the next generation of innovators, Megan organizes and supports the annual fifth- and sixth-grade Girls STEM Day Conference in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin. She also has served on the Kohler STEM Committee to lead programming for local eighth-grade students. On a collegiate level, Megan regularly participates in university seminars, senior design projects, university collaborations and ceramic instruction.

Beyond her professional contributions, Megan has volunteered with several organizations and events focused on children and adults with special needs including the Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin, Camp Evergreen, A Night to Shine and Balance Inc. Gala. She cooks and serves meals with the Sheboygan County Food Bank. At Kohler, she co-leads a volunteer committee for the Business Resource Group BOLD Ability, which focuses on bringing awareness and advocating for those who are differently abled. Her commitment to others is also deeply personal, as she serves as the primary caregiver for her sister.





HONOREE

Rachel Dougherty

Vice President, Supply Chain Operations, Hair Care North America
Procter & Gamble

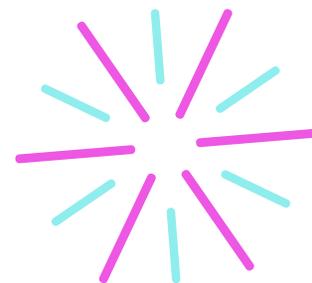
“I hope to inspire the next generation by sharing my passion for innovation and continuous improvement in manufacturing. By mentoring emerging leaders, fostering a culture of collaboration and emphasizing the importance of innovation, I aim to empower them to drive positive change and achieve excellence in their careers.”

Over her 26-year career at Procter & Gamble, Rachel Dougherty has exemplified leadership through two plant manager roles and her current position as vice president of Hair Care Product Supply for North America. In the past three years, Rachel has driven significant advancements in safety, quality and operational excellence. With a proactive and humble approach, she has guided her team to achieve best-in-class service levels, reduce inventory days on hand and realize substantial cost savings through Lean Forward initiatives. Under her leadership, the North America Hair Care Product Supply team recorded unprecedented growth in net operating sales, profit, value and volume share, while also earning perfect stewardship scores and making notable strides in cash management and capability building. She has also been a personal champion to accelerate digital solutions, and under her leadership, her team has created tools and solutions being reapplied globally within P&G.

Rachel actively sponsors the All-Functions Beauty Sector Asian Pacific American Team, reflecting her commitment to fostering diverse and empowered teams. She has championed young female APA managers in manufacturing, providing mentorship and a supportive community, which is particularly meaningful to her as a woman of Native American heritage. As a leader in the North America Product Supply Women’s Network and a participant in the Native American Network, Rachel has earned trust and respect across all levels, mentoring women from junior managers to peers and helping new employees build foundational skills for long-term success.

A proud mother of two, Rachel understands the transformative power of sports in building confidence and character in young women. She is highly engaged with her children’s soccer passion instilling values of teamwork, discipline and resilience, and she serves as a role model for many young athletes. Her dedication to service extends to charitable organizations, including long-term contributions to the United Way, support for her church’s food pantry and participation in the Hope for Haiti Christmas gift boxes. She has also served as an external board member for the Kansas State University Chemical Engineering Department—providing important industry input to their curriculum.





HONOREE

Regina Dunagan

Business Manager, Aircraft
BorgWarner Inc.

“I am motivated by challenges and problem-solving. I believe every person brings a critical piece of the puzzle, and success comes through collaboration. I work through difficult situations with full commitment and take pride in helping others grow, develop and reach their potential.”

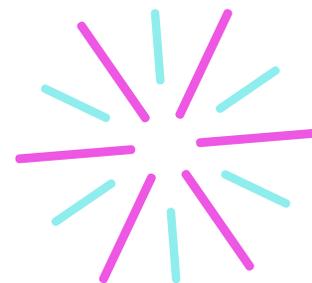
With a career spanning 40-plus years at BorgWarner, Inc., Regina Dunagan is an inspiration, not to mention a wealth of historical information on the Bellwood, Illinois, plant. Starting as an hourly operator and progressing all the way to business manager for BorgWarner’s entire aircraft business segment, Regina has worked full-time while supporting her family, enduring personal tragedy and completing both her associate and bachelor’s degrees at night.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, BorgWarner’s aircraft segment was facing challenges with a reduced workforce and reduced orders, while other areas of the plant were in need of additional staffing to meet demand. Regina discussed the business needs of the entire plant with her team and encouraged them to look at this opportunity to help the business and learn a new skill set. Company leadership accepted her offer to cross-train employees, and years later, those team members are still helping run equipment at rate in times of business constraint.

Always looking out for how to help others discover the best version of themselves, Regina recently challenged her technicians to come up with their own ideas for how to improve their process. This has helped her build a team that embraces challenges, understands the bigger picture and focuses on mutual success and growth.

Regina serves as a role model for commitment to the community. She often shares her story of development and career progressions with children and parents to inspire and motivate them. Regina is an active member of the local philanthropy committee. She is a regular and consistent volunteer at multiple community events supporting the SOS Children’s Villages, Ronald McDonald House, Cara Collective, Children’s Secret Santa and Bellwood Chamber of Commerce. In addition to volunteering her time, Regina also engages others to participate—friends and extended family, included. She is personally called out by name by these charities expressing their thanks and appreciation of her efforts.





HONOREE

Wanda Duran

Quality & Technology Manager
Cornerstone Building Brands

“I hope to inspire the next generation by being a visible example as a Latina woman in engineering and manufacturing. I want them to believe they belong and can succeed with perseverance and focus. As Isabel Allende said, ‘You can create your own legend, or not.’ Let’s choose legend.”

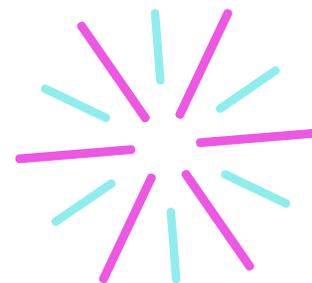
Looking at Wanda Duran’s accomplishments at Cornerstone Building Brands, it is clear she delivers results. But ask her what matters most, and she will point to mentoring and opening doors for others. Wanda believes in creating “legendary actions,” powerful moments that inspire, uplift and serve. She has mentored colleagues and early career engineers, especially women entering a traditionally male-dominated field. Her support goes beyond technical guidance, offering practical coaching on career planning, workplace dynamics, confidence and constructive conflict resolution.

In her quality leadership role, Wanda is known as collaborative and relentlessly focused on customer impact. She played a key role in the NVR business transition to North Brunswick, personally visiting local customers to reinforce responsiveness and trust. Her initiatives reduced warranty spend, drove a 37% drop in waste and lowered costs. Customer-focused audits performance improved 77.5% through stronger inspection processes, operator training and accountability. In 2024, she led 18 quality initiatives, all on time or ahead of schedule.

A proud Rutgers alumna and member of the Rutgers Society of Hispanic Engineers, Wanda supports students and emerging talent through mentoring and career-focused engagement. She organized plant tours for Rutgers GSET students to provide real exposure to engineering and manufacturing careers. Wanda also supported the plant’s Manufacturing Day programming, helping students explore modern manufacturing through tours and career awareness.

Wanda’s commitment to service extends beyond the plant. She has led North Brunswick Connecting Communities initiatives, mobilizing employees to give back through local drives, service events and partnerships that strengthened the community. As a United Way volunteer, she visited New Brunswick Public Schools to read with students and introduce engineering concepts, led classroom visits to share engineering and manufacturing career pathways and participated in career day outreach, including a table event with Paul Robeson Elementary. Through every improvement she leads and every person she mentors, Wanda helps others see what is possible and create their own legend.





HONOREE

Dana Espinosa

Manager, Ingredient Performance System
Ingredion Inc.

“I am motivated by driving continuous improvement efforts, developing people, collaborating to create solutions and building an inclusive culture where everyone is empowered towards progression. Seeing others succeed is a joy.”

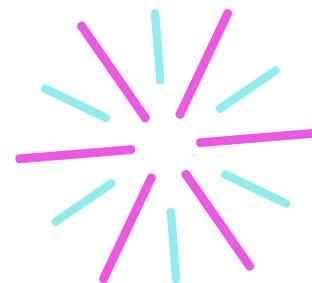
Dana Espinosa began her journey with Ingredion in early 2023 as the quality manager at the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, plant. Within her first few months, she tackled a major inventory reduction initiative: more than 2 million pounds of aging inventory stored across third-party warehouses. Recognizing both the financial and operational implications, she ensured viable inventory was preserved, while outdated or downgraded materials were responsibly discarded in a way that minimized waste. Her efforts resulted in a reduction of approximately 1.7 million pounds of inventory and the salvaging of more than 700,000 pounds of final product, roughly worth \$230,000. This successful initiative cleared logistical bottlenecks and increased storage in warehouses, setting the tone for her ongoing successful tenure at Ingredion.

In the last two years, Dana guided three college interns with tailored feedback to match each individual’s goals and strengths. She encouraged them to engage with members of the Plant Leadership Team to network and gain firsthand insight into the company’s culture and operations. Dana mentored two Global Talent for Operations employees in 2025, drawing from her own engineering background to support their transition into new professional environments.

For 25 years, Dana has contributed her time, expertise and passion to support young innovators as a dedicated volunteer with the Eastern Iowa Science and Engineering Fair. Her commitment to EISEF was inspired by her father, a longtime coordinator of science fair events, who instilled in her the value of nurturing curiosity and academic growth. As a judge for more than a decade, Dana has helped students refine their scientific thinking and presentation skills. Working out details from large to small, Dana has organized awards and managed event logistics from setup to cleanup.

Dana also leads STEM educational opportunities at the collegiate level. She has traveled back multiple times to her alma mater, Iowa State University, to volunteer as a judge in their MBA Case Competition. As Ingredion’s lead representative for the school, she oversees recruitment efforts and student engagement. It’s part of her seamless mission of encouraging and supporting up-and-coming science leaders at work and beyond.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Hedieh Evans

Capital Projects Manager

Tilcon Connecticut, a CRH Company

“I am motivated by our industry’s future, the pride in our community impact and the drive to include more women. Mentorship motivates me to encourage and support diverse talent, ensuring women are welcomed, empowered and able to build lasting, fulfilling careers in mining and construction.”

Hedieh Evans leads with the same quiet confidence whether she’s in an asphalt plant, in a corporate board meeting or presenting to executives twice her age. Her industry expertise, coupled with her innate ability to connect with others, brings a fresh perspective to our business.

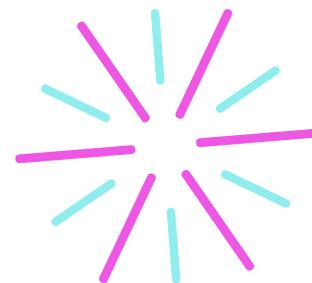
While interning with Texas Materials, Hedieh thoroughly learned the maintenance department and the processing plant at CRH’s largest aggregate quarry, Marble Falls Quarry, and built a strong reputation for her tenacity, aptitude and excellent work ethic. After graduating from Virginia Tech, Hedieh returned to Texas Materials, where she was promoted several times—first to maintenance lead, then to plant supervisor, followed by project manager and ultimately to aggregate commercial sales manager. In this short time, Hedieh’s judgment, depth of knowledge and industry expertise have become recognized beyond the Texas-based operations. After seven years in Texas, Hedieh was presented with the opportunity to help design and build a new quarry at a sister company. In November 2025, Hedieh moved to Connecticut to work with Tilcon Connecticut, the CRH company in the state, where she is supporting capital projects specific to the aggregates business.

Hedieh embraces challenges at every opportunity: leading price-change communications initiatives with customers, building a training program for hot-mix asphalt operations, presenting to large audiences at corporate functions and high-profile board meetings, serving as a board member on industry and internal company organizations and mentoring others. Hedieh was selected by corporate leadership to help lead a groundbreaking pilot project aimed at unifying diverse and segregated business lines. She built connections across functions and developed a road map to provide innovative customer solutions and increase efficiency.

A gifted communicator, mentor and advocate for others, Hedieh uses those skills as a facilitator for CRH’s Frontline Leadership Program. Hedieh’s passion for creating greater opportunity for women in construction led her to serve on the National Association of Women in Construction Austin Chapter’s board of directors and organize events that encourage female students to engage in STEM activities and learn about the construction industry.

Hedieh’s curiosity, drive and tenacity are rare, and rarer still is her capacity to expertly balance the responsibilities of her role with her leadership on corporate initiatives and involvement in industry organizations, all while pursuing her MBA at Duke University, which she completed in May 2025.





HONOREE

Szilvia Falvai-Sashalmi

Assistant Operations Manager

Jabil

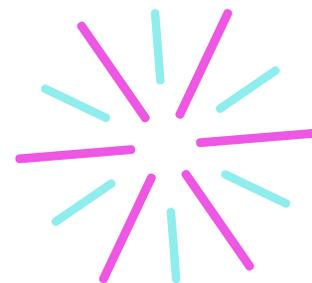
“I am motivated by colleagues reaching their goals, a healthy but challenging working environment and happy customers.”

Throughout her career, Szilvia Falvai-Sashalmi has held roles spanning operations, technical leadership, project management and workcell management. For Jabil Hungary, Szilvi most recently led one of the site’s most ambitious and technically complex initiatives to date. With a team of technical functional leads, Szilvi developed a technical road map aligned with customer needs and innovation goals, positioning the site for long-term success. She also spearheaded the largest new product introduction project at the site and led the installation of the most advanced back-end automation line from the initial design phase through debugging and final implementation. Her leadership on this \$20 million project was critical at every step, in execution as well as in development for her 40-person team. Now that Szilvi has transitioned to Dublin, she continues to make an impact by mentoring key talent and embedding the workcell structure into the site’s NPI team.

Szilvi’s ability to build capability and instill operational excellence has made her a cornerstone of Jabil Hungary’s positive transformation. Her influence includes reliable one-on-one mentorship and extends beyond that, as she has also facilitated team-wide development programs, including sessions focused on driving innovation and continuous improvement. For years, Szilvi has championed gender equity in manufacturing. She has served as both an organizer and panelist in a regional women’s forum, designing important discussions on navigating leadership as a woman in manufacturing.

At Jabil Tiszaújváros in Hungary, Szilvi organized donation programs, including gifts for children at the Girincs foster care home. She personally engaged with the children, creating meaningful connections and joyful experiences. She also helped organize Children’s Day activities and the annual community sports event. Now based in Ireland with her husband and two children, Szilvi is embracing her new community with enthusiasm. Her family is already actively involved in local sports clubs, and she is eager to deepen her engagement with the Irish community, to the benefit of all.





◆ CHAMPION

Isabelle Ferain

Vice President, Product Management
GlobalFoundries

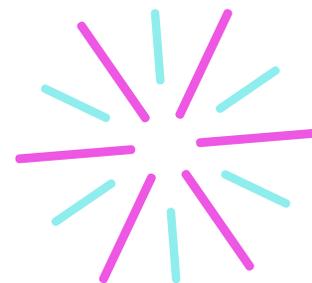
“I am motivated by new college graduates. They bring fresh energy and bold ideas, and they often see possibilities others overlook. They offer engineering and technology-user insights that elevate our competitive edge. This inspires me to seek out passionate engineering talent and help shape their growth—building the skills and confidence that empower them.”

In just two years as global executive sponsor of GlobalFoundries’ GlobalWomen employee resource group, Vice President of Product Development and Engineering Isabelle Ferain has grown membership by 24%, to 2,100+ members. Throughout her 25-year career in semiconductors, Isabelle has been a strong ally to women and people from other minority groups. She evolved from being a chapter-level GlobalWomen sponsor to overseeing eight chapters globally, ensuring each site receives tailored support for best practices, such as annual internal development conferences and speed mentoring. Isabelle also sponsored the first in-person strategy sessions for GlobalWomen executive sponsors and core team leaders. She partnered with Inclusion & Engagement to launch a six-month group-mentoring program for pre-executive women—and served as an executive mentor in the pilot. Isabelle’s advocacy extends to challenging systemic barriers, such as when she supported an internal gender diagnostic project and partnered with human resources to lead reforms to the promotion process.

Consistently finding ways to foster a positive and supportive culture, Isabelle sponsors an enrichment program to provide stretch assignments for employees to develop critical skills and explore new career paths. Last year, this program supported more than 250 projects. She funded and shaped ERG executive-sponsor training, sponsors internal learning programs and sets clear expectations for inclusive leadership in her own staff meetings. Isabelle uses her influence to build a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ employees by attending and encouraging others to attend the internal Pride Conference.

Isabelle uses her platform to elevate others and champion STEM—from lobbying for federal STEM R&D funding at the Science Technology Action Committee Capitol Hill Reception to engaging with future engineering and manufacturing talent. She was the keynote speaker for the New York State Capital Region Society of Women Engineers Merit Awards Ceremony and participated in a prestigious panel of women in the semiconductor industry at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers International Electron Devices Meeting. Isabelle’s other outreach efforts—and her work in mentorship, company-wide advocacy and building allyship—are too numerous to list here, all underscoring her commitment to advancing women in tech.





◆ CHAMPION

David Fernandes

Senior Vice President
Mazda Toyota Manufacturing

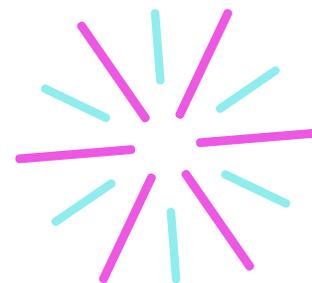
“I hope to inspire the next generation by showcasing the great opportunities in manufacturing, especially for young people, by listening to their voices and creating a work environment where everyone can be themselves. Through sharing my experiences and being a servant leader, I want to inspire others to accept challenges and break through to reach their full potential.”

With more than 27 years at Toyota, including leadership roles at six plants and a global assignment in South Africa, David Fernandes has built a legacy of innovation and empowerment. His accomplishments include launching powertrain facilities for Toyota West Virginia, Kentucky and Alabama; transitioning to vehicle plants in South Africa, Mississippi and Alabama, including opening the Toyota Mississippi Experience Center; and leading the development of the Toyota Trash Pandas Stadium—a Northern Alabama landmark that strengthens community connection.

David’s greatest legacy, however, is the impact he has made on team members and his support of women in the workplace, in particular. David ensures women’s voices are heard, credited and represented in leadership spaces, speaking up when contributions are overlooked and fostering an environment where women feel safe to lead and take risks. He mentors women across multiple organizations and geographies, and many of these relationships evolve into sponsorships that open doors to leadership roles. He has led efforts to implement flexible work schedules, intentionally recruits women into underrepresented technical fields and ensures women have equal access to career development, including rotational assignments, external training and coaching. Under David’s leadership, organizations have seen increased female participation in leadership roles and broader representation in decision-making forums. For these efforts and more, David was recently honored with the inaugural William E. Gaskin Ally Award at the Women in Manufacturing Summit.

With a genuine passion for creating opportunities that uplift individuals and communities alike, David’s community involvement is extensive. While serving as president of Toyota Alabama, David led the Clean Low Emissions Approach & Novel Transportation Innovation Practice with Alabama A&M University—Toyota’s first university mobility collaboration in the U.S. This student-led mobility project connected the community with students to explore how to improve access to education, employment and essential services and promoted the adoption of zero- and low-emission vehicles. David has served in leadership roles with the Huntsville Madison County Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturing Alabama, UnidosUS, Business Council of Alabama and its Manufacturing Advocacy Council and too many others to list here. Through these roles, David has helped shape policy, support economic growth and advocate for inclusive development.





HONOREE

Michelle Fields

Plant Manager, Gary Ladle Plant
HarbisonWalker International

“I hope to inspire the next generation by demonstrating persistence and resiliency at all times. When things get hard, dig in, find a solution and get it done. When they say can’t, find a way to can and never give up.”

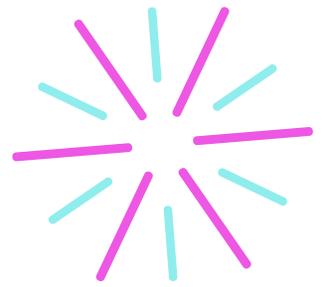
Navigating uncharted territory comes naturally to Michelle Fields, plant manager for Gary, Indiana, Ladle Works at HWI, a member of Caldersys. Whether she’s being tasked with contributing toward business goals or creating an excellent environment for her team, Michelle’s response is always, “Yes, we can!”

With a metallurgical engineering degree from Michigan Technological University and an internship at Bay Engineered Castings, Michelle kicked off a career of more than 20 years at United States Steel Corporation, where she was promoted through various positions, ultimately becoming primary plant manager at a site with more than 2,000 total employees. Michelle joined HWI in 2016, where her expertise in steelmaking and refractories enabled her and the HWI research team to improve ladle life from 60 to more than 70 heats, resulting in significant savings in time, cost and materials. In addition to numerous other operational improvements, she identified and led an effort to shift shotcast pumping onsite at the customer’s facility, dramatically increasing efficiencies while reducing costs.

Throughout her career, Michelle has been keenly aware of the few women in her field, and she values the benefits of mentoring and networking with other women. At U.S. Steel, Michelle was an active leader in its Women’s Inclusion Network and a member of its Diversity & Inclusion Committee. Michelle has been a career-long advocate for the local Association for Iron and Steel Technology chapter and was selected as an AIST Young Leader in recognition of her emerging leadership skills. She has ensured that her company sponsors AIST events—particularly those for people new to the field.

As plant manager, Michelle is instrumental in coordinating and arranging fundraising activities, including walks for Breast Cancer Awareness, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the American Heart Association, as well as holiday toy and coat drives. On a personal level, Michelle is passionate about the well-being of animals and adopted her beloved dog, Nick, from a local nonprofit, Giant Paw Prints Rescue. She continues to support this organization and the Humane Society of Northwest Indiana.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Ariel Foss

Plant Safety Manager
LP Building Solutions

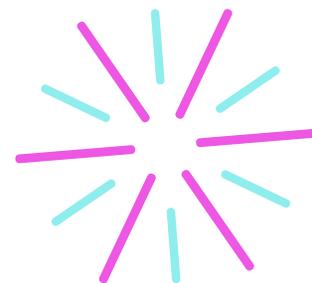
“I am motivated by my hardworking coworkers and the collaborative culture we share. Working alongside intelligent, creative teammates who willingly support one another pushes me to do my best and makes me proud to be part of such a strong, dedicated team.”

Ariel Foss is a standout example of a woman making a measurable impact in two of manufacturing’s most critical areas—training and safety. With a background in marketing and sales, Ariel joined LP Building Solution’s Houlton mill as a training specialist during a pivotal product conversion and was tasked with retraining more than 150 employees. Ariel led technical instruction and helped the workforce adapt to new processes—building trust and resilience during a time of significant change. In just four years, she helped lead the site through two year-long injury-free stretches, recently surpassing 600 consecutive injury-free days and more than 500,000 safe work hours. During LP’s 2024 safety reset, Ariel led a comprehensive overhaul of machine-specific lockout procedures—many of which were outdated or missing. She partnered closely with the electrical department to redesign protocols, ensuring clarity, compliance and risk reduction in a high-hazard environment.

Though her role shifted to safety, Ariel continues to champion mentorship and talent development. She is currently training another woman to join the safety team, expanding female representation on the mill floor and modeling inclusive leadership. She established diverse subcommittees that empowered frontline workers to lead safety initiatives and contribute to project planning. By giving voice to those closest to the work, Ariel replaced the “we’ve always done it this way” mindset with a culture of ownership, transparency and innovation.

Partnering with the nonprofit Trades for ME, Ariel introduces middle and high school girls to careers in welding, electrical, HVAC- and technical-education programs, where she facilitates mill tours and mentorships that expose students to real-world careers. Her ability to connect with students, educators and community organizations reflects her belief that strong workplace cultures begin with strong community ties. Ariel is not only shaping the future of manufacturing— helping others see themselves in it.





HONOREE

Brooke Franco

Commodity Manager, Catalyst & Additives
INEOS Olefins & Polymers USA

“I am motivated by setting a strong example for my kids and demonstrating the value of hard work. Their future inspires my work ethic, and I strive to show them what dedication, integrity and perseverance look like in action.”

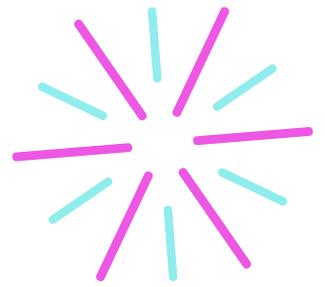
For nearly 13 years, Brooke Franco has served INEOS Olefins & Polymers USA. Currently Brooke is commodity manager for Polymers Catalyst & Additives, where she and her team generated \$11.3 million in variable cost savings and achieved \$1.85 million in cost avoidance over five years. With a colleague’s retirement, Brooke expanded her scope to include Olefins Catalyst and Bulk Chemicals across all sites.

As the company’s first Six Sigma Green and Black Belt, Brooke completed seven major projects that delivered \$3.95 million in net present value savings. She has streamlined labor and scheduling in maintenance and led a quality-assurance project that reduced customer claims. Additionally, Brooke’s SHE initiative led to the removal of restrictive permit conditions from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

A few years ago, a severe accident coupled with the genetic osteogenesis imperfecta disorder left Brooke with seven broken bones and 16 surgeries. She faced limited mobility and extended periods in a wheelchair, though she maintained her dedication to her work and her focus on growth and development. Brooke is a certified SAP professional and active member of the SAP SuperUser program, with advanced knowledge in materials management and production planning. She earned her certification while completing her MBA in management information systems at Lamar University. For others, Brooke helped develop and lead Leader Standard Work and Green Belt training programs and has mentored 14 Six Sigma Green Belts. Beyond her technical leadership, Brooke was honored as the first guest on the INEOS Women’s Network podcast and invited to speak at San Jacinto College to inspire future professionals.

Alongside her husband, Jeremy, Brooke has been a KidSave mentor, supporting older foster children, which led the couple to adopt Bobby, age 9, who joined siblings Leighton (13) and Lawson (6) in 2023. Brooke also founded the nonprofit Franco Funny Farm Sanctuary, which partners with the local sheriff to rescue abandoned livestock and rehomes dogs. The sanctuary serves as a volunteer hub for youth, who receive mentorship and hands-on experience. Brooke is also a supporter and volunteer for the INEOS ICAN Foundation, a nonprofit that supports educators and promotes physical activity among children.





HONOREE

D.J. Gall

Director of Manufacturing
Vacuworx

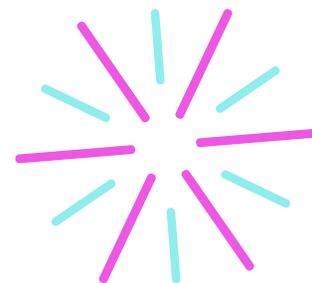
“I am motivated by safely achieving company goals, meeting output demands and developing a team that enjoys coming to work. I want my employees to win, so we cross-train to learn new skills. This ensures quality and growth opportunities for everyone.”

D.J. Gall brings innovation and strategic vision to his role as director of manufacturing at Vacuworx. He built and launched a media blasting and powder coating facility from the ground up for the company. This new facility quickly became a fully integrated division that eliminated outsourcing costs, reduced turnaround and lead times by an average of two weeks and enhanced overall quality and consistency. D.J. has overseen major upgrades within the welding division, such as installation of a robotic welding cell that produces cleaner, more precise weldments. He also secured the largest-ever grant (\$750,000) from the U.S. Department of Energy to implement energy-efficiency upgrades throughout the plant, reducing operational costs and environmental impact and positioning Vacuworx as a sustainable manufacturer.

Though he’s achieved critical efficiencies for Vacuworx, D.J.’s greatest achievements are his respectful leadership and care for his team members. With a deep knowledge of the trade, developed over a career begun at age 17, D.J. understands every step of the process and never asks an employee to do something he wouldn’t do himself. He’s committed to recruiting and retaining skilled talent, and he advocates for fair pay and growth opportunities, with a belief in recognizing hard work and publicly celebrating accomplishments. He’s a hands-on leader, too, grilling burgers, teaching theory and troubleshooting skills and occasionally working well into the night to fill a critical rush order. D.J. even helped an employee clean up after a tornado destroyed his garage and vehicle.

D.J. is deeply committed to giving back to his community, frequently partnering with Tulsa Technology Center to promote careers in manufacturing by sharing his expertise and inspiring students to pursue opportunities in the trade. He volunteers and participates in fundraising events for a variety of causes, such as the George Miksch Sutton Avian Research Center and Tulsa Boys’ Home. Recently D.J. helped the Boy Scouts of America, Oklahoma chapter, rebuild their scout ranch fishing dock by soliciting private donations.





HONOREE

Neela Bhargavi Ganduri

Director, Supplier Quality and Development
GE HealthCare

“I am motivated by the idea that each of us has the power to build a better world. I channel that belief into solving complex problems in manufacturing through a human-centric approach and, ultimately, making health care and education accessible to everyone.”

As director of supplier quality and development at GE HealthCare, Neela Bhargavi Ganduri leads supplier quality and development teams in anesthesia and respiratory care. Managing 12 engineers, more than 700 suppliers and 30 million components, Neela has driven a 70% defect reduction in two years and supported critical new product launches and supplier initiatives for lifesaving medical equipment. Previously, Neela was director of optimization for GE HealthCare’s global Supplier Quality organization, influencing 10,000-plus suppliers and driving systemic improvements and Lean deployment.

Before transitioning to GE HealthCare, Neela advanced through automotive manufacturing from a manufacturing engineer to leading enterprise-wide Lean Six Sigma deployment across two high-volume automotive plants. She spearheaded transformative projects and programs to enhance manufacturing processes, improve product quality and increase productivity of several products spanning multiple precision automotive components. She has delivered more than \$100 million in cost savings through innovative problem-solving and operational excellence.

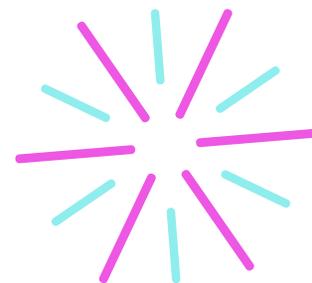
Neela is a catalyst for growth, known for elevating workplace culture through coaching and people development. Her own credentials include a master’s in mechanical engineering, Six Sigma Black Belt, Lean, Shainin Red X Journeyman, Kepner-Tregoe, TRIZ and PMP. She’s trained more than 1,500 employees and coached 350-plus executives, engineers, technicians and operators in problem-solving.

Neela co-designed and led mentorship programs for more than 150 early and mid-career professionals in Supply Chain. Over two years, she co-led development programs and built a supportive community for women in quality and regulatory roles. Neela currently acts as GE HealthCare’s liaison to Women in Manufacturing, connecting professionals with industry events and experts fostering a culture of empowerment.

As program manager for GE Girls Milwaukee for two years, she led weeklong STEM camps and coordinated year-round alumni activities; now she champions the program in Wisconsin. Through school-based initiatives, Neela shares her journey during interviews, panels and interactive sessions, and her authentic storytelling and approachable style make STEM careers feel accessible. She was a featured speaker at the 2023 WiM Summit and acted as a judge for the FY24 Society of Women Engineers Awards Program.

In recognition of her impact, the World Women Leadership Congress awarded Neela the 2025 Women Leadership Award for Excellence in Manufacturing. Neela is also a recipient of the Leadership in Manufacturing Award from the Empowering Women in Industry organization.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Hillary Gargel

Logistics Operations Leader
Dow

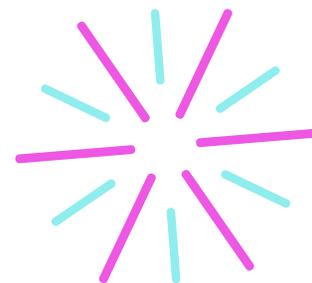
“I am motivated by helping people grow, building strong relationships and fostering a culture where collaboration and accountability thrive. It is important for my work to contribute to a larger mission, align with organizational values and make a positive impact on both people and performance.”

As logistics operations leader at Dow’s Croydon plant, Hillary Gargel revitalized a department facing significant attrition and drove measurable improvements in safety, productivity and cost efficiency. Through her Propel To Excel, a talent development program, Hillary achieved inventory accuracy exceeding 95%, significantly reducing production delays caused by incorrect or missing raw materials. Her targeted efforts to reduce finished product offgrade have led to increased rework rates across all three production reactors, reclaiming almost 6 million pounds of product and preserving approximately \$3 million in value for the business.

Hillary strengthened discipline within a largely inexperienced team by enhancing procedural documentation, upgrading the training program and establishing clear performance expectations for each role. She introduced a structured daily meeting format that fosters open communication and accountability, cultivating trust and collaboration across her team. Her emphasis on professional development as well as recognition and appreciation has inspired employees to exceed expectations. She actively identifies individual interests and growth opportunities, which has led to greater employee engagement, enhanced flexibility and a stronger environmental, health and safety mindset. Notably, she expanded the skill set of entry-level logistics technicians by qualifying them as safe work permit writers and isolation of energy (that is, lockout/tagout) isolators—capabilities traditionally reserved for reactor operators or day staff—thereby increasing workforce capability and readiness.

Beyond the Dow plant, Hillary volunteers for food pantries, park cleanups and Habitat for Humanity. As chair of the 2025 United Way campaign, she reinvigorated sitewide participation in creative fundraising events that boosted morale and community impact. Inside the plant, as a key member of the Bristol Croydon People Team, Hillary has played an instrumental role in organizing and executing events that connect employees, their families and the broader Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, community, including bake sales, “pie the leader” challenges, slow-cooker cook-offs, a 5K fun run, long-drive contests and more. Hillary’s ability to inspire involvement and build community—both within and beyond the workplace—continues to make a lasting impact.





HONOREE

Shanda Gentry

Plant Manager
LP Building Solutions

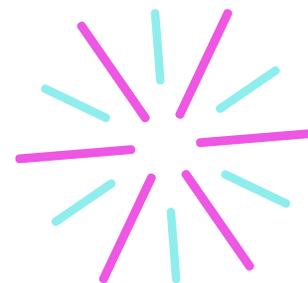
“I hope to inspire the next generation by communicating, teaching and staying involved in how they think and grow. By sharing my story, I want young women to feel confident being involved, contributing and pursuing opportunities that interest them.”

As plant manager at LP Building Solutions’ Roaring River, North Carolina, facility—the company’s only female plant manager across more than 20 North American manufacturing facilities—Shanda Gentry consistently delivers strong business results in the areas of efficiency, quality, compliance and safety. She has led multiple excellence initiatives, including Lean Six Sigma process improvements, employee resource planning and scheduling system rollouts, cost reduction strategies and capital budgeting. But beyond these stellar metrics, Shanda’s devotion to inclusivity makes her a truly standout leader as she advocates for amenities often overlooked in the manufacturing industry. This includes adequate women’s restrooms and a nursing suite in the design and launch of LP’s newest plant in Bath, New York.

Shanda is passionate about building a workplace where all employees thrive, and she specifically works to ensure women’s voices are heard, whether in daily check-ins or strategic decision-making opportunities. She regularly mentors female employees, sharing her own experiences balancing motherhood and a demanding career, and she’s eager to offer approachable, empowering guidance on negotiating schedules, pursuing development opportunities and building leadership skills. Shanda’s leadership style employs both formal and informal points of connection, from championing participation in women-centered leadership conferences to providing constructive feedback aimed at helping emerging talent step forward with clarity and confidence.

Beyond her leadership at the mill, Shanda strives to make manufacturing tangible and exciting for future generations. She’s a regular participant in STEM outreach events for middle schoolers, setting up interactive booths where students use measuring tools, calipers and hands-on engineering aids. She judges high school senior projects, helping students refine presentations and build confidence in their ideas. Shanda loves sharing about her professional journey in manufacturing at school career days, especially highlighting opportunities for young women in the industry. She also serves on local board of education planning sessions and at community events, like the Wilkes County’s “Breaking Barriers” panel, where she advocates for educational pathways that connect directly to workforce opportunities.





HONOREE

Lisa Giese

Senior Director, Finance
Marvin

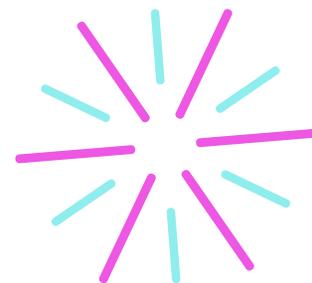
“I am motivated by seeing the success of those around me and playing a role in contributing to that success. I enjoy building genuine relationships with others and influencing their lives in a positive way.”

In 2020, Marvin identified a possible new business opportunity in the direct-to-consumer market segment. Developing the new venture required deep company knowledge and financial expertise—the perfect opportunity for Lisa Giese. Her research into the homeowner journey revealed an unmet need in the online market, and from there, she developed the business case for Marvin Replacement. Marvin Replacement now operates across 13 states with a compounded annual growth rate of 150% in its first five years of operations.

In her 10-year career at Marvin, Lisa’s curiosity, collaboration and drive have led to her promotion to senior finance director and prompted her role’s evolution from a focus on manufacturing operations to that of business strategy. As the financial leader for Marvin Replacement, Lisa established an accounting team for the business by bringing together long-time Marvin employees and new teammates in service of a larger goal. In navigating the inception of a new, fully remote team in 2020, Lisa prioritized technology-focused solutions to inspire collaboration. Her team adopted tools like Salesforce to document and facilitate the business unit growth, developing data analysis tools and dashboards to measure success.

Lisa earned her accounting degree from Minnesota State University Moorhead and remains an active participant in programs that empower students and alumni seeking to establish fulfilling careers and build their professional networks. She has served as an executive mentor for students in the university’s accounting program and currently acts as treasurer on the board of the MSUM Alumni Foundation, which raises funds for scholarships and programming at the university. Lisa is also a member of the North Dakota State Board of Accountancy, a position appointed by the governor. The board provides oversight of statewide certified public accountant licensure, setting and maintaining high standards that promote reliability and accuracy for financial professionals across industries. With a powerful leadership presence and a drive to provide meaningful service beyond work, Lisa is a force for good.





HONOREE

Elianne Gonzalez

Senior Engineer, First Line Supervisor
Samsung Austin Semiconductor

“I am motivated by an intellectual curiosity and commitment to continuous improvement, challenging myself to grow and motivating those around me so we can achieve more together. I strive to elevate my impact through thoughtful leadership and turn my ambition into sustained excellence in each aspect of my life.”

With experiences spanning manufacturing sectors, including aerospace, appliances, chemicals and refining, Elianne Gonzalez brings a broad, systems-oriented perspective to her four years in semiconductor manufacturing. In her role within Samsung’s facilities operations organization, she supports the maintenance and reliability of thousands of critical assets that deliver clean air, water and utilities essential to advanced manufacturing environments.

Elianne’s work provides technical and strategic input to department managers and directors on asset reliability, where she has contributed to equipment incident investigations, strengthened safety performance, enhanced predictive maintenance programs and improved preventative maintenance strategies.

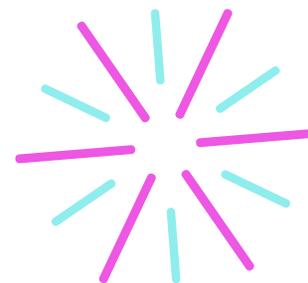
In 2024, she participated in a cross-functional task force that developed a new risk management process and standardized documentation requirements for non-standard work across all six facilities departments. Elianne led 14 training sessions for engineers, technicians and managers on the updated job package creation process and drove changes to lifting and rigging requirements to better align with OSHA and industry best practices. More recently, she led her department’s transition of more than 4,000 preventative maintenance plans covering more than 10,000 assets from a local system to a global maintenance management platform.

Elianne supervises nine engineers and professionals who develop maintenance job packages for a team of 40 technicians. She is committed to developing others, having coached senior technicians through complex technical projects and supported their progression into department specialist roles. Her leadership has helped establish stronger maintenance workflows, higher-quality documentation and a culture of accountability, trust and continuous improvement.

Beyond her technical role, Elianne has served as vice chair and chair of the Women in Technology at Samsung employee resource group. She set the theme “Pathways to Success” and guided initiatives focused on professional development, mentorship, networking and retention. Under her leadership, WITS delivered more than 20 professional development talks to the broader organization. She also advocated for deeper collaboration with university recruiting efforts and strengthened engagement with executive sponsors.

Her community engagement includes STEM outreach through WITS, where she served as an industry speaker at University of Texas at Austin programs and helped with Samsung’s participation at UT Girl Day, engaging more than 1,000 K–12 students in hands-on learning about science and manufacturing. In addition, Elianne volunteers with A Cappella Texas, a nonprofit dedicated to enriching the Austin community through music while supporting organizations such as Austin Pets Alive!, the Central Texas Food Bank and We Are Blood.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Monica Greenhalgh

Director, Manufacturing Intelligence
General Motors

“I hope to inspire the next generation by embracing how innovation in technology and investment in people can occur simultaneously to drive outstanding results.”

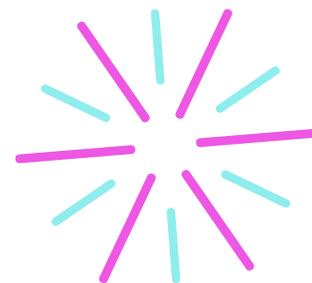
Monica Greenhalgh has redefined data-driven manufacturing for General Motors by stabilizing and modernizing their device level analytics platform, unlocking more than \$380 million in cost savings. Her ability to align diverse teams under a shared vision showcases her operational and people leadership. When Monica took on the challenge of stabilizing DLA, the cross-organizational team was struggling with siloed operations that slowed progress. Recognizing this, Monica championed a One-Team approach, aligning everyone around the shared goal of delivering DLA 2.0. She complemented this by strategically hiring experienced talent with critical skills, promoting strong internal performers and addressing performance challenges swiftly and constructively.

Monica demonstrated her management skills again when she took over the Manufacturing Data Engineering team two years ago. That platform was outdated, the data quality was poor and frequent outages eroded user confidence. Within six months, Monica’s team stabilized the legacy system, established a modern architecture and data model and re-platformed it to cloud-based technologies.

Central to Monica’s impact is mentorship. She personally mentored a key team member, helping them develop interpersonal skills in negotiation and escalation management, leading to a significant career advancement. She also created opportunities for individuals outside her immediate organization, bringing them into critical conversations where they could showcase their expertise to both peers and senior leaders. Monica serves as the leader for the General Motors Austin Chapter of the Latino employee resource group, sits on General Motors’ National Latino Advisory Board and acts as the executive sponsor of the Women in Technology ERG.

Outside the workplace, Monica’s long-standing involvement with Scouts of America and youth athletics reflects her commitment to developing future leaders. Monica has completed the Scouts of America’s most advanced leadership programs, equipping her with extensive skills in team development and organizational leadership. Her lifelong commitment to service demonstrates her dedication to empowering individuals and strengthening communities through mentorship, advocacy and inclusive leadership.





HONOREE

Suzie Guzman

Assistant Vice President, Strategic Support
The Greenbrier Companies

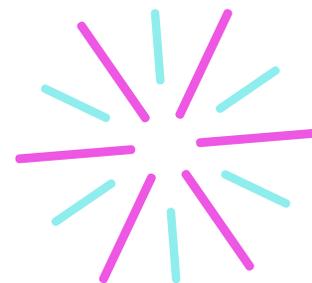
“I am motivated by turning ideas into action, improving how things work and making a meaningful impact. I value advocating for others in the workplace, supporting their growth and success and being part of an organization where diverse perspectives are valued and employees are genuinely cared for.”

As assistant vice president of strategic support for The Greenbrier Companies’ Leasing and Fleet Management business segment, Suzie Guzman provides strategic, financial and accounting support for vital business units. Over nearly 17 years with Greenbrier—beginning her career in accounts receivable—Suzie has built deep institutional knowledge and emerged as a trusted leader within the leasing organization. With a sharp attention to detail and a strategic mindset, she manages, tracks and supports enterprise-wide initiatives that drive informed decision-making and long-term value.

Suzie is a gifted leader of people, and she’s hired, trained and mentored numerous employees over the years. She provides support and guidance to her direct reports as she helps them understand the complex work of accounting treatment and revenue recognition and successfully advance in their careers within the company. She co-founded Greenbrier’s GBXCELS Women’s Leadership Employee Resource Group, which she helped grow to more than 100 members from a total network of 300, making it the largest group of its kind at Greenbrier. Suzie has mentored and engaged the next generation of female talent, empowering Greenbrier’s female workforce and developing their leadership skills for personal and professional development.

Having moved from the Philippines to the United States at just 23, Suzie remains a leader and advocate in her community. She was a member of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Oregon, served on the City of Hillsboro Audit Committee and held a role on the Oregon Board of Accountancy’s Complaints Committee. Across her career and community involvement, Suzie is known for leading with integrity, kindness and purpose—championing others’ success while driving meaningful impact.





HONOREE

Rachel Hall

Senior Engineer, New Model Central Engineering
Nissan

“I am motivated by mentoring and supporting the generation following me. They are the future of manufacturing. The next generation needs encouragement to open the doors they might find daunting from the outside. Manufacturing has many doors, but finding the right fit is the key to building a brighter future for the next generation.”

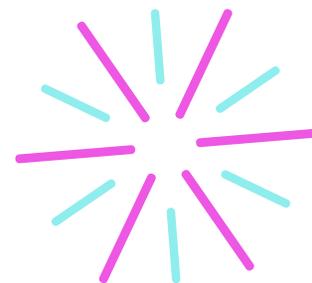
Rachel Hall’s career at Nissan is proof that you don’t need a management title to influence cultures; in fact, her work as an engineer has strengthened Nissan’s operational excellence, expanded access to STEM careers and elevated how the manufacturing community supports one another. Through innovative problem-solving and collaboration, Rachel developed the standard New Model Equipment System for Nissan’s trim engineering organization. Carefully balancing technical precision and real-world production needs, this system established a unified approach for engineers to develop specifications and check systems, ensuring new model equipment met Nissan’s exacting standards, and accounted for every stakeholder’s requirements. The result is a legacy of measurable improvement: Projects launch more smoothly, engineers collaborate more effectively and manufacturing operations now have a standardized foundation that continues to deliver value across multiple model life cycles.

Equally impressive is Rachel’s role in championing innovation through the Nissan Manufacturing Innovation Summit, which she has helped organize for several years. This event connects more than 50 vendors with local manufacturers, increasing exposure to new technologies and cost-saving ideas, strengthening Nissan’s competitiveness and inspiring regional collaboration.

Rachel’s leadership shines most in how she lifts others. Rachel is part of Women in Nissan and actively engages her peers to attend events like Women Driving Manufacturing Forward. Rachel co-led the 2024 Nissan Summer Engineering Program, spending every Saturday in June—unpaid—to mentor 40 high school students exploring careers in manufacturing. She mobilized 30 volunteers to guide students through hands-on learning and show them what’s possible in this industry. Rachel engages with college students at Middle Tennessee State University to share insights on topics ranging from AI in engineering to careers outside traditional management paths.

As Nissan’s Society of Manufacturing Engineers representative, Rachel has championed multiple community-based initiatives designed to build awareness, opportunity and pride in manufacturing. She helps organize SME Nashville Chapter events, as well. Her openness and authenticity resonate deeply with young professionals who see in her a model of lifelong learning and curiosity.





◆ CHAMPION

Laura Harshberger

Global IT Director
PPG

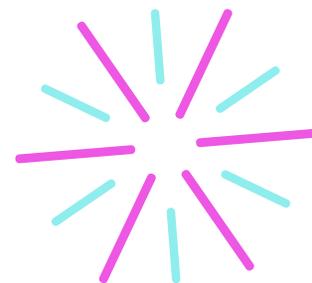
“I hope to inspire the next generation by being a role model that they can look up to. It’s important to me to ‘pay it forward’ and sponsor others, since I had an inspiring sponsor early in my career at PPG. I hope that others (especially women) who see me lead with confidence can picture themselves in my role someday.”

In her 20-year career in IT for the manufacturing industry, Laura Harshberger has managed or implemented systems that enhance every aspect of the manufacturing value chain. At PPG, Laura is a model for how leaders can create real impact by combining advocacy with action. As the global information technology director, Laura launched and leads the global internship program, which has supported 582 interns since its inception in 2016. She also serves as an inclusion and belonging ambassador for IT, embedding inclusive practices into hiring, team development and career advancement.

Laura was the first global sponsor of PPG’s Women’s Leadership Network and co-chair of the Women’s Leadership Council, growing the network to more than 4,500 members. She’s organized events that helped employees manage stress and burnout, advanced company-wide initiatives that enhance belonging and professional growth and created a more supportive environment overall. In the production environment, Laura championed the need for different types of clothing for women that adheres to all the personal protective equipment standards. She actively sponsors employees for stretch roles and new opportunities, ensuring women and underrepresented colleagues have equal access to growth pathways. Under her leadership, colleagues feel supported not just as professionals, but as whole people—valued for their ideas and encouraged to thrive.

Laura’s advocacy for practices that remove barriers to inclusion goes beyond the workplace. She’s served for multiple years as PPG’s representative for Women United, one of the United Way’s largest donor networks, bringing together women to understand the impact of their donations to the Southwestern Pennsylvania community. She mentors colleagues one-on-one, both at work and through initiatives like the 3 Cups of Coffee program with Pennsylvania Women Work. Laura served on the board of directors for Dress for Success Pittsburgh and encourages others at PPG to become involved. She’s generous in sharing her expertise with the wider manufacturing community, including as a panelist at the Manufacturing Leadership Council’s 20th Anniversary Rethink event on Developing a Thriving Manufacturing Culture for Women. This community engagement reflects her commitment to empowering women, building equitable access to opportunity and strengthening the broader manufacturing ecosystem.





HONOREE

Leanna Hasan

General Manager, FG Transportation North America
Filtration Group

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that success and authenticity are not mutually exclusive. Leadership requires courage, curiosity and a commitment to continuous growth. I want the next generation to feel empowered to ask questions, take risks and believe they belong in rooms where decisions are made to change the world for the better.”

From intern to general manager, Leanna Hasan has built her career in manufacturing at Filtration Group by designing products, processes and opportunities—demonstrating that authenticity, grit and people-first leadership can transform both organizations and individuals.

Leanna is the general manager of FG Automotive North America, a division of Filtration Group, where she oversees three business units across the region. FG Automotive is part of Filtration Group, a \$2 billion organization supported by Madison Industries. She holds a degree in engineering and materials science from the University of Illinois at Chicago and an MBA from Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management.

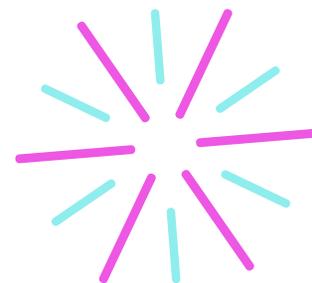
Leanna’s career began as an engineering intern and evolved through roles in R&D, program management, sales leadership, procurement and operations. As an R&D engineer, she helped design filtration products still in production today, including platforms that positioned Filtration Group as a single-sourced supplier for the Ford F-Series. Her transition into program management accelerated her impact, where she led cross-functional teams through Ford’s highest-profile launches and implemented process improvements that strengthened quality, reliability and customer trust.

As her scope expanded, Leanna took on leadership roles across commercial and operational functions. During the COVID-19 pandemic and global supply chain crisis, she built and scaled procurement capabilities, transforming a small team into a resilient, strategic function that safeguarded production for key customers. Known for her hands-on leadership style, she worked closely with teams through uncertainty, developing leaders who continue to drive results across the organization.

In recent years, Leanna has unified sales, operations, procurement and customer service under a single strategic vision—positioning Filtran not only as a supplier, but as a trusted technical partner. In 2024, she assumed responsibility for the North American business as general manager. She views her journey as a continuous progression of building—first products, then processes, then organizations. Today, her purpose is to create opportunity, develop leaders and leave manufacturing stronger than she found it.

A first-generation American born to a Palestinian family, Leanna is deeply driven by the values of empowerment, opportunity creation and leading with humility and kindness. She is also actively engaged in her community as an ambassador and member of the St. Jude Children’s Hospital event organization team and running group.





HONOREE

Rebecca Hicks

Director, Digital Transformation

Pella Corporation

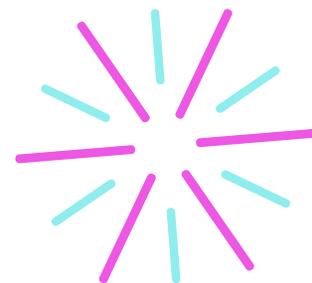
“I am motivated by showing up, speaking up, learning daily, courageously challenging and owning my seat at the table.”

Rebecca Hicks is a difference maker in the digital landscape at Pella Corporation, as a culture-builder and connector among colleagues and by supporting families in her Iowa community. As director of digital transformation for Pella, Rebecca’s influence spans the entire customer journey, beginning with brand engagement through to ordering and ongoing interactions. With the needs of commercial sales, marketing and customers in mind, she’s responsible for how new technologies are built and deployed. Her team built and delivered the new Pella Certified Contractors digital-quoting tool for web-based quotes in less than a year. With more than 1,000 PCCs coast-to-coast, this platform has been widely adopted and praised for simplifying what was once a complex process. Rebecca is helping create the future-state quoting capability for the largest product portfolio in the window and door industry, bringing the customer voice directly into conversations with executive leadership in the process.

Among the mostly female digital team that Rebecca has recruited and developed exists a culture where team members are encouraged to share ideas openly, learn from one another and celebrate each other’s successes. Rebecca is a sought-after voice in women in technology circles and was a panelist at “Thought Leadership Collective: Women in B2B” in Chicago. Rebecca’s own professional journey from retail into manufacturing leadership makes her a powerful role model who can show others that skills and perspectives from outside manufacturing are transferable, and even essential, to shaping the industry’s future.

Rebecca is consistent in her drive to uplift others. She is head of concessions for the Ankeny Girls Softball Association, which is Iowa’s largest youth softball program. She manages scheduling and inventory and, more importantly, provides training for dozens of teens each season, many in their first jobs. Through this platform, Rebecca mentors youth while connecting with the community, such as by sourcing products from local entrepreneurs. Rebecca’s influence extends further with her volunteer work for Single Parent Provisions, where she helps organize holiday events that provide gifts and support for hundreds of single-parent families.





HONOREE

Mindy Hostettler

Associate Director, Digital Project Management
AstraZeneca

“I am motivated by a passion for helping others reach their career goals, empowering women to see what is possible in manufacturing, and creating environments where people feel purpose and fulfillment in their work.”

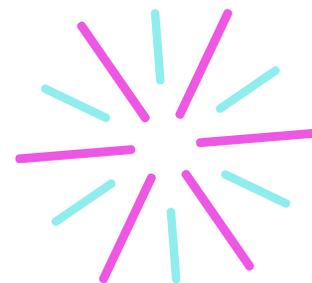
Mindy Hostettler has spent 15 years leading high-impact efforts through roles in IT, quality assurance, manufacturing leadership, the project management office and Digital Lighthouse. With deep operational expertise and a commitment to getting things right, Mindy tackles complexity head-on to deliver innovative solutions across the organization. This is especially evident in her development and implementation of the SmartMetering tool—a Power App that monitors company-wide energy consumption through predictive modeling. As the first Digital Lighthouse initiative to launch in the Americas, the tool now operates across multiple sites and has set a new standard for operational transparency at AstraZeneca.

Mindy also led the technical transfer of a new drug product to the Americas, delivering cost savings by reducing active pharmaceutical ingredients needed for testing, maintaining zero quality deviations across all trial stages. Mindy’s flawless execution created a reliable second supply source for a billion-dollar product and accelerated patient access to critical therapy, all delivered on time, despite pandemic travel limitations.

When Mindy recognized that her site lacked structured opportunities for professional connection and mentorship, she established the site’s Professional Networking Employee Engagement Resource Group, as well as its first mentorship program, which has empowered more than 350 participants over seven years. One mentee describes the program as “the single most impactful factor to my professional development,” and that’s the standard Mindy sets for building a culture where people can collaborate, learn and grow in their careers.

For more than a decade, Mindy has mentored at-risk students at a local elementary school, worked with Junior Achievement to build financial literacy among young learners and volunteered in classrooms. As a class leader for Leadership Everyone, Mindy champions diversity and innovation as the foundation for effective community leadership. She also spearheaded the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge at her site, mobilizing participation across AstraZeneca locations throughout the Americas. Her leadership inspired widespread involvement and heightened awareness for important causes across the organization.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Taylor Howell

Factory Manager

Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories

“I hope to inspire the next generation by helping them understand there are no limits to what they’re able to accomplish, no matter where they’re at in life! My goal is to be an example of how patience combined with perseverance can drive you through any setback and towards success.”

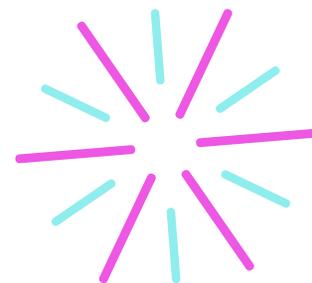
With a background in human resources, and now EO Schweitzer Manufacturing factory manager for Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Taylor Howell’s leadership style is grounded in collaboration and respect. This has led to big gains for the company, for her team members and for her as a person.

At just 25 years old, Taylor took over a manufacturing location with extended lead time and significant backlog. With an ambitious goal to achieve the industry-leading five-day lead time seen across SEL’s other manufacturing locations, Taylor right-sized staffing, introduced new equipment and led a major floor re-layout that empowered teams to design their own workspaces for optimal flow. These efforts resulted in a 68% reduction in average lead time across the factory, with some product lines improving from 40-plus days to just five. Within the first few years, the product line saw a 71% increase in output. She’s driven a 30% increase in capacity, a 55% increase in head count and a 45% increase in revenue.

Fostering a culture of growth and courage, Taylor has spurred a multitude of employee success stories through her mentorship. She’s promoted multiple team members into leadership roles and mentored emerging talent through SEL’s Women in STEM program. Her leadership continues to shape a resilient, high-performing team and inspire others to reach their full potential.

Taylor’s desire to help people grow makes her an advocate for youth outreach and STEM education, as well. She initiated an annual internship partnership with Lake Zurich High School and volunteers in classrooms and at STEM events, especially supporting girls in STEM programming. One standout initiative involves SEL’s collaboration with the school’s robotics class, where employees work alongside students to solve actual manufacturing challenges. It shouldn’t be a surprise that Taylor is a civic leader, too, serving on the board of directors for the Lake Zurich Area Chamber of Commerce.





HONOREE

Crystal Hyman

General Manager, Oxbox
Trane Technologies

“I hope to inspire the next generation by demonstrating that ambition should never overshadow integrity or kindness, and that deep convictions do not need to diminish respect for those who have differing perspectives. I strive to exemplify hard work, innovation and relentless pursuit of success, all while reflecting my faith in God as my foundation.”

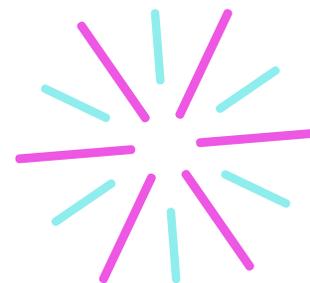
Since joining Trane Technologies in 2003, Crystal Hyman has brought her strong analytic skills, creative mindset and extensive commercial knowledge to all that she does, and she’s been recognized for her achievements with highly competitive Trane Technologies Presidents Awards in 2024, 2022, 2021, 2018 and 2011.

Crystal’s signature project was launching Trade Warriors, connecting Trane Technologies’ Trane Residential HVAC dealers with qualified technicians while creating rewarding careers for military service members. Crystal developed this concept in 2020 while she was director of dealer/contractor experience for the Trane Technologies Residential business unit. There she found that a significant lack of HVAC technicians was impeding contractors’ ability to grow. Through a partnership that included her team, a local training company and the United States Army, Trade Warriors was launched as a hands-on, eight-week training initiative to equip servicemen and servicewomen returning to civilian life with the skills and certifications to begin successful careers in HVAC. The program has trained 31 cohorts and led to more than 300 job placements so far. Trade Warriors was a key contributor to Trane Technologies receiving the Military Friendly® Gold Award last year.

Crystal is also known for transforming teams with a positive, supportive, motivating environment. She possesses a delicate balance of leading with empathy while ensuring key business goals are still met, as shown during three employees’ unexpected long-term absences.

Inside and outside Trane Technologies, Crystal supports the next generation of HVAC professionals. She’s mentored 20 young professionals within the organization alone. Since 2023, Crystal has served on the board of directors for the EGIA Foundation, which focuses on the pipeline of up-and-coming HVAC professionals. To date, the foundation has provided 135 scholarships and \$337,500 in tuition funding across 37 states and 105 schools. Crystal supports STEM programs for underserved communities through her work with the pre-K through 12th grade Wakaboomee Program, and last year, Crystal was named the Wakaboomee Sustainability Honoree. Crystal is also a Girl Scout troop leader and serves in various capacities with her church and local organizations.





HONOREE

Elaine Jackson

Assistant Vice President, Manufacturing Excellence
L'Oréal

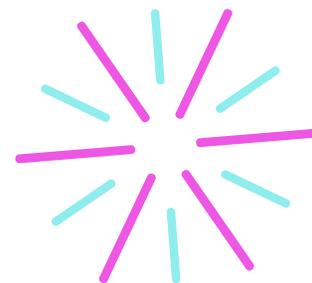
“I am motivated by the development of empathetic leaders. In our technological age, I believe genuine human mentorship is the ultimate catalyst for sustainable growth and change. Standing on the shoulders of my mentors, I am dedicated to paying it forward by equipping leaders who connect, empower and lead with heart.”

Elaine Jackson has made a profound impact on the people and processes at L'Oréal Groupe's North Little Rock facility. Elaine guided her team through two complex changes—KISS and Project Dragonfly—using clear strategic goals, enhancing stakeholder engagement and employing Prosci Change Management principles to ensure factory-wide understanding. The KISS project led to a 99.76% Optimizer Accuracy, significant service improvements, increased key product days of supply and a reduction in mascara department tooling changes from 23 per month to just 13. Finished goods days-of-stock increased from 37 to 57 days, and service recovery efforts reduced production constraints for priority SKUs from 60 to 49 days. At the same time, Project Dragonfly, a catalog-simplification effort, improved the overall service rate from 66.4% in early 2022 to 92% by the end of 2024, effectively closing the pre-COVID service gap.

Results like these cannot be achieved without team buy-in. Elaine empowers her team through a “100% responsibility” model, where team members are empowered to “Own it, Fix it, and Learn from it.” Her highly capable team functions autonomously and effectively, a testament to their dedicated succession-planning efforts. This approach is working on multiple levels, as Elaine's leadership survey scores have improved from 74 in 2022 to 83 in 2024. Working on talent development, Elaine is site lead for the summer intern program, which involves orchestrating recruiting events and learning opportunities while providing direct mentorship.

Elaine seeks opportunities to connect industry and education, sponsoring the STRIVE program to offer local high school STEM teachers practical experience at the North Little Rock facility—an initiative recognized as a best practice by the global operational HR leader and shared company-wide. She organizes Team Trek groups and sponsors the master coaching program, encouraging peer-to-peer learning. Her advocacy for DEI factory initiatives and participation in a factory panel on mental health underscore her dedication to creating a psychologically safe space where every individual feels valued and supported.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Nehali Jain

Vice President, Strategy & Growth
Antora Energy

“I am motivated by solving hard problems alongside exceptional people who care. We are undergoing a massive transformation in the energy sector that requires translating complex engineering into outcomes that matter. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity fuels my commitment to lead with rigor, empathy and long-term perspective.”

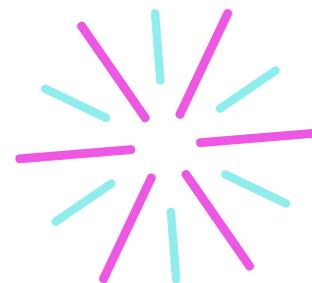
Nehali Jain has been central to bringing Antora Energy’s breakthrough thermal battery technology to American manufacturers and enabling U.S. industry to access low-cost, reliable clean energy. Nehali oversees strategy and growth at Antora, charting a steady path for the rapidly growing company and serving as the bridge between Antora’s engineering, factory operations, commercial and finance teams.

An engineer at heart, Nehali has brought her methodical problem-solving approach to all aspects of Antora’s business, including running a cross-company sprint that helped secure the company’s first project, ramping production 12-fold within one month and managing the company’s AI strategy. Such company-wide initiatives are made possible by her ability to cultivate genuine relationships and respect across the entire 300+ person team. She is part of the executive team at Antora and is one of the two people within Antora to interview every team member before hire, acting as the custodian of the company’s culture and core values.

Nehali’s background enables her to collaborate with both technical and financial stakeholders, facilitating well-informed executive decisions. Accelerated by Nehali’s leadership, Antora has raised more than \$400 million and is now deploying major, privately financed, commercial projects—making American factories more efficient and more competitive.

An emerging leader in the clean energy sector, Nehali has been invited to speak to large audiences, including popular webinars and podcasts like “Hardware to Save a Planet.” She has been featured in the World Economic Forum and New Energy Today magazine and has spoken at events like CERAWEEK. She enjoys coaching business students at schools that include Wharton, Stanford and UC Berkeley, and she mentors women through Women in Climate and Sustainability.





HONOREE

Bonnie Jenkins

Senior Director, EHS & Sustainability
GE Appliances, a Haier company

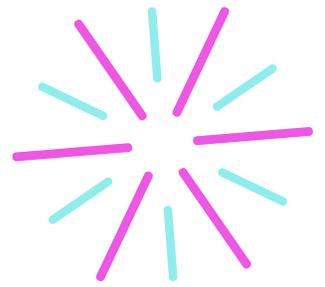
“I hope to inspire the next generation by compassionate leadership and by modeling the principle of never asking others to do what you wouldn’t do yourself. I encourage stepping outside comfort zones, pursuing lateral moves and seizing opportunities, while giving back through volunteering, professional societies and employee resource groups, creating a strong career.”

As senior director of environmental health and safety at GE Appliances, Bonnie Jenkins has reshaped environmental, health, safety and sustainability practices at the company over her remarkable 30-year career. Bonnie’s leadership improved supply chain safety by over 35% in OSHA recordables and over 50% in lost-time injuries over three years; reduced the Decatur, Alabama, Refrigeration Plant’s injury rate by 84%; and enhanced ergonomics programs to reduce repetitive motion injuries by 13%. Bonnie is a staunch advocate for concern reporting, doubling employee reports of near misses and reducing time to resolution. She’s also introduced programs that improved landfill diversion to 86%, increased energy efficiency and advanced appliance recycling and circular product use.

Bonnie has fostered a culture where people feel safe and encouraged to speak up. As ombudsman business compliance leader, Bonnie builds trust by ensuring every concern is heard and resolved fairly, and this commitment to open reporting has transformed company culture. Today, more than 10,000 employees across nine sites feel empowered to speak up when there’s a concern. She leads the People and Culture Council, where she fosters inclusion and belonging, and is a visible champion of the GE Appliances Empowers Women’s Network and Women in Operations. Bonnie believes in the power of mentorship, too, and has helped many professionals achieve director and senior manager positions.

Beyond GE Appliances, Bonnie was an organizer at Dress for Success Kentucky, a volunteer effort that collects professional attire to help women seeking employment. She led a Habitat for Humanity Women’s Build, raising funds and laboring to provide safe housing for families, and she volunteered with a donation drive for families of young women in recovery with Volunteers of America’s Freedom House. Since 2009, Bonnie has served on the University of North Alabama’s Industrial Hygiene Advisory Board, and in 2024, she joined the UNA Foundation Board of Directors. She’s active in Women Influencing Louisville, Women in Industrial Hygiene and Women in Manufacturing, serving on both regional boards and the national board.





HONOREE

Sandy Ibarra Johnson

Director, Culture Enablement
Shaw Industries Group, Inc.

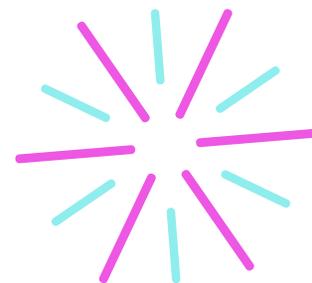
“I hope to inspire the next generation by mentoring emerging leaders, supporting at-risk youth and advocating for families in need. Life’s challenges have taught me that resilience, fueled by hope and faith, can transform the impossible into extraordinary and beautiful realities—often beyond what we dare to dream.”

In her more than 20 years with Shaw Industries Group, Sandy Johnson has empowered others and shaped organizational culture through purpose-driven leadership. One of her crowning achievements as director of culture enablement has been the creation and implementation of Shaw’s Bridge program. Conceived as a means to expand career pathways for associates, the program has, to date, helped more than 40 associates transition into salaried roles across the organization. In a previous role, Sandy founded the HR Business Acumen Team to enhance financial literacy and decision-making insight across human resources, and she launched Shaw Inclusion Teams to foster discussions aimed at cultivating inclusive excellence across all of Shaw’s operations.

Sandy’s method is as simple as it is effective: She aims to make every associate feel supported and empowered to grow through empathy and advocacy. Strategic coaching of first-generation professionals helps employees communicate their distinct stories with leadership and open doors to meaningful career advancement. Mentorship is deeply important to Sandy, and over the course of her career, she has helped more than 50 associates—several of whom have advanced to leadership roles—navigate challenges, build confidence and pursue advancement opportunities. She also launched a company-wide training program to help employees embed inclusive behaviors into daily practice.

A Colombian native, Sandy immigrated to the U.S. through the Georgia Rotary Student Program, ultimately earning her MBA. She is deeply passionate about the power of education. She serves as a mentor to at-risk high school girls in the Dalton Public Schools, meeting with students facing significant personal challenges. She and her husband have opened their home to six foster children, which she describes as one of her family’s most challenging yet rewarding experiences. Sandy secures donations and basic necessities for refugee families in her hometown and serves on the board of Compassion House, an organization that works to help struggling parents and children at risk of separation by state custody as well as improving reunification efforts for those already in foster care.





HONOREE

Shasta Johnson

Maintenance and Reliability Manager
Arkema, Inc.

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing them they are capable of more than they imagine. I want to help individuals identify barriers, map paths forward and believe that anything is possible for themselves, empowering others to create their own opportunities.”

Shasta Johnson, a maintenance and reliability manager, has a track record of improvements at numerous Arkema, Inc., plants. In Houston, she led root-cause investigations to improve steam boiler reliability, resulting in new surveillance measures to control water hardness. While in Birdsboro, Pennsylvania, she developed and implemented the site’s mechanical integrity policy, establishing a framework for equipment compliance. As a production manager in Paulsboro, New Jersey, Shasta enhanced the safe work permitting process and launched the behavior-based safety program, improving hazard recognition.

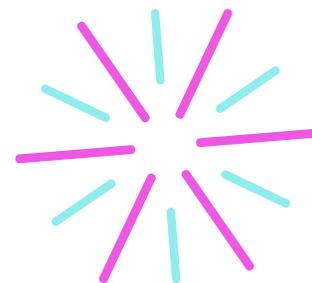
Recently, Shasta worked to increase reliability at Arkema’s JV partner plant. As the company is not the operator of the facility, her success was contingent on convincing the partner’s team members to implement her recommended preventive actions. Under her leadership, they identified problematic pumps in the unit and increased the mean time between failures by an average of 167%. She also participated in an overall assessment of spare parts for the unit by identifying, organizing and executing spare part inventory required for PFA-lined vessels.

Shasta believes anyone can pursue a career in manufacturing and it’s never too late to do so. At her first job as an equipment operator in the mining industry, she marveled at how the sciences came together in the asphalt plant. This motivated her to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering part-time while working full-time. Shasta recently earned a master’s in manufacturing leadership, successfully managing a demanding work and school schedule, well positioning her for success in her new role as maintenance and reliability manager.

Shasta was pivotal in launching and organizing networking events for a Houston-area chapter of Arkema’s E-Team, an engagement initiative for early career engineers. She also participated in the Women in Industry Conference in Galveston, Texas, which introduces manufacturing careers to veterans, women in career transition, underemployed people and students.

Over the last eight years, Shasta has moved to five different manufacturing locations and has made it a priority to always give back to her community. During her time in the Philadelphia area, for example, Shasta volunteered for Habitat for Humanity, helping to upgrade a community center, and for Cradles to Crayons, providing essential items to children in need.





HONOREE

Dawn Krencisz

Global Business Director, Metal Carbide Coatings
Momentive Technologies

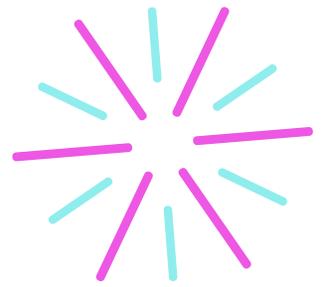
“I hope to inspire the next generation by mentoring and coaching for continuous improvement. We can all strive to continually improve, personally and professionally. By sharing the tools and methods that have brought me success and showing by example how to use those tools to drive continuous improvement, I hope to inspire my family, friends, coworkers and community.”

Throughout her career at Momentive Technologies, Dawn Krencisz has been a transformative leader in advanced ceramics and metal carbide coatings. Dawn’s winning edge is the ability to bridge technical development with commercial strategy. She’s used her technical acumen to open new avenues for growth and position Momentive to meet evolving market demands, evidenced by her early-career development of a high-purity boron nitride solid composite and a water-based coating for high-temperature automotive applications. One of Dawn’s most significant accomplishments was during her tenure as director of Global ADE Ceramics, where she grew the sales pipeline by nearly three times as she led a multidisciplinary engineering team to develop customer-specific solutions.

Dawn leads from a hands-on and people-focused place, fostering a workplace culture grounded in technical excellence, mentorship and continuous improvement, prioritizing the growth of others while driving innovation and operational success. As a Six Sigma Black Belt, she’s trained 13 engineers to certification, and she excels in coaching teams through complex product development cycles in a collaborative and accountable environment. She has led cross-functional teams through high-stakes implementations and mentored engineers in product and process development, and she creates opportunities for others to connect their work to broader business strategies.

Outside of Momentive, Dawn volunteers her time and capabilities to share her own love of STEM with the next generation. She is involved with the NASA Glenn Young Astronaut Day, serving as a team advisor, and volunteered with Girl Scouts of Northeast Ohio’s Girls Initiative to Revitalize the Learning of Science, empowering young girls to explore and embrace scientific inquiry. She was part of one of the first cohorts in Case Western Reserve University’s Leadership Lab for Women in STEM. Dawn also volunteers as a fundraising member of the St. Ignatius High School Marching Band Boosters, as treasurer for the Sts. Joseph and John Parent Teacher Union and as dinner crew and event volunteer for the St. John Neumann Life Teen program.





HONOREE

Deb Krikorian

Chief Financial Officer
Riverdale Mills Corporation

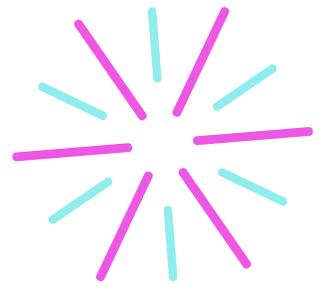
“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with curiosity and integrity, demonstrating that continuous learning and hard work create opportunities. I encourage finding genuine joy in one’s work, as passion drives resilience and innovation. Above all, be true to who you are. Authenticity strengthens your path and those around you.”

As CFO of Riverdale Mills, Deb Krikorian helped guide the small manufacturing company through both the U.S. steel tariffs of 2018 and their abrupt escalation in 2025 with thoughtful, intuitive and unwavering leadership. Riverdale continually purchases thousands of tons of steel to manufacture wire mesh for the marine, security, construction and agriculture industries. Steel rod, which is used in virtually every Riverdale product, represents two-thirds of production costs. Deb helped the company navigate significant cost increases, drawing on her deep expertise in finance and risk management to stabilize the company’s cost structure by leveraging supplier relationships to maintain a reliable, cost-effective steel supply.

Deb’s career was shaped by her rise in finance at a time when female CFOs were few and mentors even fewer, and she works to be the resource and role model she once needed. She champions women at all levels and fosters an environment where everyone feels empowered and essential to the company’s success. She is fiercely dedicated to mentoring rising talent, providing the women around her with the autonomy and tools to thrive in their professional challenges. Deb also has a keen eye for emerging talent and, upon recently noting a numbers-savvy receptionist and human resources assistant, provided guidance and encouragement as she pursued and secured a purchasing associate role.

Based on a belief that strong businesses build strong communities, Deb has championed the company’s long-standing partnerships with local educational institutions and workforce-development programs to expand access to manufacturing careers for underrepresented populations. Deb’s leadership was also central to Riverdale receiving the John McArthur Community Commerce Innovation Award from the Venly Institute, recognizing the company as a national model for community-driven workforce development.





HONOREE

Tonya Kuhl

Engineering Associate Director
Zimmer Biomet

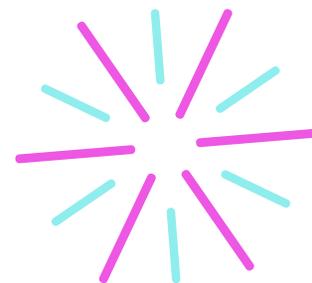
“I hope to inspire the next generation by providing intentional development and guided opportunities through mentorships and by maintaining a culture that builds confidence, sharpens technical skills and ignites continuous personal and professional growth.”

For almost 30 years, Tonya Kuhl has brought her technical excellence, strategic leadership and commitment to people development to aerospace and medical device industries. While she’s led numerous process improvement initiatives, launched several new products and earned her Six Sigma Black Belt, her most significant contribution is the culture she has built at Zimmer Biomet. Now engineering associate director, Tonya has shaped a workplace where excellence is expected and future talent is built with intention.

Believing that investing in individuals leads to long-term organizational success, Tonya leads by example, mentoring junior engineers, emerging leaders and peers with equal dedication. For the past five years, Tonya has served as champion for the Engineering Internship Program. She’s given life to this program, with applicant numbers growing from just 50 to more than 400. Her efforts have elevated the program’s visibility from local to national, strengthened its structure and ensured that interns receive meaningful experiences that prepare them for future roles within the organization and beyond. Under Tonya’s leadership, teams not only meet performance goals, they also grow in capability, confidence and collaboration.

Carrying forth her dedication to education, mentorship and service, Tonya volunteers with the local high school’s Regional Advanced Manufacturing Pathway, where she teaches classes on materials and processes used in medical device manufacturing. She also conducts mock interviews to help students build confidence and prepare for professional opportunities. Tonya extends her mentorship to apprenticeship candidates through the Indiana Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education program, helping connect education and industry. Through company-sponsored community give-back initiatives, Tonya contributes to fundraising efforts for the local food bank and Habitat for Humanity and recently took part in a local Women Build event. Her dedication to service reflects a desire to inspire others and create lasting impact in her personal and professional lives.





HONOREE

Savannah Kunes

Senior Plant Manager
Land O' Lakes

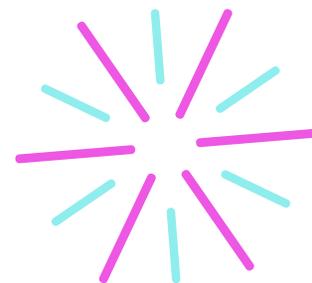
“I am motivated by serving others—helping people realize their potential—and by producing safe, high-quality products for our member owners and farmers. I’m passionate about leading and developing teams to solve operational problems. My goal is to make our plant the safest, best workplace locally and strengthen Land O’Lakes overall every day.”

Savannah’s career path was charted early in life, starting with her childhood on a dairy farm and her early days of showing Brown Swiss cattle in 4-H. It can’t be a surprise that she carried that passion forward into a career in agriculture, today as plant manager for the Land O’Lakes Black River Falls, Wisconsin, facility. Since stepping into this role in 2021, Savannah has redefined what operational excellence and employee engagement look like. Perhaps most striking was the implementation of a four-day, 10-hour workweek. Savannah and her leadership team prioritized understanding employee needs and aspirations and developed the new schedule to enhance work-life balance as well as improve plant performance. The facility has achieved its lowest overtime rates in 25 years and a very competitive cost per ton. It’s been recognized multiple times for its exceptional cleanliness and positive workplace culture, too.

This innovative thinking and people-first mindset have earned Savannah great respect and nominations to participate in high-impact projects within the Animal Nutrition division. Savannah has played a key role in initiatives like Pay for Skills and Courage to Care, which promote skill development and a culture of empathy and accountability. In her leadership of the company-wide Reverse Mentorship Program, which connects more than 300 participants from new hires to executive leaders, she reinforces the idea that insight, innovation and relevance often come from emerging leaders.

A true educator and advocate, Savannah was named the 2014 Wisconsin Brown Swiss Queen. After graduating from the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Leadership Institute in 2019, Savannah traveled to Washington, D.C., to advocate for agricultural policy. That same year, she co-hosted Christmas on the Farm with the Jackson County Farm Bureau, connecting families to agriculture. From 2020 to 2023, she served on the State Young Farmer and Agriculturist Committee, chairing it in 2023 and earning a seat on the Wisconsin Farm Bureau State Board of Directors. She also serves as the dairy superintendent for her county fair, coordinating youth and livestock activities and enhancing the fair experience for upcoming leaders in agriculture.





HONOREE

Tanya Lance

Materials & Inventory Manager
Special Products & Mfg., Inc.

“I am motivated by continuous learning and personal growth, contributing meaningfully to my team and solving problems that fuel individual and organizational success. I strive to honor God and my family in all I do, using curiosity, discipline and collaboration to create lasting value for myself, my company and others.”

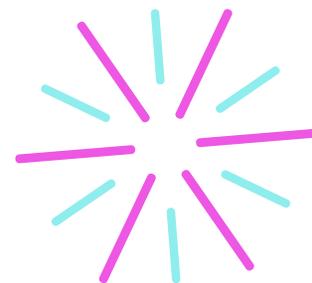
Versatility is just one impressive attribute Tanya Lance has brought to her career at Special Products & Mfg., Inc. Serving in a range of positions from human resources manager to her current materials manager role, Tanya has the ability to adapt and lead across roles to elevate everyone around her.

Tasked with spearheading the onboarding of SPM’s new enterprise resource planning system, PLEX—while navigating pregnancy—Tanya’s team-centric nature was put on display. She created opportunities for individuals across the organization to become part of the PLEX team, developing them into power users who would go on to train and support others. This intentional trickle-down effect ensured communication and training were consistent, effective and inclusive across the entire company.

During her time as HR manager, Tanya shaped workplace culture by working closely with managers and supervisors at all levels to develop personalized growth plans for employees. She dug into SPM’s BUILT values, where people feel seen, supported and inspired to grow. In her current role as materials manager, as well as a member of the leadership team, Tanya oversees supplier relations, procurement and inventory management, leading the organization toward efficiency and reliability in the supply chain.

Tanya’s experience and enthusiasm extend SPM’s impact beyond its walls. As a member of the BUILT TO SERVE team, Tanya supports local organizations, such as the Women’s Advocacy Center, and participates in food drives and numerous other charitable events throughout the year. She takes an active role in Manufacturing Day, where she leads facility tours for high school and college students, sharing her knowledge, enthusiasm and real-world experience to inspire the next generation. Her ability to connect with students and spark excitement about manufacturing technology has encouraged many to consider careers in the industry.





HONOREE

Rosalina Larragoiti Ochoa

Senior Manager, Warehouse and Systems Strategy
Lucid Motors

“I am motivated by personal and professional growth through learning, hard work and perseverance. Manufacturing is not an easy field, especially for women and even more for women who are immigrants. My greatest source of inspiration comes from my husband and daughters. Everything I do, I do with them in mind.”

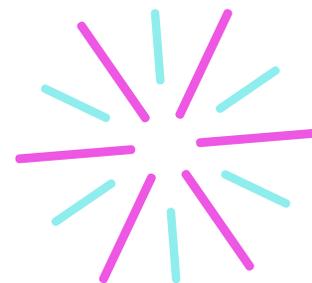
Referring to Rosalina Larragoiti as a “committed advocate” for women in manufacturing falls short of the lengths she’s gone to make a place for women in these fields internationally. At Ford Motor Company’s Irapuato, Mexico, transmission plant, Rosalina was the first woman production team manager and helped launch a groundbreaking initiative for the first transmissions built entirely by Mexican women. The program produced 20 fault-free transmissions after 12 months in service, symbolizing both technical excellence and gender equity in manufacturing. Rosalina was also chosen to lead the Women in Manufacturing Committee for the facility and then to lead Mexico’s national committee. Her commitment to supporting women here extended to mentorship, as she mentored 16 production supervisors, guiding each to earn Six Sigma certifications within one year.

Now senior manager of warehouse strategy and systems for Lucid Motors, Rosalina brings this same leadership and technical excellence. In less than five years, Rosalina led the design and launch of a new Logistics Operations Center and two 511,000-plus-square-foot warehouse facilities, oversaw the previous Logistics Operations Center during the ramp-up of Lucid Air (managing more than 800 employees across multiple Phoenix-area sites) and transitioned operations from two third-party logistics providers to full in-house control, which reduced lead times by over 20% and significantly improved on-time material delivery to the line.

Rosalina continues her active mentorship for early-career professionals and women in operations. She has also spoken at international industry conferences in Chile and Colombia, inspiring young professionals. She continues this outreach at Lucid through employee resource group initiatives that promote Latin and Hispanic representation and cross-cultural connection. For fun and team building across departments, Rosalina founded a company soccer team composed of 50% women.

While living in Irapuato, Rosalina volunteered with local high schools, partnered with a regional workforce-readiness nonprofit to host career workshops and helped launch mentorship programs encouraging young women to pursue engineering and manufacturing careers. As a working mother of two daughters, Rosalina demonstrates that women can excel in leadership, and she inspires others to do the same.





HONOREE

Marietta Lee

President and Chief Executive Officer
The Lee Company

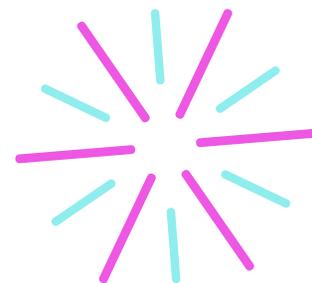
“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with vulnerability.”

Marietta Lee is the president and CEO of the Lee Company, which, with 1,500 employees, stands as the largest family-owned advanced manufacturing business in the U.S. The Lee Company is one of the world’s only businesses to manufacture miniature precision fluid controls for the aerospace, automotive and medical industries, operating on five continents with flow controls that are critical to both the NASA space program and leading global defense contractors. In her leadership role, Marietta drives innovation across the state, the country and the industry, attracting and retaining a highly skilled workforce via a multifaceted approach that includes 100% paid health insurance and profit sharing at all levels, cutting-edge training and education opportunities and strategic growth into new and emerging markets.

Marietta first joined her family’s company in 2001, leaving a career as reporter for CBS News and Court TV. She quickly learned that leading with authenticity rather than tradition was the best path forward for her and the company. She established the Ladies of Lee, an internal group dedicated to advancing women’s professional development in operational, managerial and leadership positions within both the company and the manufacturing industry. The group fosters mentorship, promotes workplace flexibility for women and builds meaningful relationships beyond the workplace. Marietta became CEO in 2023 and today, as a result of her efforts, the Lee Company has more women in leadership roles than ever before and continues to grow in this area.

She has served on the board of directors of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association since 2018, currently as board chair, representing approximately 3,000 members across all industry sectors. In this role, Marietta tackles critical statewide workforce issues, such as affordable housing, childcare, job training and family medical leave. She also works with state leaders to help secure funding for ways to attract and retain talent in Connecticut. Under her guidance, CBIA established the CBIA Foundation, and she is a strong advocate for the foundation’s Coolest Thing Made in Connecticut competition and Manufacturing Tour.





HONOREE

Mary Leslie

Director, Operations
The Hershey Company

“I hope to inspire the next generation by creating a culture where people feel valued, capable, confident and inspired to grow—because leadership is a privilege that can change the trajectory of someone’s life.”

From working in distribution to director-level leadership, Mary Leslie’s humility, humor and accountability have served her and her team at The Hershey Company well. Sometimes this looks like making a tough call, sometimes it’s like leading transformation and sometimes, it’s even like dressing up for Pretzel Day.

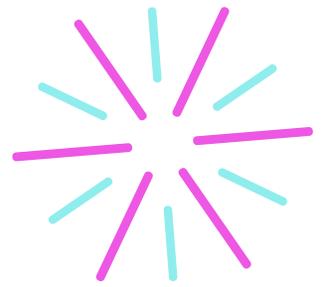
Mary began her manufacturing career in 2000, after eight years in distribution. While working full-time and attending college at night, she took a class taught by an HR manager from a food-manufacturing company who recognized Mary’s potential, mentored her and helped her transition into an overnight packaging supervisor role. Since then, Mary has worked a variety of roles, up to her current director of operations position, across meat, poultry, cookies, crackers, frozen doughs and gourmet pretzels operations.

Mary has been called the “heart and soul” of Hershey’s Salty Snacks Kansas Hub, having overseen four plants through major changes. In 2024, one of her plants was named RedZone Plant of the Year, recognizing her operational excellence and leadership. In 2023, Mary led the SAP S4 Hana deployment across all sites and took on leadership of the Lawrence plant, while navigating the closure of the Velva plant and shift reductions at Goodyear—maintaining customer service and morale throughout. In 2022, she guided the team through Hershey’s acquisition of Dot’s Pretzels, managing transitions in HR, IT and operations.

Mary is known as someone who will take the time to connect on a personal level—remembering names, stories and what matters most to each person. Her humor lightens tense moments and helps others move forward with grace and perspective.

In the community, Mary is involved in several organizations. She’s former president of Rotary International and has been named a Paul Harris Fellow, recognized for her service and leadership. She’s former president of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign War Post 6654 and still volunteers with landscaping and events. And for the Military & Family Readiness Group, Mary prepares breakfast for soldiers during drill weekends, organizes family days and provides support during deployment.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Emily Litt

Director, Product Development
Dragonfly Energy

“I hope to inspire the next generation by demonstrating that curiosity, persistence and thoughtful design can turn complex challenges into sustainable, real-world solutions that make a lasting difference.”

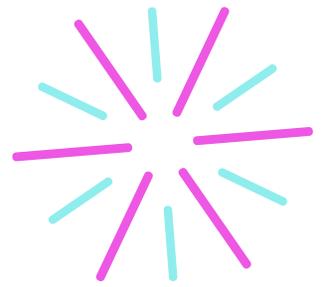
Emily Litt started as Dragonfly Energy’s first intern, and her success story mirrors the growth of the clean energy field in Nevada and nationwide. Her early days in the research and development laboratory gave her the opportunity to work on many projects from the ground up. While serving as director of R&D, Emily led the team that successfully dry-deposited lithium-ion cathode electrodes at scale, enabling commercial production. This breakthrough reduces the carbon footprint and helps eliminate the forever chemical PFAS affiliated with the battery-manufacturing process.

Last year, Emily was named the director of product development—a new position created following her successful performance growing the R&D laboratory. Emily is leading innovations to build a domestic battery supply chain and ensure greater energy independence for the United States as the world transitions to a clean energy future.

Emily’s internship experience served as an inspiration as her career path developed, and she has remained committed to supporting new interns. By regularly volunteering at the University of Nevada-Reno, Emily guest lectures and provides lab tours to prepare students for their careers. Thanks to Emily’s focus on providing a structured development and feedback process, many interns have achieved great accomplishments, such as publishing white papers, being invited to speak at industry conferences and leading award-winning projects. Emily is especially proud of helping to nurture young women who are starting their careers.

Alongside this outreach, what began as a way for Emily to cover expenses in college has grown into a meaningful way to help others. After training and becoming certified in laser tattoo removal, she now volunteers with the nonprofit Awaken, where she removes tattoos that serve as painful reminders of abuse for women who have survived domestic violence.





HONOREE

Nicole Lopez

Director, Global Sustainability Reporting & Insurance Risk
O-I Glass, Inc.

“I hope to inspire the next generation by modeling courage, kindness and curiosity, and by creating environments where all people feel supported to grow and be confident in their own strengths. Leadership can take many forms, and I want others to know they can lead boldly in the way that feels true to them.”

Nicole Lopez is the director of global sustainability reporting and insurance risk at O-I Glass, where she has built a career defined by growth, integrity and a commitment to advancing the company’s mission and the communities it touches. Over more than 20 years with O-I, she has contributed across several of the organization’s most influential functions, starting in legal, and then moving to sustainability, social engagement and insurance, consistently demonstrating strategic leadership, operational discipline and people-centered values.

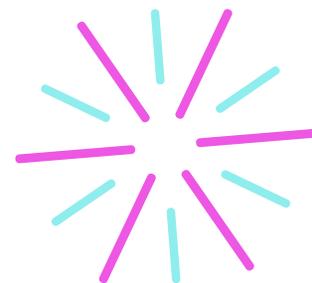
As director of O-I’s global sustainability reporting and insurance risk, Nicole supports the organization in navigating an increasingly complex regulatory and risk landscape. Her work requires close collaboration across geographies, cultures and disciplines. Nicole’s work extends from the shop floor to O-I’s offices worldwide. She has led cross-functional teams through preparations for global reporting requirements, creating space for learning, open dialogue and inclusivity. Her work continues to equip the business and operations to remain competitive and maintain strong compliance and operational readiness. Nicole’s leadership connects the global network and empowers ownership and collaboration.

Nicole’s experience also includes leading O-I’s social engagement initiatives, where she supported volunteer programs and community partnerships aligned with the company’s values. Through this work, she contributed to employee engagement and O-I’s broader social responsibility efforts. Her involvement with environmental and essential-needs organizations reflects a long-standing interest in community support and sustainability.

This focus on connection and inclusion has also shaped her work within O-I, including her role as co-founder and co-leader of the Global Women’s Engagement Network. She has played a pivotal role in shaping GWEN into a dynamic platform for connection, mentorship and cultural progress. Through thoughtful programming, partnership with senior leaders and commitment to elevating diverse voices, Nicole has helped create an environment where women feel supported, valued and encouraged to lead. GWEN has become an influential part of O-I’s culture, and her leadership has been central to its impact.

Throughout her career, Nicole has demonstrated purpose-driven leadership, continuous improvement and a consistent commitment to helping people and teams thrive. Her work reflects both her professional expertise and her belief in building communities, inside and outside the organization, where individuals feel seen, supported and confident in their voice. Guided by the purpose of reflecting back the strength she sees in others, Nicole creates space for growth and contribution, leading in a way that encourages people, especially women, to trust their own path and elevate those around them.





HONOREE

Kim Lunceford

Vice President, Enterprise Transformation
Monogram Food Solutions

“I hope to inspire the next generation by modeling curiosity, courage and collaboration. By sharing my journey and investing in others, I aim to spark confidence that they can lead, innovate and transform the future of manufacturing.”

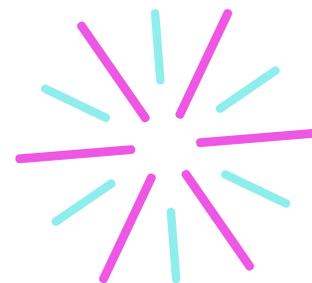
As vice president of Customer Supply Chain and Logistics at Monogram Foods, Kim Lunceford orchestrated a critical turnaround for a newly launched facility suffering from severe operational dysfunction. The plant had six-hour-plus truck-loading times, poor inventory accuracy and the resulting negative public customer reviews you might expect from issues like these. Kim streamlined warehouse workflows, implemented real-time inventory-tracking systems and retrained frontline teams on service standards. Her decisive leadership yielded immediate results: truck-loading times dropped by over 70% within weeks, inventory discrepancies decreased significantly and customer satisfaction improved.

Throughout her career in manufacturing and supply chain strategy, Kim has embodied a leadership style that is both results-driven and people-centered, where employees feel proud of their contributions. As the beneficiary of incredible mentorship, Kim has committed herself to paying it forward as an approachable and trusted advisor. She is sought out by colleagues across all levels for guidance and strategic feedback. As the executive sponsor for the company’s first Black Inclusion Group, Kim has ensured Monogram BIG is an engine for connection and development. She uses the platform to strategically share business updates with members and issue clear calls to action, directly illustrating how the members’ daily work impacts the company’s success. This approach has made the group a community partner and a strategic partner, fostering a strong sense of belonging and business acumen.

Kim’s dedication to her community’s well-being is demonstrated through meaningful, long-term volunteer commitments. For the past four years, she has been a horse leader and sidewalker with the Mid-South Therapeutic Riding Center to provide physical and emotional support to children and adults with disabilities. Through New Memphis Leadership Initiatives, she serves as a mentor to both students and mid-career professionals.

Kim believes manufacturing excellence is not just about metrics, but about building resilient teams, developing others and creating a culture where everyone can thrive. She serves the community in that spirit as well.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Soukaina Makni

Manager, Quality
Kohler Co.

“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading through example, sharing knowledge and promoting continuous improvement. Empowering others, especially young women, motivates me to create a positive impact, encourage confidence and support future talents in achieving their goals and shaping a stronger, more inclusive future.”

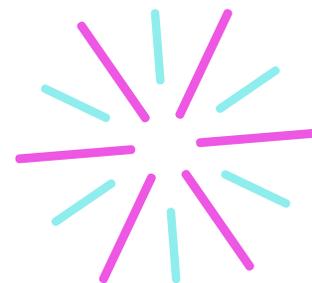
Soukaina Makni brings to the manufacturing industry an extraordinary work ethic with innate talent that extends far beyond her formal responsibilities at Kohler Co. As manager of operations, quality and Kohler Operating System and Method, Soukaina is the only female manager at the Tangier plant. Her ability to assess situations objectively, propose practical solutions and maintain harmonious relationships across teams is exceptional.

When Soukaina joined Kohler as an engineering intern 11 years ago, Kohler’s Jacob Delafon brand faced challenges to its reputation prompted by product failures and elevated warranty costs. Soukaina went to work transforming the organization’s quality systems and internal processes, achieving the lowest levels of failures and warranty costs ever recorded by Jacob Delafon—an 80% decrease. While enhancing operational performance, Soukaina fundamentally transformed Jacob Delafon’s reputation in the marketplace, making the organization a benchmark for quality and customer satisfaction. She is quick to attribute this success to collective effort, fostering a culture of accountability, collaboration and pride in achievement.

Soukaina is a member of the Tangier Plant Leadership Team and Vitreous Operations Council, where she contributes insights and solutions that enhance overall plant performance. She balances empathy with high performance expectations, continuously striving to develop both herself and her team. Through the on-site university training program, she engages students quickly, mentoring, educating and challenging them to prepare for future careers. Feedback from students consistently highlights their appreciation for her guidance and energy.

With a toddler at home, Soukaina contributes to Kohler Stewardship initiatives and supports nursery events whenever possible, demonstrating commitment to community engagement and modeling the importance of giving back.





HONOREE

Nicole Malson

Owner and President
STRYKER

“I am motivated by building a solid and respected business—and by knowing that the systems I create actually work for real people under real pressure.”

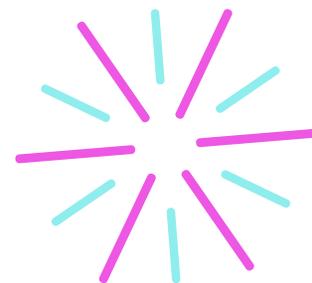
As owner and president of STRYKER, Nicole Malson has led a successful transformation of a company with deep roots and a long-standing reputation. After purchasing the business, she completed a full rebrand one year later, evolving Industrial Nameplate, Inc. into STRYKER. In 2025, STRYKER celebrates 65 years in business, including four years under its current name—marking both continuity and progress.

More than a change in name, the rebrand signaled a move into a more modern, resilient era. Nicole led the implementation of the organization’s first enterprise resource planning system in 2020 and introduced comprehensive training programs designed to empower employees at every level. She also directed cybersecurity initiatives to prepare STRYKER for future Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification, ensuring the company remains a trusted partner to the U.S. defense industrial base. Throughout this evolution, Nicole has balanced innovation and compliance with a people-first leadership approach, strengthening the company while honoring the foundation on which it was built.

Nicole leads STRYKER with a strong focus on workplace culture, shaped by her own career path from the shop floor to the president’s office. This experience drives her deep respect for the contributions of every employee. She personally championed the rollout of new software systems, working alongside team members during training to ensure they had the tools, confidence and support needed to succeed. Recognizing that the company’s long-term success is powered by its people, Nicole also fosters morale and connection through team-building activities such as chili cook-offs, taco truck lunches and axe-throwing outings.

Beyond STRYKER, Nicole is actively involved in the manufacturing community. She serves on the board of the Northeast Wisconsin Manufacturing Alliance, collaborating with educators, workforce development groups and state organizations to strengthen the regional talent pipeline. A founding member and past vice president of the Northern Wisconsin chapter of Women in Manufacturing, she is a strong advocate for women entering the industry, sharing her own career path as an example of what’s possible. Nicole also participates in the executive coaching organization Vistage, where she exchanges ideas and best practices with peers to continuously improve her organization and leadership.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Leslie Mathis

Logistics Systems Manager
ABB

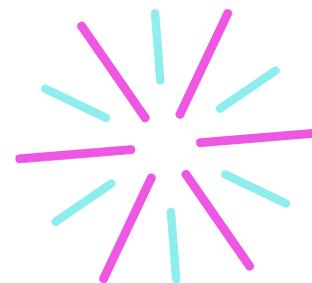
“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that collaboration and continuous learning turn challenges into opportunities. Together, we can innovate, grow and build a future that reflects strength, progress and possibility.”

Before Leslie Mathis joined ABB, the organization relied on outdated and inefficient data processing methods that caused delays and inaccuracies. One of Leslie’s most impactful achievements has been leadership in implementing and optimizing the Power BI and Power Automate platforms. With these upgrades, both data and operations have been revolutionized. Leslie introduced Power BI to create dynamic dashboards and real-time data visualizations, allowing the team to generate comprehensive reports and insights swiftly, leading to more-informed business decisions. When she brought Power Automate online, repetitive tasks and processes were streamlined, reducing manual effort and human error and freeing up valuable time for employees to focus on more strategic activities. Leslie’s innovation has made a lasting impact, setting a new standard for operational excellence.

Outside of ABB’s walls, Leslie recognized a gap in industry-specific support and career development and set out to establish the nonprofit Arkansas Manufacturing Professionals. The nonprofit provides targeted training programs and workshops to equip aspiring professionals with practical skills and knowledge, as well as mentorship programs that connect experienced professionals with newcomers, fostering valuable industry connections and guidance. Most tangibly, the annual AMP manufacturing banquet attracts hundreds of students, job seekers and industry leaders to showcase career opportunities while highlighting the importance of manufacturing as vital to the local economy. Leslie’s leadership in founding and growing AMP has helped to shape a robust, future-ready workforce and reinforced the community’s commitment to the manufacturing industry.

Leslie’s dedication to shaping leaders in manufacturing continues with her development and continued involvement in the Young Professionals Committee and the Professional Women’s Organization at ABB. Leslie’s efforts organizing workshops, providing one-on-one mentorship and leading career development programs have significantly strengthened the pipeline of skilled professionals and fostered a supportive network for women. Leslie has not only fostered the growth of young professionals but also strengthened the representation and success of women in her industry.





HONOREE

Catherine Matthews

Project Engineer
BAE Systems

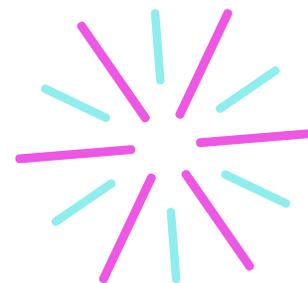
“I am motivated by the people I work with and the missions I support. Being able to provide key manufacturing direction and decisions to enable the success of complex missions is incredibly rewarding and important to me.”

While she’s still early in her career, Catherine Matthews has made her mark at BAE Systems, Inc., particularly on NASA’s Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope. As the lead manufacturing engineer for the element wheel filter assemblies—complex and mission-critical components—Cat demonstrated innovation, precision and leadership far beyond her years of experience. Cat jumped in midstream to take ownership of the manufacturing processes, navigating a first-of-its-kind optical bonding technique involving dime-sized components, among other complexities. Notably, the element wheel assembly was delivered on time, and Cat’s contributions were personally commended by the customer. When a critical update was required to the optical assemblies, Cat was specifically requested to lead the invasive hardware modification based on her proven performance and technical credibility.

Cat’s industry expertise is paired with a deep sense of responsibility to her team. For her manufacturing team of seven, she prioritizes breaking down complex projects, mitigating risks early and fostering a culture of transparency and mutual support. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Cat trained 10 new employees, many of whom still seek her guidance today. During her participation in BAE Systems’ highly competitive internal emerging leaders training program, Cat developed a knowledge-sharing system focused on operational excellence and documentation, and this program has been adopted department-wide.

In addition to being a trusted mentor for new employees at BAE Systems, Cat practices her practical, empathetic mentorship for emerging STEM professionals. As a mentor in The Sisters Program, she supports female students at the University of Colorado Boulder who are navigating STEM careers. As a member of the University of Alabama alumni board, Cat played a strategic role in shaping the school’s five-year dual degree program in mechanical engineering and business administration. Drawing from her own professional experience, she advocated for real-world-ready curriculum updates, including new courses in behavioral management, project management and technical financial management.





HONOREE

Kristina Mauger

787 Operations Senior Director

The Boeing Company

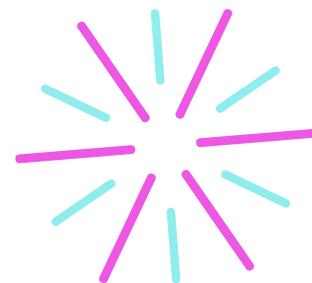
“I hope to inspire the next generation by modeling what they can do and encouraging them not to limit themselves; unlocking opportunities for others and coaching along the way so they never feel alone as they navigate their paths.”

In The Boeing Company’s operations senior director role and in previous roles, Kristina Mauger has proven herself to be a keen developer of leaders, helping high-performing employees pursue leadership positions. She is quick to make learning opportunities available to individuals internal to her organization and to external first lines and senior managers looking to grow their skill set and expand their networks. This is evident in her leadership of the cross-functional team that commissioned Quadbot, a first-of-its-kind technology at Boeing that has been studied and replicated across the company due to its resounding success.

Kristina employs engagement and inclusivity in her leadership, building her team from professionals working across the industry. She influences the culture of her team to align, operate with a common vision and support one another during challenges. This unified environment has led to improvement on processes and engineering requirements that harvest stability, increase capacity, drive cost avoidance and mitigate disruption as the team supports production rates. Kristina coaches and mentors her leaders in both career goals and personal aspirations, and she consistently advocates for the growth and success of women, currently serving as the executive champion for Women in Manufacturing for the Boeing South Carolina site, which was launched in April 2025.

This commitment to personal success extends beyond Boeing, too. Kristina is a board member of the Children’s Museum of the Lowcountry, where she has helped create innovative learning experiences that equip and inspire children to become creative problem-solvers. She’s also supported its satellite location in Georgetown, South Carolina, which was launched in 2024 to extend the museum’s summer camps and daily enrichment to children in underserved communities. And as the Boeing ambassador for Trident Technical College, Kristina supports procurement of test equipment, curriculum development and funding approval through scholarships for students entering the educational institution.





◆ CHAMPION

Megan McKay

Global Human Resources Manager
Arconic

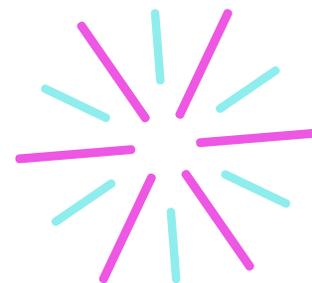
“I hope to inspire the next generation by approaching challenges with empathy and compassion and taking and pursuing solutions with meaningful impact. We are stronger when we work together to lift each other up.”

Maintaining that people are the company’s biggest asset, Megan McKay is a consistent face of supportive leadership for Arconic’s employees. As human resources director, Megan has navigated significant change and increasing responsibilities with grace. When the company separated to create a new business entity, she onboarded new executive leaders and ensured everyone was put into the position that best suited their skill set.

Always looking for ways to advance Arconic’s workforce, Megan collaborated with business leaders to develop tailored training workshops on various topics, from finance to quality. She assembled a team of internal trainers to provide education at sites across the U.S., Canada and Europe. Having launched in 2023, the program is now in Phase 3 and has a nearly 100% positive rating. In her effort to champion employee resource groups and networking opportunities, Megan became a steering committee member for Arconic’s Women’s Network, which was then combined into an Inclusion & Engagement Committee. She campaigned to have committee funds built into the business unit’s budget so every location has equal opportunities. Separately, Megan established Talent Spotlight sessions to give employees at all levels the voice and platform to present themselves to the Business Unit leadership team, and 40 employees participated last year alone.

Perhaps most impactful for her community, Megan was inspired to form her own nonprofit. While organizing 20 Arconic lead team members to volunteer at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank during a leadership training, Megan discovered some personal hygiene products were not covered under government-assistance programs. Immediately following this event, she solicited donations from family and friends to make personal hygiene care packages for women and girls in need. With a positive response from her community, Megan put together more than 200 care packages in six months. This led her to establish the Empower and Elevate PGH Women nonprofit in July 2025 so no woman should have to miss school or work because she lacked access to basic needs, nor should any woman have to make the tough choice between having food, clothing and shelter over sanitary products. This is another example of how Megan consistently shows up with collaboration and allyship.





HONOREE

Angela Mire

Engineering Manager II
Ecolab

“I am motivated by opportunities to foster both personal and career development—particularly for my team and my peers. Mentoring engineers early in their career is especially rewarding, as it allows me to share my experiences, empower others to grow and contribute to the next generation of talent in our field.”

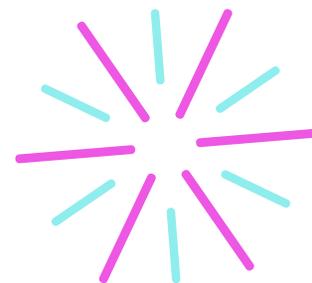
To say Angela Mire’s time as engineering manager at Ecolab’s largest process safety regulated plant has been “above average” would be an understatement. Angela led a complex capital project where she applied value engineering to reduce the initial investment cost from \$12 million to \$7 million. Her leadership has resulted in a threefold increase in capital project approvals and execution, with monthly spend accuracy consistently between 98% and 102%.

Angela’s reliability team was the first in Nalco Water’s supply chain to achieve Bronze Planned Maintenance Pillar certification. They improved operating efficiency from 69% to 72% while maintaining overtime below 5%. Their feedback speaks volumes about Angela’s leadership: 96% engagement, 89% retention and 100% inclusion. Angela took her capital project team from a sidelined, reactive group into a proactive, solution-oriented force.

Angela has reenergized employee engagement and created a more inclusive environment. In 2024, she joined two employee resource groups—E3 Women’s Network and PLAN—where she actively mentors interns and evaluates talent for hiring. She organized and mentored Garyville’s large summer intern class, ensuring meaningful development experiences. Angela also leads the site’s engagement and inclusion team, revitalizing the group and launching impactful initiatives, such as the Gramercy Elementary Student of the Year selection panel and cultural awareness programs.

Angela’s outreach extends into the broader Baton Rouge area, where she advocates for women in industry through professional associations and events. She led a team from Ecolab in the Greater Baton Rouge Industry Alliance’s Women in Industry event, which involved mentoring and promoting STEM careers for more than 200 high school students. Angela brought three female plant leaders with her, modeling collaboration and inspiring the next generation of talent. She is a member of local chapters of the Society of Women Engineers and Project Management Institute, mentors interns and leadership candidates and supports organizations such as the LSU Foundation, St. John United Way, St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital and Healing Place Church. Most recently, she joined the Parent-Teacher Organization at Galvez Primary School.





HONOREE

Caitlin Moffitt

Senior Director, Operational Excellence
Altria

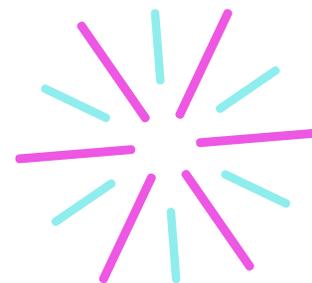
“I am motivated by driving transformation—the transformation of materials into finished goods, the transformation of a complex problem into an effective solution and, most of all, the transformation of women just entering the manufacturing field into confident leaders and strong colleagues.”

Since beginning her career at Altria in 2010, Caitlin Moffitt has progressed through various roles in engineering, manufacturing and operations, all while creating an environment where individuals can be authentic and deliver their best work. When she was senior manager of manufacturing, Caitlin spearheaded a manufacturing scale-up at Altria’s US Smokeless Tobacco Company Richmond facility, supported an FDA application and led a premarket inspection for a new product platform. Commercial production expanded tenfold (in less than five years), with five manufacturing lines installed across two bays. In her role as director and senior director of operations, Caitlin implemented the Integrated Work Systems methodology at USSTC Richmond, which resulted in a 40% increase in average production output and a 30% reduction in standard variable costs. Caitlin’s leadership style drove a significant cultural transformation within the operation that was instrumental in USSTC Richmond becoming the first Altria manufacturing operation to attain IWS Phase 1 Qualification and delivering \$18 million in cost savings through these new operational practices. After leading a manufacturing organization, she has now moved into a role leading an operational excellence team focused on deploying strategies, standards and best practices across Altria’s manufacturing sites.

Caitlin is quick to affirm people’s worth and value, making her an exceptional mentor and leader. She has led Altria’s Engineering Leadership Development Program, where she fostered the growth of young engineers. In addition, she has consistently advocated for the development of the hourly workforce, leading to the creation of numerous progression and development opportunities and emphasizing career-building over mere job-holding. Her commitment to gender equality is evident in her support for the Women in Manufacturing employee resource group. Caitlin continually welcomes new mentees through both Altria’s career development programs and organically formed relationships.

As an active member of her church community, Caitlin is dedicated to numerous initiatives, such as helping refugee children adapt to life in America, welcoming church newcomers with the Hospitality Team and serving on the Benevolence Team, where she has met with members of the Richmond community in times of crisis to determine whether resources, financial or otherwise, can be provided. Currently, Caitlin contributes her leadership skills to the women’s ministry.





HONOREE

Misty Montgomery

Human Resources Employee Services Advisor
ExxonMobil

“I am motivated by my faith and the belief that true leadership is found in serving others well.”

Within ExxonMobil Global Operations, Misty Montgomery has built a distinguished track record of measurable impact and thoughtful, people centered leadership. She leads with courage and authenticity, challenging bias, fostering open dialogue and creating clarity across all levels of the organization. Through the design, implementation and facilitation of numerous training initiatives, Misty has expanded access to leadership development opportunities for emerging talent—accelerating growth, confidence and capability in the next generation of leaders.

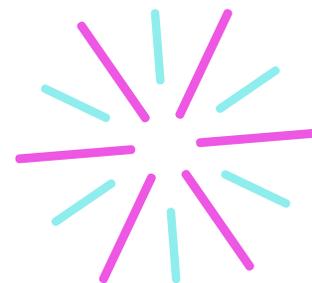
Misty has held multiple leadership roles at ExxonMobil, including people development manager, employee services advisor and training supervisor, and she consistently establishes practices that strengthen alignment and elevate workforce performance. Her initiatives have set standards for excellence, driving a 179% increase in employee competency, delivering a unified development planning system for 430 frontline supervisors and facilitating targeted training courses that strengthen leaders in the people-development space. Collectively, these efforts significantly enhanced skill development, operational discipline and long-term organizational readiness.

Misty leads by empowering others with both responsibility and support. She creates environments where individuals are trusted to take ownership of their work while being equipped with the tools and guidance needed to succeed. When faced with complex challenges, she remains solutions focused, resilient and deeply committed to developing people.

Beyond the workplace, Misty’s leadership is grounded in service and compassion. She has personally delivered more than 40 meals to senior citizens through Meals on Wheels and brought hope to children of incarcerated parents through the Angel Tree Prison Fellowship. She supports a Girl Scout troop of 20 girls, ages 8 to 12, helping them build confidence, character and leadership skills. Within her faith community at Triumph Church and the Royally Redeemed Women’s Christian Ministry, Misty leads women’s small groups and advocates for healing, purpose and resilience.

Misty’s influence is reflected not only in measurable results, but also in the lives she shapes, the teams she empowers and the communities she serves.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Brooklyn Mussman

Continuous Improvement Manager
The Lubrizol Corporation

“I am motivated by the energy that emerges when people come together to solve hard problems and stretch their capabilities. Seeing individuals grow, build confidence and realize what they’re capable of pushes me to keep learning, improving and creating environments where meaningful progress happens.”

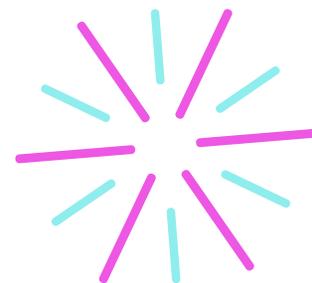
In Brooklyn Mussman’s brief tenure as an engineer and operational excellence leader for The Lubrizol Corporation, she has driven change by connecting plant leadership with frontline teams and partnering with all to create lasting improvements. Brooklyn led the implementation of a standardized Lubrizol operating model across five work streams at three manufacturing sites, impacting more than 200 people. By actively seeking and leveraging diverse perspectives across functions, she ensured the initiative’s success without any disruption to safety, quality or production. The result was a seamless transition that produced consistency across sites, improved workflow and generated more than \$2.5 million in annual savings.

Recommissioning a critical clarifier processing unit, Brooklyn brought together site leadership, frontline maintenance, contractors, suppliers and operations to completely reimagine the plan. Through collaboration with the people closest to the work, the team identified inefficiencies, removed unnecessary waiting and coordinated activities in a way that dramatically accelerated progress. The result was a reduction of the original 10-month timeline to just three months—an achievement that ensured operational continuity but also delivered an estimated \$1.2 million in savings for Lubrizol.

Championing the growth of others, Brooklyn elevates colleagues, celebrates wins and inspires teams to reach beyond perceived limits. As global chair of Lubrizol’s Women’s Inclusion Network ERG, she shapes strategy, drives professional development programming and cultivates a supportive, action-focused community for hundreds of members around the world. Her commitment extends beyond Lubrizol—mentoring women across multiple industries including medical, manufacturing, psychological services and construction for four years. Her enthusiasm for encouraging young girls to discover and nurture their interest in STEM has resulted in a partnership program, Lubrizol Learning Lab, which inspires the next generation of STEM leaders through hands-on learning, mentorship and real-world experiences.

Advancing global community well-being, Brooklyn led a team of eight engineers through Engineers Without Borders to design and construct composting bathrooms in rural Bolivian mountain communities. This work significantly improved sanitation, hygiene and quality of life for local residents.





HONOREE

Stephanie Nappier

Senior Director, Global Asset Integrity and Turnarounds
LyondellBasell

“I hope to inspire the next generation by helping people grow, strengthening workers across our industry and creating meaningful, challenging experiences that build purpose, confidence and capability. By developing talent and improving how we work, I aim to elevate teams, communities and the future leaders who will advance our industry.”

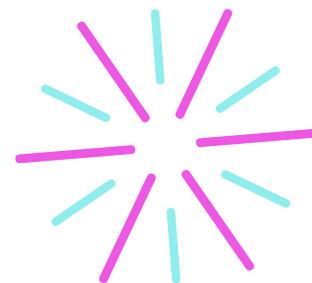
Stephanie Nappier translates leadership capability and teamwork into tangible business results. In her work as the global director of asset integrity and turnarounds for LyondellBasell, Stephanie has brought forth top-tier maintenance, reliability and turnaround practices. She launched the annual LyondellBasell Reliability Forum to gather global experts to share best practices and develop value-enhancement opportunities. Stephanie has also improved the company’s global asset integrity programs across all manufacturing sites, which have set standards in mechanical integrity, instrumentation, electrical, process control and mechanical equipment effectiveness. Prior to this role, as the operations manager at the Bayport Complex in Pasadena, Texas, Stephanie set the standard for six operations organizations and created forums for operations managers, supervisors and specialists to share best practices, which resulted in significant growth and development among participants.

Since the inception of diversity, equity and inclusion networks at LyondellBasell, Stephanie has been a collaborator and vocal advocate. She is an executive sponsor for the Veterans Employee Network Group, with one of its goals being to connect with veterans seeking new careers in the industry.

Passionate about advancing women in leadership, Stephanie has mentored many junior associates and presented to various groups on development and leadership. Many of her mentees have advanced in their careers and are poised to become the next generation of female senior leaders. Stephanie is known for creating opportunities for talent growth within her organization and throughout manufacturing by distributing responsibilities, encouraging collaboration and supporting team members’ personal and professional growth.

With extensive volunteer involvement, Stephanie has renovated homes with Rebuilding Together Houston, participated in sports leagues and served on school and church committees. Stephanie’s leadership and volunteerism not only enhance the lives of those she helps but also inspire others to get involved and make a difference.





HONOREE

Tyler Nash

Value Stream Manager
ABB

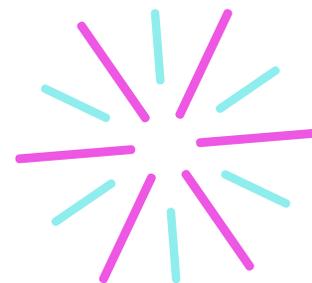
“I hope to inspire the next generation by being humble. No matter where you are in your career, individual success is dictated by the people around you.”

With more than 20 years at ABB, it is difficult to pick out Tyler Nash’s most significant accomplishments. Among them is leading the transfer of SuperStrut product manufacturing from the Mississippi facility to Athens, Tennessee. As value stream manager, Tyler was instrumental in coordinating teams, aligning production capabilities and ensuring a seamless transition. In 2024, Tyler collaborated with multiple teams to develop a new Quad Strut product for the semiconductor industry—a market projected to generate \$8 million in annual revenue. Beyond innovation, Tyler has championed sustainability by leading internal teams that helped ABB Athens reach 92% of its zero-to-landfill target.

Rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach to leadership, Tyler tailors his guidance to each team member’s strengths and goals. His effort to work closely with team members to enhance both technical skills and personal development has resulted in improved productivity, morale and retention. Tyler also champions a safety-first culture, not just through policy but through behavior-based management. By involving employees in safety planning and recognizing proactive behaviors, he has created an environment where individuals feel valued and responsible for one another’s well-being. This approach has led to an 80% improvement in safety performance over three years.

This genuine interest in others’ well-being follows Tyler outside the workplace. As an active member of Keith Memorial United Methodist Church, Tyler contributes to faith-based outreach programs and volunteers at the McMinn County Warming Shelter. His community involvement extends to charitable athletic events that raise awareness and funds for critical causes, including the St. Jude Marathon and regional cycling events Tour De Blount, Ride the Plains, the 6 Gap Century Ride and the Cherohala Challenge. In 2024, Tyler graduated from McMinn County Leadership, a program focused on developing civic-minded professionals who contribute to regional growth and collaboration.





HONOREE

Brenda Neely

Site Director, Beaumont
BASF

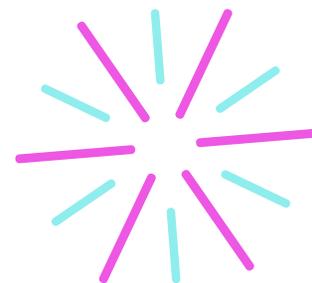
“I am motivated by helping others grow—much like I learned on the farm, where steady guidance and shared effort made every harvest possible. Coaching, developing talent and building strong collaboration energize me. Seeing people gain confidence and succeed through teamwork inspires me to keep improving and contributing to our collective success.”

Quiet yet powerful leadership—never seeking the spotlight, but always creating meaningful change—defines Brenda Neely’s place in manufacturing. Throughout her career, Brenda has successfully mastered diverse roles, starting with a new chemical process that she developed and received a patent for. Since joining BASF in 2016, she has held roles of increasing responsibility at the Freeport, Texas, site, where she led the Polyamide organization as well as the Ammonia Joint Venture and Terminal facilities. Here, she set a benchmark in operational discipline and emergency response, notably during Hurricane Harvey, the 2021 Freeze Event and Hurricane Beryl. In March 2025, Brenda became site director at BASF’s Beaumont, Texas, site, seamlessly transitioning into the role and quickly mastering the site’s technology and business needs. She has not only continued existing improvement initiatives but also introduced impactful ideas through her “even better if” approach. Brenda’s can-do attitude, calm demeanor and ability to build trust have allowed her to quickly develop rapport to elevate safety culture and enhance capital project planning and execution.

Widely recognized for her ability to identify and develop talent, Brenda is a sought-after participant on interview panels. She was part of launching BASF’s apprenticeship program, which lowers barriers to entry for technician roles and builds a more inclusive pipeline for manufacturing talent. Brenda’s commitment to people development extends to mentoring and coaching talent through structured initiatives and informal peer-to-peer relationships.

Advocating for underrepresented groups in STEM through her employment duties and as a volunteer is a cornerstone of how Brenda spends her time. She volunteers with organizations like Texas Alliance for Minorities in Engineering, Society of Women Engineers and Southeast Texas Women in Industry. For Junior Achievement, she delivered weekly classroom lessons on financial literacy and career awareness in low-income schools. For her church, she has been a youth volunteer and chaperone and has held leadership roles on the administrative board. Brenda’s list of community activities is simply too long to cover here. Most importantly, her desire to make a lasting impact led her to become a foster parent and adopt her two daughters.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Hayley Nguyen

Infrastructure Engineer
Ovintiv Inc.

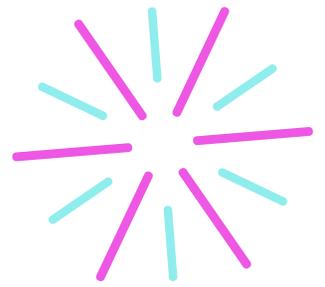
“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that anyone can create meaningful change by learning continuously, giving back generously and helping people rise with them.”

Bringing a global perspective and a deep respect for natural resources to her role as water infrastructure engineer at Ovintiv, Hayley Nguyen has overhauled water use in the company’s hydraulic fracturing process. Hydraulic fracturing requires large volumes of water—traditionally, fresh water—and Hayley led a shift toward reusing wastewater created during the hydraulic fracturing process, boosting its utilization from 30% to 50%. Her initiative conserved 680,000 cubic meters of fresh water—272 Olympic-sized swimming pools—last year and eliminated approximately 235,000 water-hauling truck trips. Each cubic meter reused means one less extracted from the environment, and these changes reduce operational costs, minimize environmental disruption and extend the longevity of local water sources.

Hayley’s personal journey—leaving her family in Vietnam when she was 13 years old to pursue an education in Singapore—taught her the value of support and inspired a lifelong commitment to giving back. For the past four years, Hayley has served on the board of the Society of Professional Engineers Calgary Young Professionals and earned the 2023 Outstanding Contribution Award from SPE Young Professionals. When she was mentorship lead, she helped launch the Data Science Mentorship Program to upskill individuals applying data science to energy challenges. With 50 mentees and 15 mentors in its first year, the program is now a fixture. Currently, as sponsorship lead, Hayley advocates for funding to support mentorship and training programs. Her efforts ensure young professionals have access to the resources and networks needed to adapt and thrive.

Building community with intention and care, Hayley organizes holiday parties and networking events to create spaces where people feel supported and valued in the workplace. Continually pursuing higher standards, Hayley recently earned her professional engineering designation. From youth outreach to professional development, she channels her experiences into meaningful action that creates opportunities for others.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Cheyenne Novak

Planning Analyst
Ecolab

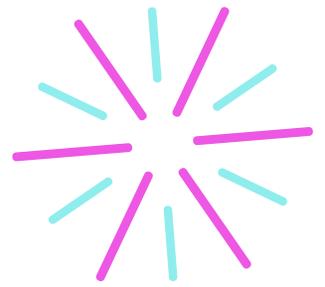
“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing you can accomplish anything. Your starting point doesn’t determine your finish line.”

At Ecolab and in her Chicago-area community, Cheyenne Novak is a catalyst for progress. As the federal Buy American Act and Trade Agreement Act came into enforcement, Cheyenne led the supply chain’s compliance initiative by establishing a cross-functional steering committee and developing short-term solutions while long-term processes were implemented. Her leadership prevented runout situations for key customers and laid the foundation for sustainable compliance practices that benefit the broader manufacturing ecosystem. Cheyenne’s work was critical for retaining \$12 million in sales and unlocking substantial growth potential.

Within Ecolab’s culture, Cheyenne’s actions reflect integrity, compassion and a deep sense of purpose. She leverages her own military experience to foster a strong internal community focused on attracting, engaging and developing military talent—especially women transitioning into manufacturing roles. Through her leadership in the Military Employee Resource Group at Ecolab, she has expanded outreach and support for military veterans, and the chapter she leads has seen a 30% increase in membership this past year. Cheyenne actively mentors new members, shares her career journey and encourages participation in leadership development opportunities. She also organized MERGE’s largest fundraiser, the annual Veterans Day 5K run and community event at the Naperville, Illinois, campus. Over two years, this initiative raised more than \$23,000 for the veterans-support nonprofit AllenForce.

Reflected in Cheyenne’s community service is a genuine desire to uplift others. Cheyenne volunteers with Feed My Starving Children, where each two-hour shift she completes provides enough meals to sustain a child for seven months in a developing nation. She also actively participates in Ecolab’s Community Giving campaigns, donates to a thrift store supporting domestic-violence victims, volunteers at community events to raise funds for her town’s high school and participates in Wreaths Across America to honor fallen veterans. Cheyenne’s commitment to service within and outside the workplace is both inspiring and far-reaching.





HONOREE

Bella Oung

Senior Director, Digital and IT Portfolio Management
Regal Rexnord

“I am motivated by driving meaningful change through technology and collaboration. I’m inspired by the opportunity to create inclusive spaces where innovation thrives and every voice matters.”

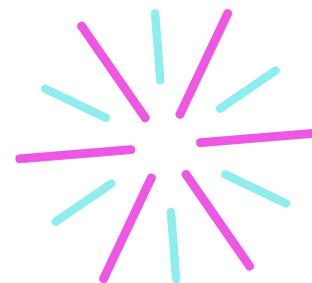
Bella Oung, PMP®, joined Regal Rexnord in February 2024 as senior director of digital and IT portfolio management. In this role, Bella drives alignment, execution and value realization for strategic initiatives across all business units and functions globally. She oversees automation and AI intakes and requirements and facilitates the AI Governance Center of Excellence. Additionally, Bella serves as the program lead for the PES segment Salesforce program.

Bella is passionate about fostering inclusion and collaboration. She founded the RRX Enterprise IT Women Quarterly Meetup, creating a platform for women in technology to connect, share insights and drive meaningful change. Her commitment to advancing women in tech and inclusive leadership has earned her prestigious recognition, including being named a 2026 STEP Ahead Awardee by the Manufacturing Institute and a 2025 Leaders of Impact honoree by Women Impact Tech.

Prior to joining Regal Rexnord, Bella served as chief digital marketing officer at Innovator ETFs, where she led digital transformation and executed go-to-market plans for more than 100 exchange-traded funds. She previously served as senior director of enterprise portfolio delivery lead at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, overseeing a \$400M IT portfolio. Before that, she held the position of director of IT PMO lead at Motorola Solutions, where she managed a \$52M IT portfolio, unified IT demand management and formalized program governance.

Bella graduated with distinction, earning a Master of Science degree in information systems from DePaul University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She holds the Project Management Professional (PMP)® designation from the Project Management Institute. Beyond her corporate role, Bella serves as a brand ambassador for Women in Technology Wisconsin, a nonprofit organization promoting and supporting the advancement of women in technology.





◆ CHAMPION

Catherine Panagopoulos

Managing Director, Talent Management
Smithfield Foods

“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with grit and passion—showing that true success comes from believing in people, empowering their curiosity and lifting others as you rise.”

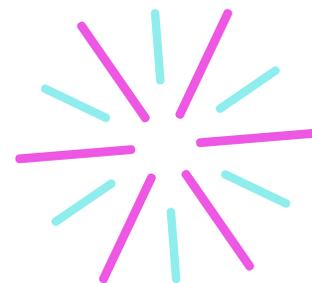
When the majority of an organization’s people managers are promoted from within, it’s easy to see the director has been intentional about fostering a workplace culture rooted in empowerment, collaboration and continuous development. This is the case with Catherine Panagopoulos, who serves as managing director of talent management for Smithfield Foods, Inc., as well as mentor and career coach to many. She’s challenged the status quo in ways that address one of the industry’s most persistent concerns—hiring and retaining talent.

In rolling out a centralized recruitment framework, Catherine transformed fragmented efforts into a unified process that improved hiring speed and quality—reducing time-to-hire by 80% and maintaining high staffing levels. She’s partnered with manufacturing leadership to analyze turnover trends and implement retention strategies, built a high-performing talent advisory team and developed a TN visa immigration program to build a manufacturing-leadership pipeline.

For current employees, Catherine prioritizes personal connection through structured new hire check-ins and skip-level touch bases. Beyond onboarding, she regularly engages with individuals to understand their career aspirations, gather feedback and offer support. To further cultivate openness and empowerment, Catherine hosts Sizzle & Success gatherings designed to encourage candid dialogue on topics ranging from career development to managing workplace dynamics. She also supported her team in launching a peer-led Internal Training Committee that delivers monthly development sessions on topics such as time management, AI applications and compliance. led Internal Training Committee that delivers monthly development sessions on topics such as time management, AI applications

Catherine’s contributions to initiatives beyond the workplace have encouraged her team to do the same. Catherine donates to and volunteers at local food banks and organizes team-building events there. During Hunger Action Month, Catherine supports efforts at her location to raise awareness and drive donations for food-insecurity initiatives. She empowers her team to participate in and take on leadership roles within employee resource groups, many of which are actively involved in community outreach. Catherine’s belief in the power of collective action inspires her team to view community involvement as an integral part of their professional identity.





HONOREE

Carmel Patulot

Operations Senior Manager
Lockheed Martin Corporation

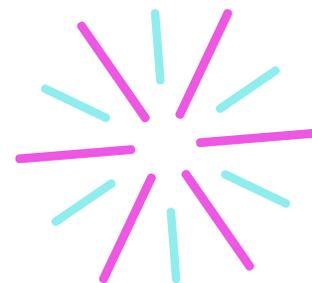
“I hope to inspire the next generation by demonstrating leadership that is driven by purpose, integrity and helping others reach their goals.”

As operations senior manager at Lockheed Martin, Carmel Patulot has proven to be a leader capable of reshaping advanced manufacturing operations. She’s led critical efforts to integrate artificial intelligence, robotics and automation into production lines. She’s also employed innovative thinking and a honed ability to deliver results to produce a 20% program cycle time improvement and a 40% quality improvement. Carmel has had an undeniably positive effect on Lockheed Martin’s operations, driving a 70% transformation of core operations business processes, as well as establishing a more agile, efficient operating model and increased commonality across programs.

While sweeping changes such as these can often be met with cautious reluctance from an organization’s workforce, Carmel’s technical excellence paired with her passion for people have enabled her to bring together teams across generations to bridge long-standing traditions with modern practices while modeling a spirit of adaptability and innovation for Lockheed Martin as a whole. She employs inclusivity and empowerment to unify teams, inspire confidence and rally support around truly groundbreaking changes in process improvement. Through this transformative leadership style, Carmel is creating a sustainable and inclusive culture shift in an industry long marked by traditional attitudes.

As a pioneering female leader in manufacturing, Carmel is passionate about supporting STEM initiatives for the next generation. She’s dedicated to volunteering with Central Florida programs that aim to inspire local elementary and middle school students, and especially young girls, to see themselves in science, technology and engineering careers. Through these mentoring opportunities, Carmel leads hands-on learning experiences, which she sees as integral to reaching and influencing future manufacturing leaders. This volunteer work, going above and beyond, further exemplifies Carmel’s dedication to empowering women and inspiring the next generation.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Rachel Pawlawski

Business Manager, Agriculture Surfactants
Evonik Corporation

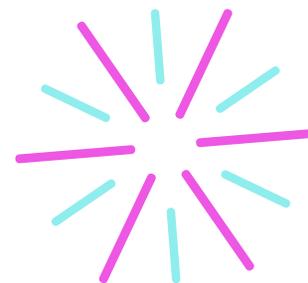
“I hope to inspire the next generation by creating spaces where early-career professionals feel supported, confident and seen. By leading with authenticity and curiosity, I want to show that anyone—at any stage—can spark meaningful change and open doors that elevate others, especially women, across the manufacturing industry.”

Rachel Pawlawski’s ability to transform personal insights into a company-wide initiative demonstrates her vision and commitment to building inclusive communities within the manufacturing industry. As a rising professional, she has already made a measurable impact by leading a multicompany initiative to standardize the evaluation of antifoam performance in agricultural tank mixes, addressing a critical need in the crop-protection industry.

Working with the ASTM International standards organization, Rachel co-authored and coordinated an interlaboratory study involving seven organizations and 16 unique formulations to create a new test. Rachel oversaw the study’s design, execution and statistical analysis, which included more than 300 data points and rigorous precision testing across multiple foam chemistries and surfactant systems. The new method is now progressing towards official ASTM review and could become a recognized industry standard this year. During this time, Rachel also transitioned into a business manager role, bringing a heightened customer focus to the project. Her ability to combine technical expertise with commercial insight ensured the method addressed real-world challenges for formulators and crop growers.

Beyond her technical achievements, Rachel has demonstrated visionary leadership by founding the Early Career Professionals Employee Resource Group at Evonik. Having joined the company just two weeks after graduating from college, she understood the importance of peer connections during the transition to corporate life. When Rachel discovered the absence of a formal group for new professionals, her manager encouraged her to build one. Rachel created a structure that prioritizes mentorship, networking and professional development. Under her guidance, the group has expanded to more than 10 site chapters, many of which are led by women—reflecting her commitment to engaging and elevating the next generation of female talent. Rachel also champions mentoring programs, career mapping and ERG leadership rotations to foster growth and visibility for emerging female talent.





HONOREE

James Phillips

Head of Large Scale Manufacturing
Biogen

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that biotechnology is a purpose-driven career with meaningful impact. By sharing my experience and lessons learned, I aim to accelerate their growth, fuel innovation, strengthen our communities and help shape the future of manufacturing while leaving a lasting legacy.”

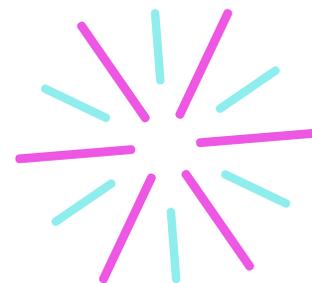
For nearly three decades, James Phillips has been the leading force behind some of Biogen’s most defining manufacturing milestones, shaping the start-up, expansion and global reach of facilities that deliver lifesaving medicines to patients around the world. As one of Biogen’s first employees, James joined the company in 1996 and was pivotal to the start-up of the RTP small-scale drug substance manufacturing site. There, he played a significant role in writing procedures, hiring and training staff and leading key activities to support the start-up of both large-scale manufacturing and an additional purification suite—all within four years. His impact continued as he later transitioned into the manufacturing sciences organization, leading the site’s technology transfer program with strong collaboration, partnership and integration across multiple chemistry manufacturing and controls teams.

James’s leadership was especially evident during the launch of the Solothurn facility in Switzerland, where he managed dual responsibilities across continents and guided the plant to licensure through the COVID-19 pandemic, underscoring his capacity to deliver under the highest pressure.

James propels teams across manufacturing by actively mentoring and empowering others. His leadership was unmistakable at the Solothurn facility, where he kept communication strong throughout the pandemic and led his team through a demanding regulatory approval process. James’s ongoing dedication to developing others, reinforced by his personal investment in the growth and achievements of his colleagues, is reflected in the success of the people he’s helped develop along the way.

James brings the same energy and commitment to his community, where he has proudly participated in initiatives such as the MS-150 bike ride in New Bern, North Carolina, that supports multiple sclerosis and the Biogen Fearless Runners group, a company-led running group that supported Alzheimer’s awareness. James also serves on the advisory committee for the Biomanufacturing Training and Education Center at North Carolina State University and an academic advisory committee at Central Carolina Community College. From supporting community health efforts to helping develop the next generation of biotech professionals, James strengthens every mission he commits to.





HONOREE

Kelli Poppenhagen

Senior Manager, Supply Management Services
Ovintiv Inc.

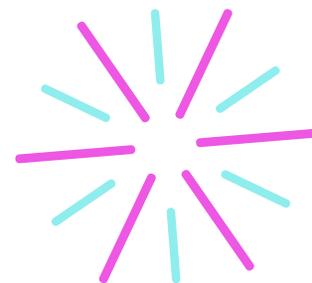
“I am motivated by my family—the desire to excel so I can expand their opportunities and life experiences. I am equally driven to deliver meaningful organizational impact, lead my team to maximize their contributions and mentor and train future leaders while continually pursuing excellence.”

Kelli Poppenhagen’s strategic foresight has paid off time and again over her 23-year career. Using an innovative approach to a new forecasting method and contract strategy, Kelli led her team to deliver approximately \$10 million in cost avoidance for Ovintiv USA, Inc. Kelli’s business intelligence approach revealed trade case price risk to casing and tubing—an area of significant spend for the organization—so she aggressively pursued contract structures and buying strategies to mitigate that risk. This departure from typical procurement methods demanded internal alignment, careful navigation of supplier relationships and respect for corporate priorities, such as expenditure timing and budget discipline. Kelli’s calm, results-driven approach ensured that the team remained focused and agile, ultimately delivering a solution that safeguarded the company’s financial and operational interests.

This ability to influence without force and lead with clarity and purpose has made Kelli an excellent mentor for multiple aspiring and new leaders. In one example, Kelli mentored a new professional struggling with disorganized leadership and ineffective meetings. After adopting Kelli’s advice, the mentee reported improved team efficiency and a stronger relationship with their supervisor. In the volatile oil and gas sector, Kelli shares her perspectives on resilience and success, helping mentees thrive amid uncertainty.

Kelli’s insight sharing continues into her volunteer time with local schools, where she raises awareness of industry opportunities and inspires curiosity and ambition. Kelli has served as a guest speaker on foundational economic concepts, tailoring her message for elementary students. These experiences have broadened Kelli’s understanding of diverse socioeconomic contexts and how her industry can positively impact schools and communities. Kelli and her sons regularly participate in neighborhood and open-space trash cleanups, which have instilled in her children a sense of pride and environmental stewardship. Kelli’s actions reflect a leader who drives results professionally while investing in the well-being and growth of the community she serves.





HONOREE

Solanda Prather

Senior Director, Manufacturing
Pharmavite

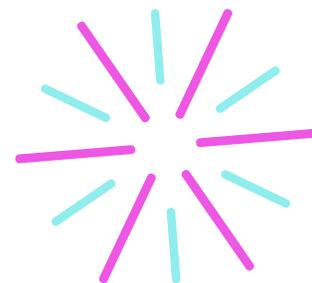
“I am motivated by my faith and family motivate me by reminding me my purpose is bigger than my role and that I’m never walking alone. They keep me grounded. I’m also driven by the success of my team—there’s nothing more powerful than watching people grow and succeed together.”

In Solanda Prather’s 20-plus-year career, national brands like Yoplait, Pillsbury and Nature Made have benefited from her dedication to excellence. In 2021, she joined Pharmavite at its Opelika, Alabama, site as the company’s first woman site director. Most recently, she led her team through the absorption of all internal tableting and two-piece capsule manufacturing from production on the West Coast. Meeting the growing demand for Nature Made vitamins, Solanda partnered with teams to focus on delivering significant milestones in all aspects of the move, including workforce planning, asset transfer and validation, product qualification and volume transfer. While maintaining high quality standards and a strong workplace culture, she has grown the facility’s workforce by over 70% and increased production volume by 40%. The site now produces over 60% of the volume for Nature Made vitamins.

Solanda’s belief that people will deliver their best work when they feel valued and supported has become a cornerstone of her site’s culture. She serves as the executive sponsor for the site’s Diversity and Inclusion Team, and every employee at the facility has completed diversity and leadership training. Her mentorship and advocacy have directly contributed to internal promotions and a significant increase in diverse leadership representation. She mentors women in manufacturing across the company and has consistently encouraged them to pursue stretch roles that expand their influence and visibility.

Recognizing that more young women needed exposure to manufacturing careers, Solanda took action by launching a Women in Manufacturing community group. Partnering with a technical school, a high school career counselor and another site leader in Auburn, Alabama, she created a program that would inspire the next generation. Her team organized the first Women in Manufacturing Day for 40 high school juniors and seniors who were interested in STEM, and Solanda continues to meet with several of them monthly. Solanda is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., a women-led nonprofit that supports local programs with a focus on African-American communities, where she mentors adolescents. She participates in HBCUConnect recruitment events and shares her expertise at professional conferences, including as a presenter for “The Career Game Plan: Promotions, Presence, and Influence.”





HONOREE

Jennifer Rivara

Senior Manager

Mazda Toyota Manufacturing

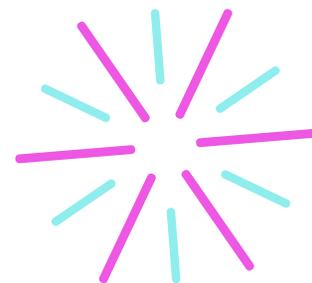
“I am motivated by helping others find their confidence and voice, especially in high-pressure environments. I care deeply about building trust, fairness and accountability so people can do their best work without fear.”

With a high-energy style and dynamic problem-solving coaching, Jennifer Rivara has been a driving force behind the development and growth of Mazda Toyota Manufacturing, particularly during its formative years as a joint venture producing two distinct vehicles for Mazda and Toyota. In leading the creation and implementation of the Total Ownership Pillar System, which includes 5S, standardized work and process ownership activities, Jennifer’s teams have improved workplace organization, consistency and engagement across all production areas. Her leadership in this initiative laid the foundation for manufacturing excellence and a culture of continuous improvement.

As a start-up leader, Jennifer created many processes from scratch, bringing her team along every step of the way. She supports her team members’ professional growth through regular one-on-one mentoring sessions, personalized development plans tailored to individual strengths and career goals and challenging projects that stretch skills and encourage innovation. Within MTM’s paint shop, Jennifer developed floor management systems that organize daily operations, track key performance indicators and enhance visibility. Her ability to visualize problems and translate them into actionable solutions has elevated both efficiency and quality on the shop floor. This investment in team-building activities and coaching has built trust and strengthened morale.

Jennifer’s outreach reflects her commitment to mentoring youth, fostering diversity in engineering and manufacturing and building meaningful community partnerships. She chairs MTM’s Women Inspiring Women business partnering group. Externally, she supports Women in Manufacturing by participating in industry events that advocate for women’s advancement. Her community involvement includes volunteering with organizations like Kids to Love, which supports children in foster care, and participating in school-based programs, such as mock interviews with James Clemens High School’s career department. She has also contributed to STEM education through her past work with the Young Professional Business Partnering Group, volunteering at National Society of Black Engineers summer camps for third-grade girls, collaborating with the Mississippi School for Math and Science and hosting workshops on interview readiness and resume writing for local high schools.





HONOREE

Emily Rockwell

Vice President, Human Resources
Materion Corporation

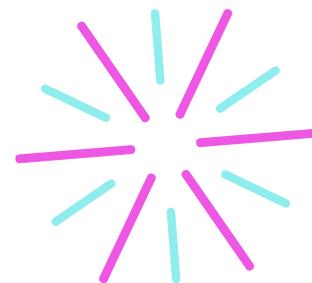
“I am motivated by the satisfaction I feel when a new idea comes to fruition. It takes a lot of hard work, influence and support from many different people, but the sense of accomplishment when something I created impacts others drives me to continue to be a ‘lone nut’ and challenge the status quo.”

In just three years with Materion, Vice President of Human Resources Emily Rockwell has already made a lasting impact in the Performance Materials division. She began overseeing HR at three different facilities and is now responsible for eight U.S.-based manufacturing sites. Her practices of consistent and clear communication, engagement with the workforce on all shifts and providing training opportunities to supervisors demonstrate an inclusive leadership style. At the largest plant, with 650 employees, Emily established an employee policy review team that engages staff members in making improvements. This approach resulted in a new, flexible workforce policy which provided employees an opportunity to train and expand their skills in different roles. Participation in employee-engagement-surveys and quarterly town halls has also improved.

Emily sets an example for impactful female leadership both at work and in the community. She focuses on succession planning and developing strong leadership throughout the entire plant reporting structure. At Materion, she launched an employee resource and mentorship group for women and allies called Elevate. Emily volunteered to be a mentor and meets regularly with an early-career female employee to discuss career goals and growth opportunities.

When Emily joined the company, she made it a goal to reengage the plant back with the community. Members of the Elevate group have become involved locally, supporting women’s shelters, volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House and sponsoring back-to-school supply drives. In 2024, Emily led efforts to launch Ohio’s inaugural Young Women LEAD event, which brought together 180 high school freshman girls from around the county and prominent speakers, like Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur and Second Lady of Ohio, Tina Husted. As a testament to its impact, the 2025 event had more than 700 young women participating from multiple counties. For Emily, elevate is more than the name of a program; it is her mission to lift up Materion staff and young women to be their best selves.





HONOREE

Bonita Rogers Montgomery

Manager, Manufacturing Excellence Engineering, DENSO
Manufacturing Athens Tennessee (DMAT)

DENSO

“I am motivated by faith, family and friendship and by my passion for seeing people succeed. Purpose fuels my commitment to unity, love and service. Love leads the way—because it has the power to heal, connect and create lasting, meaningful impact in the lives of others.”

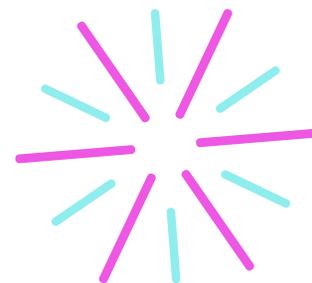
Bonita Montgomery’s journey is defined by purpose, resilience and an unwavering commitment to lifting others. A graduate of Mississippi State University Bagley College of Engineering with more than two decades at DENSO, she has helped shape the organization into a stronger, more-innovative and more-inclusive place to work. Her career spans product design, quality, industrial and manufacturing excellence engineering—a breadth of experience that gives her a rare, holistic understanding of how people, processes and culture come together to fuel excellence.

Today, as manufacturing excellence engineering manager, Bonita leads transformative improvements that strengthen DENSO’s operations and the employee experience. She increased Kaizen participation to the highest level in company history, serving as regional manager for a team that earned top honors at the North American Kaizen Competition and represented DENSO globally in Japan. She is also a driving force behind the region’s digital transformation, elevating data accuracy, visibility and coaching time—advancements that boost engagement as much as they improve performance. Her leadership extends far beyond metrics. Bonita has improved support spaces for working mothers, advocated for more-inclusive environments and opened doors for new sites to participate in programs that help associates shine.

A lifelong mentor and community champion, Bonita devotes her time to students, emerging talent and organizations that make life better for families. She has guided women across DENSO, supported interns and co-ops and championed DEIB through initiatives like a dedicated DEIB newsletter, DRIVEN, and events such as the C3 community partnership fair. Her service stretches deep into McMinn County, Tennessee, where she volunteers with youth programs, STEM initiatives, community boards and civic groups—all while being a devoted spouse, mother and steadfast advocate for education and opportunity.

Bonita’s story is one of heart and impact. She is a leader who inspires change, strengthens communities and helps others reach their full potential. She represents the future of manufacturing: innovative, inclusive and driven to make a difference.





◆ CHAMPION

Ana Rosales

Senior Operations Manager
Honeywell

“I am motivated by building strong teams where people feel valued, heard and empowered to deliver their best.”

Throughout her 20-year career at Honeywell, Ana Rosales has consistently demonstrated leadership grounded in operational excellence, systems thinking and a deep commitment to people. Her professional journey spans more than 18 years in quality leadership roles and operations, contributing across three Honeywell divisions while driving sustainable performance in complex manufacturing environments.

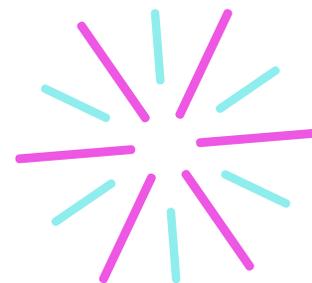
One of Ana’s most impactful contributions was her role in establishing and deploying a complete quality management system for a greenfield manufacturing site (MX0E). This work created a strong foundation for governance, compliance and long-term operational discipline, supporting the site’s successful launch and earning recognition with the Honeywell HPS President’s Award. Today, Ana continues to apply this same systems-focused mindset in operations, leading standardized process deployment across planning, quality, engineering, production and logistics within Honeywell’s Portables Gas Detection business.

Ana is widely respected for her ability to align cross-functional teams, foster trust-based collaboration and translate strategic objectives into disciplined execution—while maintaining a people-centered leadership approach. Her influence extends beyond results, as she actively invests in developing others and strengthens leadership capability within her organization.

As a mentor in Honeywell’s Growing Together Program and Cultivate ISC Leadership Academy and the only female operations manager at the MX07 campus in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, Ana plays a meaningful role in advancing inclusion and empowering women in engineering and manufacturing. Through her leadership, she has helped cultivate a culture of collaboration, confidence and growth that continues to benefit both individuals and the broader organization.

Ana holds a bachelor’s degree in industrial and systems engineering from the Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez and a master’s degree in quality engineering from the University of Texas at El Paso. Her career reflects a sustained commitment to building not only strong systems and processes, but also resilient teams and leaders prepared for the future.





HONOREE

Susan Rozak

Sales Manager
Saint-Gobain

“I hope to inspire the next generation by my example as they consider STEM careers. I’ve learned that imagination leads to innovation, big dreams lead to progress and diversity in the workplace benefits everyone. There has never been a better time to join this field. We all succeed when the next generation succeeds.”

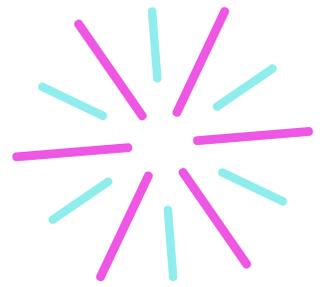
Over her 35-year career, Susan Rozak’s most noteworthy contributions to the Saint-Gobain Group have involved meeting customer needs by acting as a bridge to engineering teams. After learning that a longtime customer needed help manufacturing plates for their production, she worked with the manufacturing, research and development and engineering teams to innovate and bring a new product from the customer’s materials to market. While working as a manufacturing engineer, Susan implemented new setting designs that doubled production capacity without additional capital investment.

For more than a decade, Susan has championed women in the Saint-Gobain Women’s Network Employee Resource Group and the external Women in Manufacturing organization. On behalf of the company, she attends trade shows and conferences to educate girls and women on the benefits of a career in manufacturing. While working in Abrasives, Susan recruited and hired a young female engineer and was her direct supervisor for the next five years. This woman is now a successful executive in the department.

Susan is a strong supporter of STEM education. During workshops at the local high school, she leads students in experiments with the properties of glass, encouraging their interest in materials science. She has also volunteered for the Geek is Glam event in Worcester, Massachusetts, which attracts more than 400 Girl Scouts. These events encourage young people to consider STEM careers while showing them that just about everything they touch has to be designed and manufactured.

A graduate of Alfred University, Susan has been an active volunteer there for 35 years. She has served on the board of trustees and the alumni council, twice serving as president of the alumni association. Her work has helped build potential pipelines for students to gain employment and experience after graduation and strengthened the bond between the university and Saint-Gobain. Susan’s work as a connector, both at work and in the community, is a benefit for clients, women and students.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Marivette Rullan-Semidey

Industrial Engineer
The Boeing Company

“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading by example, demonstrating that leadership can be done with authenticity. We are all responsible for rewriting the leadership blueprint to include passion, empathy and inclusion.”

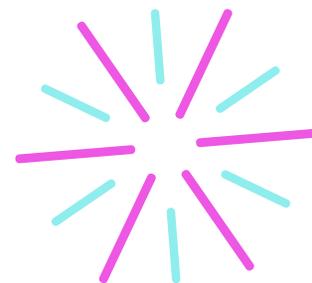
Sending humans to space. Not every woman can say she has contributed to such a historical adventure, but Marivette Rullan-Semidey can. Following the Starliner Crewed Flight Test thruster anomalies, NASA required The Boeing Company to conduct a crew module ground thruster hot fire test prior to every mission. Marivette took the lead in planning and implementing the first CM hot fire test to be performed at Kennedy Space Center—a completely new effort with no existing blueprint to follow. The project required overcoming significant technical and schedule challenges, yet Marivette’s team established a critical new test capability, strengthened confidence in the Starliner program and reinforced NASA’s trust in Boeing to meet evolving mission requirements and send humans to space.

Marivette’s leadership approach emphasizes strong relationships. She regularly highlights by name the accomplishments of each teammate to reinforce the value of their work, which has strengthened morale and earned positive feedback from both colleagues and senior leaders.

Along those lines, Marivette is committed to creating opportunities for the next generation of women in STEM. She organizes and leads visits to an elementary school’s Girls in STEM Club, where she introduces students to hands-on Future-U kits and explains how Boeing’s work on the Space Coast connects to the science and math concepts they learn in school.

As an alumna of the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, Marivette mentors students in the Society of Women Engineers chapter by offering one-on-one coaching, resume reviews and mock interviews to prepare them for internships and full-time roles. One of the students Marivette mentored even joined Boeing as a liaison engineering intern, which has been one of the most rewarding outcomes of her outreach. Marivette participates in conferences, presenting topics that bridge the academic and corporate worlds. By sharing her experiences and supporting the next generation, Marivette empowers other women in engineering to pursue their goals with confidence.





◆ CHAMPION

Lindsay Sabey

Senior Production Manager
L'Oréal

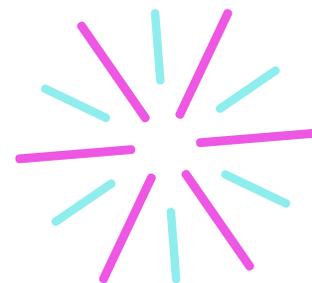
“I am motivated by perseverance and the belief that leadership is service. I strive to get to the root of problems and advocate for the frontline. I empower others by teaching the ‘why’ and bridging diverse perspectives to replace temporary fixes with meaningful, inclusive and lasting change for our entire workforce.”

Lindsay Sabey’s dedication to creating organizational change, designing equitable opportunities and encouraging employee empowerment has gained deserved attention within and outside of L’Oréal Groupe. As a senior production manager, Lindsay helped the North Little Rock, Arkansas, factory apply for and receive Governor’s Quality awards at the Challenge, Commitment and Achievement levels. This recognition comes as Lindsay has enacted new efforts to develop a positive and supportive workplace culture. In 2024, she spearheaded the Quality at the Source team, partnering with leadership to establish a career pathway for talented production employees to advance into quality specialist roles. This program is providing career opportunities for manufacturing team members while cultivating future production floor leaders. Lindsay has personally uplifted and sponsored several advancements for operators.

At the same time, Lindsay actively participates in her own advancement, lifting the whole of the L’Oréal Groupe with her. By taking part in the seven-month Team Trek Master Coach Training program, she enhanced her coaching and feedback skills, which was evident in her work with team members as they resolved interpersonal issues and drove quality process improvements. She fosters cross-departmental collaboration by addressing critical communication gaps and uses in-the-moment data capture to communicate with production supervisors. Last year, her efforts were validated when external auditors noted significant improvements in quality incident reporting by frontline leaders.

Lindsay’s care for others carries over into the broader community. She’s been involved with Engineers Without Borders as an active member and eventually president, participating in a project to support a water reservoir and distribution system to address long-standing water scarcity for the community of Samne, Peru. She’s been a mentor through Big Brothers Big Sisters and for chemical engineering students with the University of Arkansas Alumni Mentorship program. After one of her children was born with Down syndrome, Lindsay became actively involved with her church’s Embrace ministry and serves on the Parent Advisory Board at Baptist Hospital for the Maternal and Fetal Care Units, collaborating with other parents to influence tangible improvements in patient care.





HONOREE

Angelica Salazar

Purchasing Manager

Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories

“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading by example and through mentorship and focusing on being authentic, courageous, creative, kind and disciplined.”

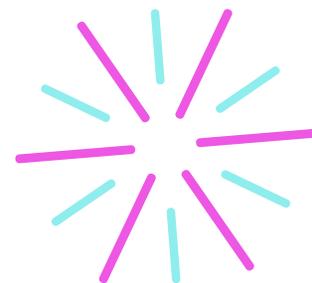
Described as “the type of leader that people like to follow,” Angelica Salazar has guided Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories’ supply chain through global disruption with agility and precision. As purchasing manager for the new product introduction team, Angelica led efforts to secure critical materials during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Her strategies in long-lead time ordering, strategic safety stock and escalation processes kept production lines running and products shipping, even when global supply chains faltered.

Recognizing the need for deeper visibility, Angelica spearheaded a company-wide initiative to document the manufacturing, packaging, testing and shipping locations of 30,000+ parts. This became a powerful asset in the last couple of years, when new tariffs were rapidly imposed on components worldwide. Her foundational work enabled SEL to assess tariff exposure in real time and respond faster than many larger organizations. In collaboration with engineering and supply chain, Angelica built tools that enhanced responsiveness, process efficiencies and overall supply chain visibility, including a sourcing dashboard based on price, quality, features, innovation, delivery and service.

Angelica began her career as an SEL intern while attending the University of Idaho, giving her a greater understanding of the company’s vision and culture. Over time, she has cultivated high-performing teams known for innovation and resilience. She’s committed to mentoring and supporting emerging talent.

Motivated by creating a positive impact in the world, Angelica has supported events within local Hispanic communities by providing meals to families in underserved communities. She enjoys working with youth and has volunteered at STEM-focused events, supporting middle and high school students in the Northwest region. Her commitment to mentoring underrepresented groups and fostering inclusive spaces reflects her belief in leadership as a force for good.





◆ CHAMPION

John Sampson

Senior Vice President, Operations, Manufacturing & Engineering
Dow

“I hope to inspire the next generation by demonstrating that leadership in manufacturing is built on service, integrity and a commitment to developing people. By investing in talent, sharing knowledge and fostering a culture of operational excellence, I aim to empower future leaders to innovate, collaborate and drive meaningful progress across our industry.”

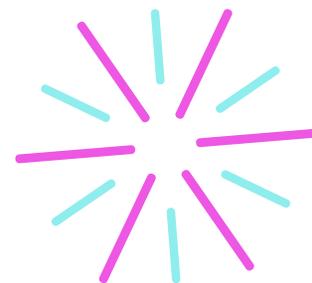
Last year, Dow was named No.1 on the Best Workplaces in Manufacturing and Production by Great Place To Work® and Fortune—for the second consecutive year and fifth year on the list—reflecting the culture Senior Vice President of Operations John Sampson has helped build over his four-decade career. John is responsible for more than 22,000 employees in 31 countries and at 104 sites, setting a global standard for inclusion and advocacy.

John is a member of the Executive Leadership Council, reflecting his commitment to advancing diverse leadership in industry. Today, women lead 50% of the asset value across Dow, up from 25% in 2019, and women represent 26% of site leaders, up from 16%. Dow is also one of the top contributors of female mentors to the Manufacturing Institute’s mentorship programs. As executive sponsor of Dow’s Disability Employee Network, John has driven transformative change, expanding DEN to nearly 7,000 members and 35 chapters globally. He has also sponsored Dow’s participation in the OneTen initiative, focused on advancing Black talent without four-year degrees. His leadership has helped Dow earn top industry recognition for workplace inclusion.

As architect of Dow’s Forward with Purpose Operations Strategy, John has redefined what it means to lead with inclusion, collaboration and operational excellence. His regular State of Operations webcasts, town halls and site visits allow him to engage with employees, foster open dialogue and reinforce a sense of shared purpose. Through his expansion of the Operations Talent & Development program, which has served thousands of employees globally, and additional initiatives and councils across multiple regions and sectors, John’s commitment to building strong teams is evident.

John’s community engagement is holistic and strategic—he leverages his influence to build partnerships, mobilize resources and inspire others to give back. Under John’s leadership, Dow has partnered with nonprofits and educational institutions globally, invested significantly in community programs and achieved a 77% employee volunteer rate. Among his supported initiatives are those that advance STEM education, workforce development and environmental conservation. Beyond executive responsibilities, John currently serves on the board of the Greater Midland Community Center and has served on many others. His leadership ensures that Dow’s impact is felt in communities around the world, creating lasting value and advancing the broader mission of the manufacturing industry.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Christina Schiavone

Tissue Manufacturing Training Specialist
Kimberly-Clark

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing what perseverance looks like and proving we’re capable of more than we imagine. I want to encourage others to always try their best, give their all and stay kind throughout the journey, knowing that effort, heart and compassion can shape a brighter future.”

At Kimberly-Clark, Christina Schiavone has addressed critical skills gaps and established a sustainable pipeline for technical talent, enhancing operational resilience and long-term organizational success. In her current role as manufacturing training specialist at Kimberly-Clark’s Jenks, Oklahoma, facility, she spearheaded the design and implementation of a Registered Apprenticeship Program for maintenance roles. Christina helped develop a rigorous three-year hybrid curriculum, ensuring compliance with federal apprenticeship standards and tailoring content to site-specific needs.

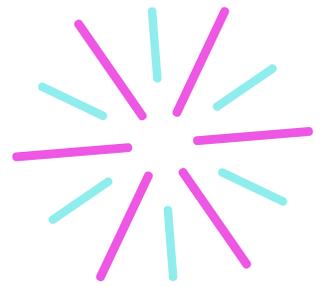
Christina’s dedication to developing others extends beyond the production floor. She digitized training records for more than 300 associates, standardized document management and streamlined processes across the mill. Her efforts have reduced onboarding time, improved employee experience and made audits run more efficiently. She established a training plan for new shift leaders to help them move from an operator to a leadership role. Through strategic partnerships, she shares best practices, amplifying her positive influence across the broader manufacturing community.

Christina has played an instrumental role supporting initiatives that empower women and celebrating diversity through the ONE WIN Circle. By planning and executing family-oriented events—such as “Take Our Kids to Work Day,” family days and BINGO events—Christina has strengthened the sense of belonging and community within Kimberly-Clark. Her influence is further reflected in her role in the development of Communicator Teams with human resources and operations associates, empowering frontline operators and fostering transparent, two-way communication.

Mentorship is important to Christina, illustrated by her coordination of resume-building workshops and interview preparation sessions. She has empowered countless associates to prepare for future opportunities, serving as both a coach and a role model.

Christina is deeply committed to a range of charitable initiatives within her community. She involves her children in these efforts, fostering a family-wide culture of service. As a dedicated volunteer with The Demand Project, a nonprofit organization addressing human trafficking, she has coordinated the Angel Tree initiative at Kimberly-Clark Jenks to collect gifts for rescued girls and has played an instrumental role in organizing their fundraising gala. Additionally, she has contributed to fundraising efforts in her husband’s memory for Gold as Ice, a nonprofit hockey team that assists families of children with cancer. Christina’s outreach not only supports those in need but also motivates her colleagues and family members to engage in impactful service.





HONOREE

Erin Schroering

Director, Continuous Improvement
MasterBrand

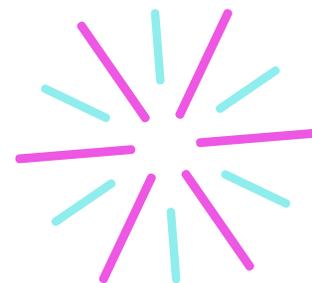
“I hope to inspire the next generation by making process and personal improvements attainable—encouraging others to always have respect for people, especially those with different perspectives. By bringing curiosity, courage and care to our work, we’ll improve and celebrate each step forward, together.”

Erin Schroering has built an important and varied career at MasterBrand over the years. Prior to her current role, she worked in various logistics and supply chain project management roles that saw her start new delivery programs, plants and production lines, helping various cabinetry brands grow in market share. She also played a key role in several inventory and freight-consolidation projects, as well as worked on numerous cost-saving measures and developed a data source for ongoing analytics. In her current continuous improvement role, Erin co-leads the creation and rollout of several training tools, templates and self-guided e-learnings that allow employees to learn various lean and problem-solving tools at their own pace and as the needs arise.

Continuous improvement is a natural extension of Erin’s passion for mentoring and coaching others, which she’s expressed through a variety of activities. Erin has facilitated various trainings on problem-solving tools and applying lean principles, and she remains eager to coach new associates on resourcefulness and connection-building. She strives to be an encouraging voice at MasterBrand, especially to women co-workers. Erin is well known for mentoring other continuous improvement managers and supervisors, and when new employees have a question, they know to seek out Erin, who’s always ready to steer them to the right contacts.

Outside of MasterBrand, Erin is a district officer with Psi Iota Xi, a national philanthropic women’s volunteer organization that raises funds for arts, literature, music and speech and hearing causes. In 2023, she was named National Psi Ote of the Year for the standout leadership and work with her local chapter, which includes a kids craft booth at the Ferdinand Folk Festival, planting flowers throughout town, hosting Halloween and Christmas activities and providing a free summer speech and hearing clinic for elementary school children. In addition to her philanthropic work with Psi Iota Xi, Erin is a Junior Achievement volunteer in the local elementary school, teaching kids about entrepreneurship and finances, and she coaches a variety of sports for her own children.





HONOREE

Nicole Sebek

Associate Director, Quality
Sherwin-Williams

“I am motivated by helping people recognize their strengths and grow. I love using my own skills alongside others to achieve meaningful progress. Supporting the people I care about both personally and professionally drives me to show up as my best self.”

Nicole Sebek, associate director of the Quality Resource Center at Sherwin-Williams, has made a lasting impact in quality and strategic continuous improvement through her leadership. With 16 years of experience across multiple divisions and manufacturing sites, she brings a depth of expertise and versatility to her role.

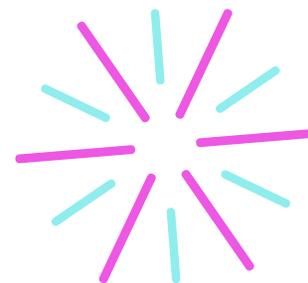
Strategic projects often require working across teams, and collaboration is a hallmark of Nicole’s work. In partnership with the Color Team, she is co-leading a project to align the color scale. Her team supports customer-facing initiatives for the marketing organization, consistently delivering high-quality results under tight timelines. Her work has elevated the standards of quality and innovation across Sherwin-Williams.

Nicole currently leads a team of 15 professionals responsible for executing strategic initiatives, auditing new product development and overseeing manufacturing hygiene across North American plants. She has guided the implementation of high-impact projects, such as manual addition error-proofing systems and the optimization of filling quality systems, which have significantly enhanced operational efficiency and product consistency. Under her leadership, the North America Quality department has delivered more than \$2 million in annual cost savings for two consecutive years.

Nicole leads the QRC with empathy, clarity and purpose while prioritizing career development for team members. Her mentorship has directly contributed to career advancements and promotions. She has guided seven Green Belt candidates and one Black Belt candidate to certification. As a corporate leader, she co-leads the R&D Community of Practice and helped lead a highly engaging virtual event with 250 attendees. Her ability to balance high expectations with genuine care has made her a trusted and respected leader across the organization.

Nicole regularly organizes department volunteer events in the community, including service at local food banks and medical-supply sorting. Outside of work, she is a dedicated mother of two and coach for her daughter’s soccer team.





◆ CHAMPION

Eric Seip

Senior Vice President, Global Operations and Chief Supply Chain Officer

Ingredion Incorporated

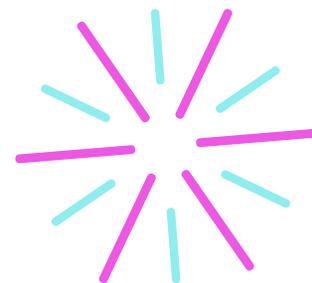
“I hope to inspire the next generation by being a role model worth emulating, where my actions match my words. I hope in a small way I can help make the world a better place.”

Eric Seip’s commitment to fostering an inclusive, responsive workplace culture at Ingredion is evident not only in metrics but in the trust and momentum he builds across teams. Since Eric joined Ingredion in 2021 and to August 2025, the number of women in director-level roles and above increased from 19.6% to 29.8%, while those in manager-level roles and above rose from 22.9% to 27.7%. Eric encourages participation in engagement initiatives and acts as the executive sponsor of the Women Inclusion Network and sponsor of the STEP Ahead initiative, which has honored five Ingredion winners over the past six years. Taking this recognition program to another level, Ingredion hosts an internal celebration for individuals nominated, regardless of selection, each year. Among the benefits Ingredion has seen from this work are improved engagement scores among women from 71% to 77% and a steady 79% among men from September 2021 to October 2024.

Beyond advocacy, Eric has a commitment to fostering inclusive growth, bridging workforce needs with strategic business goals and championing initiatives that create meaningful opportunities for all employees. He plays a key role in talent development through the Global Talent for Operations Program, which focuses on a three-year development cycle for early-career professionals to gain insights into operational strategy and build leadership capabilities; approximately 67% of these GTOs are women.

Outside the office, Eric has spearheaded Ingredion’s involvement with the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. From 2022 to 2024, he served on the Chicago Light the Night Board, when annual fundraising efforts consistently exceeded \$100,000. Eric served as master of ceremonies for the 2022 event. Last year, Eric accepted the position of chairman of the board for the American Heart Association’s prestigious Heart Ball in Chicago, which is the largest Heart Ball in the United States, raising more than \$5 million in contributions annually. Through his personal and professional roles, Eric has shown a commitment to driving meaningful change, mobilizing corporate and community support and championing causes that improve lives.





◆ CHAMPION

Nisha Shine

Senior Director, Materials
Flex

“I am motivated by purpose, not position—using empathy, courage and conviction to empower people, transform lives and create impact that extends beyond the workplace to society and the environment.”

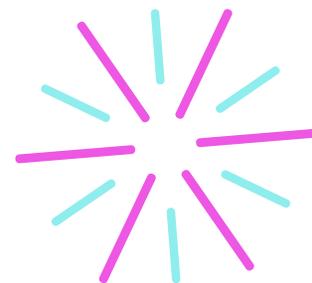
A committed advocate for gender diversity and women’s leadership enablement and transformation, Nisha Shine has spearheaded initiatives that translate into measurable outcomes, both at Flex and in her community. As an electronics engineer and CPSM-certified professional, Nisha brings 25+ years of expertise in end-to-end supply chain, transitions, operational excellence and system implementations. Her leadership, mentorship and involvement in many initiatives have led to support for mothers returning to work, high-potential women professionals building leadership readiness and mid-career women needing exposure to strategic projects and executive sponsorship; Flex’s Mom’s Nest, She Leads, TransforMe and the Bamboo Program are among these programs.

A passionate proponent of continuous learning, Nisha personally invests more than 100 learning hours annually, modeling a growth mindset for others to emulate. Her leadership enabled the Supply Chain Institute to become a flagship learning platform at Flex that offers accessible and engaging training through gamified modules, interactive simulations and master classes led by experts. More than 200 employees have built strategic capabilities using the program’s microlearning and certification pathways. Nisha also guides her team to represent the organization at industry forums such as ISM CPO and CII IQ Awards, earning external recognition and strengthening the company’s brand. In encouraging team members to step outside their comfort zones and take on cross-functional assignments, Nisha creates growth opportunities that help employees recognize their value and potential.

Nisha’s community engagement is further proof that her leadership is measured not just by results, but by the lives it uplifts. Her involvement in mentorship, career-readiness and allyship activities is extensive. As a core member of WE-Connect for alumni of Kannur Engineering College, Nisha mentors emerging women engineers and helps young women secure internships and early career roles. With the Scheme for Her Empowerment in Engineering Education—a Kerala, India, statewide initiative now — Nisha guides students on resilience, decision-making and work-life integration. Nisha is also involved in community dry-waste management and sustainable-living education programs and Sargam events, which revive vibrant cultural and arts traditions. Nisha’s approach redefines allyship; she transforms advocacy into meaningful, measurable action, ensuring opportunities for growth are accessible to all.

In addition to her professional pursuits, Nisha is a committed mother of two adult daughters. She is an accomplished Indian classical dancer with extensive performance experience and a marathon runner, demonstrating both dedication and perseverance.





HONOREE

Whitney Shlesinger

Vice President, Global Planning & Logistics
McCormick & Company

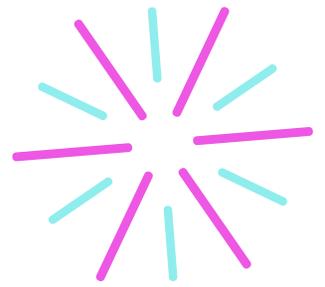
“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that leadership in manufacturing and supply chain is built on curiosity, courage and collaboration. By sharing knowledge, championing diverse voices and creating space for others to grow, I aim to help future leaders see themselves as catalysts for innovation and lasting impact.”

Whitney Shlesinger’s career has spanned Unilever, New Balance and now McCormick & Company, where she has served as the vice president of global planning and logistics for the past three years. Here, she aligns operations between procurement, supply planning, materials management and scheduling across 20 locations in four countries. Whitney has implemented her “innovate often” perspective via digitalization and AI capabilities and has overseen \$4.9 billion in McCormick Americas’ net sales while supporting approximately \$50 billion in global sales across three regions. In her time as a leader with McCormick & Company, Whitney has a track record in forecasting, planning and cutting waste; embedding sales and operations execution practices with integrated business planning principles; and promoting collaboration among company leadership.

Whitney is a powerful mentor to McCormick & Company teams across the globe, bringing a unified McCormick philosophy to both end-to-end supply-chain teams and customer-facing teams. She serves as executive sponsor to the company’s Working Parents Employee Group and sponsor and workstream leader of McCormick’s Women in Supply Chain initiative. Whitney acts as liaison between the company and the World Trade Center Institute CEO Council, providing McCormick executive leadership and WTCI’s leadership team with strategic advice. Whitney also serves as a mentor to the McCormick members on the Bowie Fellowship for globally minded current and aspiring executives.

Balancing professional excellence with personal responsibilities, Whitney has centered authenticity in both her work and home lives. She’s an active community member, serving as a lacrosse and field hockey coach while also sitting on the Penn State Leonhard Center board, which aims to sustain world-class engineering education at Penn State University. Whitney also serves on the Penn State Industrial and Professional Advisory Council in the College of Industrial Engineering, which acts as a link between the college and its industrial and professional partners to align engineering curricula with anticipated business needs. Whitney is also excited to serve as a Penn State engineering capstone project coach for a student team this semester.





HONOREE

Nishita Singh

Vice President and General Manager, Corpus Christi Liquefaction
Cheniere Energy

“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with confidence, curiosity and purpose. There is no substitute for hard work and dedication. I want them to see that they belong, their voices matter and they can shape systems that drive meaningful change. I want them to take the leap and engage.”

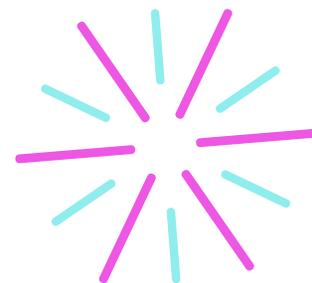
Nishita Singh has served as vice president and general manager of Corpus Christi Liquefaction since July of 2024. In her role, Nishita manages, directs and oversees all aspects of the company’s liquefied natural gas export terminal in Gregory, Texas. She brings 19 years of operational and leadership experience to the role, including the past 11 years at Cheniere.

As the vice president and general manager of the Corpus Christi Liquefaction site at Cheniere Energy, Nishita bridges the gap between daily plant operations and strategic company objectives, utilizing experience from her previous roles as vice president of operations support, operational excellence and assurance manager and process and systems manager. She critically analyzes systems to identify potential areas of improvement and develop innovative solutions. She has led teams developing and implementing the framework for Cheniere’s operational management system and safely executing two maintenance turnarounds on time.

Though her systems work is critical to operations, Nishita knows that investing in people is key to getting strong performance results. She has built an engaged team by mentoring employees throughout the company, driving open communication across the site through her work to promote transparency. She’s established periodic touchpoints with each team, presenting a topic of interest and inviting feedback. She serves as the executive sponsor for Cheniere’s women-focused employee resource group, Women Inspiring and Leading Success. She supports programming that builds leadership and technical skills, encouraging other leaders to participate so women company-wide benefit from mentorship opportunities with senior leaders.

Nishita’s deep commitment to the career development of young women extends beyond workplace initiatives, and she hosted a Young Women Energized event where local high school seniors interested in pursuing a STEM degree were awarded scholarships. Awardees at this event got the opportunity to connect with representatives from local energy, manufacturing and construction companies, helping further their networks and learn about potential career paths. She also engages with the This One’s for the Gals organization, in which she helps girls learn about career pathways in construction, energy, manufacturing and maritime industries. Nishita has also participated in multiple panel discussions, sharing insight from her career and encouraging young girls in their career aspirations.





HONOREE

Jennifer Sivak

Vice President, IT Americas
Allegion

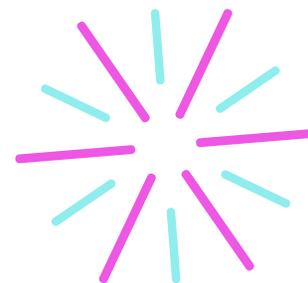
“I am motivated by the opportunity to unlock potential in others and see a team thrive. In the complex world of global manufacturing, nothing is more rewarding than building trusting relationships and watching a group of individuals grow into a high-performing team that solves ‘impossible’ problems together.”

In her role at Allegion, Jennifer Sivak ensures success in the company’s technology programs. She leverages deep expertise in manufacturing operations and technology to create a clear vision that connects diverse elements across the business. Jennifer has the rare skill of translating complex processes and technologies into understandable terms, which has been a critical contribution to her work developing and implementing major enterprise resource planning systems across Allegion’s global manufacturing sites. Under her leadership, the company has seen meaningful improvements in operational performance, productivity, delivery reliability and financial insights.

Jennifer’s leadership of a team of nearly 100 global employees is her standout contribution, especially in the challenging landscape of ERP implementation projects. She has retained her core ERP team for over a decade, maintaining high engagement and loyalty in a discipline known for burnout and turnover. Jennifer champions female co-workers and serves as a member of Allegion’s Network of Empowered Women employee resource group. Jennifer organized and hosted an inaugural panel at Allegion’s Indianapolis plant that highlighted and shared insights from successful women in manufacturing. Moreover, she contributes as a mentor and advisor through Allegion’s mentoring program and represents Allegion on influential industry councils, such as the Manufacturers Alliance for Productivity and Innovation Information Technology Council and the National Association of Manufacturers Manufacturing Leadership Council. She also participated in a women’s leadership pilot program in partnership with Harvard Business School last year.

Outside of Allegion, Jennifer is the president of the West Virginia University Academy of Industrial Engineers, supporting industrial engineering students by connecting coursework to real-world practice and helping students prepare for engineering careers. She also mentors students and young people through school- and church-based programs and supports organizations focused on strengthening families and communities.





HONOREE

Natalee Smith

Research and Development Manager
Covestro LLC

“I am motivated by building rooted, sustainable relationships and communities; a deep curiosity about people and the world; being of service through problem-solving, kindness and fairness; my mother’s example of generous community-building; and the chance to grow endlessly through experiencing nature, art, beauty and travel.”

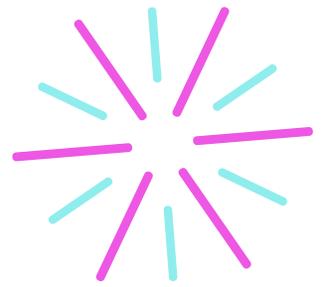
Drawing inspiration from her mother’s legacy of advocacy and lifelong learning—and having been guided by mentors who champion inclusion in the chemical industry—Natalee Smith approaches leadership with both technical excellence and genuine human connection. As Covestro’s research and development lead for Project CLIP, a laboratory renovation project in the Coatings manufacturing division, Natalee guides the integration of Covestro’s Wilmington and Pittsburgh R&D sites while rebuilding their labs’ infrastructure to support future innovation.

Time and again, Natalee’s work has showcased her ability to solve complex technical challenges with creativity and determination. Her customer-focused approach is evident in her development of an improved material quality complaint investigation process, which reduced customer-response cycle times, enhanced accountability and became the standard across Covestro business groups. As part of a collaborative research team, Natalee helped develop an innovative computational strategy to characterize complex polyurethane dispersions, enabling critical EPA regulatory approvals that advanced sustainable materials across the industry and led to a landmark filing approval in July 2020.

Natalee’s commitment to a vibrant and inclusive workplace culture is long-standing. Her co-leadership of the ACCESS Employee Resource Group has transformed the organization’s approach to diversity initiatives, particularly evident in a groundbreaking Black History Month roundtable that brought together global Covestro leaders and inclusion and belonging experts. Even during pandemic challenges, Natalee maintained ACCESS’s momentum by connecting ERGs across sites and sustaining critical STEM outreach. Demonstrating remarkable initiative for personal growth, it was no surprise when Natalee was selected for the prestigious Global Citizens Fellowship program, a seven-month leadership experience across Pittsburgh’s professional sectors.

Natalee’s community interests are no less impressive. She continues to champion ACCESS’s elementary school Science Education Days, and her volunteer work with the i3 STEM ERG includes participation in Greenlight for Girls Day events across Pittsburgh and Houston. For five years, she has offered guidance to high school chemistry students with the Neighborhood Academy Mentorship Program in Pittsburgh. Natalee is committed to and engaged in local arts and fundraising efforts, too, as a vocalist, fundraiser, board chair-elect for PearlArts Studios and former board member for Attack Theatre.





HONOREE

Jennifer Snee

Plant Manager, USG Aliquippa
USG Corporation

“I am motivated by people. I take great pride in providing a safe workplace where individuals can earn a good wage to support their families. I am passionate about tackling challenges and finding ways to make each day at work better and easier for our team than the day before.”

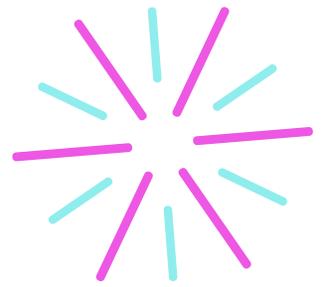
As plant manager of one of USG Corporation’s most important plants, Jennifer Snee has time and again proven herself to be a leader of the highest caliber. She’s gained technical expertise across a 23-year career in which she held roles such as project engineer and operations manager, making her an obvious choice to lead USG’s most critical operation. In 2024, the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, plant set a new all-time production record, producing more than 1 billion square feet of wallboard.

On the plant floor, Jennifer operates with calm, decisive leadership, keeping her people and facility safe even when faced with potentially catastrophic safety incidents. A strategic thinker, Jennifer consistently looks beyond immediate challenges to question the operational effectiveness of all decisions.

As a founding member of USG’s Women in Manufacturing group (she’s an active member in the national organization, too), Jennifer has established pathways for female leaders. And she’s always seeking the best and brightest to join her, recruiting among the 10,000 attendees at the Society of Women Engineers conference to find talented additions to enhance a culture built on loyalty and continuous improvement. Many of the emerging managers she’s helped to develop over the years have even gone on to leadership positions within the organization. It’s no wonder that she’s earned the fierce dedication of her 185-person team.

With an MBA from the University of Pittsburgh, Jennifer remains an engaged civic leader in her Pennsylvania community. She serves as vice chair of the Sewickley Water Authority board and is an active member of both the Beaver County Chamber of Commerce and the Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development. Jennifer volunteers with The Challenge Program to help connect employers with high school seniors in local school districts for potential manufacturing careers. She is also a member of the Divine Redeemer parish and volunteers as a coach for Quaker Valley recreational girls’ softball.





HONOREE

Jennifer Solcz

Vice President, PMC Americas
PPG

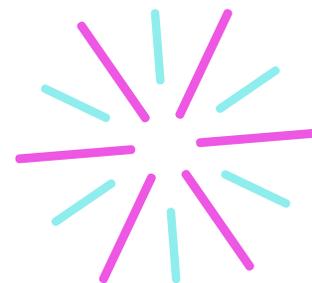
“I am motivated by creating open doors and opportunities for my girls and my team. Watching those I care about achieve their goals and dreams with the help of my mentorship, guidance and example is what drives me to work hard and persevere.”

Leading global and regional teams in the manufacturing industry for more than 15 years, Jenn Solcz brought with her a wealth of knowledge about the automotive industry to her role as vice president of protective and marine coatings at PPG. Soon after accepting the position in 2024, Jenn was tasked with navigating the company through a major divestiture—a drastic strategic change that eliminated a significant portion of the business’s revenue and market channels. Jenn exceeded all expectations, leading with purpose to restructure the team’s commercial model, restore trust between departments and reestablish customer confidence. Within a year, the region delivered double-digit revenue growth and improved internal engagement, positioning the business for long-term, scalable success.

Jenn brings a people-first leadership approach to a role that had previously been challenged by a culture of frustration in manufacturing productivity and employee morale. She quickly implemented weekly Coffee with Jenn sessions to foster transparency, which saw an astounding 78% organizational participation. She also visited manufacturing plants once a month for the majority of 2024 to engage in candid conversations with frontline workers, encouraging open dialogue at every level of the organization. Jenn helped implement actionable plans to streamline processes and ensure the plants received necessary resources to operate smoothly. She also visited customers, learning their pain points and sales goals to understand their needs. Moreover, believing “you’re only as good as your team,” Jenn is a senior leader mentor in PPG’s mentorship program, actively investing in the growth and career development of her mentees and advocating for their advancement and success.

Jenn serves as a board representative and active member of The Solcz Family Foundation, which supports the basic psychological needs and health and wellness of youth and families in the Ontario, Canada, community. Recent foundation contributions include funds for the design of a 100% accessible playground, construction of a Pediatric Care Center at Windsor Regional Hospital and community housing that offers transitional services for women fleeing abuse.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Margaret Standish-Bruce

Corporate Counsel
Sukup Manufacturing Co.

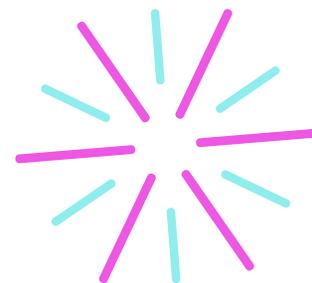
“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with strategy, integrity and a focus on people, demonstrating to women that their voices, ideas and strengths are vital in shaping the future of manufacturing.”

Margaret Standish-Bruce serves as corporate counsel for Sukup Manufacturing Co., where she aligns legal, operational and strategic goals. Her leadership in contracts, risk management and compliance has streamlined operations, reduced risk and reinforced a company-wide culture of integrity. Margaret’s career with Sukup began as a 2019 intern, when she uncovered embezzlement in a subsidiary. This early demonstration of her integrity and diligence launched her into oversight of the human resources department, implementing initiatives such as pay-for-performance reviews, which tied recognition to merit and improved morale across the organization. Now leading Sukup’s legal department, Margaret has played a key role in three acquisitions, overseeing due diligence processes that strengthened the company’s growth strategy.

With a background in chemistry, Margaret brings analytical insight and collaboration to her leadership. She bridges operations, executive and sales teams with an approachable, empathetic style that fosters trust and open communication across the company. Margaret champions ethical and sustainable practices, ensuring Sukup upholds the highest standards in safety, environmental stewardship and corporate responsibility. She has restructured legal roles to support working mothers and caregivers while mentoring team members to take ownership of key functions. Margaret also spearheaded Sukup’s parental leave policy, offering four weeks of paid leave for the birth or adoption of a child. This initiative helped Sukup earn recognition as a Best Place for Working Parents® two years in a row.

Another major initiative Margaret helped bring to life is the Colts Corner Bin Town Daycare Center in Sheffield, Iowa. Created in partnership with Sukup, the local school district, businesses and Future Ready Iowa, the center provides high-quality childcare to a community once deemed a childcare desert. With more than 90 families in need of childcare, Margaret ensured the project met every benchmark and delivered lasting value to both the community and Sukup employees.





HONOREE

Nima Subramanian

Vice President, Digital Operations and Technical Services, Innovative Medicine Supply Chain

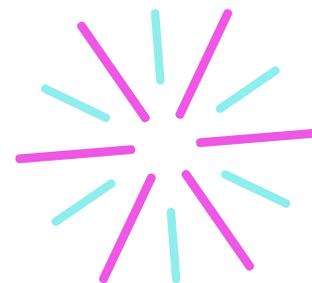
Johnson & Johnson

“I am motivated by continuous learning and the opportunity to grow, both personally and professionally. I find energy in working with people, collaborating across perspectives and helping others develop their skills and confidence. Making a meaningful impact through shared progress and curiosity keeps me driven.”

Nima Subramanian is a transformational leader who elevates innovation, efficiency and patient impact across Johnson & Johnson’s Make organization, overseeing digital manufacturing, operational excellence, cold chain and artwork. By applying advanced technologies and streamlining processes, she has reshaped pharmaceutical manufacturing to accelerate delivery of high-quality medicines to patients. As general manager of the Malvern, Pennsylvania, site, Nima’s operational and supply-chain expertise kept the facility performing seamlessly, secured the reliable supply of critical therapies like Remicade and advanced the development of new clinical supply products.

A committed talent builder, Nima leverages her experience to mentor emerging professionals across the company and beyond, amplifying career growth and leadership readiness. Nima’s community leadership includes championing Bridge to Employment outreach for underserved youth. In 2020 she sponsored 32 Norristown students for BTE; 14 earned Johnson & Johnson scholarships and four graduated in the top 10 of their class. An MIT Leaders for Global Operations alumna, she has served on its alumni board. Nima combines technical mastery, strategic vision and deep social commitment to drive lasting impact in both business and community.





HONOREE

Alissa Taylor

CMPT Manufacturing Engineering Director
Qnity Electronics

“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with confidence, curiosity, empathy and resilience—demonstrating through example that innovation thrives when diverse voices are empowered, boundaries are challenged and people are truly heard.”

Alissa Taylor is a transformational manufacturing leader whose impact spans engineering, culture and global community engagement. During a time of rapid growth in the semiconductor industry, she emerged as a trusted leader. Qnity Electronics was grappling with the challenges of increased capacity demands and aging manufacturing assets. Alissa was entrusted with leading a major operational revitalization effort to improve quality and efficiency while maintaining full production during peak demand.

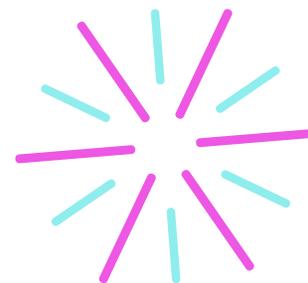
While this was no easy feat, Alissa created high-caliber teams using existing and new talent. She empowered innovative decision-making structures and boldly tackled barriers. This enabled the safe execution of nearly 100 capital projects, including 45 completed in the first year valued at \$10 million.

Notably, Alissa championed a rigorous shutdown process that provided necessary windows for construction while ensuring a timely return to operations. This “building the ship while sailing it” approach took phenomenal teamwork, coordination and resilience. The bold and well-orchestrated strategy yielded great results—Qnity saw an increase in business revenue and enhanced supply assurance for customers.

Beyond her technical leadership, she has also shaped the culture. Alissa facilitated open dialogues that embraced a variety of perspectives, aligning on key issues and garnering support for actionable strategies—contributing to improved employee morale and organizational effectiveness. To improve employee coaching, Alissa established a program that pairs senior engineers with early-career professionals, encouraging mutual learning and diverse perspectives. To strengthen collaboration, she initiated a Technical Leadership Team, unifying leaders across disciplines and enhancing innovative outcomes and alignment. To promote education, she has led and championed multiple training programs, helping to drive clarity and effectiveness. Last year, her team-building influence earned her a place on a seven-person team to create and lead the Qnity Global Women’s Network.

Alissa’s influence extends outside the workplace. Her many community engagements provide tangible benefits to those around her while also enriching her personal growth and hope in humanity. These are too numerous to name, but notably include a trip to South Africa, where Alissa led a team to enhance facilities at a local school in an underprivileged area to ensure a comfortable and safe space for the children to learn. Through her commitment to operational excellence, cultural transformation and global impact, Alissa continues to elevate Qnity Electronics and the communities she serves.





HONOREE

Diane Tennenhouse

Associate Vice President, Site Head, Lilly Houston
Eli Lilly

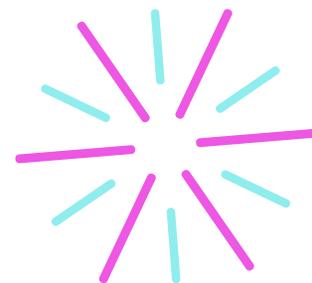
“I am motivated by working with people who are technically excellent, curious and eager to learn through solving problems and who are passionate about delivering medicine for the patients we serve.”

For more than 22 years, Diane Tennenhouse has consistently built high performing teams through strategic facility planning. Whether leading efforts in Indianapolis, Indiana; Kinsale, Ireland; or now Houston, Texas, Diane has prioritized health, safety and inclusivity across her teams. As the site head and associate vice president of the newly announced Eli Lilly Houston site, Diane leads with a strong commitment to safety and quality. Her ability to simplify complex challenges and guide teams toward delivering value for patients and the company has made her a trusted leader across Lilly’s global footprint. performing teams through strategic facility planning. Whether

Diane’s leadership in developing the Engineering Tech Center supporting active pharmaceutical ingredient manufacturing is one example of her talent for taking on major projects with strategic vision. She guided her team through the design and delivery of new API facilities while implementing process improvements that enhanced productivity and avoided additional capital investment. She excels at helping individuals understand how their work connects to the larger mission, creating value for both patients and the company.

Diane supports emerging talent through mentorship and coaching at Eli Lilly and Purdue University. As the Lilly Houston site takes shape, she is already planning meaningful community service efforts with a local school district to promote STEM education and build connections that will have a lasting, positive impact.





◆ CHAMPION

Sam Thevanayagam

Chief Executive Officer
DeVal Lifecycle Support

“I hope to inspire the next generation by creating environments where people, in all seasons of their lives, can achieve their God-given potential. Purpose and potential are our Creator’s work. Mine is to steward workplaces where individuals discover their uniqueness, achieve a higher purpose greater than themselves and support U.S. warfighters and taxpayers through meaningful, challenging work.”

Sam Thevanayagam is a Sri Lankan-born American, entrepreneur, author, thought leader, innovator and expert in defense and aviation sustainment. He is president and CEO of two companies focused on aerospace and defense systems, Parts Life, Inc. and DeVal Lifecycle Support.

Sam came to the U.S. in his early twenties and rose to senior leadership in the automotive aftermarket. In 2007, amid a global recession, he recognized a strategic opportunity to establish his own enterprise, Parts Life, Inc., driven by his lifelong ambition of becoming a business owner.

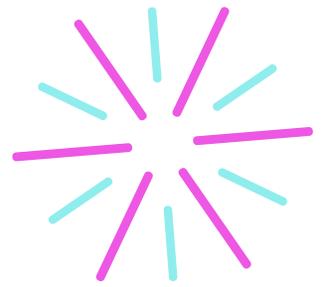
In 2017, Sam purchased DeVal Lifecycle Support, a 70-year-old HUBZone defense manufacturer located in the Tacony section of Philadelphia. Sam was committed to workforce development, preserving jobs in inner-city Philadelphia and retaining the entire existing workforce. Since then, DeVal has achieved over 400% growth, creating high-skilled manufacturing jobs in the defense industry through comprehensive, multi-skill development programs.

At DeVal, Sam invested directly in his employees through his Community Transformation workforce-development framework. This holistic model has four pillars: employment, health care, housing and training. DeVal offers free professional and personal development courses, workplace accommodations and counseling services. With the Help U Buy program, employees receive assistance with their first home purchases, and to date, DeVal has helped more than 26 employees purchase their first home. Workforce development, training and upskilling employees into higher paying roles is central, with significant investments made so employees can advance in machining, welding, non-destructive testing and engineering.

Sam constantly reinforces the idea of “creativity before capital,” encouraging innovation before investment. He’s empowered employees to solve problems in real time. He believes that when employees feel valued, they respond with creativity and loyalty. His forward-thinking employee-investment initiatives have caught the attention of the U.S. Department of Labor, whose deputy assistant secretary stated she wished she “could clone” him for his workforce-development efforts.

At his core, Sam’s philosophies are grounded in servant leadership and empowering his communities and beyond. The SamT Foundation supports local causes, and Sam’s Micah Cricket Club provides safe environments where youth learn teamwork and leadership in countries around the world. Sam’s engagement with schools and colleges, including Rowan University and Rowan College of Burlington County, strengthen the STEM pipeline. Sam is also an active board member for the Delaware Valley Industrial Resource Center. His leadership has been recognized nationally, reinforcing his role as a model for how manufacturing can empower both individuals and communities.





HONOREE

Hillary Thomas

Vice President
Westminster Tool

“I am motivated by creating a workplace where people can build meaningful careers without sacrificing their families. I especially want women and organizations to see that when flexibility, trust and purpose come together, employees, families and organizations can thrive.”

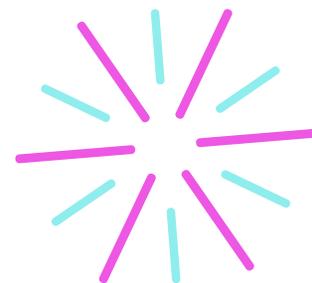
The youngest board member of the American Mold Builders Association, Hillary Thomas is shaping manufacturing on a national scale as well as on a company level for her family’s business, Westminster Tool. In not quite 10 years of leadership, Hillary’s efforts have doubled Westminster Tool’s throughput, increasing revenue per employee through strategic efficiency, workforce development and data-driven process improvements. She championed the adoption of advanced simulation software and metal 3-D printing, marking the transition of Westminster Tool from a traditional mold manufacturer into an innovation leader trusted by top original-equipment manufacturers.

With a commitment to supporting the nationally renowned company culture at Westminster Tool, Hillary has redefined what workplace balance looks like. This isn’t just a perk that might be listed on a job description, rather it’s a core leadership standard. Hillary openly shares her own experiences navigating career and family, setting the tone that personal responsibilities are not obstacles to success, but essential parts of it. Under her guidance, Westminster Tool has implemented flexible scheduling, work-from-home options and paid-leave policies that empower employees to prioritize family without fear or guilt.

Beyond policy, Hillary invests directly in the growth of every individual. Every team member is encouraged to define their own career trajectory, and Hillary ensures they have the structure and support to achieve it. She helps employees build SMART goals, identify training pathways and cross-train in areas aligned with their strengths, personalities and long-term aspirations. Equally as important is Hillary’s commitment to empowering the next generation of women in manufacturing. She’s built structured mentorship programs, led hands-on training initiatives and personally invested in the career development of countless young women entering the industry.

Hillary’s fresh, forward-thinking perspective on the American Mold Builders Association board helps influence programs that support mold makers across the country, including scholarships and awards that recognize and elevate the next generation of talent. Through her involvement with Future Leaders in Plastics, Hillary mentors young professionals and often serves as a role model. She has also played a critical part in Westminster Tool’s financial support of youth manufacturing education initiatives in the community, from first grade through manufacturing associate degree programs.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Kristen Thrash

Cotton Planner and Data Manager
BASF

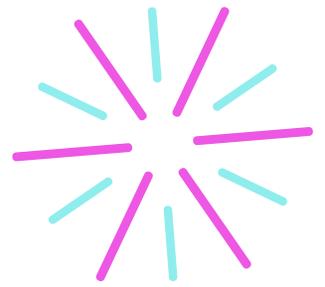
“I am motivated by the opportunity to build systems and people that last. I believe teams are strongest when we invest in collaboration and the next generation of leaders—creating workplaces where operational excellence and human potential grow together.”

Kristen Thrash’s talents lie at the intersection of agriculture, manufacturing and leadership. As the site captain for BASF’s North America Seed Supply organization, she contributes significantly to improving profitability and operational efficiency in the cotton seed organization. This job requires navigation of dynamic cotton-market conditions, a rapidly evolving product portfolio and diverse stakeholder needs. It’s Kristen’s abilities in understanding complex scopes, formulating effective responses and leading through influence that have allowed her to do just that. She brings clarity and cohesion to her team, guiding them to develop and own robust demand and supply plans aligned with strategic goals.

Kristen has been instrumental in developing and leading an enhanced sales and operations planning and sales and operations execution process in alignment with BASF’s strategic shift toward differentiated steering—critical to ensuring the company’s long-term success. Her leadership has prepared the organization for a successful go-live of a new Wave 1 enterprise resource planning system across diverse teams and functions. Her work was also crucial in developing the SCOPE grower database-management system for cotton producers. Kristen’s ability to be both diplomatic and directive has been essential to aligning internal and external stakeholders who often have competing priorities.

Beyond her immediate team, Kristen mentors a colleague, helping them to develop their skills and contributions to carry on the groundwork Kristen is laying. In the broader agricultural community, Kristen is involved in the Women in Agribusiness membership organization. Here, she contributes to the empowerment and professional development of women in agriculture, sharing her expertise, mentoring others and helping to build more diverse and inclusive participation in STEM industries. Kristen’s ability to lead across boundaries—whether that’s within her organization or in the wider community—demonstrates her dedication to growth, collaboration and positive change in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors.





HONOREE

MaryBeth Tran

Site Leader

Owens Corning

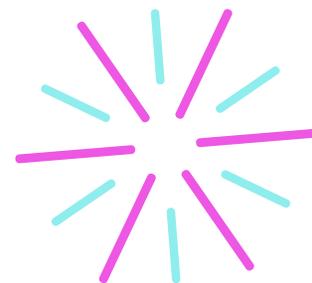
“I am motivated by my team. I am blessed to work alongside such amazing people. Watching us grow together, achieve major milestones and embrace each new challenge is the most rewarding part of my job.”

MaryBeth Tran’s path to becoming site leader at Owens Corning’s roofing and asphalt plant in Compton, California, embodies her ability to translate strategic goals into operational execution. She started her career with Owens Corning in the Operations Leadership Development Program, an engineering rotational program designed to challenge participants and foster innovation. She then joined the Furnace Development Program, gaining technical and leadership experience across multiple Owens Corning sites. She attained the role of operations leader at the Compton plant, where her leadership style led to improved overall equipment effectiveness, reduced costs each year and Plant of the Year awards for two consecutive years. Her subsequent promotion to site leader reflects her ability to connect strategy with operations.

MaryBeth’s dedication to excellence led her to start the local chapter of Women in Operations at the Compton plant, a monthly group charged with engaging and recruiting women to join the Compton team. This inclusive environment has led to reduced turnover and record employee perception survey scores. MaryBeth’s commitment to fostering the next generation of female talent is tangible in her spearheading the remodeling of restrooms and locker rooms and the installation of a mother’s station at the facility. She lives her dedication to workplace excellence by taking on formal mentoring roles; her mentorship helped one early-career development candidate become shipping supervisor at the company’s largest roofing plant, just as she advised another hourly employee through a career trajectory that ultimately led her to a supervisor role. She is passionate about supporting young engineers and leads the campus recruiting efforts for Owens Corning at Purdue University and is a member of the Material Science Engineering Department Industrial Advisory Committee.

As a former Division I athlete at Purdue, MaryBeth—an avid CrossFit athlete—is dedicated to the health and confidence of her team, leading her to start a fitness committee at the Compton plant. She led a Peloton team for Ohio’s Newark and Granville sites for six years, cycling and raising money for cancer research; participating virtually since moving to Los Angeles. She also coached a girls’ softball team for six years, volunteering her time to mentor young athletes. MaryBeth prioritizes outreach of the Compton plant, ensuring they are contributing positively to the surrounding community, and she is an active member of her church.





HONOREE

Winnie Tu

Head of Human Resources, Hon Hai USA
Foxconn

“I am motivated by creating environments where young people are empowered to grow and thrive, senior generations are valued and respected and mental health is openly recognized and supported. I am also passionate about ensuring elderly individuals in our communities receive dignity, care and the respect they deserve.”

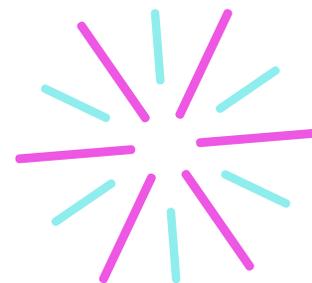
Work is always hard; there is always a challenge to overcome. The question is: Are you the problem solver or the problem creator?” Winnie Tu’s mindset has shaped many careers and reinforced a solution-oriented culture. In an industry largely managed in a traditional, top-down style, Winnie’s presence as assistant vice president of human resources has helped shape a strong, trust-based workplace for Foxconn.

Approaching her 30th year with Foxconn Technology Group, Winnie’s work has shaped Foxconn’s footprint across the U.S., North America and Europe. She had a pivotal role in launching and supporting eight greenfield sites in five states, plus a site acquisition with hundreds of workers in a sixth state. Her impact is especially notable in Wisconsin, where she helped grow a site from fewer than a dozen employees to more than 1,500 supporting data server production—a technology not widely manufactured in the U.S. Internationally, Winnie has guided Foxconn’s expansion across three sites in Mexico and one in Hungary.

A champion for sourcing, developing and mentoring female talent, Winnie has directly contributed to the increased presence of women in Foxconn’s leadership and technical roles. She also leads effectively across generations. When a junior colleague felt overwhelmed by complex responsibilities and considered leaving, Winnie responded with empathy rather than pressure, and the colleague stayed on and thrived, later crediting Winnie’s encouragement. Winnie also fosters continuous improvement, recently initiating a discussion on developing an AI-infused human resources operating model that integrates advanced technologies into talent processes.

Winnie’s time off work is often spent volunteering or mentoring. For more than four years, she has volunteered twice a month at a nursing home in Austin, Texas, to read to residents, assist with walks and provide companionship. Winnie also plays a vital mentorship role within the Asian American community, particularly among young women, where she’s supported mentees through family pressures, mental health challenges and uncertain career paths. These are quiet but powerful acts that mirror Winnie’s professional ethos of care and perseverance.





HONOREE

Alexandra Waltemyer

Director, Energy Saving Ceilings
Armstrong World Industries

“I hope to inspire the next generation by leading with curiosity and integrity: taking on complex challenges, developing others along the way and believing they can shape systems, cultures and ideas into something better.”

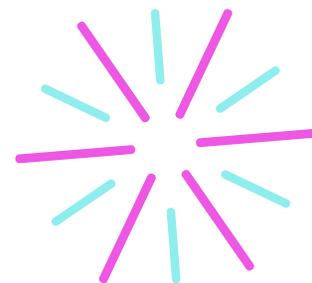
Nearly a decade ago, Alexandra Waltemyer made a major impact on Armstrong World Industries’ operations and business opportunities, and she hasn’t stopped since. In that first major initiative, Alex developed a portfolio management system that unified Armstrong’s manufacturing facilities, business support and product development under a single technology umbrella. For product development, she led agile methodology implementation, which was piloted during Armstrong’s ACOUSTIBUILT acoustical drywall solution launch. This created new jobs and millions of dollars in sales, and Alex’s initiative solidified Armstrong’s agile approach for future projects. Alex was recognized for her work in agile innovation with Armstrong’s CEO Award in 2019.

Since then, Alex also spearheaded Innovation Labs, bringing together internal experts from across functions to generate a pipeline of more than 60 new concepts, including TEMPLOK ceiling panels, which can reduce operational carbon emissions from buildings. Now that Alex is the director of the Energy Saving Ceilings business line, her work has already created more than 20 new jobs, with the potential for 50 more.

Through these accomplishments, it’s easy to see that Alex creates an environment where every idea is valued and collaboration is used to open doors. During Innovation Labs, Alex invited colleagues from different areas of the business to work side by side. Engineers learned how to build business cases and use customer feedback; sales and marketing gained new insight into product development; and manufacturing teams began to see their work through the lens of the end user. They ideated as a team and partnered to turn concepts into viable solutions.

In her commitment to education, Alex attends speaking events and hosts hands-on activities with women and girls in STEM programs. She volunteers with youth sports organizations, connecting children to high-school-aged players. This effort teaches the older players mentorship and reinforces confidence and teamwork across all ages. Additionally, Alex gives one-on-one youth tutoring in mathematics to help students succeed academically.





HONOREE

Meganne Wecker

Owner and Chief Executive Officer
Skyline Furniture Manufacturing

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that leadership can be creative, compassionate and resilient; building things responsibly matters; women belong at every table—especially at the head of it; and investing in people, purpose and craft creates lasting businesses.”

As CEO and owner of Skyline Furniture Manufacturing and the third generation of her family to run the business, Meganne Wecker has built her career on anticipating industry shifts and driving innovation. For nearly 80 years, Skyline has been a trusted name in U.S. made-to-order furniture. Under Meganne’s leadership, it has grown from a modest 50-person company into a multimillion-dollar powerhouse with more than 450 employees across three facilities.

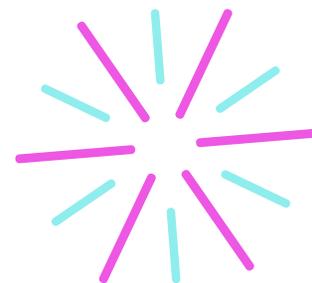
In the early 2000s, long before e-commerce defined consumer behavior, Meganne recognized the potential of the digital marketplace. She transformed Skyline’s made-to-order model into one of the first in the furniture industry designed specifically for online retail. She also spotted a gap for affordable, fashion-forward upholstery and led the design and development of stylish, accessibly priced furniture aimed at younger consumers. Despite industry skepticism, the formula of trend-driven upholstery, affordable pricing and direct-to-consumer delivery proved to be a winning one. Skyline emerged as a risk-free solution for the country’s fastest-growing retail platforms and fueled tremendous growth for the company.

In 2016, drawing on firsthand insight into consumer preferences from major retail partners, Meganne recognized a growing demand for a furniture brand that could mirror the speed-to-market model seen in the fashion industry. Frustrated by the industry’s stagnant designs, she took a bold step, investing in the nation’s first upholstery-grade digital printer. This innovation not only streamlined Skyline’s supply chain but also unlocked new possibilities for customization. It laid the foundation for Cloth & Company, an eco-certified, textile-focused home brand that leverages digital printing and 3D-rendering technology to bring collections to market with unprecedented speed. Through its pioneering “click-to-ship” model, Cloth & Company delivers bespoke pieces to consumers within weeks, setting a new standard for design, sustainability and rapid fulfillment in the home furnishings industry.

Recently, Meganne has focused on obtaining eco-certifications and ensuring the supply chain is sustainable and environmentally conscious. She has also prioritized reshoring raw materials, cultivating domestic partnerships and reducing reliance on overseas suppliers. These efforts not only strengthen operations but also support local communities and reinforce Skyline’s commitment to a long-term vision of U.S. manufacturing.

Meganne’s leadership has earned wide recognition, with Skyline ranking number 15 on Crain’s Chicago’s Largest Women-Owned Businesses list for 2025 and Family Business Magazine honoring Meganne with a Transformational Women in Business Award. For Meganne, her proudest accomplishment is proving that women led, U.S.-based manufacturing is not only possible, but powerful.





HONOREE

Jeannie Whitfield

Vice President, Business Development
Parts Life, Inc.

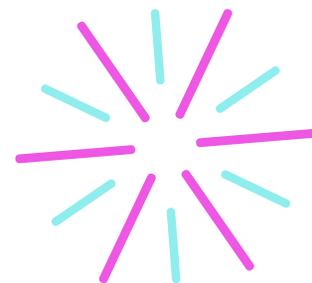
“I am motivated by the people who matter most to me—my husband and children—who inspire me to lead with heart and intention. Their support, paired with a strong connection to our company’s mission, pushes me to grow, lead responsibly and serve with purpose.”

Jeannie Whitfield carries the distinction of being one of Parts Life’s first employees, joining the organization just a few years after its inception. In her 12 years with the company, she has been an essential part of its growth, supporting more than 180 employees across its family of companies as the vice president of business development. Early in her career, she identified the need for a formal business intelligence function and built the department from the ground up. Her ability to address customer needs helped drive the growth of Parts Life as it moved from securing sole-source contracts under the small business 8(a) program, to participating in larger competitive initiatives across the Department of Defense. By emphasizing technical capability, past performance and a commitment to the warfighter and U.S. taxpayer, Parts Life secured one of its first competitive contracts with the U.S. Navy. As the company expanded through acquisitions, Jeannie integrated business development strategies across Parts Life, DeVal and LC, aligning capture, contracting and account management into a unified enterprise approach.

Jeannie’s ability to build lasting business processes, open new opportunities and strengthen the company’s foundation for growth—combined with her advocacy and community engagement—makes her a role model for the next generation of manufacturing leaders. Her leadership philosophy, learned from CEO Sam Thevanayagam, is to give people opportunities to discover their potential. Jeannie’s emphasis on open communication and continuous improvement has encouraged her team to share ideas on how to work more effectively together. She encourages team members to take on new challenges, often helping them advance into leadership roles. Most of all, her ability to balance professional growth with family responsibilities inspires colleagues to pursue advancement with confidence.

While Jeannie’s community involvement runs deep and wide, it may be best shown through her leadership of the annual holiday support project for Visitation Homes, an initiative she created and continues to lead. Each Christmas, she organizes the Parts Life family of companies to provide meals, gifts and groceries for the women and children of Catholic Social Services Visitation Homes in Philadelphia. By coordinating employees, donations and outreach, she has built a tradition that reflects her belief that business leadership must also mean community leadership. Jeannie also serves on the Women in Defense Liberty Chapter board and the Lakehurst Small Business Roundtable board.





HONOREE

Ellen Whittingham

Vice President, Strategic Talent Enablement
Kennametal

“I am motivated by a deep internal drive and passion for connecting talent to strategy—creating win-win outcomes that advance both people and the business.”

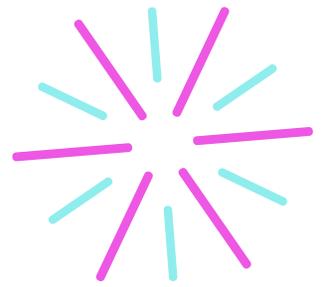
From developing leaders to fueling team growth and business success, Ellen Whittingham exemplifies accountability and consistently delivers meaningful impact. She began her career in manufacturing as a process engineer and continuous improvement manager and spent more than two decades in operations. Her ability to solve problems, lead through complexity and manage people, processes and performance has made her a trusted leader.

Transitioning to human resources more than 15 years ago, Ellen has helped lead various companies through organizational design transformations and driven a shift in performance management from an annual exercise to a continuous experience that promotes accountability and feedback. She has elevated talent management, talent acquisition and learning, ensuring employees have clearer career paths and better tools to succeed.

At Kennametal, Ellen has led various inclusion and belonging efforts, including the development of the company’s I&B strategy; commemorations for various key awareness months, including the company’s Women’s History Month recognition ceremony; and championed the launch of multiple employee resource groups. Over multiple years, company employee engagement scores improved, career growth expanded for high potential employees and the company successfully retained the majority of successors for critical roles. In addition, Ellen mentors several women and men in industrial manufacturing and regularly advocates for team members.

Ellen’s leadership has directly improved community services as well. For more than six years, she has supported Outreach Teen and Family Services, a nonprofit that provides counseling to young people and their families. She has helped the organization develop and execute a strategy to expand into new communities and guided the executive director in building a pipeline of talent and coaching the staff. On a trip to Tanzania last year, Ellen, her family and fellow travelers visited a girls’ orphanage, bringing suitcases filled with supplies and sports equipment. That experience left a lasting impression and deepened her commitment to serving others.





HONOREE

Danette Wilder

President and Chief Executive Officer
SealingLife, Inc.

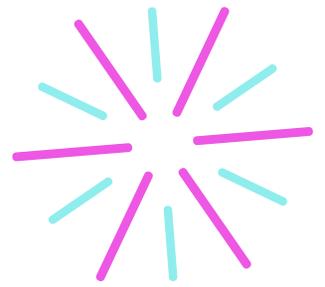
“I hope to inspire the next generation by leaving a legacy of innovation, integrity and accountability—encouraging young people to imagine, invent, think critically, discover who they are, pursue their purpose and lead with kindness as they build the future of manufacturing and technology.”

With women comprising 90% of SealingLife’s workforce, President and CEO Danette Wilder has shaped a culture of high employee satisfaction, autonomy and collaboration. Under her guidance, the company achieved the prestigious AS9100 Aerospace Quality Certification—a benchmark of excellence that remains rare among small, woman-owned and minority-owned manufacturers in the advanced materials and elastomeric components sector. Danette personally led the system design, training and implementation of risk management and supplier qualification processes required to meet these global aerospace standards. Within SealingLife, Danette developed and implemented the Know Your Numbers for Success and Drive Solutions for Impact programs, which have enabled the company to maintain a 100% quality rating and zero customer returns.

Danette leads from the front, personally solving engineering challenges on the production floor and coaching emerging leaders throughout the organization. She established a Core Leadership Team to promote shared accountability, hosted professional workshops and built structured programs that include Women Mentoring Women book clubs, one-on-one coaching and Enneagram-based training. Danette also creates second-chance employment pathways for women and mothers navigating reentry, providing personal mentorship to help them successfully rejoin the workforce.

Danette’s volunteerism reflects her belief that empowerment begins with opportunity. She serves on the Kentucky Intellectual Property Alliance Board and has served as chairperson for the Kentucky Commission on Women, vice chair of the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board and treasurer for the Kentucky Aerospace Industry Consortium. As former president of the Bluegrass Chapter of the Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education, she helped bridge classroom learning with hands-on manufacturing opportunities for youth and career changers. Danette serves as a speaker, mentor and advocate, sharing her experiences and insights at schools, professional associations and community forums to encourage women and youth to pursue careers in STEM and advanced manufacturing. Her record of impact and inspiration across manufacturing demonstrates how Danette has combined technical excellence with emotional intelligence to uplift women and the industry as a whole.





HONOREE

Ashton Williams

Senior Director, Operations
Smithfield Foods

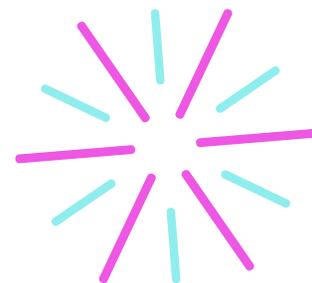
“I am motivated by seeing the potential in those around me and supporting them to advance their career.”

Already one of only five female plant managers across Smithfield Foods’ 40+ facilities, Ashton Williams broke new ground by becoming the company’s first female senior director of operations, overseeing four sausage facilities. Ashton has directly influenced six production facilities during her career, spearheading the launch of new product lines, reworking plant layouts, sourcing equipment, training teams and conducting research. Managing a team of more than 500 employees at the St. Charles, Illinois, facility, Ashton oversaw the production of 129.4 million pounds of dry sausage annually. She achieved a weekly production capacity of 3 million pounds—a goal unmet for over a year—and the facility consistently reached 97% or greater fill rates.

In each role Ashton has had with Smithfield, she’s demonstrated an ability to identify and nurture talent with a commitment to mentoring and uplifting emerging leaders, particularly women in manufacturing. Ashton emphasizes the importance of representation, believing that seeing others like themselves in leadership roles inspires confidence and ambition. Influenced by her own mentors, Ashton now pays it forward by supporting rising talent, and she finds the greatest fulfillment in watching those she has mentored grow into confident, capable leaders.

Ashton builds strong connections in the community, as well. In St. Charles, she developed a strong partnership with the Valley Industrial Association, where she facilitated collaborative discussions among manufacturers in the Fox Valley area and hosted on-site plant tours to share best practices. Ashton also collaborated with the Greater Chicago Advanced Manufacturing Partnership to create career pathways for high school students. She emphasized the value of manufacturing careers, highlighting viable alternatives to traditional college routes. In 2023, Ashton organized an annual holiday ham giveaway, distributing more than 7,000 Smithfield hams to St. Charles residents. She became involved with the local food bank as a volunteer, as well as in coordinating product donations and encouraging her team to get involved. Since relocating to Virginia, Ashton has remained committed to community involvement through Smithfield outreach events, including continued volunteer work with local food banks.





HONOREE

Erin Wojcicki

Lead Scientist, Global Application Technology and Specifications
SABIC

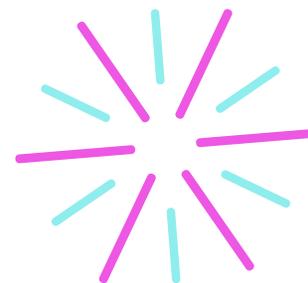
“I hope to inspire the next generation by helping create spaces where young women feel supported and encouraged to explore STEM. Sometimes all it takes is someone saying ‘you can do this’ or offering a place to ask questions without judgment. If I can help build that kind of community, I think real change can grow from there.”

Erin Wojcicki’s 12-year career at SABIC is not all told by metrics, but her metrics are impressive: Erin has led more than \$100 million in research efforts, including a \$5 million project to advance the manufacturing process for a new ULTEM foam product. Her technical contributions are reflected in 103 internal reports, nine invention disclosures and six patent filings. Now lead scientist for global application technology and specifications, Erin’s focus on design for manufacturability ensures that innovative solutions are technically sound as well as practical and scalable for production.

Erin’s effect on the SABIC company continues into her mentorship and professional development. She has completed business leadership training that’s equipped her to influence cross-functional teams and drive strategic initiatives. She consistently serves as a talent champion and advocates for the development of the next generation of technical leaders. Erin has led focused mentoring sessions with engineers at SABIC’s Polymer Processing Development Center, which has allowed her to help team members build and demonstrate technical competencies. In addition to her mentorship, Erin cultivated emerging talent through her leadership of the PPDC co-op program for three years.

Through Erin’s consistent volunteer efforts and mentorship within the community, she has made a meaningful difference in preparing youth for academic and personal success. She has actively partnered with the Flying Cloud Institute, supporting their Young Women in Science and youth STEM camps, and she has volunteered for elementary school STEM events. Over the years, Erin has hosted multiple events and tours for youth groups and connected these students with SABIC Women’s Network members to provide additional role models and mentorship opportunities in STEM. Erin also has served for three years on the steering committee for the Berkshire Youth Leadership Program for high school students, and she has been a science fair judge at Morris Elementary School in Lenox for four years.





HONOREE

Carla Wright

Vice President, Manufacturing, Toyota Motor Manufacturing Texas
Toyota Motor North America

“I hope to inspire the next generation by demonstrating that leadership is about purpose, integrity and continuous learning—showing that innovation and collaboration can drive sustainable success—and by mentoring others to believe in their potential and break barriers.”

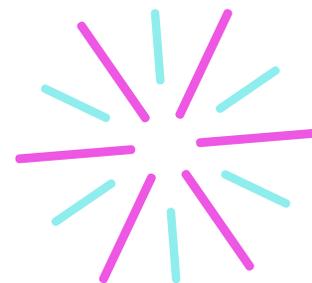
Carla Wright’s journey from administrative assistant to a top manufacturing leader is a tale of resilience, adaptability and excellence over a 25-year career. Carla’s early achievements in Toyota Motor North America’s research and development group included cutting work hours for performance documentation in half and exceeding cost-reduction targets for all new vehicle models. Since then, one of Carla’s most notable accomplishments was leading production ramp-up for a new vehicle model during the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Amid global supply chain disruptions, Carla oversaw the hiring and onboarding of more than 600 new team members. Toyota Motor Manufacturing Texas (Toyota Texas) achieved the highest team-member morale and engagement scores among all Toyota manufacturing plants in the country, while reducing downtime related to parts shortages by 97%.

As vice president of manufacturing at Toyota Texas, her responsibilities include oversight of the plant’s daily manufacturing operations across assembly, paint, plastics, welding, press and plant engineering, including the upcoming Rear Axle Unit Plant set to launch in late 2026. In her fearless approach to taking on new roles, Carla can be heard saying she does it, “so my daughters know they can do whatever they put their minds to.” She uses her background as a former teacher to develop policies and systems that engage and empower employees. When working in R&D Digital Solutions, she developed an employee individual development plan and a comprehensive management system that aligned vision, mission and annual goals. Today, she continues to mentor women at every level of the organization.

Carla’s visionary leadership is a boon for San Antonio and the state of Texas, as well. Since 2021, she has served on the board of the Texas Diversity Council, and the following year, she was honored with the Diversity FIRST Leadership Award. She then joined the board of Junior Achievement of South Texas, raising \$42,000 to support its curriculum. She currently serves on the executive board of the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and as a co-chair of their Education and Workforce Development committee. Prior to moving to San Antonio, Carla was board president of SOS Community Services in Michigan, a nonprofit dedicated to preventing homelessness.

Carla holds a Bachelor of Arts from Madonna University and several certifications, including Leading Others from the University of Michigan Center for Creative Leadership; Strategic Leaders from the University of Michigan Ross School of Business; Diversity First from the National Diversity Council; and Evolving Leaders from the Southern Methodist University Cox School of Business.





HONOREE

Christine Young

Senior Director, Operations
Caterpillar Inc.

“I hope to inspire the next generation by encouraging them to discover unshakable confidence—believing their potential stretches far beyond what they imagine. By challenging the status quo and embracing what makes them different, they can create ideas and results bolder and greater than anything we thought possible.”

Christine Young didn't set out to break barriers—she set out to build great teams. Along the way, she became the first woman and first non-Japanese leader to head operations at Caterpillar's Akashi, Japan, facility, where she now leads and is part of a team of more than 1,000 employees. Under her leadership, Akashi is strengthening built-in quality, elevating performance and aligning around a shared culture of operational excellence.

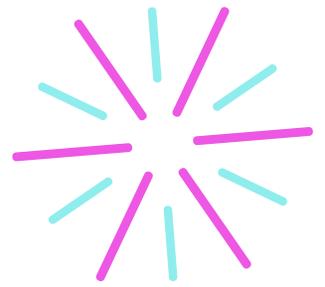
In Akashi, Christine is recognized for her people-first leadership. With a steady, energizing presence, she listens deeply, expects courage and brings out the best in others. Her focus on disciplined problem-solving, dedicated execution and employee engagement is not only improving machine reliability but also building a workplace where individuals feel valued, accountable and connected to purpose. Yet what she values most is the unity of the team and the culture of shared ownership they're creating together.

Prior to her global assignment Christine worked in four facilities, most recently in Victoria, Texas, where she led hydraulic excavator production and helped elevate safety, quality and engagement during a period of significant transformation and volume increase. Her earlier experiences—spanning quality, lean/CPS, supply chain, logistics engineering and design engineering at a previous company—provided a strong foundation in operations and change leadership. Across these roles, she guided teams through complexity, strengthened systems and accelerated improvements that continue to benefit Caterpillar's global production network.

Christine pairs her operational depth with technical roots from Purdue University, where she earned her engineering degree and remains a lifetime member of the Purdue Alumni Association. Over her tenure at Caterpillar, she has participated in and sponsored numerous employee resource groups, reinforcing her belief in the Power of Everyone as a driver of strong culture and performance. She is passionate about developing future leaders, championing diverse perspectives and fostering workplaces where people feel supported to grow and succeed. Throughout her career, she has mentored employees across functions and continents, helping them navigate challenges, build confidence and discover their own potential.

Across every role, Christine's compass has remained constant: invest in people, create clarity and build organizations where employees feel connected to purpose. Her teams describe her as a leader who challenges, champions and believes—that when people grow, performance follows. This philosophy continues to guide her work and shape the cultures, teams and future talent of Caterpillar's global operations.





HONOREE

Olawumi Yusuff

Senior Director, Food Safety
Ferrara Candy Company

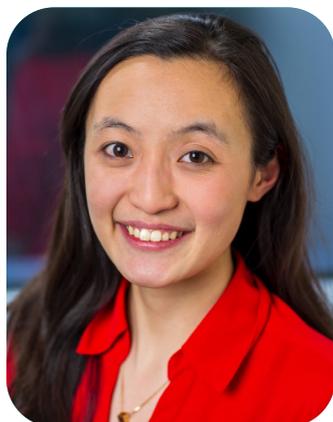
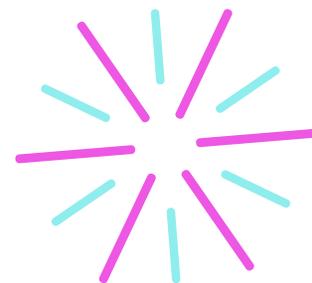
“I am motivated by opportunities to contribute to manufacturing excellence where food safety, quality and operations reinforce one another while giving back through mentorship and community engagement. I believe strong systems, data-driven decisions and engaged people are essential to delivering consistently safe, high-quality products and building resilient, high-performing organizations.”

As senior director of food safety, Olawumi Yusuff leads a dedicated team of food safety and sanitation professionals and provides enterprise-wide leadership across Ferrara Candy Company’s manufacturing network. Her risk-based, preventive approach has strengthened the company’s global food safety systems, advancing programs in allergen management, sanitation, foreign material controls and microbiological controls that safeguard millions of consumers worldwide. Under her leadership, Ferrara elevated its global food safety standards, enabling manufacturing excellence and a zero-defect mindset while driving measurable reductions in incident rates. Olawumi has made a profound impact by implementing a strategy that integrates data analytics, continuous improvement and cross-functional collaboration—transforming food safety into a shared business value through engagement and ownership at every level, from production floor operators to senior leadership.

Formerly co-chair of Ferrara’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council—a group sponsored by the CEO—Olawumi played a pivotal role in bridging the gap between manufacturing facilities and corporate locations, two areas that historically operated in silos. Her council identified a critical barrier to engagement among employees who spoke English as a second language, and the team partnered with IT to explore technology-based solutions. The resulting pilot of Zoom and Outlook translation features to improve real-time communication and inclusion for global team members proved so impactful that Ferrara expanded access company-wide. Olawumi’s leadership demonstrates how inclusive thinking drives both culture and operational excellence.

A lifelong commitment to service, learning and empowerment is seen in her community involvement. As past chair of the board of directors for the Chicagoland Food Science Foundation, Olawumi leads initiatives that promote awareness of food science and create pathways for students pursuing careers in the food industry. Under her leadership, CFSF continues to strengthen partnerships between academia and industry to ensure the future of early-career professionals pursuing STEM and food science. Olawumi also serves as a mentor with AscentPoint Leadership (formerly WOMEN Unlimited, Inc.), an organization developing and empowering high-potential women leaders. Bridging industry and community, Olawumi continues to elevate others, foster inclusion and shape a future where opportunities in STEM and leadership are accessible to all.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Cathy T. Zhang

Circular Economy Innovation Manager
Saint-Gobain

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that courage is doing the tough work day after day, taking small, consistent steps that eventually move mountains.”

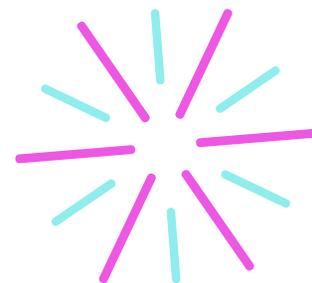
As the circular economy innovation manager for Saint-Gobain North America, Cathy Zhang leads teams to turn complex waste resources into sustainable solutions. Since joining Saint-Gobain, Cathy has played a pivotal role in embedding sustainability into the company’s innovation process and accelerating its circular economy goals. Cathy and her team co-developed and deployed CarbonEstimator, a digital tool for environmental impact and hotspot assessment. Incorporating input from research and development, finance, sales and product management, the tool was launched to more than 300 global users, supporting more than 20 sustainable innovation projects at one site alone in 2023.

Cathy has built an inclusive sustainable innovation team from the ground up and is committed to creating opportunities for others. She has mentored more than a dozen early-career professionals from diverse backgrounds, served on panel discussions for career development and built a team where inclusive collaboration and diverse perspectives are core values. Furthermore, she mentored start-ups through Go Build 2024, a program coordinated by Greentown Labs and sponsored by Saint-Gobain, fostering innovation and sustainability in the construction start-up ecosystem.

Cathy frequently shares presentations on the latest innovation in circular economy practices with colleagues, and her trainings have been deployed across multiple functions. As a board member of Women in Cleantech and Sustainability, Cathy’s leadership is influencing the broader manufacturing community. She oversees programs that reach more than 500 professionals each year and empowers a team of female volunteers. Their accomplishments have included successfully implementing pricing-change initiatives, completing an onboarding program and improving the format of their social media channels.

In the last decade, Cathy has mentored students and supported STEM education initiatives. She volunteered as a high school tutor and has conducted workshops at local science fairs. In every endeavor, she has sought opportunities to share and support the next generation of talent while translating previous learnings into new opportunities.





HONOREE

Min Zhou

Strategic Development and APJ Manufacturing Operation Director
HP Singapore (Private) Limited

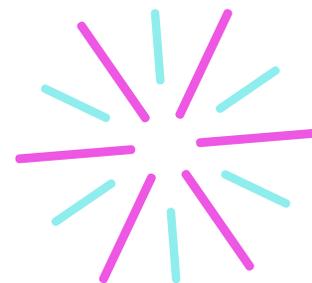
“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that regardless of age, gender or nationality, by staying curious, embracing uncertainty, learning from our mistakes, focusing on growth and treating ourselves and others with respect and fairness, we can achieve great results and cultivate fulfilling relationships both at work and life.”

HP’s manufacturing facility in Thailand is up and running, thanks to the standout leadership of Director of Strategic Development Min Zhou. Under Min’s direction, the facility achieved an accelerated ramp-up—about 55% faster than a typical site launch—producing and shipping approximately 2.7 million units annually. Min’s leadership resulted in this exceptional launch followed by maintaining and improving total customer experience metrics, reducing factory cycle time by two days and achieving goal targets. By guiding the team to prioritize high-impact work and encouraging open dialogue, she empowered others to contribute ideas and take ownership of solutions.

Within and beyond her immediate organization, Min is known for her commitment to developing team members. She mentors emerging leaders, sharing her time, insights and experience to help others grow professionally and personally while supporting talent development initiatives across the company. HP has seen more structured action plans, tangible progress and a culture where individuals feel valued, empowered and motivated to excel. It is obvious that the supportive environment Min cultivates has contributed to enhanced team performance and organizational success.

For her three young daughters, Min tries to be a role model of an engaged citizen as well as a valued team member. Mindy is a long-standing sponsor of Sasco Senior Citizens’ Home and Junior Achievement Singapore Ltd. In addition, she has volunteered as a mentor for Junior Achievement Singapore and the Young Technopreneur Challenge sponsored by HP. She has continued to give back to her community, including sponsoring and preparing free meals for seniors.





★ EMERGING LEADER

Ana Paula Zinn

Engineering Manager, Technical Publications
Honeywell

“I hope to inspire the next generation by showing that confidence is built and authenticity is powerful. By staying curious, taking risks, I want to prove that leadership, resilience and impact are forged through courage, learning and believing in yourself—even when the path feels uncertain. Always lift others with you.”

Ana Zinn joined Trane Residential in 2018 and was promoted five times over the past six years. When she first joined the Trane Residential HVAC Split Systems team, Ana saw a gap in internal and external support for sourced products and stepped in to fill it. She quickly became known as the internal sourced-product expert and for turning innovative ideas into reality. Ana has successfully launched more than 20 products that are low-global-warming-potential compliant, supporting \$155 million in revenue sales.

Ana originally joined Trane Technologies as part of its Accelerated Development Program, an early-career program that gives recent graduates broad exposure to company operations and senior leaders. She now serves as an ADP mentor, and the young women she has mentored have all gone on to be hired in engineering roles throughout the company.

Ana believes it's important for younger Latinx members of the organization to see someone who looks like them succeeding within the organization while embracing their culture. Ana has been recognized through Trane Technologies' work with Project Scientist for her service as a STEM Superstar, a volunteer committed to sharing their personal and professional journeys with girls from marginalized and underserved communities. Actively involved with the national Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, Ana presented “Flatten the Learning Curve, Strategies to Improve Your Career Growth” to 75 attendees at the 2024 National SHPE convention and provided the keynote address for the Trane Technologies hospitality suite, drawing 200 attendees.

In the local Charlotte, North Carolina, community, Ana has volunteered at an elementary afterschool STEAM club for bilingual young girls, where she shared how she came from a similar background and grew up to get an engineering degree—a commitment that earned her recognition in a local public radio feature. Ana has also served as a guest judge for the local high school's CO2 car race and presented for the Women's History Month Panel at a local middle school. Always evolving and learning, Ana is currently pursuing her MBA at Duke University.





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