



ASIAN
CORPORATE &
ENTREPRENEUR
LEADERS

2025

ACELing IN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Bridging the Divide:
Leading with Purpose in a Changing World

AUGUST 14–15

TEMPE, ARIZONA

CONNECT. LEAD. ELEVATE.



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UPHOLDING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, **TOGETHER.**

SRP is committed to promoting diverse perspectives and civic engagement in order to make a positive impact in the community. That's why we support organizations like Asian Corporate & Entrepreneur Leaders that develop and foster initiatives that enrich life for us all.

srp.net/community-support



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is proud to support ACEL
in empowering
the next generation of
AAPI leaders



WELCOME



Dear Sponsors, Partners, Members, and Colleagues,

Welcome to Arizona and to our 12th Annual ACELing In Leadership Conference!

This year, we proudly celebrate 19 years of empowering the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) community. Since our founding, ACEL has remained steadfast in its mission to cultivate leadership, foster mentorship, and champion community service across generations.

Our journey has taken us far—what began in Arizona has now expanded to Colorado, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Nevada. This remarkable growth reflects not only our dedication to addressing the evolving needs of the AANHPI community but also the steadfast support of our board members, volunteers, and partners who make this work possible.

This conference stands as a testament to our shared commitment to developing leaders at every stage of life. We hope it offers meaningful insights, sparks inspiration, and empowers you to drive positive change in your communities. As we reflect on nearly two decades of impact, we also look ahead—with optimism and purpose—toward what we can accomplish together.

Thank you for being part of ACEL's journey. Your continued support makes all the difference.

Warm regards,

Jason C. Wong

Jason Wong
Founder & CEO

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 15, 2025

Dear 2025 ACEling In Leadership Conference Attendees,

I am honored to welcome you to Arizona. Your commitment to uniting AAPI leaders and strengthening their presence in communities, government, and the workforce is truly inspiring.

The Asian Corporate & Entrepreneur Leaders (ACEL) play a vital role in empowering AAPI professionals nationwide. Thanks to the exemplary leadership of President Jason C. Wong and the Board, AAPI individuals are better positioned to grow as leaders and entrepreneurs. As you attend workshops and speaker sessions, I hope you build meaningful connections with one another.

I wish you all a successful and productive conference and thank you for contributing to the betterment of Arizona. I am proud to represent the ACEL and its members in the United States Senate.

Sincerely,

RUBEN GALLEGOS
United States Senator



GREG STANTON
ARIZONA'S FOURTH DISTRICT

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
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DISTRICT OFFICE
1220 S. ALMA SCHOOL ROAD, STE. 209
MESA, ARIZONA 85210
(602) 956-2463

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

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WESTERN HEMISPHERE SUBCOMMITTEE

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE STRATEGIC
COMPETITION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES
AND THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY**

August 14, 2025

Greetings!

It is my privilege to welcome you to the 2025 ACELing in Leadership Conference. I hope you all make the most of your time here in Arizona. The work ACEL does in our state and around the country continues to empower Asian American and Pacific Islander professionals by providing all the necessary resources to become accomplished leaders in our communities. I encourage you all to make the most of the professional and personal opportunities offered through this experience.

Year after year, ACEL uplifts AAPI business leaders who work hard to make a more prosperous and welcoming community for all. This year's theme "Bridging the Divide: Leading With Purpose in a Changing World" could not be more relevant to the moment we are in as a nation. I look forward to seeing the way ACEL will rise to the occasion as changemakers and community leaders across industry sectors.

Thank you to Jason Wong and his outstanding team of leaders and mentors who give countless hours of their time in support of ACEL's longstanding commitment to stewardship, activism, and excellence. Your extraordinary efforts have made this year's conference a success yet again, and I hope you depart with the inspiration and motivation to continue to make a positive difference in your communities and around the world.

Sincerely,



Greg Stanton

Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Office of Governor Tim Walz &
Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan

Jason C. Wong and Daniela Thao
Asian Corporate and Entrepreneur Leaders
P.O. Box 25527
Tempe, Arizona 85285

July 24, 2025



Dear Asian Corporate and Entrepreneur Leaders (ACEL):

It has come to my attention that you will be hosting the annual ACELing in Leadership Conference from August 14-15, 2025. Know that I share in your excitement for this extraordinary occasion.

The work you accomplish in promoting Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) professional development within the State of Minnesota and nationwide does not go unnoticed nor unappreciated. Your commitment to supporting and advancing AANHPI entrepreneurs and leaders exemplifies the strength of diverse leadership in our communities. The AANHPI community positively impacts Minnesota's culture, economy and political landscape. We value the contributions AANHPI community members have made in Minnesota and abroad. Leadership that reflects the communities being served has always been a goal of our Administration, and it is events and organizations like these, that progress us to meet that goal.

On behalf of the people of Minnesota, I would like to acknowledge the important services ACEL provides, and once again congratulate you all on the exciting occasion of your annual ACELing in Leadership Conference!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tim Walz".

Tim Walz
Governor



COLORADO
Governor Jared Polis

August 14, 2025

Greetings!

As the Governor of the State of Colorado, I am honored to welcome you to the 2025 ACELing in Leadership Conference. This important event celebrates and empowers the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, and I'm proud to support its mission of advancing inclusive leadership.

I hope that you are eager to integrate the valuable insights and knowledge gained from this conference into your roles as entrepreneurs, professionals, and public advocates. Your dedicated efforts in providing training, resources, and mentorship to the Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander community are truly commendable. The positive impact on Denver's MNHPI community with your Denver Chapter (ACEL - Denver) is both profound and far-reaching.

Again, it is my earnest wish that your conference is successful and productive. I hope you have an outstanding event.

Sincerely,

Jared Polis
Governor
State of Colorado





August 1, 2025

City of Tempe
P.O. Box 5002
31 East Fifth Street
Tempe, AZ 85280
480-350-8225

Corey D. Woods
Mayor

Dear ACELing in Leadership Conference Attendees,

On behalf of the City of Tempe, it is my honor to extend warm congratulations and best wishes to the Asian Corporate & Entrepreneur Leaders (ACEL) as you gather for your annual ACELing in Leadership Conference.

While I regret that I am unable to attend in person, I want to express my deep appreciation for the work ACEL continues to do to empower Asian American professionals and entrepreneurs across Arizona and beyond.

The ACELing in Leadership Conference serves as an important space for emerging and established leaders to come together and grow professionally. As our communities continue to evolve, we rely on strong, visionary leadership to shape a more equitable future for all.

Thank you for your continued contributions to Arizona's business and civic landscape. I applaud your dedication and the impact you are making every day, and I look forward to the many ways ACEL will continue to lead our communities.

Congratulations on a successful conference, and please know that the City of Tempe is proud to stand with you in support and celebration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Corey D. Woods'.

Corey D. Woods
Mayor
City of Tempe, Arizona



Kevin Hartke
Mayor

August 1, 2025

Dear ACEL Board Members and Team,

On behalf of the City of Chandler, I extend our heartfelt congratulations on the remarkable work ACEL continues to do in uplifting and empowering Asian American and Pacific Islander professionals.

Your organization's mission—to elevate AAPI voices in leadership and cultivate a more inclusive, equitable future—is both timely and essential. Through initiatives such as professional development programs, mentorship opportunities, and cultural awareness events, ACEL is building bridges, expanding networks, and equipping the next generation of leaders to succeed.

This year's theme, *"Bridging the Divide: Leading with Purpose in a Changing World,"* powerfully underscores the critical role leaders play in closing cultural, generational, and economic gaps across business, government, and community sectors. ACEL's work not only strengthens its members but also enriches our broader community.

Congratulations once again to all members of the ACEL family. Your tireless leadership and vision are building brighter futures for countless professionals and communities alike.

Best Regards,



Kevin Hartke
Mayor, City of Chandler





Eric Genrich
Mayor

July 17, 2025

To whom it may concern:

Green Bay is proud to celebrate the rich cultural heritage and entrepreneurial spirit of the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA and NHPI) communities. These communities have long contributed to the strength and vitality of our city and our nation - through innovation, business leadership, and a steadfast commitment to excellence. ACEL's commitment to developing emerging leaders, fostering economic growth, and promoting civic engagement is a powerful example of how inclusion drives progress. Your efforts to empower professionals and entrepreneurs not only strengthen our economy but also enrich the cultural fabric of our communities.

I would especially like to recognize the ACEL-Northeast Wisconsin (ACEL-NEW) Chapter for your outstanding efforts in fostering leadership, professional development, and civic engagement right here in our region. Your work has created meaningful opportunities for individuals and businesses alike, and your commitment to building a more inclusive and dynamic community is deeply appreciated.

In my capacity as Mayor, I commend ACEL for your continued leadership and impact. May your conference be a source of inspiration, collaboration, and momentum for the important work ahead.

Thank you for your time and attention. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.



Sincerely,

Eric Genrich
Mayor of Green Bay



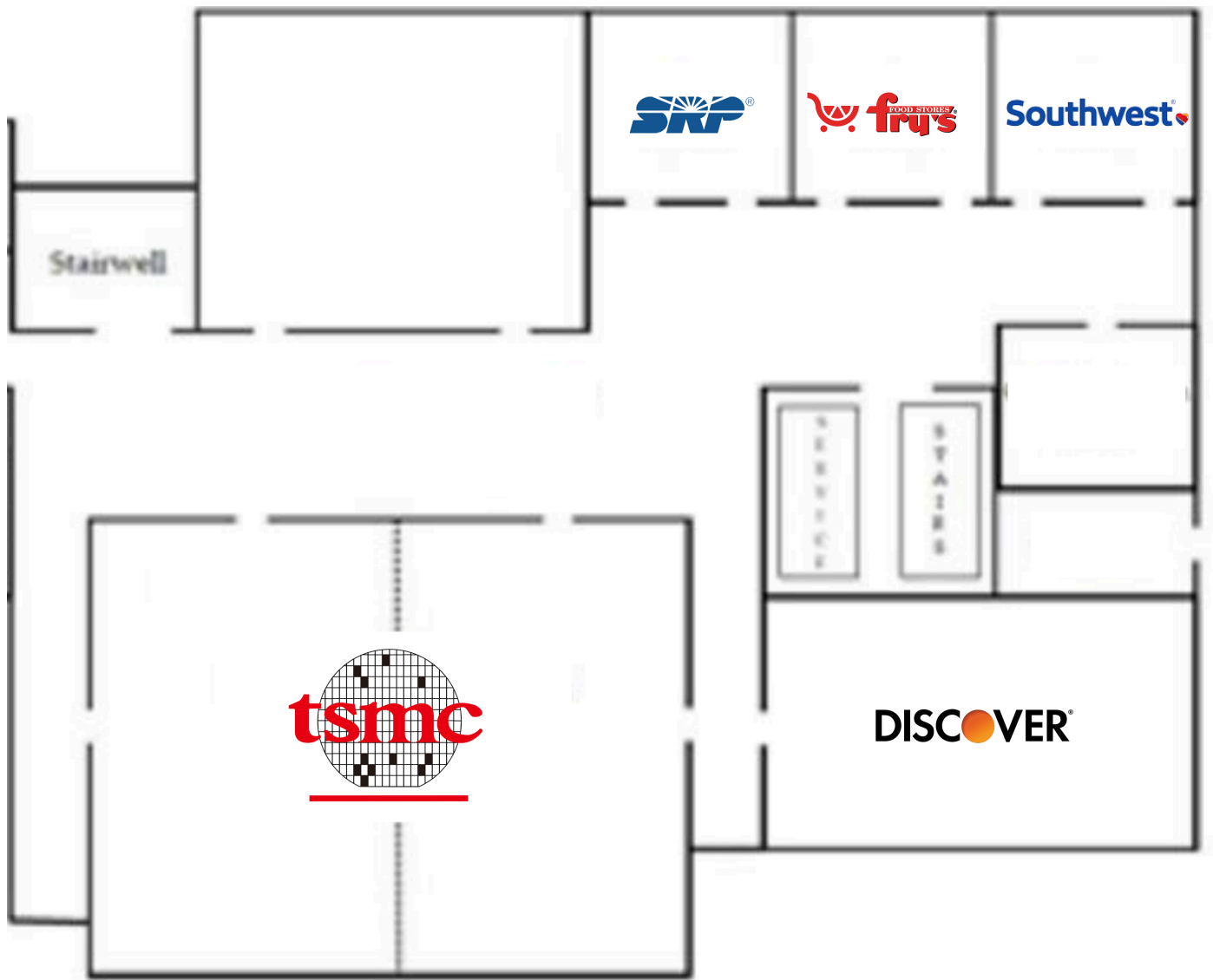
The power of together

Caring, giving and making things better.
It all starts by working together. Join us in
celebrating the power of community.



2025 ACELing in Leadership Conference Guide

- BALLROOM - TSMC Room
- A TRACK: Corporate Leadership - SRP Room
- B TRACK: Entrepreneurial Leadership - Fry's Food Stores Room
- C TRACK: Community Leadership - Southwest Airlines Room
- Session 8ABC: Discover Room



SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, AUGUST 14th

Time	Activity	Location
8:00 - 9:00 am	Registration/Breakfast/Opening Topic: Bridging the Divide and Moving Forward Speaker: Dr. Hui Wu-Curtis, SupportU	TSMC
9:00 - 9:20 am	Networking Break	
9:20 - 10:35 am	1A: No Key Required: Unlocking the Hidden Features of Employee Resource Groups Speaker: Dr. Kevin Sakamoto, Cal State University - Fullerton	SRP
	1B: Chart Your P.A.T.H. Speaker: Tania Will Jeppesen, The Prepared Leader	Fry's Food Stores
10:35 - 10:55 am	Networking Break	
10:55 - 12:10 pm	2A: Climbing the Corporate Ladder as an AANHPI Professional Speaker: Mariko Carpenter, Nielsen & Sharmila Fowler, OpalSphere	SRP
	2B: Building a Business in a Hybrid World: What Works, what Doesn't Moderator: John Fung Panelists: Faustine Chan, Rodney Hu, Anisha Patel, Tuyet Taylor	Fry's Food Stores
	2C: The Evolving Leader in the Age of AI Speaker: Roger Lee, Contact Center Advocates, LLC	Southwest Airlines
12:10 - 12:30 pm	Networking Break	
12:30 - 1:30 pm	Lunch Speakers: Sue Ann Hong-Whitaker, <i>Center for Asian Pacific American Women</i> & Jason Wong, <i>Asian Corporate & Entrepreneur Leaders</i> Emcee: Faye Ferguson	TSMC
1:30 - 1:50 pm	Networking Break	
1:50 - 3:05 pm	3A: Cross-Generational Leadership: Building Cohesion Across Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z Moderator: Andrea Moreno Panelists: Harrison Pham, Melanie Stuckenberg, Vanessa Leuaxay, Will Abbott	SRP
	3B: Brand You: Growing Your Personal Brand to Grow Your Business Speaker: Phil Kim, Signature Wealth Concepts, LLC	Fry's Food Stores
	3C: ACELerate Confidence: Reclaiming Voice, Power & Presence Moderator: Chau Nguyen Panelists: Jasmine Bhatti, Monica Wang, Dani Thao, Clairra Dresher	Southwest Airlines

SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, AUGUST 14th

Time	Activity	Location
3:05 - 3:25 pm	Networking Break	
3:25 - 4:40 pm	4A: Slay in Color - Restorative Leadership for a Purpose-Driven Future Speakers: Mistie Dawn Weishaar, Greenberg Traurig, LLP; Elizabeth Greene, Lam Research	SRP
	4B: Leveling Up Through Mentorship: Real Stories, Real Growth Moderator: Mark Strickling Panelists: CJ Dennis, Jay Maningo-Salina, Kayla Chan, Amanda Woo	Fry's Food Stores
	4C: Strengthening Civic Health in Arizona through Leadership and Action Moderator: Evelyn Casuga Panelists: Kristi Tate, Dawn Wallace and David Martinez	Southwest Airlines
4:40 - 5:00 pm	Networking Break	
5:30 - 7:30 pm	Welcome Reception & Mentorship Graduation Keynote Speaker: Anita Ranhotra, Hallmark Emcee: Kenny Ho, Carvana	Crescent Crown Distributing. Mesa AZ

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15th

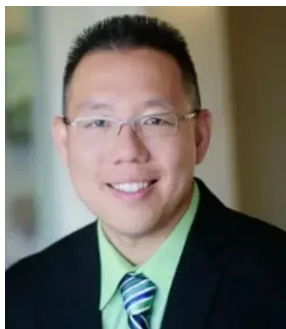
Time	Activity	Location
8:00 - 9:00 am	Registration/Breakfast/Opening Speaker: Phil Kim, Signature Wealth Concepts, LLC	TSMC
9:00 - 9:20 am	Networking Break	
9:20 - 10:35 am	5B: From Operator to Orchestrator: Navigating Career Pivots and Building at the Edges of Commerce Speaker: Dennis Yao Yu, The Other Group Moderator: Bill Imada, IW Group	Fry's Food Stores
	5C: Leading Through Disruption: Navigating AI, Automation, and Rapid Technological Change Moderator: Amy Wang Panelists: Michael Cheung, Rebecca Clyde, Sandra Yang Scirpo	Southwest Airlines
10:35 - 10:55 am	Networking Break	

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15th

Time	Activity	Location
10:55 - 12:10 pm	6A: Crisis-Proof Leadership: Cultivating Resilient Teams in an Unpredictable World Moderator: Kim Ho Panelists: Chau Nguyen, Melanie Stuckenberg, Jean Seo, George Chen	SRP
	6B: AI in Action: How Everyday Entrepreneurs Are Using AI to Work Smarter, Not Harder Moderator: Tommie Ho Panelists: Rodney Hu, Matt Hum, Jack Liu and Dr. LeeAnn Lindsey	Fry's Food Stores
	6C: Inside Out: Using Self-Awareness and Feedback to Achieve Growth Speaker: Anita Ranhotra, Hallmark	Southwest Airlines
12:10 - 12:30 pm	Networking Break	
12:30 - 1:30 pm	Lunch Speaker: Ron Li, Phoenix Suns Moderator: Jack Liu, ProCare Portal	TSMC
1:30 - 1:50 pm	Networking Break	
1:50 - 3:05 pm	7A: Leading with Integrity: Shaping Organizations Where People Matter Moderator: Reina Ferrufino Panelists: Dr. Johnny Yi, Anita Malik, Greg Lim and Sam Castro	SRP
	7B: Fuel Your Growth with Connection Speaker: Dr. Hui Wu-Curtis, SupportU	Fry's Food Stores
	7C: How to Harness the Strengths of All Generations as Current and Future Leaders Speaker: Roger Lee, Contact Center Advocates, LLC	Southwest Airlines
3:05 - 3:25 pm	Networking Break	
3:25 - 4:40 pm	8ABC: Empowering Yourself When You Don't Feel Empowered Speaker: Sue Ann Hong-Whitaker, Center for Asian Pacific American Women (CAPAW)	Discover
4:40 - 5:00 pm	Networking Break	
5:00 - 6:00 pm	Gala Registration and Reception	
6:00 - 8:00 pm	ACEL Leadership Awards Gala Keynote Speaker: Mariko Carpenter, Nielsen Emcee: Roger Cheng, AT&T and Faye Ferguson, Wells Fargo	TSMC Room

MEET THE EMCEES



Roger Cheng | Sr. Supplier Diversity Sourcing Manager at AT&T

Roger Cheng is a dedicated Sr. Supplier Diversity Sourcing Manager at AT&T. With over 14 years of experience in the technology industry, Roger's expertise lies in leading business development initiatives through Supplier Diversity, having previously excelled with M/WBEs. Roger is affectionately known as "The Voice" for his captivating emcee and VOG (Voice of God) performances at various prestigious events nationwide. In acknowledgment of his unwavering support for gender equality, Roger was bestowed with the esteemed #Hes4Shes Champion title at the WBENC National Conference in 2017.



Steve Erickson | Chief Learning Officer at Desert Botanical Garden

Steve Erickson is the Chief Learning Officer at Desert Botanical Garden, where he leads initiatives to inspire and educate through nature-based learning. Prior to this role, he spent over 13 years with Teach For America, serving in several leadership capacities including Executive Director and Vice President of External Affairs. With a strong background in public affairs and community engagement, Steve has dedicated his career to advancing educational equity and fostering civic partnerships across Phoenix. His strategic leadership and deep commitment to community impact continue to shape innovative programs that empower individuals and strengthen the fabric of the region.



Faye Ferguson | Executive Director at Wells Fargo Bank

Faye Ferguson is an Executive Director and District Senior Manager for Wells Fargo Bank, NA, overseeing a team of 95. With over 15 years in the financial industry, she leads the AZ Middle East Employee Resource Group and Arizona Asian Connection, promoting diversity and inclusion. Born in Dumaguete City, Philippines, Faye moved to the U.S. in 2007 and holds a BS in Information Technology from Negros Oriental State University. She is the Chairwoman of the ACEL board and a member of the Chandler and Mesa chambers of commerce. She is currently a candidate for Mrs Philippines Arizona 2025, promoting Building Future Leaders, representing the National Federation of Filipino American Associations Arizona.



Kenny Ho | Associate Corporate Counsel at Carvana, LLC

Kenny Ho oversees the company's external litigation portfolio, including consumer disputes, commercial litigation, general liability, and regulatory investigations. He partners closely with business leaders to protect corporate interests and mitigate risk. Committed to service and leadership, Kenny is a board member of the Arizona Asian American Bar Association and a former member of the State Bar of Arizona's Council for Minorities and Women in Law. A graduate of Valley Leadership Accelerate and the Bar Leadership Institute, he also actively participates in ACEL and Lambda Legal. Outside of work, Kenny enjoys martial arts, food exploration, and writing a music blog.

THURSDAY, AUG 14
8:30AM - 9:00AM

Thursday Coffee Session: Bridging the Divide and Moving Forward

Start your day with a powerful opening designed to spark inspiration and set the tone for connection, courage, and clarity. In a world marked by rapid change and growing gaps—between people, priorities, and perspectives—this session will challenge us to lead with intention, empathy, and bold purpose. Through compelling stories and actionable insights, you'll discover how to bridge divides in your own work, elevate your impact, and become the kind of leader who turns disruption into opportunity. Let's step forward—together—with a purpose that unites and a vision that moves us forward.



Dr. Hui Wu Curtis | C.E.O of SupportU

Dr. Hui Whu Curtis is a visionary leader in the CX and BPO industries, known for blending innovation with empathy to drive exceptional service and empower diverse teams. With over 20 years of operational experience across major industries, both domestically and globally, she brings strategic insight and deep expertise to every initiative. As CEO of SupportU and Director of Customer Service at SmartRent, Dr. Hui champions inclusive leadership and customer-centric transformation. An active speaker and published author, she has received numerous industry accolades for her impact in contact centers. Her personal journey—from immigrant child to executive—fuels her passion for elevating both people and performance across the customer experience landscape.

“Learn as if you will live forever, live like you will die tomorrow.” — Mahatma Gandhi



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Southwest Airlines® is dedicated to your community.

Our mission is to make the connections that empower communities to thrive. Through our meaningful relationships, we proudly support your efforts in the many communities we call home. Whether in the air or the ground, we believe community is more than a place – it's at the Heart of what brings us together.

**Southwest Airlines® is proud to be the official
airline sponsor for the 2024 ACEling in
Leadership Conference.**

Southwest®

1A. NO KEY REQUIRED: UNLOCKING THE HIDDEN FEATURES OF EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

This session is a call to lead with purpose, courage, and clarity. Through personal stories, lived experiences, and a simple framework, you'll be invited to reconnect with your deeper "why," lead in alignment with your values, and build spaces where both you and those around you can truly thrive. Rooted in authenticity and community, this session will include time for reflection and discussion. You will leave not only inspired, but ready to act with intention and impact.



Dr. Kevin Sakamoto | Professor at Cal State University- Fullerton

Dr. Kevin Sakamoto is a seasoned product management leader with senior roles at Dollar Shave Club, Lululemon, Target, and Zappos. He holds a Doctor of Business Administration from Pepperdine Graziadio Business School and an MBA from University of Hawaii. Dr. Sakamoto currently serves as Adjunct Professor at Cal State Fullerton and is a researcher at Pepperdine, focusing on Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and employee dignity through digital transformation. He recently served as a Women's ERG board member, designing safe space guidelines for workshops and seminars. He presented his ERG research at the 2025 Academy of Management conference in Copenhagen.

1B. PANEL: CHART YOUR P.A.T.H

This session is a call to lead with purpose, courage, and clarity. Through personal stories, lived experiences, and a simple framework, you'll be invited to reconnect with your deeper "why," lead in alignment with your values, and build spaces where both you and those around you can truly thrive. Rooted in authenticity and community, this session will include time for reflection and discussion. You will leave not only inspired, but ready to act with intention and impact.



Tania Will Jeppesen | Founder of The Prepared Leader

With two decades of experience leading operations and HR teams in both Fortune 50 companies and small to mid-sized businesses, Tania has a deep understanding of the challenges leaders face. Her passion for empowering leaders led her to shift her focus to leadership development, providing organizations with strategies and tools to thrive. Holding a Bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering, Tania's systematic approach to problem-solving has shaped her success in guiding leaders. Through engaging speaking sessions, she equips leaders with actionable insights to drive performance and foster a culture of excellence.

2A: CLIMBING THE CORPORATE LADDER AS AN AANHPI PROFESSIONAL

Explore the unique challenges and opportunities faced by AANHPI professionals as they navigate the corporate ladder throughout their career. This session will highlight strategies for overcoming barriers, building influence, and advancing careers while honoring cultural identity. Learn how to leverage strengths, develop leadership skills, and create meaningful impact in the workplace.

THURSDAY, AUG 14
10:55AM - 12:10AM

2A: CLIMBING THE CORPORATE LADDER AS AN AANHPI PROFESSIONAL (CONT.)

MEET THE **SPEAKERS**



Mariko S. Carpenter | Founder & Managing Director of OpalSphere

Mariko S. Carpenter is the Founder and Managing Director of OpalSphere, an advisory agency specializing in brand growth at the intersection of culture and strategy. With over 20 years of experience leading marketing initiatives for iconic brands in both B2C and B2B sectors, Mariko has held key roles at Nielsen and Condé Nast. She combines her deep expertise in consumer markets with data-driven insights to help organizations uncover growth opportunities and navigate market dynamics. A passionate advocate for the AANHPI community, Mariko has been recognized with the Outstanding 50 Asian Americans in Business Award. She holds an MS from New York University and a BA from Vassar College.



Sharmila M. Fowler | Co-Founder & Managing Partner of OpalSphere

Sharmila M. Fowler is the Co-Founder and Managing Partner of OpalSphere, a people-first advisory firm specializing in culture, brand, and business strategy. A seasoned DEI strategist and marketing expert, she brings 20+ years of cross-disciplinary experience spanning HR, consulting, and leadership development. Sharmila has held senior DEI roles at McDonald's and Echo Global Logistics and now teaches DEI management at DePaul University. A recognized leader, she serves on multiple national boards and advisory councils and was honored by Diversity MBA as a Top 25 Outstanding Leadership & Diversity Impact Award winner. Sharmila holds an MBA from The Wharton School.

Live an *Extraordinary Life*

The traveler pursues a life beyond the mundane and uninspired,
setting his sights on the beauty only a few have ever cognized.
Going the distance through voyage and venture
to come home to a place familiar and true
surrounded by the entirety of amazing experiences sown.

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2B: BUILDING A BUSINESS IN A HYBRID WORLD: WHAT WORKS, WHAT DOESN'T

As remote and hybrid work become the norm, how can small business owners and entrepreneurs adapt to attract talent, retain clients, and build culture? This session explores low-cost tools, time-tested strategies, and lessons learned from leaders managing distributed teams and customers.

Moderator



John Fung | Major Gifts Fundraiser

John Fung is a Major Gifts Fundraiser with over 11 years of experience in driving impact and helping others through philanthropy. A Certified Fundraising Executive and 2019 graduate of the FBI Citizens Academy, John is recognized for his leadership and service. His accolades include induction into the University of Arizona Kappa Sigma Fraternity Hall of Fame (2020) and graduation from Greater Tucson Leadership's Lead Class (2021). In 2022, he co-founded ACEL Tucson and served two years as president. Most recently, John was selected for the prestigious Social Venture Partners of Tucson Fast Pitch Class of 2025.

MEET THE PANELISTS



Faustine Chan | Community and Business Programs Director for BBB

Faustine Chan is the Community and Business Programs Director for BBB Serving Pacific Southwest, Central and Inland California. With over 20 years of event planning and communication experience, she oversees the business programs, events, and communications for the organization of over 22,000+ BBB Accredited Businesses, student scholarship programs, and event and meeting space. Faustine has been with the organization for 15 years and has a passion for being a servant leader in her community. Most recently, she was recognized with a 2024 Asian Leadership Award by The Profiles of Leadership Journal for her professional achievements and work in her community. Faustine holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Arizona State University, and also Master in Management and Communication. She is a native of Arizona and a proud mom of.



Rodney Hu | Owner & Operator at Yucca Tap Room

Rodney Hu is a second-generation Arizona native and ASU finance graduate. He spent eight years on Wall Street as an investment analyst with firms such as Goldman Sachs and Cantor Fitzgerald before returning to Tempe as the Owner/Operator of the iconic Yucca Tap Room. A founding member of Arizona Distilling Company, he helped produce the first locally distilled spirits in Phoenix since prohibition. Over the past decade, Rodney has worked in the cannabis industry, launching brands like Vital Infusions and Grand Daddy Genetics. Named a Phoenix New Times Tastemaker, he serves on several boards, including the Tempe Sports Authority Foundation.

2B: BUILDING A BUSINESS IN A HYBRID WORLD: WHAT WORKS, WHAT DOESN'T (CONT.)



Anisha Patel | Certified Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula, New Parent Coach, Author

Anisha Patel swapped her corporate badge for burp cloths—and never looked back. After a decade-long career spanning industries from automotive to aerospace to wellness, she stepped away from the boardroom to raise her three boys. That season opened her eyes to the emotional and logistical challenges parents face and it sparked a passionate mission: to help other parents not just get by, but thrive. Today, as the founder of MasalaMommy, Anisha provides pregnancy and postpartum coaching to individuals and partners with companies to deliver training and resources that strengthen workplace support for parents. She is the author of *Expecting: A Pregnancy Journal* and serves as the Maternal Health Chair for the Phoenix-Gilbert Chapter of Chamber of Mothers, advocating for better care and policies for moms across Arizona.



Tuyet Taylor | Entrepreneur / Founder of Curate Estate Partners

Tuyet Taylor is a purpose-driven entrepreneur and the founder of Curate Estate Partners. Backed by over a decade of leadership in marketing, project execution, and organizational strategy across Fortune 500 companies and startups, Tuyet approaches real estate through both a business and equity lens. Her mission is clear: to create access, opportunity, and financial empowerment through real estate—especially for communities historically left out of ownership. She leads with purpose, clarity, and an unwavering focus on long-term impact."

2C: THE EVOLVING LEADER IN THE AGE OF AI

In an era of constant change and AI disruption, effective leadership requires adaptability, empathy, and a focus on purposeful execution. In this interactive session, Roger shares a practical framework to build resiliency, cultivate an other-centered mindset, and lead with clarity. Drawing from real-world insights, he offers actionable strategies to help leaders navigate uncertainty, empower teams, and thrive in a rapidly evolving environment.



Roger Lee | Seasoned Leader at Contract Center Advocates, LLC

Roger Lee is a seasoned executive with over 20 years of expertise in finance, contact center operations, and customer experience (CX). As founder and principal of his own firm, he bridges product, sales, and customer success to drive cohesive, high-impact client journeys. Roger has led initiatives achieving nearly \$10 million in cost savings and has built top-performing teams in AI-driven marketing, product management, and digital transformation. A recognized CX thought leader, he is passionate about innovation and empowering leadership. Roger holds Six Sigma Black Belt and COPC certifications and contributes to the Stevie Awards and the Performance Excellence Network.

THURSDAY LUNCH
LET'S PIVOT! NAVIGATING CHANGES IN CAREER AND LIFE

Life and career rarely follow a straight path. Join us for a candid conversation about navigating major pivots—whether by choice or circumstance. Speakers will share personal stories of change, resilience, and reinvention across industries. Learn how to develop mental agility, overcome obstacles, and create your own opportunities. This session will provide insights on thriving through uncertainty, adapting to new environments, and building a dynamic, purpose-driven career across multiple sectors.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS



Sue Ann Hong-Whitaker | President and C.E.O of the Center for Asian Pacific American Women (CAPAW)

Sue Ann Hong-Whitaker is President & CEO of the Center for Asian Pacific American Women (CAPAW), leading the organization since 2020 after joining as interim Executive Director in 2018. She brings over 28 years of leadership experience at State Farm Insurance across Diversity & Inclusion, Technology, and Claims, managing teams of 600 and serving customers in 23 states. A committed advocate for equity and leadership, she serves on the Asia Society So-Cal Advisory Board and the National Diversity Advisory Council. In 2024, she received the Diversity MBA Top 25 Leaders of Impact Award and the LEDI International Life Changers Award.



Jason Wong, Founder & CEO of Asian Corporate & Entrepreneur Leader (ACEL)

Jason is the Founder and CEO of Asian Corporate & Entrepreneur Leaders (ACEL), a national organization committed to empowering Asian, American, and Pacific Islander (AAPI) professionals and entrepreneurs through leadership development, mentorship, and community engagement. Based in Phoenix, Arizona, Jason has led ACEL's strategic growth across multiple regions, creating programs that advance career mobility and amplify AAPI voices. A dedicated advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion, he has forged impactful partnerships with corporations, government, and nonprofit sectors. Jason is a recognized community leader and speaker who champions the next generation of AAPI changemakers to lead with purpose and impact.

3A WORKSHOP – CROSS-GENERATIONAL LEADERSHIP: BUILDING COHESION ACROSS BABYBOOMER, GEN X, MILLENNIALS, AND GEN Z

With multiple generations shaping today's workplace, leaders must foster collaboration across age groups. This discussion focuses on bridging generational gaps through mentorship, communication, and inclusive leadership. Discover practical approaches to harnessing the strengths of every generation to drive innovation, mutual respect, and team cohesion in rapidly evolving work environments.

Moderator



Andrea Moreno | Interim CEO of AZ Impact for Good

Andrea Moreno is the Interim CEO of AZ Impact for Good, bringing over 20 years of experience in community engagement and philanthropic leadership. A passionate advocate for social impact, she has held key leadership positions at SRP, where she managed multimillion-dollar corporate contributions and led successful community outreach initiatives. Andrea's commitment to empowering nonprofits and advancing philanthropy is reflected in her extensive board service, including her continued involvement with AZ Impact for Good. Deeply rooted in Arizona, she is a respected leader whose dedication to community betterment continues to inspire and uplift those around her.

MEET THE PANELISTS



Harrison Pham | Senior Director at Vaco

Harrison Pham is a Senior Director at Vaco, by Highspring, a global IT consulting and talent solutions firm. With 13 years of industry experience and over 7 years in leadership, he is passionate about building high-performing teams and focusing on helping each individual reach their maximum potential. Harrison brings deep expertise in talent strategy and team development, consistently driving results through collaboration and vision. He holds a degree from Arizona State University and is committed to fostering growth in both people and organizations.



Melanie Stuckenberg | IT Director of Strategy, Planning, and Delivery at Arizona Public Service

Melanie Stuckenberg is an accomplished IT executive with over 20 years of corporate IT experience and 9 years as an entrepreneur across diverse industries. She currently serves as the IT Director of Strategy, Planning & Delivery at Arizona Public Service, where she leads key functions including IT financial planning, portfolio management, governance, compliance, and vendor management. Melanie recently completed a three-year term on the Board of Trustees at the Desert Botanical Garden, contributing to the Operational and Personnel Committees. A passionate global traveler, she enjoys exploring new cultures, languages, and cuisines, bringing a broad and inclusive perspective to her leadership.



Vanessa Leuaxay | Senior Recruiter at Avnet

Vanessa Leuaxay is a Senior Recruiter at Avnet who now calls Phoenix, Arizona home. Originally from Kansas City, Kansas, she attended Grand Canyon University and has built her career around helping people find roles where they can grow and succeed. At Avnet, she also serves as the Membership Chair for the ASPIRE Employee Resource Group, supporting inclusion and community. Vanessa is known for her approachable style and genuine interest in people. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her partner, Connor, and their dog, Cooper—whether that's exploring new spots around town or just relaxing at home.



Will Abbott | Vice President of Development at Junior Achievement of Arizona

William Abbott is the Vice President of Development at Junior Achievement of Arizona. He brings over a decade of nonprofit experience with a focus on fundraising and donor engagement. An ASU graduate in Business Management and Sustainability and an MBA candidate, William has led transformative campaigns, including a 978% funding increase and a \$20 million capital project. His award-winning pitch presentations have inspired major gifts and elevated community partnerships. Previously with the Boy Scouts of America, he values lifelong donor relationships. A Scottsdale native, William is excited to be back home. He enjoys outdoor adventures with his wife, Reina, and their German Shepherd, Hera.

3B BRAND YOU: GROWING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Whether you're a founder, freelancer, or corporate professional, your personal brand is your most valuable asset. Learn how to position yourself with purpose, create trust across digital platforms, and turn authentic engagement into business opportunities.



Phil Kim | Managing Director & Co-Founder of Signature Wealth Concepts

Phil Kim is the Managing Director and Co-Founder of Signature Wealth Concepts, with over two decades of experience in financial planning and wealth management for individuals and businesses. A graduate of Cornell University, Phil holds multiple industry designations, including CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® and various FINRA registrations (Series 7, Series 66, and Series 24). His dedication to excellence, combined with a strong commitment to education and the profession, allows him to provide exceptional service to his clients. Active in his community and a frequent speaker on topics such as business strategy, financial planning, and career advice, Phil builds lasting relationships based on trust and accountability. Since 2008, he has resided in Arizona with his wife and two children, enjoying golf, travel, and outdoor activities.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23

1:50PM - 3:05PM

3C: ACCELERATE CONFIDENCE: RECLAIMING VOICE, POWER & PRESENCE

This candid and empowering panel brings together accomplished women leaders to explore the challenges of imposter syndrome—how it manifests, why it persists, and how to rise above it. Through personal stories and practical strategies, panelists will share how they've reclaimed their confidence, navigated self-doubt, and redefined their sense of belonging in spaces where they once felt invisible. Attendees will leave with tools to silence their inner critic and lead with authenticity, courage, and conviction.

Moderator



Chau Nguyen | Co-Founder of Chemical Handling and Occupational Safety (CHAOS)

Chau Nguyen is the co-founder of CHAOS (Chemical Handling and Occupational Safety) Supplies in Arizona, a company with over 30 years of excellence in the safety and automotive products industry. Under her leadership, CHAOS has earned a reputation for delivering innovative, high-quality solutions tailored to the evolving needs of professionals across multiple sectors. Chau's strategic vision and dedication to safety and customer satisfaction have positioned the company as a trusted partner for businesses nationwide. Her entrepreneurial drive continues to fuel the company's growth, making a lasting impact in the field of occupational safety and reinforcing CHAOS's role as an industry leader.

MEET THE PANELISTS



Jasmine Bhatti | Founder and C.E.O of Navi Nurses

Jasmine Bhatti, RN, is the founder and CEO of Navi Nurses, a fast-growing private-duty nursing company transforming at-home care through co-created care and client empowerment. With nearly 14 years of nursing experience, Jasmine brings a deep commitment to patient-centered care and healthcare innovation. Her leadership at Navi Nurses reflects a vision for accessible, compassionate, and personalized nursing support in the home. Jasmine is currently completing her PhD in Nursing and Health Innovation at Arizona State University, where her research focuses on reimagining healthcare delivery models. Her work bridges clinical expertise and innovative thinking to create meaningful change in the lives of patients and the nursing profession.



Monica Wang | Business Development Director at Amentum

Monica Wang is the Business Development Director at Amentum, where she leads environmental programs and government market strategy. With 20 years of experience and dual advanced degrees (MBA, MS in Civil Engineering), Monica brings strategic insight and technical expertise to every initiative. She serves as President of both the ACCEL Denver Chapter and the SAME Denver Metro Post, championing cross-sector leadership and collaboration. Monica is also the Founder of Epic Horizon, which delivers transformative wellness experiences through outdoor adventure, yoga, and mindfulness. Through her nonprofit, Epic Horizon Access, she expands nature-based wellness access for underserved communities. Monica is a certified yoga instructor, ultramarathon runner, and advocate for wellness-driven social impact.



Dani Thao | Marriage and Family Therapist, Life Coach Entrepreneur

Dani Thao is a Marriage and Family Therapist, Life Coach, and Entrepreneur, and the proud daughter of Hmong refugees. Often the “first” or “only” in many spaces, Dani knows firsthand the weight of imposter syndrome and the journey toward belonging. Her work is rooted in helping others come home to themselves—not by becoming someone new, but by remembering who they’ve always been. Through therapy, coaching, and community work, Dani creates spaces of healing, authenticity, and empowerment. She doesn’t show up because she has all the answers, but because she’s learned to lead with both courage and doubt—and believes we all deserve to take up space just as we are.



Claira Drescher | Chief Operating Officer of Gellert Health

Claira Drescher is the Chief Operating Officer of Gellert Health, a mission-driven organization guiding patients through the complexities of healthcare with compassionate support. She began her career at Goldman Sachs in finance, operations, and asset management before transitioning into psychology and healthcare. Claira holds a Master’s in Clinical Psychology from Pepperdine University and a Bachelor’s in Psychology and Economics from NYU. Her leadership is rooted in kindness, mindfulness, and service. Passionate about mentorship and community, she contributes to Asian Corporate & Entrepreneur Leaders (ACEL) through its Mentoring Program and Executive Alliance. Outside of work, she enjoys yoga, meditation, reading, art, music, travel, and time with loved ones.



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4A. SLAY IN COLOR – RESTORATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR A PURPOSE-DRIVEN FUTURE

This interactive workshop introduces a restorative leadership framework that blends emotional well-being with organizational impact. Inspired by the Slay in Color journal, participants will engage in mindfulness practices, guided prompts, and intentional reflection to reconnect with their purpose. Designed for leaders navigating constant change, the session offers practical tools to step away from urgency culture, cultivate inner clarity, and lead with creativity and intention in today's complex, purpose-driven world.



Elizabeth Greene | Senior Director of Organizational Learning and Development at Lam Research

Elizabeth Greene is a seasoned talent development leader with over 20 years of experience driving learning strategy, leadership development, and organizational growth in global environments. She is the Senior Director of Organizational Learning and Development at Lam Research, a Fortune 500 semiconductor company. Known for her practical insights and people-first approach, Elizabeth is a respected voice in leadership and career development. She holds an MBA, a BA in East Asian Studies, and SHRM-SCP certification. Elizabeth also serves as a Make-A-Wish volunteer, ACEL mentor and speaker, and advisory board member for NAU's workforce development initiative in the semiconductor industry.



Mistie Dawn Weishaar | Author Slay in Color: Motivational Affirmation and Quotes by Women

Mistie Dawn Weishaar is a writer, marketer, and multicultural engagement specialist with 25+ years of experience helping organizations and leaders lead with clarity, connection, and purpose. She is the author of Slay in Color: Motivational Affirmations and Quotes by Women, blending art, affirmations, and creative restoration for resilient leadership. At Greenberg Traurig, she leads marketing, branding, and inclusion initiatives. With a B.I.S. from ASU, Mistie's creative background spans special effects artistry and design. An active community leader, she's been recognized as AZ Big Media's 2025 Nonprofit Volunteer of the Year and a 2023 Most Influential Minority Business Leader.



4B. LEVELING UP THROUGH MENTORSHIP: REAL STORIES, REAL GROWTH

Mentorship can be a game-changer at every stage of leadership. In this dynamic panel, diverse professionals share personal stories of transformation through mentorship—both as mentors and mentees. Explore how guidance, accountability, and authentic relationships unlock hidden potential and drive long-term growth. From navigating career transitions to cultivating leadership presence, this session offers actionable insights on how mentorship fosters resilience, connection, and upward mobility in today's fast-evolving workplace.

Moderator



Mark Strickling | Professional Development Coach, Motivational Speaker

Mark Strickling has dedicated over twenty years to helping others achieve their personal best through leadership in higher education. An experienced speaker and emcee, he has presented on professional development, leadership, networking, and customer service at multiple venues, with appearances on AZTV and the Pat McMahon Show. Mark earned a bachelor's degree in Marketing from UA and an MBA from the University of Phoenix. He was a two-year letter winner on UA's Desert Swarm football team, champions of the '94 Fiesta Bowl, and is a member of Valley Leadership's 35th class. He is married and a father of two.

MEET THE PANELISTS



CJ Dennis | Senior Vice President and Wealth Advisor at Wells Fargo Private Bank

CJ Dennis is a Senior Vice President and Wealth Advisor at Wells Fargo Private Bank, where he focuses on high-net-worth clients and leads efforts in the Outsourced Chief Investment Officer (OCIO) group. With over a decade of experience, he previously managed \$2 billion in institutional assets at Vanguard and helped generate \$4.5 billion in new business. CJ mentors emerging professionals through ACEL and formerly with Vanguard's Hispanic/Latinx group. A recognized leader and speaker, he is known for building high-performing teams. CJ also serves as a Board Member and past President of the CFA Society of Phoenix.



Dr. Jay Maningo-Salinas | Vice Chair of Research at Mayo Clinic

Dr. Jay Maningo-Salinas is Vice Chair of Research at Mayo Clinic in Arizona and holds the academic rank of Assistant Professor of Nursing at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science. With nearly 30 years of nursing experience in clinical and leadership roles, she was honored with the Mayo Clinic Distinguished Administrator Award in 2024. Jay actively serves in local and national professional organizations, including the Philippine Nurses Association of Arizona and the American Organization of Nurse Leaders. She is a board-certified Nurse Executive (NE-BC), Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ), and a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE).



Kayla Chan | Marketing Manager at WSP USA Inc

Kayla Chan is with a degree in English Literature and a passion for community engagement, Kayla brings a decade of experience in marketing and business development services. She is currently WSP USA Inc.'s Marketing Manager, leading marketing and business development efforts for Arizona and New Mexico in the architecture/engineering/consulting industry. Kayla is deeply passionate about mentorship programs and has been involved both as a mentor and a mentee in programs across several different organizations, including ACEL, her employers, Barrett the Honors College at ASU, and the AZ Science Center through their Girls in STEM events.



Amanda Hines-Woo | USAA Federal Savings Bank

Amanda Hines-Woo is a college-educated, purpose-driven professional with a diplomatic approach and a diverse background as both a team manager and individual contributor. Her experience spans large-scale remediation projects, credit assistance, home loan servicing, and most recently, technical procedure writing for Bank Financial Crimes at USAA Federal Savings Bank. Amanda has been an active member of ACEL since 2019 and was part of the 2021 ACEL Mentorship Program, where she was honored as Mentee of the Year. Outside of work, Amanda enjoys reading, playing video games, and participating in long-form improv events.

4C. STRENGTHENING CIVIC HEALTH IN ARIZONA THROUGH LEADERSHIP AND ACTION

A thriving Arizona depends on an engaged, informed, and connected community. Join leaders from the Center for the Future of Arizona and the Flinn Foundation as they share the latest data on civic engagement and discuss how leadership at every level can strengthen our state's civic health. Discover your role in shaping a more inclusive, collaborative future—and leave with clear actions to contribute meaningfully to your community and beyond.

Moderator



Evelyn Casuga | Director, Community & Economic Prosperity at Center for the Future of Arizona

Evelyn Casuga advances initiatives focused on economic development, education, and civic engagement. A retired APS executive with 25 years of service and former municipal leader in Eloy and Marana, Evelyn brings decades of public and private sector experience. She is a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) and serves on several boards, including Arizona Capital Source, Central Arizona College, and the Filipino American National Historical Society–Arizona Chapter. She also chairs Growth Partners Arizona, Local First Arizona, and Arizona Town Hall's Customized Services Committee.

**4C. STRENGTHENING CIVIC HEALTH IN ARIZONA THROUGH
LEADERSHIP AND ACTION (CONT.)**

MEET THE PANELISTS



Kristi Tate | Director, Civic Health Initiatives at Center for the Future of Arizona

Kristi Tate has held leadership roles in organizations dedicated to education, service, and civic engagement. She currently serves at the Center for the Future of Arizona, following her tenure at the National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC), where she led national partnerships for the Civic Health Index. Kristi previously served as Director of the DC Schools Project at Georgetown University's Center for Social Justice and led programs for HandsOn Greater Phoenix and the Boys and Girls Club of Boston. She holds a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame and an M.A. in Liberal Studies from Georgetown University, focusing on social and public policy.



Dawn Wallace | Vice President, Civic Leadership at Flinn Foundation

Dawn Wallace directs the Arizona Center for Civic Leadership at the Flinn Foundation, a nonpartisan initiative dedicated to strengthening civic life through education, engagement, and leadership development. She leads programs including the Flinn-Brown Fellowship, youth civic leadership initiatives, and statewide policy workshops in partnership with civic organizations. A respected public-policy expert, Dawn advised Arizona governors and legislators for over 20 years before joining the Foundation in March 2020. She holds a bachelor's degree in history from Arizona State University and an Arizona teaching certificate. Dawn also chairs the Arizona Commission on the Arts and serves on boards for Read Better Be Better and Girl Scouts–Arizona Cactus-Pine Council.



David Martinez III | Director of Strategic Community Partnerships at Vitalyst Health Foundation

David Martinez III is the Director of Strategic Community Partnerships at Vitalyst Health Foundation, where he leads initiatives in grantmaking, capacity-building, and civic health. A first-generation college graduate from the University of Arizona and a Flinn-Brown Fellow, David has more than a decade of experience advancing equity and civic engagement. His previous roles include leadership at the Center for the Future of Arizona, St. Mary's Food Bank, and the Arizona Students' Association. He serves on numerous boards and committees, including the Arizona Democracy Alliance, FCCP Census Initiative, and the National Trust for Civic Life. Originally from Marana, David now resides in Phoenix.

THURSDAY, AUG 14
5:30PM - 7:30PM

CRESCENT CROWN
DISTRIBUTING, MESA, AZ

Welcome Reception & Mentorship Graduation

ANITA RANHOTRA

DISTRIBUTION ENGINEERING MANAGER AT HALLMARK



Anita Ranhotra is the Distribution Engineering Manager at Hallmark Cards, Inc., where she leads engineering, quality, and EHS teams across a distribution network of over 3 million square feet. With 25 years at Hallmark, Anita has extensive experience in engineering, manufacturing, procurement, and supply chain solutions. She recently led the development of a new 850K square-foot distribution center. Prior to Hallmark, Anita worked at The Limited and Payless ShoeSource, earning a patent. Anita holds a B.S. in Industrial Engineering and an M.S. in Engineering Management from Kansas State University (K-State), where she is also a co-founder of the IE Academy. She is an active leader in professional organizations and community initiatives, including serving as a senior advisor for the Kansas City chapter of the Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers and co-founding the Kansas City chapter of the National Association of Asian American Professionals.

Mesa Police Department

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 15

8:30AM - 9:00AM

FRIDAY COFFEE SESSION: BREAK THROUGH YOUR OWN BAMBOO CEILING

Explore how the “Bamboo Ceiling” continues to impact AAPI professionals in their pursuit of leadership roles within corporate America. This session will shed light on the systemic and cultural challenges that contribute to this barrier—and more importantly, how we can collectively overcome it. Discover actionable strategies and be inspired to break through limitations, redefine success, and pursue a purpose greater than what you may have imagined for yourself.



Phil Kim | Managing Director and Co-Founder of Signature Wealth Concepts

Phil Kim is the Managing Director and Co-Founder of Signature Wealth Concepts, with over two decades of experience in financial planning and wealth management for individuals and businesses. A graduate of Cornell University, Phil holds multiple industry designations, including CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® and various FINRA registrations (Series 7, Series 66, and Series 24). His dedication to excellence, combined with a strong commitment to education and the profession, allows him to provide exceptional service to his clients. Active in his community and a frequent speaker on topics such as business strategy, financial planning, and career advice, Phil builds lasting relationships based on trust and accountability. Since 2008, he has resided in Arizona with his wife and two children, enjoying golf, travel, and outdoor activities.



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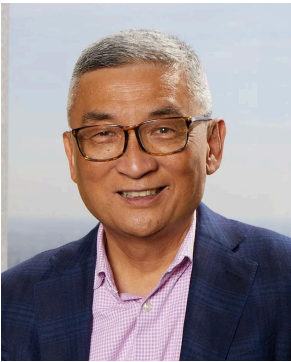


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**5B: FROM OPERATOR TO ORCHESTRATOR: NAVIGATING CAREER PIVOTS AND
BUILDING AT THE EDGES OF COMMERCE**

In this session, Dennis Yao Yu shares his journey from leading at Shopify and Firework to founding The Other Group. He'll explore how intentional pivots unlock creativity and scale. Moderated by industry leader Bill Imada, this conversation offers tactical insights and mindset shifts for rising operators and founders alike—highlighting how to navigate inflection points, identify market whitespace, and build with impact in today's evolving commerce landscape.

Moderator



Bill Imada | Co-Founder, Chairman, and Chief Connectivity Officer of IW Group

Bill Imada is Co-Founder, Chairman, and Chief Connectivity Officer of IW Group, a national advertising and PR agency specializing in multicultural markets. For over 30 years, Bill has led campaigns for top global brands including Walmart, Disney, Lexus, McDonald's, and Warner Bros. IW Group is part of IPG/McCann Worldgroup and Worldcom PR Group. A founder of six national AAPI-focused organizations, Bill also serves on numerous nonprofit and university advisory boards. He was inducted into the AAF Advertising Hall of Fame and recently led IW Group to be named Multicultural Agency of the Year by PRWeek and Ad Age (2025).

MEET THE SPEAKER



Dennis Yao Yu | Seasoned Business Leader

Dennis Yao Yu is a seasoned business leader and 20-year eCommerce veteran, having shaped go-to-market strategies for top platforms and brands. With executive experience at Shopify, Firework, and Art.com, Dennis now leads The Other Group, a consultancy helping brands and tech companies accelerate growth. He offers a unique end-to-end perspective on commerce, advising businesses from DTC startups to public enterprises. Dennis integrates digital transformation, brand storytelling, and ecosystem orchestration to drive sustainable growth. A LinkedIn Top Voice and frequent speaker, he holds an MBA from USC and a BA in Economics from UC Irvine. Dennis is passionate about guiding companies through change and building enduring businesses.



"Great leaders are not defined by the absence of weakness, but rather by the presence of clear strengths." — John Peter Zenger



FRIDAY, AUGUST 15

9:20AM-10:35AM

5C LEADING THROUGH DISRUPTION: NAVIGATING AI, AUTOMATION, AND RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

As AI, automation, and emerging technologies transform every industry, leaders must navigate disruption with vision and responsibility. This expert panel explores how to adopt innovation while empowering people, maintaining trust, and leading ethically. From reimagining roles to addressing bias and building adaptable cultures, discover how forward-thinking organizations are aligning technology with human-centered leadership to thrive in the future of work—without leaving their workforce behind.

Moderator



Amy Wang | AI Software Engineer at Parable

Amy Wang is an AI Software Engineer at Parable, with nearly a decade of experience in machine learning and artificial intelligence software development. She specializes in helping organizations new to AI adopt practical and high-impact solutions that align with their goals. Amy has a strong track record of guiding teams through early-stage AI strategy, emphasizing real-world applications that drive measurable outcomes. Now working at the intersection of generative AI and user experience, she is passionate about building intuitive, meaningful technologies. Amy believes we are only scratching the surface of what's possible with AI and is excited for what lies ahead.

MEET THE **PANELISTS**



Michael Cheung | Founder Partner at Redwood Investment Management

Michael Cheung leads the development of quantitative, algorithmic, and deep learning-based systems that shape research and investment strategies at Redwood Investment Management, which oversees approximately \$3 billion in assets. With over 15 years of investment experience, he advances Redwood's technology-driven approach to portfolio construction and dynamic risk management. Michael also drives innovation initiatives that leverage data science, automation, and scalable infrastructure to transform financial services. His work enhances decision-making, operational efficiency, and long-term performance, positioning Redwood as a leader in modern, data-driven asset management.



Rebecca Clyde | Co-Founder & C.E.O of Botco.ai

Rebecca Clyde is the co-founder and CEO of Botco.ai, a generative AI platform helping organizations automate over 90% of customer inquiries, driving efficiency and revenue. A recognized leader in marketing automation, she previously founded the Inc. 5000 agency Ideas Collide and held leadership roles at Intel. Rebecca holds an MBA from ASU and executive education from Stanford. She's earned honors such as Most Influential Women in Arizona, ATHENA Businesswoman of the Year, and the Google for Startups Latino Founders Fund. Botco.ai serves healthcare and public sectors, transforming customer engagement through AI-powered automation.



Sandra Tang Scirpo | Seasoned Executive Leader at Gen Digital

Sandra Yang Scirpo is a seasoned executive leader with a strong record of driving business transformation and delivering measurable financial results. She excels at setting strategic direction for high-performing teams and translating vision into actionable outcomes. At Gen Digital, a global leader in cyber safety, she spearheads the transformation of global inside sales and support services, aligning operational excellence with customer-centric innovation. Her work centers on AI-led product strategies that elevate customer experience, growth, and long-term success of both the business and the people.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15

10:55AM-12:10PM

6A. CRISIS-PROOF LEADERSHIP: CULTIVATING RESILIENT TEAMS IN AN UNPREDICTABLE WORLD

In today's rapidly shifting landscape, effective leaders must navigate crises—from global instability to environmental disruptions—with clarity, empathy, and strategic foresight. This session will examine how to build organizational resilience by fostering psychological safety, promoting adaptive thinking, and enhancing operational agility. Attendees will gain practical tools and frameworks to lead through uncertainty while sustaining team trust, engagement, and performance.

Moderator



Kim Ho | Vice President of Sales at evolvedMD

Kim Ho serves as Vice President of Sales at evolvedMD and is a respected community leader with over 15 years of experience in B2B sales. Known for her passion for intentional living, self-care, and meaningful community engagement, Kim integrates purpose-driven leadership into every aspect of her work. She is a strong advocate for balancing personal well-being with professional ambition, inspiring others to lead with both compassion and impact. Through her dedication, Kim continues to uplift individuals and organizations, helping them thrive while staying grounded in values that promote long-term success and holistic growth.

MEET THE PANELISTS



Chau Nguyen | Co-Founder at Chemical Handling and Occupational Safety (CHAOS)

Chau Nguyen is the co-founder of CHAOS (Chemical Handling and Occupational Safety) Supplies in Arizona, a company with over 30 years of excellence in the safety and automotive products industry. Under her leadership, CHAOS has earned a reputation for delivering innovative, high-quality solutions tailored to the evolving needs of professionals across multiple sectors. Chau's strategic vision and dedication to safety and customer satisfaction have positioned the company as a trusted partner for businesses nationwide. Her entrepreneurial drive continues to fuel the company's growth, making a lasting impact in the field of occupational safety and reinforcing CHAOS's role as an industry leader.



George C. Chen | Partner at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP

George C. Chen is a partner at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP (BCLP), where he has led the Intellectual Property Practice in the Phoenix office since 2008. He began his legal career at BCLP in 1999 and served on the firm's Global Board of Directors from 2017 to 2018 and 2019 to 2024. George represents the State Bar of Arizona in the ABA House of Delegates and serves on the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession. A former NAPABA president, he remains on its Leadership Advisory Council and is actively engaged with legal diversity initiatives in Arizona.



Melanie Stuckenberg | IT Director of Strategy, Planning, and Delivery at Arizona Public Service

Melanie Stuckenberg is an accomplished IT executive with over 20 years in corporate IT and 9 years of entrepreneurial experience across various industries. She currently serves as the IT Director of Strategy, Planning & Delivery at Arizona Public Service, where she oversees financial planning, portfolio management, project execution, IT governance, compliance, vendor management, and organizational development. Melanie recently completed a three-year term on the Board of Trustees for the Desert Botanical Garden, contributing to the Operational and Personnel Committees. A passionate global traveler, she enjoys exploring new cultures, languages, and cuisines, bringing a broad perspective to her leadership approach.



Jean Seo | Founder and President at Evolve Skincare

Jean Seo is the Founder and President of Evolve Skincare, a pioneering force in clean beauty. In 2007, she launched the first eco-chic beauty boutique in Beverly Hills, featuring top green beauty brands. After realizing that her celebrity clientele sought more effective results, Jean began formulating products using naturally occurring moisturizing factors found in the human body. This led to the creation of Evolve Skincare, which now offers two global brands: Evolve Beverly Hills, a luxury anti-aging line, and LUE by Jean Seo, an accessible organic skincare range available in 1,371 Walmart Supercenters across the U.S. Jean remains dedicated to combining innovation with integrity in skincare.

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Discover is a proud supporter of the Asian Corporate & Entrepreneur Leaders and their mission to provide Asian American professionals opportunities to work together to enhance Asian American leadership in our careers, communities and the local government that we live and serve in.

Discover Financial Services is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, protected veteran status, among other things, or as a qualified individual with a disability.

6B. AI IN ACTION: HOW EVERYDAY ENTREPRENEURS ARE USING AI TO WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER

AI is no longer just for tech giants. Discover how entrepreneurs and small business leaders are using AI tools to streamline operations, enhance marketing, and boost productivity. This panel explores practical, affordable ways to integrate AI into daily workflows—while keeping authenticity and ethics top of mind. Hear real-life strategies, recommended tools, and lessons learned to help you adopt AI with confidence and purpose.

Moderator



Tommy Ho | Senior Healthcare IT leader at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

Tommie Ho is a senior healthcare IT leader and entrepreneur with over a decade of experience in data systems, EDI, business intelligence, and data analysis. He has led teams driving scalable solutions in healthcare operations and automation. Beyond corporate leadership, Tommie has built and invested in ventures from medical billing software to brick-and-mortar businesses. He contributed to Change Healthcare's tech segment acquired by Lyric AI and serves on Arizona Christian University's AI Strategic Advisory Board, shaping AI curriculum and strategy with a builder's mindset focused on practical technology solutions.

MEET THE PANELISTS



Rodney Hu | Owner & Operator at Yucca Tap Room

Rodney Hu is a second-generation Arizona native and ASU finance graduate. He spent eight years on Wall Street as an investment analyst with firms such as Goldman Sachs and Cantor Fitzgerald before returning to Tempe as the Owner/Operator of the iconic Yucca Tap Room. A founding member of Arizona Distilling Company, he helped produce the first locally distilled spirits in Phoenix since prohibition. Over the past decade, Rodney has worked in the cannabis industry, launching brands like Vital Infusions and Grand Daddy Genetics. Named a Phoenix New Times Tastemaker, he serves on several boards, including the Tempe Sports Authority Foundation.



Matthew Mihaylo Hum | Founding member & Head of New Venture Development at Y Solve Lab

Matthew Mihaylo Hum is a founding team member of Y Solve and the Head of New Venture Development at Y Solve Lab. Y Solve is an invention innovation system that is building, operating, and funding 170 emerging technology companies over the next 6 years. Y Solve's purpose is to generate above market returns and deliver scaled impact. As the Head of Y Solve Lab's New Venture Development group, he is responsible for leading the incubation and building of the 170 companies. Matt is passionate about changing the system in which organizations create value and impact society.



Jack Liu | Co-Founder & C.E.O at ProCARE Portal

Jack Liu is the co-founder and CEO of ProCARE Portal, a healthcare SaaS company streamlining provider compensation and performance management for medical groups in large hospitals and health systems. Since launching in 2019, he has guided ProCARE through key milestones, including onboarding over 25,000 providers and expanding internationally with a wholly owned subsidiary in Northern India. Passionate about leveraging technology to solve complex business challenges, Jack offers deep insight into shifting healthcare market dynamics. He also serves as a board director for ACEL, a national nonprofit advancing AANHPI leadership and mentorship. Outside of work, Jack enjoys mentoring young entrepreneurs, playing golf, and spending time with his two dogs.

6B. AI IN ACTION: HOW EVERYDAY ENTREPRENEURS ARE USING AI TO WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER (CONT.)



Dr. LeeAnn Lindsey | Director of EdTech and Innovation at the Arizona Institute for Education and the Economy

Dr. LeeAnn Lindsey is a lifelong educator specializing in educational technology and “new literacies” shaped by the evolving digital landscape. As Director of EdTech and Innovation at the Arizona Institute for Education and the Economy, she is shaping the “future of school” with technology as a catalyst for transformation. She also teaches at Glendale Community College and the University of Illinois. LeeAnn led the development of Arizona’s statewide guiding document for K-12 schools and co-founded the AZ AI Alliance for K-12 education. With degrees in elementary education, educational technology, education administration, and leadership & innovation from Arizona State University and Northern Arizona University, she is a proud “DevilJack!”

6C. INSIDE OUT: USING SELF-AWARENESS AND FEEDBACK TO ACHIEVE GROWTH

This interactive session empowers attendees to take ownership of their personal and professional development. Through engaging discussions and exercises, participants will explore the connections between self-awareness, feedback, and growth. Attendees will leave with practical strategies and tools to transform feedback into a catalyst for learning and growth rather than a source of tension and use self-awareness to drive their own development in an ever-changing work environment.



Anita Ranhotra | Distribution Engineering Manager at Hallmark Cards, Inc.,

Anita leads engineering, quality, and EHS teams across a distribution network of over 3 million square feet. With 25 years at Hallmark, Anita has extensive experience in engineering, manufacturing, procurement, and supply chain solutions. She recently led the development of a new 850K square-foot distribution center. Prior to Hallmark, Anita worked at The Limited and Payless ShoeSource, earning a patent. Anita holds a B.S. in Industrial Engineering and an M.S. in Engineering Management from Kansas State University (K-State), where she is also a co-founder of the IE Academy. She is an active leader in professional organizations and community initiatives, including serving as a senior advisor for the Kansas City chapter of the Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers and co-founding the Kansas City chapter of the National Association of Asian American Professionals.

“

“To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart.” - Eleanor Roosevelt

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 15

12:30PM- 1:30PM

FRIDAY LUNCHEON - GAME PLANS AND GROWTH: NAVIGATING A CAREER IN SPORTS BUSINESS

An executive of the Phoenix Suns shares how he's navigated a non-linear career—from global consulting to EA Sports, the PGA TOUR, and the Phoenix Suns—leveraging adaptability, mentorship, and bold decisions. A timely and inspiring story for professionals and entrepreneurs alike.



Ron Li | Fan Intelligence and Partnership Strategy Advisor

Ron Li leads fan intelligence and partnership strategy at the Player 15 Group, parent company of the NBA's Phoenix Suns, WNBA's Phoenix Mercury, G-League's Valley Suns, and PHX Arena. Before joining Player 15, he was SVP of Client Strategy at Navigate, a top sports and entertainment consultancy. He also held roles in commercialization at Electronic Arts and the PGA TOUR. Originally from Hong Kong, Ron has lived in Canada, Germany, Singapore, and the U.S. He earned an Economics degree from the University of British Columbia and later completed his MBA in sports business at the University of Oregon after 2 years of consulting for his fraternity, Delta Kappa Epsilon.



Jack Liu | Co-founder and CEO of ProCARE Portal

Jack Liu is the co-founder and CEO of ProCARE Portal, a healthcare SaaS company streamlining provider compensation and performance management for medical groups in large hospitals and health systems. Since launching in 2019, he has guided ProCARE through key milestones, including onboarding over 25,000 providers and expanding internationally with a wholly owned subsidiary in Northern India. Passionate about leveraging technology to solve complex business challenges, Jack offers deep insight into shifting healthcare market dynamics. He also serves as a board director for ACEL, a national nonprofit advancing AANHPI leadership and mentorship. Outside of work, Jack enjoys mentoring young entrepreneurs, playing golf, and spending time with his two dogs.



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FRIDAY, AUGUST 15

1:50PM- 3:05PM

7A: Leading with Integrity: Shaping Organizations Where People Matter

More organizations are moving past performative efforts and working toward lasting cultural change that reflects the values of their people. This panel will explore how leaders are building workplaces where every individual feels respected, heard, and empowered to contribute fully. Learn practical approaches to strengthen leadership behaviors, operational systems, and company culture to foster trust, shared purpose, and long-term growth. Discover how leading companies are creating environments where authenticity and accountability are standard—not slogans—and where belonging is not an initiative, but a way of doing business.

Moderator



Reina Ferrufino |

Reina Ferrufino is a first-generation Honduran American higher education leader and social justice advocate with over a decade of experience in student success and inclusive education. She has led equity initiatives at Hispanic-Serving and AANAPISI institutions and helped pass Nevada's AB 226 expanding tuition equity for undocumented students. At Rio Salado College, she leads a 35-member council focused on student engagement and cultural transformation. Reina holds a BA from UC Berkeley, MS from CSUN, and is completing a PhD at UNLV.

MEET THE PANELISTS



Dr. Johny Yi | Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Mayo Clinic Arizona

Dr. Johny Yi is an Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Mayo Clinic Arizona and a board-certified, fellowship-trained urogynecologist. He completed his residency at the University of Utah and advanced fellowship training at Mayo Clinic Arizona and Loyola University. For over a decade, he has led a busy academic and clinical practice, specializing in surgical treatment of pelvic organ prolapse, urinary incontinence, endometriosis, and mesh complications. Dr. Yi has served as the Fellowship Director for Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery and currently directs the medical student clerkship at the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine. His research focuses on surgical innovation to enhance the lives of women with pelvic floor disorders.



Anita Malik | SVP of Customer of Experience at SmartRent

Anita Malik is the SVP of Customer Experience at SmartRent, with over 20 years of leadership experience focused on inclusive company cultures and strong customer communities. She previously served as COO at LawLytics and ClearVoice, both in the legal and content technology sectors. Anita founded East West magazine, a nationally recognized publication celebrating multicultural America, and was a regular NPR guest discussing representation in media. A 2018 Congressional nominee, she continues to champion social impact through her advocacy work. She currently supports the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and serves as VP of Advocacy for NCJW AZ, blending professional excellence with a deep commitment to community-driven change.



Greg Lim | Co-Founder of WellBeings and Perosa

Greg Lim is a seasoned executive with nearly 20 years of experience scaling data-driven businesses through key growth inflection points. He brings deep expertise in operations, strategy, finance, and marketing, having led companies from early-stage development to successful public and private exits. Before co-founding WellBeings, an AI health startup, Greg co-founded Persosa, a data personalization platform acquired by Carvana. Earlier in his career, he held leadership roles at LifeLock, where he played a pivotal role in the company's IPO and its \$2.3B acquisition by Symantec. Greg is known for his focus on high-growth infrastructure, financial discipline, and executional excellence across all stages of growth.



Sam Castro | Experience and Belonging Partner at Choice Hotels Int'l

Sam Castro is the Experience and Belonging Partner at Choice Hotels International, where she leads talent and culture initiatives concentrated on human advancement and professional growth. With a background as a Licensed Associate Counselor, Sam uses her expertise in mental health advocacy and leadership cultivation to empower others and foster engagement. Through facilitation, program development, and event management, her skillsets blend to create deeply impactful and holistic experiences. Sam serves on local boards in the Greater Phoenix area and proudly identifies as Filipina and LGBTQ. Outside of work, Sam enjoys traveling, exploring new cuisines, attending concerts, spending time with her pet family, and caring for her tropical plants.

7B: FUEL YOUR GROWTH WITH CONNECTION

Strong networks don't just happen—they're intentionally built. This interactive workshop is designed to help participants forge meaningful connections through structured icebreakers, engaging networking challenges, and breakout sessions centered around shared goals and mentorship. Whether you're looking to expand your circle, find peer support, or connect with mentors, this session offers practical.



Dr. Hui Wu-Curtis | C.E.O of SupportU

Dr. Hui Wu-Curtis is a visionary leader in the CX and BPO industries, known for blending innovation with empathy to drive exceptional service and empower diverse teams. With over 20 years of operational experience across major industries, both domestically and globally, she brings strategic insight and deep expertise to every initiative. As CEO of SupportU and Director of Customer Service at SmartRent, Dr. Hui champions inclusive leadership and customer-centric transformation. An active speaker and published author, she has received numerous industry accolades for her impact in contact centers. Her personal journey—from immigrant child to executive—fuels her passion for elevating both people and performance across the customer experience landscape.

7C: HOW TO HARNESS THE STRENGTHS OF ALL GENERATIONS AS CURRENT AND FUTURE LEADERS

This interactive workshop explores how generational perspectives shape leadership. Certified generational trainer Roger will guide participants in recognizing each generation's unique strengths, fostering collaboration across age groups, and navigating challenges with a multi-generational lens. Through real-world examples and practical strategies, attendees will gain inclusive leadership tools to build resilient, adaptable teams in today's dynamic workplace.



Roger Lee | Seasoned Leader at Contract Center Advocates, LLC

Roger Lee is a seasoned leader with over 20 years of experience in finance, contact center operations, and customer experience (CX). As the founder and principal of his own firm, Roger specializes in bridging product, sales, and customer success to create seamless momentum throughout the client journey. He has led initiatives resulting in nearly \$10 million in cost savings and has built high-performing teams that excel in AI-powered marketing, product management, and digital transformation. A recognized CX thought leader, Roger is passionate about delivering impactful customer experiences through innovative strategies and empowering leadership. He holds certifications as a Six Sigma Black Belt, COPC leader, and has contributed to the Stevie Awards and Performance Excellence Network.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15
3:25PM-4:40PM

8ABC: EMPOWERING YOURSELF WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL EMPOWERED

How many times do we feel like we do not have control over our career and lives? We can feel overwhelmed and helpless. With all that is happening externally, we need to figure out what is within our control. Whether it's our health, wealth, career, community impact or our ability to navigate through this world, we need something to anchor ourselves to feel like we can navigate our own lives. Is there a way to look within ourselves to find the answers? Let's discuss what we can actually focus on and how to create a "center" for ourselves. At the end of the session, identify 1-2 ways you can take back control of your work and life!



Sue Ann Hong-Whitaker | President and C.E.O of the Center for Asian Pacific American Women (CAPAW)

Sue Ann Hong-Whitaker is President & CEO of the Center for Asian Pacific American Women (CAPAW), leading the organization since 2020 after joining as interim Executive Director in 2018. She brings over 28 years of leadership experience at State Farm Insurance across Diversity & Inclusion, Technology, and Claims, managing teams of 600 and serving customers in 23 states. A committed advocate for equity and leadership, she serves on the Asia Society So-Cal Advisory Board and the National Diversity Advisory Council. In 2024, she received the Diversity MBA Top 25 Leaders of Impact Award and the LEDI International Life Changers Award.



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FRIDAY, AUGUST 15
5:00PM - 8:00PM

2025 ACEL LEADERSHIP AWARDS GALA

MARIKO CARPENTER

**FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF
OPALSPHERE**



Mariko S. Carpenter is the Founder and Managing Director of OpalSphere, an advisory agency specializing in brand growth at the intersection of culture and strategy. With over 20 years of experience leading marketing initiatives for iconic brands in both B2C and B2B sectors, Mariko has held key roles at Nielsen and Condé Nast. She combines her deep expertise in consumer markets with data-driven insights to help organizations uncover growth opportunities and navigate market dynamics. A passionate advocate for the AANHPI community, Mariko has been recognized with the Outstanding 50 Asian Americans in Business Award. She holds an MS from New York University and a BA from Vassar College.

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SCAN ME

Benefits:

- Develop a network of resources
- Gain fresh perspective from local, seasoned veterans
- Encouragement & support
- Self-reliance & self-confidence
- Professional development & tips to improve lifestyle



FRIDAY, AUGUST 15

5:00PM - 8:00PM

2025 HONOREES | ACEL LEADERSHIP AWARDS

MEET THE **AWARDEES**



Kevin Hartke
Mayor, City of Chandler
2025 ACEL Impact Leader Award for DE&I Advocacy



Sintra Hoffman
President & CEO, WESTMARC
2025 ACEL Impact Leader Award for Economic Advancement



Evelyn Casuga
Director, Center for the Future of Arizona
2025 ACEL Impact Leader Award for Community Empowerment



Jean Seo
Founder & CEO, Evolve Skincare
2025 ACEL Impact Leader Award for Entrepreneurial Leadership

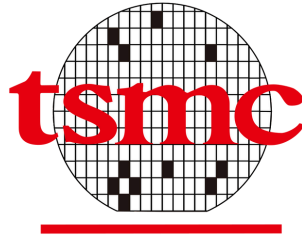


Junelle Cavero
Senior Policy Advisor, Arizona State Legislature
2025 ACEL Impact Leader Award for Civic Leadership



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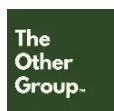


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VISION STATEMENT

A world where everyone has the skills & opportunity to lead.

MISSION STATEMENT

To advance the Asian American & Pacific Islander community by providing a network of resources in professional development, cultural awareness, community service and mentoring.

VALUES

- **Leadership:** Develop, inspire, and connect leaders
- **Education:** Excel at life-long learning
- **Accountability:** Honor commitments to deliver value
- **Diversity:** Embrace a culture of inclusion and innovation



“Leadership is solving problems. The day soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them.” - Colin Powell



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