



2026 QUEST FOR SUCCESS



RESET. RECHARGE. RISE.

**Pre-Conference Workshops, Awards
Banquet & Full Day Conference**

Quest Conference Center, Columbus, Ohio

***Make Plans to
Join Us!***

September 14 - 15

www.thepartnershipforexcellence.org





Pre-con Workshop



Carol Shields
Founder
Fruition Through LLC

Reset. Recharge. Rise. *A Personal Excellence Framework for Sustainable Success*

September 14th 1:00 - 4:15 p.m. ET

In today's fast-paced world, many professionals find themselves running empty while striving to achieve more. Yet sustainable excellence isn't built through constant motion; it's built through intentional renewal. This interactive workshop invites participants to assess where they are, reconnect with what matters most, & create a practical roadmap for growth. Drawing on principles from performance excellence, leadership development, & the Baldrige Framework, participants will explore how self-awareness, energy management, purpose, & intentional action contribute to personal & professional success. Through reflection, discussion, & exercises, attendees will learn how to reset priorities, recharge their energy, & rise to new levels of impact & effectiveness!

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Pre-con Workshop



Edwin Boon, CEO
The Lean Six Sigma
Company USA

Coffee Game:

**Learn how Lean Six Sigma can Improve
Customer Experience and Save Cost**

September 14th 1:00 - 4:15 p.m. ET

In this interactive session, participants work in teams in a service game running a coffee shop, experiencing process problems (particularly errors & defects) and applying Lean Six Sigma practices to overcome them. More than 4,000 companies and 50,000+ students across the globe have enjoyed learning Lean Six Sigma in this fun and highly interactive simulation game. Within half a day participants will learn what Lean Six Sigma can do for improving the process performance of their organization unlike no other teaching method can.

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Breakout Session

September 14th at 4:30 p.m.

Pecha Kucha Presentations of Process Improvement Projects

2025-2026 Leader2Leader Collaborative Cohort



Heather Alderks
Meridian CUSD 223



Monica Amick
WVU Camden Clark



Tammy Anderson
Vandalia Health



Erin Cornell
HospiceCare



Tanya Faulkner
HospiceCare



Maggie Morehart
University of Findlay



Rose Nicholson
WVU Camden Clark



Kayla Rogers
BVHS



Eric Withrow
Vandalia Health

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Awards Banquet



Brian Lassiter
President & CEO
The Alliance for Performance
Excellence

America Needs Baldrige

Brian Lassiter, President & CEO of the Alliance for Performance Excellence, will present an informational & motivational presentation on why America needs Baldrige and how the pathway to national has become more streamlined for TPE Platinum level Governor's Award recipients. This year, the Alliance—a consortium of 25 state/regional & national programs—took on administration of the national award process on behalf of the U.S. Department of Commerce & NIST. Join us to learn how the Alliance has made it easier for TPE recipients to engage in the national award process

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Plenary Session



David Shaw, CEO

2025 Baldrige Recipient
Nor-Lea Hospital District

A Rural Hospital's Journey to Performance Excellence

David Shaw, CEO of Nor-Lea Hospital District, will share his organization's performance excellence journey, culminating in the 2025 Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award. He will highlight key milestones, including the creation of a leadership system that fosters a strong culture and translates strategy into execution. He will also discuss how building relationships of trust with stakeholders across the service area led to significant improvements in community health and engagement.

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Breakout Session



Elias Koulouriotis

Project Management Specialist
Mid America Transplant,
2021 & 2015 Baldrige Recipient

Knowledge Management: The Bridge between Strategy & Operations

Two-time Baldrige recipient Mid-America Transplant (MAT) shares how a focus on knowledge management provides the bridge between strategy and operations. The session will show how MAT converts information into organizational learning and action. Following the flow of information through its customer life cycle/operational management process, will illustrate how information is collected, transferred, and utilized. You will examine how customer, workforce, performance, and external information is synthesized into organizational knowledge; transferred through communication, training, standard work, and change management; applied through operations, improvement, and innovation; and evaluated through results.

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Breakout Session



David Shaw, CEO
2025 Baldrige Recipient
Nor-Lea Hospital District

Developing a World Class Workforce in a Rural Desert

Building a world-class organization begins with a world-class workforce. David Shaw, CEO of Nor-Lea Hospital District, will discuss the challenges of recruiting and developing talent in a rural area with limited candidate availability. He will also share how Nor-Lea reduced turnover and created internal systems to develop qualified leaders and clinicians who can meet the demands of a high-performing organization.

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Breakout Session

Integrated Process Excellence – A Business Model for the AI Era



John M. Cachat
VP Services
IPE Services

Briefing on Integrated Process Excellence – a process infrastructure deployment model that trains AI LLMs and enables organizations to execute flawlessly, innovate continuously, and align business, operational, and digital objectives into a single, intelligent performance system (Business Transformation, Operational Excellence, Continuous Improvement)

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Breakout Session



Marty Smith
Retired Chief of Staff



Julie Fowler
Special Programs
Manager

Fairfax County Public Schools
2026 TPE Gold Recipient

Keeping Students as the North Star: How FCPS Built a Baldrige-Aligned Customer Focus System

Fairfax County Public Schools will share how student focus became the "North Star" for aligning strategy, leadership, data, communication, and community partnerships. Participants will explore transferable practices for building a customer-focused system in any organization, including listening deeply, segmenting by need, turning feedback into action, and using continuous improvement to strengthen outcomes.

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Breakout Session



Elena Gonzales
UX Designer



Michael Everett
Organizational
Excellence Officer

Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund
2019 National Baldrige Recipient

Elevating Journey Mapping: Turning Customer Insights into Service Blueprints that Drive Digital Adoption

Customer journey mapping is often treated as a visualization exercise, but its true value lies in its ability to drive meaningful, measurable changes across an organization. This session explores how teams can move beyond static journey maps and use them as a foundation for designing service experiences that improve adoption, streamline operations, and enhance customer satisfaction.

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Breakout Session



Margaret Dospiljulian
Dospil & Associates

Hitting Reset. Lessons learned.

Resisting the reset is normal because it feels like failure. It doesn't need to be. It's all part of the journey toward excellence, and you're not alone. Per the Clemmer Group's 2025 study, 50 - 70 percent of all improvement endeavors lose their way regardless of industry, sector or size. Wanting to reset is the easy part, determining the best approach is the challenge. During this session, Margaret will share one client's journey of stops, starts, and lessons learned as they worked to reframe and reset their pursuit of excellence.

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Plenary Session



Cindy Milrany, CPA
CFO/CSO (retired)

2024 & 2010 Baldrige Recipient
Freese and Nichols

Freese and Nichols' Keys to Success and Resilience

This plenary session emphasizes two-time Baldrige recipient Freese and Nichols' key drivers of success, including strong, consistent leadership, a culture built on values, employee engagement and development, and a strategic focus on client service—evidenced by a high percentage of repeat clients. The presentation demonstrates the firm's disciplined growth strategy, commitment to technical excellence and innovation, and a long history of stability and continuous improvement.

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Breakout Session



Kay Kendall
CEO & Principal

BaldrigeCoach

Glenn Bodinson
Founder & Principal

Rise: Accelerating Improvement by Implementing Best Practices Aligned with the Baldrige Core Values and Concepts

This session will feature six of the eleven Baldrige Core Values and Concepts: Systems Perspective, Visionary Leadership, Valuing People, Focus on Success, Management by Fact, and Delivering Value and Results. For each one, we'll present best practices from Baldrige Award Recipients as well as organizations on a performance excellence journey. Adopting or adapting these best practice can jump start your improvement efforts to focus on measurements that matter and results you need to achieve. Engaging and practical at the same time; come join us!

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Breakout Session

Strategy at Freese and Nichols: Our Foundation for Success



Cindy Milrany, CPA

CFO/CSO (retired)

2024 & 2010 Baldrige Recipient
Freese & Nichols

This session explains Freese and Nichols' approach to strategy that goes beyond planning to drive alignment, commitment, communication, and data-driven decision-making across the organization. It highlights how a structured process—combining five-year strategic direction with annual execution, continuous communication, and measurable performance indicators—ensures strategy is actively deployed, monitored, and adjusted to deliver sustained value.

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Breakout Session



Mark Ryan
Consultant

Thomas West
Consultant

The Green Dot Consulting Group

Chaos to Clarity:

Aligning Strategy, People, & Daily Work to Execute What Matters Most

Many organizations don't struggle with strategy—they struggle with execution. This session introduces a practical, systems-based approach to closing the gap between strategy & execution by creating visibility, alignment, and daily accountability across the organization. Participants will learn how making work visible improves decision-making & organizational clarity, how aligning priorities reduces waste & expands capacity, and how structured daily accountability engages the workforce & connects frontline activity to strategic outcomes.

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Breakout Session



Rob Kleiner

Director, External Operations
2024 Baldrige Recipient
Northeast Delta Dental

SMART Goals That Drive Results and Build Culture

This session will focus on how SMART goals can move beyond a paperwork exercise and become a practical tool for driving performance and alignment throughout an organization. By connecting corporate priorities to department and individual goals, leaders can create clarity, accountability, and stronger results while keeping people focused on what matters most. The presentation will share a straightforward approach, real examples, and lessons learned that attendees can bring back and use right away.

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Breakout Session

Tracy Smith



MarJean Kennedy



Katie Sams

WVU Medicine Camden Clark MC

New Leader Onboarding and Service Line Strategy: From Data to Execution

WVU Medicine Camden Clark relies on a system-wide onboarding program for new leaders, but its self-paced, mostly virtual format does not fully prepare leaders for local expectations. This session shares their locally driven 12-month Leadership Onboarding Program, which includes monthly development sessions led by key departments, peer discussion, and networking lunches to build leadership community. Additionally, Camden Clark holds service-line specific strategic planning sessions, working in alignment to the broader health system's mission, vision, and community need, ensuring that all priorities support patient-centered care, improved access, and strong clinical outcomes.

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Breakout Session



Sean Olson, CEO
Renogize Professional
Coaching

From Fixer To Influencer: A Leader Others WANT To Follow

In this session you will be entertained and energized as Sean Olson shares his secrets to being a truly influential leader. Look behind you, if no one is following, you are not a true leader. Do you want them lining up to follow you....move from Fixer to Influencer. Discover if you are a fixer and the key signs to know if you are. Understand the root causes – when you learn why you are a fixer, you have taken a powerful step to overcoming being a fixer. Learn the skills to influence: There are some foundational skills that will help you jump from being a fixer to an influencer.

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Closing Session



Margot Hoffman

President & CEO

The Partnership for Excellence

Baldrige Enterprise Update

In the closing session of the conference, TPE President & CEO Dr. Margot Hoffman, who also serves as the Chair for the Alliance for Performance Excellence board and is on the Baldrige Board of Overseers, will present an update on activities in the Baldrige Enterprise including updates on the national Baldrige program, the Alliance for Performance Excellence, the Baldrige Excellence Framework, and The Partnership for Excellence.

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