SESSION DESCRIPTIONS AND SPEAKER BIOS – KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

The US and Midwest Economy in 2020: Implications for Supply Chain Firms
Rick Mattoon, Senior Economist, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago

This session will provide an in-depth review of recent economic conditions and insights into the US outlook. Topics will cover key elements of the national economy, including trade, manufacturing and supply chain impacts on the regional economy. The discussion will be followed by a Q&A session.

Rick Mattoon
Rick Mattoon is a Senior Economist and Economic Advisor in the Economic Research Department of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. His primary research focuses on issues that face the Midwest regional economy. Mr. Mattoon began his career at the Chicago Fed in 1990. In 1997, he left the bank to serve as a policy advisor for economic development, energy and telecommunications to the Governor of Washington. He later served as director of policy and legislation for the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. He returned to the bank in 2001. Mr. Mattoon's work has appeared in the National Tax Journal, State Tax Notes, Public Choice and Society. He is the co-author of a chapter on state and local governments and the national economy in the Oxford Handbook of State and Local Government Finance. He serves on the Board of the Chicago Manufacturing Renaissance Council, the Advisory Committee to the Chicago Workforce Investment Council, the pension committee of the Civic Federation and is a member of the Joint Advisory Board of Economists to the Governor of Virginia. He also serves as a lecturer at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. Mr. Mattoon received a B.A. from Kenyon College and an M.A. from the University of Chicago.

Hiring HUMANS, not Resumes: The 5 Keys to Winning the Battle for Talent
Todd Palmer, Executive Coach, Extraordinary Advisors

Dive deep into the mindset of today’s candidates who — unlike a few years ago — now have numerous employment options. Learn the key decision-making factors for job seekers (many will surprise you) from someone with 20+ years of experience as the founder and CEO of a 6x INC 5000 recruiting company. You will learn how to locate great talent and how to make your company a no-brainer, so that the best talent says, “Yes, I want to work with you.”

This talk is highly engaging and full of energy as Mr. Palmer shares his real-world experience in a no-holds-barred fashion, including his own mistakes and how he resolved them. You will love this level of transparency. Here’s what you can expect to learn:

• How to be the employer of choice in a competitive market
• How to locate hard-to-find talent
• How to successfully engage talent during the recruiting and vetting process
• How employers can stop being their own worst enemy
• Why employees are the #1 differentiator in your business

Todd Palmer
Todd Palmer is an Executive Coach who is committed to helping business leaders GET UNSTUCK! Through executive coaching, corporate training, and keynote speaking, he is committed to helping business leaders tackle their obstacles and clear their path to success. As an entrepreneur and active CEO of 22 years, Mr. Palmer knows the struggles business owners face regarding people, cash, strategy & execution. He took his first company from being $600,000 in debt, to making the INC 5,000 as one of America’s fastest-growing companies (an astounding 6 times!). He specializes in helping CEOs join the mission statement of the organization with their personal core values, while addressing fear, self-doubt, and imposter syndrome. He brings a unique blend of authenticity, transparency and vulnerability to help business owners & organizations achieve their goals. Mr. Palmer’s mission is to share the strategies he’s learned over the past 20 years to guide business owners, leaders, entrepreneurs, and CEOs into success.
EMERGING TRENDS IN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

**Moderator:** Mike Joseph, Vice President Sales, Transplace

**Panelists:**
- Bill Selles, Sr. Director of Procurement, Supply Chain Services, Spectrum Health
- Eric Schmidt, Manager - XS Supply Chain, Amway
- Adam Skinner, Vice President of Supply Chain Management, ODL Inc.
- Mark Zelek, Director, Supply Chain Management, L3Harris Combat Propulsion Systems

From tariffs, to trade, to technology, the external pressures and emerging trends are forcing companies to evaluate and restructure their supply chains to ensure growth and sustainability. In this interactive session, the panelists will discuss the latest trends in supply chain management, the impact of these trends, how to proactively address these trends, and the pitfalls to avoid.

**Mike Joseph**
Mike Joseph has 27 years in the Supply Chain/Transportation industry, with experiences focused on ERP and TMS applications, as well as implementation, support, and sales experience. He has helped numerous companies deliver results within the 3PL, Food/Beverage, Retail, Manufacturing, Pharma, Auto, and Electronics Industries. Currently, he is Vice President of Sales at Transplace and has held prior positions with Baan, LeanLogistics, and FourKites. Mr. Joseph is a member of CSCMP and serves as a Roundtable Board member as well. His personal life revolves around his family of five in West Michigan and serving as a Youth USA Hockey Coach and a Licensed USCG Captain.

**Bill Selles**
Bill Selles is Senior Director of Procurement, Supply Chain Services of Spectrum Health, a $6.5 billion not-for-profit integrated health system based in West Michigan. He is an experienced leader in system-level thinking who aligns people and strategy with organizational efforts in large, complex organizations. Mr. Selles is responsible for all aspects of procurement in supply chain. He is charged with leveraging supply chain to help the organization realize its vision to be the leader in health by 2020. Under his leadership, supply chain services has saved over $35M, centralized procurement activity, launched a procurement analytics department, and created a system-level value analysis structure. Mr. Selles joined Priority Health in 2012 as director, workforce management, bringing more than 5 years of management experience in from the retail sector. He has led logistics and operational processes, succession planning, strategy and people development in prior roles. Mr. Selles received his Bachelor of Business Administration from Grand Valley State University. He later earned a Master of Business Administration, with a concentration in strategy and organizational dynamics at Grand Valley State University. He is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and Association for Health Care Resource & Materials Management (AHRMM). He is a volunteer with the United Way Leadership Circle, an avid golfer, long distance runner and enjoys spending time with his wife and two children.

**Eric Schmidt**
Eric Schmidt is currently the Manager of XS Supply Chain at Amway. Prior to joining Amway, he was part of the Motorola Mobility and Gordon Food Services supply chain management team. Mr. Schmidt received his bachelor’s and an MBA in supply chain from Michigan State University. One of his strong talents is creating a culture of fun and collaboration and motivating the team to reach stretch goals. He excels in building high performing teams by listening, engaging and empowering people to find creative solutions.

**Adam Skinner**
Adam Skinner is VP of Supply Chain Management at ODL. Prior to joining ODL, he was the Director of SCM at Adient. Mr. Skinner’s prior experiences included SCM managerial positions at Magna Donnelly, Monaco Trucking, and Johnson Controls. He earned his BS in Technology degree from GVSU, a BBA in SCM from Ashford University, and two executive development certifications in supply chain from Ohio State University and MIT. He is currently pursuing a master’s degree at Michigan State University. Mr. Skinner loves working with people and building successful teams.
Mark Zelek
Mark Zelek is the Director of Supply Chain Management of L3Harris Combat Propulsion Systems (CPS), a world leader in combat vehicle engine and transmission manufacturing company of approximately 300 people worldwide and 2018 sales of $153M. With its division headquarters in Michigan, L3Harris CPS is a first tier subcontractor to the major combat vehicle prime contractors providing a broad range of propulsion solutions and products used on military. L3Harris CPS customers including the U.S. Department of Defense and allied foreign governments. As the director of supply chain management, he is responsible for forecasting, planning, procurement (raw material, components, subsystems and services), inventory management, warehouse operations, coordinating with supplier quality assurance, and overall material and logistic cost reduction initiatives for L3Harris CPS. Mr. Zelek has an extensive leadership career in aerospace and defense including holding key leadership roles in supplier management, materials management and operations over a 31-year span at Boeing and McDonnell Douglas. He has successfully led start up, recovery and sustaining operations involving complex, global supply chains in multiple US and Italy manufacturing sites. He is a respected subject matter expert in supply chain and has worked closely with Michigan State University’s supply chain program. He holds an executive MBA from the University of California, Irvine and a BBA (Materials & Logistics Management) from Michigan State University.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: WHAT’S IN A NAME?
Steve Rothman, Founder & Managing Partner, IT Renaissance

It would be an understatement to say that “digital transformation” is the current “mega business phenomenon.” You can’t open your email or social media application or visit a news, business or technology website and not see several new articles or posts about the “next big idea” in digital transformation. There is no doubt that the term digital transformation has reached overused, misused and over-hyped buzz word status. To make matters worse, a recent survey published in the Harvard Business Review estimated that 70% of the $1.3 trillion that was spent on digital transformation in 2018 was wasted. This session will:

• Provide a concise and pragmatic definition and historical perspective on digital transformation
• Identify the technologies that will disrupt existing supply chain operating models
• Introduce several useful frameworks that will enable supply chain leaders to understand the threats, and identify the opportunities, that these technologies present
• Introduce a “playbook” for achieving digital transformation success

Steve Rothman
Steve Rothman is a Founder and Managing Partner at IT Renaissance, a management consulting firm that partners with clients to plan, define and deliver successful digital transformations. Mr. Rothman has over 40 years of experience helping organizations leverage Information Technology to create business value. His areas of expertise include Digital Transformation, Lean Manufacturing, IT Strategy, Agile Software Development, large scale Program Management and the leadership and transformation of technology organizations. He has worked in the manufacturing, automotive, airline, distribution, utility, insurance, and financial services industries. Prior to founding IT Renaissance, Mr. Rothman had been a partner in the consulting practices of Andersen Consulting (Accenture) and Deloitte Consulting. He has also been a Senior Vice President in the IT organizations of Fidelity Investments and Nationwide Insurance and a Materials Manager for a Consumer Products Manufacturing company with a complex global supply chain. Mr. Rothman took a three-year hiatus from IT Renaissance in 2015 to serve as the Chief Transformation Officer for PRGX, the global leader in the Recovery Audit industry and a leading provider of Spend Analytics. Mr. Rothman has a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Union College and a Master of Science in Industrial Engineering from Carnegie-Mellon University.
Robotic warehouse systems, drones, RFID tags, and artificial intelligence, among others are some of the technologies that logistics organizations are implementing to improve efficiency and visibility throughout the supply chain. These technologies have also resulted in the rise and importance of big data and data analytics. In this interactive session, the panelists will be discussing the importance of technology and big data in the new logistics landscape, a wake-up call for supply chain professionals to design new and improved processes and think creatively about the future.

**Leslie Brand**

Leslie Brand is the CEO of Supply Chain Solutions (SCS), a company headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, dedicated to global supply chain and transportation management solutions. Mr. Brand is a member of the Board of Directors of SCS and is the President of the West Michigan Supply Chain Management Professionals Association (CSCMP), actively involved in various community and industry organizations, including Grand Rapids and the Dutch Chamber of Commerce. He is passionate and has successful experience leading the experienced team and clients to achieve impressive supply chain improvements and create cross-cutting and sustainable business value.

**Claren Lau**

Claren Lau, President at ALTL, Inc., is an outcome driven and people oriented senior executive who offers more than 20 years’ experience as a leader in supply chain management, distribution, transportation, logistics, and customer service. Mr. Lau is an excellent negotiator capable of producing win-win results, and a strong communicator and team builder. He received his degree in business management from Georgia State University.

**Doug Johnson**

Doug Johnson is Executive Vice President of Columbian Logistics Network, overseeing their asset and non-asset transportation business, as well as the sales and marketing departments. His experience includes 8 years with Hub Group, where he served as Assistant Vice President of Business Solutions. Prior to his tenure with Hub Group, he has driven the sales efforts of several companies in the transportation sector including, CRST, Celadon, Penske, and Gainey Transportation Services. Mr. Johnson earned a degree in Business Administration from Davenport University, with an emphasis on marketing and management. He is involved in various organizations such as CSCMP as a board member. He lives in Ada, MI with his wife and three kids.

**John Stewart**

John Stewart is an Independent Supply Chain Consultant focused on process improvement and decision support for inventory management, material flows, distribution operations, transportation and international trade. Prior to his tenure as a consultant, he was the General Manager at Applied Reasoning Technology, Senior Project Leader at Haworth, and Logistics Operations Manager at Handy Andy Home Improvement Centers. Mr. Stewart received his master’s degree in international management from Thunderbird School of Global Management, and Bachelor of Science in Finance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
CIRCULAR ECONOMY, DESIGN AND COLLABORATION
Gayle L. DeBruyn, Professor and Sustainability Officer, Kendall Design Management

As industry moves to meet the demands of emerging material economies, hear how integrated, cross disciplinary design teams are re-imagining innovative solutions to wicked problems. From international to local initiatives, see how industries are working together for greater impact. Begin a new discussion, re-frame the opportunity, be the market disrupter!

Gayle L. DeBruyn
Gayle DeBruyn is a Professor and Sustainability Officer for KCAD in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She is Chair of the Collaborative, Furniture and Master of Arts in Design Programs. In addition to teaching, she is on the planning team for the Wege Prize, and curriculum committee of the GRPS Museum School. She is past president of the West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum, and she serves on the leadership committees for the Community Sustainability Partnership and the United Nations University Regional Center of Expertise for the City of Grand Rapids.

OUR JOURNEY TO ZERO
Dar Baas, Director, Kent County Department of Public Works

In an emerging circular economy, eliminating waste while employing reuse, sharing, repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing and recycling to create a closed-loop system is directly impacted by supply chain management throughout the lifecycle of a product. Understanding the impacts of discarded waste from raw materials procurement, manufacturing, packaging and distribution is critical to advancing sustainable waste reduction practices and reliance on land disposal of discards. This session will focus on sustainable business practices on “our journey to zero.”

Darwin (Dar) Baas
Darwin (Dar) Baas is the Director of Public Works in Kent County, where he focuses on the emerging circular economy - providing leadership and visioning to deliver waste diversion, energy recovery, and sustainable material management strategies for business and residents. Mr. Baas has a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Davenport University and Master’s degree in public administration from Grand Valley State University and brings 25 years of environmental management experience in the public and private sector with experience in emergency response, hazardous waste transportation, environmental contracting, industrial cleaning, landfill, transfer station, material recovery facility and waste-to-energy operations. His work is centered in West Michigan and he is involved in energy and waste policy at the local, state and national level and currently serves as a member of the board of directors for the Energy Recovery Council, Energy Michigan and past trustee for West Michigan Sustainable Business.
SUPPLIER DIVERSITY | A BUSINESS CASE THAT MAKE GOOD BUSINESS SENSE
Laura Hopson, President & CEO, EM Services, LLC

There is a steady demographic shift taking place in America, with diverse groups becoming a larger percentage of our population — and therefore a larger economic force in our economy. Today, minorities represent approximately 35% of the population. By 2043, that representation will be over 50%. By supporting supplier diversity programs, your company will make a direct impact with minority communities in our country, position you as a top brand among those respective demographic segments and positively impact your organization’s bottom line. This session will focus on the importance of supplier diversity programs, dialogue about overcoming barriers to implementation and highlight strategies for successful program development.

Laura Hopson
Laura Hopson is the President and CEO of EM Services, LLC. As a minority and female business owner, she is excited to embrace the true meaning of minority business development. Her focus not only is to help her customers streamline their current procurement processes and platforms but to help build a community network of businesses, so they can collaborate on new business ventures and opportunities. In 2019, Ms. Hopson was recognized by receiving the Diverse Business Leader award from Michigan’s Corp! Magazine. She brings to the Michigan business community nearly 30 years of expertise stretching across manufacturing, sales, marketing, and management. Professionally, her focus on transforming brands, marketing, and people, have resulted in a number of great accomplishments over her career. Her background includes various positions at Herman Miller, VanerumStelter, Steelcase and Kentwood Office Furniture. After graduating from high school in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Ms. Hopson obtained her bachelor’s degree in Industrial Engineering from the University of Michigan and her Master of Business Administration in Marketing and Finance from Western Michigan University.
This session takes an innovative look at cybersecurity including how and why you would be targets against cybercrime and nation-states. The panel discussion dives into who and what the targets are, where they are coming from, what the threats are, the motives behind the threat, how they exploit, the associated consequences and risks associated with cybercrime. More specifically you will learn: (1) why you are a target, and the associated threats and motives; (2) what methods are being used by the “bad guys” (cyber actors, criminals, nation-states); and (3) what your organization can do to be prepared when a cyber incident happens.

Chad Paalman is the Co-Founder and CEO of NuWave Technology Partners, which is headquartered in Kalamazoo, Michigan with offices in Lansing, Grand Rapids, Traverse City, Southfield, Jackson and St. Joseph. NuWave provides managed IT solutions, cloud services, help with security and technology for businesses across Michigan. NuWave Technology Partners was recognized as one of Michigan’s 50 Companies to Watch in 2009. Mr. Paalman presently serves on The Channel Company’s NexGen Cloud Advisory Board, CompTIA Channel Advisory Board, Cisco System’s SMB Advisory Board, Lansing Community College & Career Quest Learning Centers IT Curriculum Advisory Boards, the Michigan FFA Foundation Board, Sparrow Foundation Board and on both the Leadership Council & Executive Board of Directors of the Small Business Association of Michigan.

Angela Hill is a veteran of the U.S. Navy and was an intelligence analyst for the CIA and DoD, supporting special operations in Europe, Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. She now resides in Michigan, where she is a Security Practice Manager for NuWave Technology Partners. Ms. Hill writes about technology optimization and national security risks.

Tracy Lawrence is a Commercial Insurance Specialist at Olivier-VanDyk Insurance Agency. She specializes in Cyber Insurance and is passionate about helping businesses understand the value and protection it brings to an organization. She is the founder of the West Michigan Cyber Round Table, sits on the board of the West Michigan Transportation Club and is a committee member of the West Michigan World Trade Association.

John Ford is the Chief Information Security Officer for ConnectWise. ConnectWise is headquartered in Tampa, Florida with offices in London, England and Sydney, Australia. ConnectWise’s specialty is software for the IT industry including cybersecurity and risk assessment software. Mr. Ford brings over 20 years’ experience with large and small businesses at the intersection of IT and security.

Chris Loehr is Executive Vice President of Solis Security, Inc., which is a 15+ year old incident response, cybersecurity, and IT services firm based in Austin, Texas. He has spent over 25 years in cybersecurity, IT and business leadership, with the majority of his early career leading IT operational teams in the banking sector. His experience combined with his great understanding of business architecture and strategy have positioned him well for providing expert cybersecurity-based advice and services to small and mid-sized businesses.
CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SUPPLY CHAIN: CHALLENGES, STEPS AND OUTCOMES
Dr. Sriram Narayanan, Kesseler Family Endowed Faculty Fellow in Supply Chain Management, Eli Broad College of Business, Michigan State University

As firms think about technology as an enabler of performance, they often fail to understand the human impacts and opportunities. And yet, technology and work design can actually become an enabler for a more inclusive supply chain. Supply chain inclusion is a hot-button issue today with even the United Nations prioritizing inclusion in their sustainable development goals agenda. In this session we will focus on inclusion, from multiple dimensions and discuss what it means to be inclusive within the organization. Further, the session will discuss the steps to achieving inclusion and the challenges that firms face in driving true inclusion within the organization. Ideas will be drawn from existing research work in the domain, and research that we are currently pursuing.

Dr. Sriram Narayanan
Dr. Sriram Narayanan is a professor and Kesseler Family Endowed Faculty Fellow in Supply Chain Management in the Department of Supply Chain Management at Michigan State University. An internationally recognized scholar, he has earned his doctoral degree in Operations Technology and Innovation Management at University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. His industry experience includes working in procurement and project management roles in automotive and software industries. Dr. Narayanan's primary research interests are in innovation, productivity and sustainability in supply chains. His research is practice-driven and cross-disciplinary. He has published more than 30 articles that include top-tier journals across supply chain management, organizational strategy and marketing journals, in addition to invited book chapters, and teaching classes. His most research has focused on approaches firms can pursue to facilitate inclusion in supply chains, and the creation of human centric supply chains. He has been an invited speaker in several universities within and outside the US. He holds editorial positions in several top-tier supply chain management journals and plays a leadership role in several supply chain management communities in academia. He has won multiple awards for teaching, research, community engagement and service including the John D. and Dorotha J. Withrow Endowed Emerging Research Scholar Award; Community-Engaged Partnership Award (for his inclusion work), the Lilly Fellowship (MSU), Broad Integrative Fellowship (MSU) and the distinguished service award by the India Chapter of the Decision Sciences Institute for his contributions to the society.
MAKING THE MOST OF INTERNSHIPS FOR YOUR BUSINESS
Cindy Brown, Vice President of Talent Initiatives, The Right Place

Whether you’re starting from scratch or looking to bolster your current internship program, attend the Employer Internship Training Session. This session is designed to leave participants feeling confident in what it takes to start or enhance an internship program. Cindy Brown, Vice President of Talent Initiatives with The Right Place, will share the ins and outs of internships and walk you through the 5 Steps to Developing a Quality Internship Program. All participants will receive a link to the 55 page toolkit, complete with template documents and forms.

Cindy Brown

Cindy Brown serves as the Vice President of Talent Initiatives and collaborates with other talent related organizations to address regional talent pipeline challenges. Ms. Brown worked jointly as Executive Director for Hello West Michigan and Vice President of Talent Initiatives for The Right Place for many years before stepping into her role for The Right Place full time. Under her leadership, Hello West Michigan’s membership, programming, and regional awareness grew exponentially, helping establish West Michigan as a destination for top talent. In previous roles, Ms. Brown served as Project Manager for the West Michigan Internship Initiative and had a lengthy career at Enterprise Rent-A-Car. She has over 25 years of leadership experience in employee development, talent acquisition, training, and facilitation. She excels at attracting talent, generating awareness, and connecting individuals to resources. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Aquinas College and has received numerous awards and recognitions.

• West Michigan Woman Brilliance Connector Award (2017)
• West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board of Directors
• Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids Board of Directors
• Past-President for the Michigan Career Educator & Employer Alliance
• Michigan College Educator and Employer Alliance Don Hunt Service Award (2011)

Ms. Brown’s favorite part about living in West Michigan is Lake Michigan, the sunsets, beaches, and the lake effect snow. She also loves being less than two hours away from family.

A TEAM APPROACH TO DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, ENGAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP
Heidi Frye, President & Founder, UPwords, Inc.

We instinctively know, developing a team of 10, can touch and impact more people, faster! Learn how an effective team development program can dramatically shift employee engagement, raise emotional intelligence, and increase leadership capabilities. Increase camaraderie, teamwork, productivity, retention and profitability! You will have an opportunity to participate in an exercise used in the program and experience a snippet of the team development approach which has had cascading effects on organizations.

Heidi Frye

Heidi Frye, President & Founder of UPwords, Inc, has spent 15 years growing businesses through leadership development, executive coaching, workshops, facilitation, and public speaking. Prior to founding UPwords, Inc., she enjoyed high-impact goal achievement while earning performance awards at Fortune 500 companies such as Xerox, Boston Scientific Corporation, and EMC. In addition, she was able to leverage those Fortune 500 best-practices in a number of entrepreneurial business opportunities. Ms. Frye holds a degree in Business Administration from Wayne State University with a minor in German. She is a graduate of Leadership University School of Developmental Coaching in the Coach2 and MLCS (Master Leadership Coaching System) programs; certified in the Integrative Enneagram and BANK assessments; and a member of the ICF (International Coaching Federation).
INTRACOMPANY SUCCESSION PLANNING
Todd Sperl, Owner and Managing Partner, Lean Fox Solutions
Rob Ptacek, President and CEO of Competitive Edge Training and Consulting, Partner in Global Lean Institute

This one-hour session includes 30-40 minutes of overview, considerations, planning, tips and techniques regarding building a strong intracompany succession plan. Intracompany succession planning includes planning for growth and personal development within the organization. This is not succession planning of ownership or executive leadership/general management of an organization. This session will discuss the following topics:

• The need for succession planning at all levels
• How to identify and develop the right people the right way
• Keys to consider when conducting intracompany succession planning
• Case study in intracompany succession planning
• Questions and discussion

Todd Sperl
Todd Sperl is an enthusiastic, creative leader who can look beyond today’s problems to find tomorrow’s solutions, an out-of-the-box thinker not bound by the status quo. In addition to leading lean transformations for hospitals and physician practices throughout the U.S. and Canada, he is an Adjunct Professor for the Oakland University Executive MBA program in Auburn Hills, Michigan. Mr. Sperl has co-authored three books on lean healthcare and the first iPad app for lean healthcare. He has presented at numerous regional and national conferences on Lean Six Sigma, change management and human resource assessment. Prior to founding Lean Fox Solutions, Mr. Sperl spent over nine years at St. John Providence Health in various HR and organizational effectiveness roles. He directed the deployment of Lean Six Sigma across St. John Health ensuring achievement of strategic goals and objectives. St. John Providence Health located in SE Michigan, is comprised of seven hospitals plus more than 125 medical facilities. Mr. Sperl led, coached, taught and mentored Leadership, Black Belts, Green Belts and Process Owners in DMAIC, Lean, Change Acceleration Process and Work-Out methodologies. Prior to that, he spent over seven years at Competency Management, Inc. managing projects for Fortune 500 clients focused on training programs, satisfaction surveys, pre-employment assessment tools, executive development, behavior-based modeling, selection interviewing and in-basket exercises. Mr. Sperl is a GE trained Master Black Belt and Master Change Agent. He received his BS in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin – River Falls and a MS in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from St. Mary’s University in San Antonio, TX.

Rob Ptacek
Rob Ptacek is President and CEO of Competitive Edge Training and Consulting and Partner in Global Lean Institute. Competitive Edge Training and Consulting is a firm specializing in leader and organizational development and lean enterprise transformations. He is an Approved Scanlon Leadership Network Consultant and a Senior Advisor to the National Association for Job Shops and Small Manufactures (NAJS). Mr. Ptacek holds a BS in Metallurgical Engineering from Michigan Technological University, Houghton, Michigan, and Masters of Management from Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Mr. Ptacek is an adjunct instructor of Management Principles, Manufacturing Strategy, and Total Quality Management, and has instructed at Grand Valley State University, Aquinas College, Davenport University, and currently instructs in the Lean Champion Certification program at Grand Rapids Community College. Mr. Ptacek has an extensive client list and has provided Lean and Leadership training and consulting in North America, Asia, and Europe. He has authored several books and articles on principled Leadership and continuous improvement topics. He is the author and illustrator of Shop Suey comics for industry, a comic book formatted training publication, the Supervisor Pocket Guide, and the Lean Sim Machine™ Advanced Lean Training Manual, and is on the advisory board for the Lean Pocket Guide and related materials offered by MCS Media. Mr. Ptacek has held leadership positions in Quality, Sales, and Operations Management, and has over 25 years of practical experience implementing continuous improvements in a variety of industries. He speaks on leadership and continuous improvement topics for several industry associations including, Precision Metal Forming Association (PMA), Society of Manufacturing Engineering (SME), American Society for Quality (ASQ), American Mold Builders Association (AMBA), National Association for Job Shops and Small Manufactures (NAJS), and the Scanlon Leadership Network (SLN).