CONVERGENCE SUMMIT:
AI + QUANTUM IN CASCADIA

Speaker Bios — Ordered by Panel | All Audience "5th Panelist" Bios | October 28, 2026

OPENING REMARKS | 9:30 – 9:45 AM

Host & Executive Director, Convergence: Tech Policy Institute

Arry Yu

Co-Founder & Executive Director | Convergence: Tech Policy Institute (C:TPI)

Arry Yu is Co-Founder & Executive Director of Convergence: Tech Policy Institute (C:TPI). A 3x serial founder who has raised over $35 million, she previously co-founded the U.S. Blockchain Coalition and served as Head of Strategy (U.S.) for the Global Blockchain Business Council (GBBC). She co-chaired the Washington State Blockchain Work Group, convened by the Washington State Department of Commerce, and served as primary author of its legislative recommendations to the Washington State Legislature. She also led an amicus brief to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. Arry is a PSBJ "40 Under 40" honoree, former Adjunct Professor at Portland State University, and advisor to the Milgard School of Business. She serves as President of the Northwest Quantum Nexus (NQN), Chair of WTIA's Advanced Technology Cluster. Recognized as a catalyst for tech ecosystems, Arry excels at scaling bold ideas from zero to one and convening diverse stakeholders around mission-driven initiatives.

OPENING KEYNOTE: COHERENCE | 9:45 – 10:15 AM

Keynote Speaker

Orlagh Neary

Chief Marketing Officer | Photonic

Orlagh Neary is Chief Marketing Officer at Photonic, responsible for global marketing, communications, thought leadership, brand, and market development. Orlagh brings over two decades of experience building and scaling markets for transformative technologies, from cloud computing and AI to quantum computing. Prior to Photonic, Orlagh spent over 20 years at Microsoft, most recently serving as General Manager of Microsoft Quantum and AI Ecosystem Engagement. An active board advisor, Orlagh is a passionate advocate for women's leadership and is recognized for building communities that foster wellness, professional growth, and innovation. She holds a B.A. in Applied Languages from Dublin City University and a professional certificate in quantum computing from MIT.

PANEL: THE COLLISION IS ALREADY HERE | 10:15 – 11:00 AM

MODERATOR

Ned Rava

Senior Programme Advisor | United Nations Joint Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Fund

Nenad (Ned) Rava, PhD/MDes is Senior Programme Advisor at the UN Joint SDG Fund in New York, where he drives catalytic impact in digital transformation, food systems, and decent jobs and social protection overseeing investments of more than $350 million across 80 programmes that benefit over 150 million people and catalyze over $800 million. With three decades of experience, he works at the intersection of policy, strategy, foresight, innovation, learning, leadership, stakeholder dialogue and systems transformation. He is the author of Platforms Everywhere: Transforming Organizations by Integrating Ecosystems in Business Design, a contributing author to the Handbook of Systems Sciences, and serves on the Executive Board of the Canadian Center for Future Literacy.

PANELIST

Erika Knierim

Partner | Founders Law LLP | Amnion VC

Erika R. Knierim is a Partner at Founders Law, where she leads the firm's Quantum Practice and advises founders, investors, and emerging-technology companies on corporate governance, venture financings, IP strategy, and commercial transactions. Her practice spans quantum computing, artificial intelligence, and other frontier technologies, helping clients protect innovation, secure capital, and navigate the legal and strategic challenges of commercialization. She also recently launched Amnion, an emerging investment platform focused on quantum and deep tech. Her work bridges legal strategy, technology commercialization, and investment, helping translate complex emerging technologies into durable businesses.

PANELIST

Mengyu Liu, PhD

Assistant Professor | Washington State University

Mengyu Liu is an Assistant Professor of Computer Science and Cybersecurity at Washington State University Tri-Cities. His research focuses on trustworthy AI and Physical AI for cyber-physical systems and robots, with particular interests in machine learning, robotics, real-time decision-making, and formal methods. His work investigates how intelligent systems can reason, adapt, and act reliably under uncertainty arising from incomplete observations, changing environments, computational and timing constraints, and model mismatch. He develops learning and control methods that integrate uncertainty awareness with safety and reliability guarantees, with applications in autonomous vehicles, robotic systems, and intelligent infrastructure.

PANELIST

Nirav Desai

Co-Founder & Chief Strategy Officer | Convergence: Tech Policy Institute (C:TPI)

Nirav Desai is Co-Founder & Chief Strategy Officer at Convergence: Tech Policy Institute (C:TPI). He previously served as Chief Technologist at Booz Allen Hamilton's Seattle office, where he led the firm's software development practice and technology business in the Pacific Northwest and helped build a 100-person immersive technology practice. As CEO and Co-Founder of Moonbeam Exchange, he helped companies source, prototype, and scale emerging technologies using AI-powered platforms and data science, with offices in Seattle, Lisbon, and Christchurch. He currently serves as Innovation Acceleration Lead at HP and chairs PNWER's Innovation Committee, where he works with states, provinces, and municipalities across the Pacific Northwest on emerging technology strategy and regional economic preparedness. Nirav co-authored the 2024 Washington State AI and 2023 Washington State Quantum Landscape Reports and is a recognized voice on AI-driven enterprise transformation and the creative economy. He also serves as Affiliate Assistant Professor in the University of Washington's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and as a Civic Council member at the Jackson School of International Studies. He holds a B.S. in Computer Science and a B.A. in Mathematics and Philosophy from the University of Texas at Austin.

PANELIST

Donald Thompson

Distinguished Engineer | Microsoft

Donald Thompson is a Distinguished Engineer at Microsoft, where he leads long-term innovation in AI and the future of work. He co-founded and leads a group at Microsoft focused on reimagining how organizations work in the agentic era.

Over the past 15 years, Donald has built advanced technologies that optimize business outcomes by operationalizing subject matter expertise — turning deep domain knowledge into systems that do real work.

His work sits at the frontier of what AI can become: active intelligence that doesn't wait to be asked, ambient intelligence that works alongside people without intruding, self-improving continuous systems that stay current and compound over time, and volitional and anticipatory systems that notice what needs doing before it's asked.

PANEL: THE CASCADIA CORRIDOR | 11:00 AM – 11:45 AM

FRAMING INTRODUCTION

Emily Fletcher

Associate Vice President | Challenge Seattle | Cascadia Innovation Corridor

Emily Fletcher is Associate Vice President at Challenge Seattle, the alliance of CEOs from 23 of the region's largest organizations working to ensure the Greater Seattle area remains one of the world's most vibrant and globally competitive regions. She supports the organization's work on civic initiatives spanning economic development, education, and housing, and plays a key role in advancing the Cascadia Innovation Corridor — the cross-border partnership between Washington State, Oregon, and British Columbia positioning the Pacific Northwest as a unified global hub for innovation and talent. Emily brings deep expertise in convening public and private sector leaders across the region and is a committed advocate for the power of cross-sector collaboration to drive lasting impact.

MODERATOR

Jonathan Hale

Managing Member / Principal | Neil Hill Global Strategies LLC

Jonathan S. Hale is a Washington, D.C.–based attorney and strategic advisor whose work sits at the intersection of artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, international trade, and supply chain policies. He is the Managing Member of Neil Hill Global Strategies, LLC, advising cross-border companies and emerging technology organizations on market entry, scaling, regulatory compliance, and strategy. He is also the principal at the Law Office of Jonathan S. Hale, PLLC.

With over 25 years of legal and policy expertise, Mr. Hale has dedicated his career to advising private sector leaders, U.S. government officials, and federal agencies on advanced technologies, national security, and international trade. As General Counsel to U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell and previously as Senior Counsel on the U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, he led the development of bipartisan AI and quantum legislation to bolster U.S. innovation and competitiveness. His extensive public service also includes roles as Staff Director of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, advisor to Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, and a tenure at the U.S. Department of State leading global supply chain diplomacy efforts.

PANELIST

Dr. Bethany Edmunds

Associate Dean of Computing Programs (West) | Northeastern University and **Board President** | AI Network of BC

Dr. Bethany Edmunds is the Associate Dean of Computing Programs at Northeastern University and CEO & Co-founder at Happy Prime. She holds a Ph.D. in Computer Science from Rutgers University where she developed novel machine learning algorithms for robot navigation. She brings together expertise in software development, machine learning, and educational innovation to create STEM opportunities for people of all backgrounds and abilities. Dr. Edmunds currently serves as the Board President of the Artificial Intelligence Network of British Columbia (AInBC).

PANELIST

Michael Brett

Head of GTM, Quantum Technologies | Amazon Web Services

Michael Brett leads worldwide go-to-market strategy for quantum technologies at Amazon Web Services (AWS). In this role, he works with enterprise customers, startups, research institutions and hardware partners around the world to explore and adopt quantum computing through Amazon Braket.

Michael has worked on quantum computing applications and software since 2013, helping organizations in finance, aerospace and defense apply quantum computing to hard computational problems. He began his career as a systems engineer on aerospace and defense programs in Australia. Outside his role at AWS, Michael shares what he's learned about commercializing deep technology and leading through technological change. He also works to build business and technology ties between Australia and the United States. He holds a Bachelor of Engineering in Aerospace Avionics and an Executive Master of Business in Complex Project Management from Queensland University of Technology.

PANELIST

Shannon Braddock

President & CEO | Greater Seattle Partners

Shannon Braddock is President and CEO of Greater Seattle Partners, the regional economic development organization serving King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. She leads efforts to attract investment, grow jobs, expand global trade, and strengthen the region's competitiveness. A champion of public-private collaboration, Braddock works with

business, government, and community leaders to advance economic opportunity and ensure the Greater Seattle region remains a global hub for innovation, talent, and investment.

PANELIST

Tamaira Ross

Advanced Technology Director, Boeing Mobility, Surveillance & Bombers | Boeing

Tamaira Ross is the director for advanced technology in Boeing Mobility, Surveillance and Bombers. She was formerly a Boeing Technical Fellow and was director of New Glenn System Definition and Design at Blue Origin. Tamaira holds a B.S. and a M.S. in Aeronautical & Astronautical Engineering from Purdue University. She attended the University of Washington where she obtained a M.S. in Mechanical Engineering and a Technology Management MBA. She is an affiliate instructor in the Industrial & Systems Engineering department at the University of Washington where she teaches a graduate class in technical leadership.

LIGHTNING KEYNOTE: TECH FOR THE PLANET | 12:30 – 12:40 PM

FRAMING INTRODUCTION

George Durham

Partner, Advisory Solutions Group | MGT Consulting

George Durham is a Partner in the Advisory Solutions Group at MGT Consulting, specializing in social impact, state and local government, and public sector innovation. Based in Seattle, he brings deep expertise in helping government agencies and organizations navigate complex technology and operational challenges, with a particular focus on the intersection of emerging technology, community impact, and public-private collaboration across the Pacific Northwest.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER — AI for the Hard Problems: What the World Still Needs

Chris Emura

Executive Director and Head of Applied Science & Technology | Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence

Chris Emura is Executive Director and Head of Applied Science and Technology at the Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence. He is responsible for architecting, launching, and sustaining long-lived environmental, climate, and conservation products adopted globally by more than 100 countries.

His career spans more than three decades, beginning in the 1990s with deep technical work in systems and storage. He has led and contributed across startups and Fortune 100 companies, serving the enterprise, consumer, and high-performance computing industries.

PANEL: YOUR CEO HAS AN AI STRATEGY. DOES YOUR INFRASTRUCTURE? | 12:50 – 1:35 PM

MODERATOR

Patrick O'Briant

Partner | Fall Line Partners

Patrick O'Briant is a commercial executive focused on turning AI, cloud, and infrastructure capabilities into enterprise adoption, revenue, and operating leverage. At AWS, he led go-to-market and commercialization for 29 AI/ML and GPU/infrastructure launches with more than $500 million in revenue impact, and previously held commercial ownership for a $1.9 billion AWS portfolio serving Amazon Worldwide Consumer. His broader operating background spans Microsoft, Expedia, enterprise GTM, partner ecosystems, marketplace commercialization, and large-scale technology operations.

PANELIST

Aaron Gustafson

Principal Technical Program Manager, Accessibility Engineering | Microsoft

For more than three decades, Aaron Gustafson has worked to make technology more accessible, resilient, and equitable. He is a Principal Technical Program Manager in Microsoft Accessibility Engineering, where he guides work on AI evaluation and benchmarks, agentic tooling, and design software. Previously, Aaron directed Microsoft's $25 million

AI for Accessibility portfolio and helped deliver speech-AI and custom neural-voice experiences with people who have disabilities. Earlier at Microsoft, he shaped Progressive Web App strategy for Edge and edited several W3C specifications. Aaron wrote Adaptive Web Design, co-authored the sixth edition of Learning Web Design, managed the Web Standards Project, and served as Editor in Chief of A List Apart.

PANELIST

Harpreet Singh

Executive Director | JP Morgan and **Co-Founder and CPO |** Ponte AI

Harpreet Singh is Co-Founder and CPO of Ponte AI, which builds runtime authorization and governance for AI agents and non-human identities. A 20-year enterprise IAM veteran with leadership roles at JPMorgan Chase, Veza, and T-Mobile, he co-authored Blockchain Application Security (Wiley) and contributes to peer-reviewed research on agentic security.

PANELIST

Xiaochen Zhang

CEO & Chief AI Officer | AI 2030

Xiaochen Zhang is CEO and Chief AI Officer of AI 2030, a global initiative harnessing the transformative power of AI to benefit humanity while minimizing its potential negative impacts. He is also Founder and CEO of FinTech4Good, a global network collaborating with startups, industry leaders, nonprofits, and investors to apply blockchain, AI, and emerging technologies for social good. Previously, Xiaochen served as Global Head of Innovation and Go-To-Market at Amazon Web Services, where he led teams developing cutting-edge solutions for public sector customers across digital assets, central bank digital currency, green finance, and regulatory technologies. Earlier in his career he advised government agencies and multilateral organizations at the World Bank and United Nations. He serves on boards and advisory bodies across technology, finance, and sustainable development, and brings more than 20 years of experience building transformative global initiatives at the intersection of emerging technology and social impact.

PANELIST

Mike Steep

Board Member | Resect.AI

Mike Steep is a globally recognized expert on disruptive technology and innovation strategy. As the Founding Executive Director of Stanford University's Disruptive Technology Program at the School of Engineering, he has spent his entire career in technology at the intersection of cutting-edge technology development and strategic business transformation. Mike has held senior executive roles at some of the world's most influential technology companies, including Apple, Microsoft, Xerox PARC, Kodak ENCAD, Lexmark (IBM), and Hewlett Packard. He launched the industry's first digital camera at Apple and served as an operations executive across China, Japan, and Asia. He is the author of two books: Critical Turning Point, a strategic guide for executives navigating AI and disruptive technology, and First Light of Day, a work of technological realism praised by General Stanley McChrystal, former CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell, and former FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler. Mike holds a BA and an MBA, and also completed the Wharton Multinational Enterprise Program at The University of Pennsylvania. He is a Harvard Business School Odyssey Program alumnus. He has delivered 70+ keynotes across 25+ industries to more than 7,000 executive attendees worldwide.

PANEL: WHO'S RESPONSIBLE IN THE INTELLIGENCE AGE? | 1:35 – 2:10 PM

MODERATOR

Professor Onur Bakiner, PhD

Director, Technology Ethics Initiative | Professor, Department of Political Science | Seattle University

Onur Bakiner is professor of political science and director of the Technology Ethics Initiative at Seattle University. He holds a PhD in political science (Yale University, 2011) and a Master's in computer science (Seattle University, 2021). His research and teaching interests include technology & society, technology governance, human rights, and judicial politics. His latest book Governing AI: A Primer (Cambridge University Press, 2026) reflects his ongoing work on governance models to mitigate AI risks and harms. He has delivered public lectures in universities, nonprofits, international organizations and business associations in various countries on the societal implications of technology, judicial politics, and human rights.

PANELIST

Cassaundra Howell

CEO | Public Health Solutions

Cassaundra Howell is the President and CEO of Public Health Solutions (PHS), New York City's largest public health nonprofit. Under her leadership, PHS connects over 135,000 New Yorkers to essential health and social services while addressing the city's most pressing health challenges—from food insecurity and health insurance access to maternal and child health and tobacco control.

PANELIST

Jonathan Barry

VP Global Government Affairs & Public Policy | LawZero

Jonathan Barry is the Vice President of Global Government Affairs and Public Policy at LawZero - a safe-by-design AI lab - and the Director of Policy to Professor Yoshua Bengio. He was a senior advisor to two Canadian Prime Ministers and two Ministers of Defense, and holds a Master in Public Affairs from Princeton University. He is a seasoned policy strategist with experience at the highest levels of government and campaigns in both Canada and the United States. In his current roles, he focuses on the intersection of policy and AI governance and safety, contributing his expertise to initiatives like the International AI Safety Report.

PANELIST

Mike Steep

Board Member | Resect.AI

Mike Steep is a globally recognized expert on disruptive technology and innovation strategy. As the Founding Executive Director of Stanford University's Disruptive Technology Program at the School of Engineering, he has spent his entire career in technology at the intersection of cutting-edge technology development and strategic business transformation. Mike has held senior executive roles at some of the world's most influential technology companies, including Apple, Microsoft, Xerox PARC, Kodak ENCAD, Lexmark (IBM), and Hewlett Packard. He launched the industry's first digital camera at Apple and served as an operations executive across China, Japan, and Asia. He is the author of two books: Critical Turning Point, a strategic guide for executives navigating AI and disruptive technology, and First Light of Day, a work of technological realism praised by General Stanley McChrystal, former CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell, and former FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler. Mike holds a BA and an MBA, and also completed the Wharton Multinational Enterprise Program at The University of Pennsylvania. He is a Harvard Business School Odyssey Program alumnus. He has delivered 70+ keynotes across 25+ industries to more than 7,000 executive attendees worldwide.

PANELIST

Yuki Ishizuka

Technology Policy Manager, AI Taskforce Chair | Office of the Washington State Attorney General

Yuki Ishizuka serves as the Technology Policy Manager in the Office of the Washington State Attorney General, where he advises the Attorney General on the social and legal impacts of AI and emerging technology. Yuki was appointed to lead the Washington State Artificial Intelligence Task Force, which released its final report earlier this year. Prior to joining the AG's office, Yuki worked for 20+ years as an attorney and business development executive at Amazon and Microsoft.

PANEL: WHO GETS LEFT BEHIND WHEN THE ECONOMY REWIRES ITSELF? | 2:30 – 3:15 PM

MODERATOR

Mary Nam

Governor-Appointed Regent, Emmy Award-Winning Journalist | Washington State University (WSU)

Emmy Award-winning news anchor and journalist with 23 years at KOMO-TV in Seattle where she became one of the Pacific Northwest's most trusted and recognized faces in broadcasting. Mary built her career informing viewers and listeners of breaking news, moderating high-profile political debates, and supporting the community and numerous organizations. Her communications expertise extends from the evening anchor desk to podcast hosting and civic and

charitable events. In 2026, she was appointed by Washington Governor Bob Ferguson to the Washington State University Board of Regents, deepening her longstanding commitment to public service and her alma mater.

PANELIST

Bleu Blakslee

Managing Director | Quantum Philanthropy Partners

Bleu is a nationally and internationally respected philanthropic strategist with over 35 years of leadership experience across nonprofits, foundations, family offices, and multigenerational donors. A Native Hawaiian raised on O'ahu, she is an alumna of Le Jardin Academy and Punahou School and began her career working in senior positions in Hawai'i with the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Hawai'i, Aloha Bowl Charities, and the Hawaii Foodbank, where she was featured on the cover of Hawaii Business Magazine. Bleu has since held senior roles at organizations including St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and Save the Children, Legacy Health Systems, ChildFund International, Mercy Ships, Up With People, and others, stewarding complex, transformational gifts globally. She currently serves on the board of the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum and as Co-Chair of the Punahou Alumni Association- Pacific Northwest. She is a former Board Member of the International Advisors in Philanthropy and Cotrains at Stanford U/Stanford PACS on a 2-day Effective Philanthropy certification, as well as a trainer and facilitator at Daylight on the Impact Philanthropy Advisors (IPA) certification.

PANELIST

Chris Emura

Executive Director and Head of Applied Science and Technology | Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence

Chris Emura is Executive Director and Head of Applied Science and Technology at the Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence. He is responsible for architecting, launching, and sustaining long-lived environmental, climate, and conservation products adopted globally by more than 100 countries.

His career spans more than three decades, beginning in the 1990s with deep technical work in systems and storage. He has led and contributed across startups and Fortune 100 companies, serving the enterprise, consumer, and high-performance computing industries.

PANELIST

David Lara

Executive Director | AI 2030

David Lara is an executive, entrepreneur, and technology leader with more than two decades of experience spanning government, technology, AI, and civic innovation. He currently serves as Executive Director of AI 2030, a global member-based organization focused on advancing responsible AI, where he leads strategy, operations, partnerships, fundraising, and engagement across government, industry, academia, and the investment community. David is also Co-Founder and CEO of SuperCity AI, an AI-powered civic technology platform helping cities deliver digital services, payments, communications, and community engagement through a unified platform. He is a Co-Founder and board member of SuperForce AI, a nonprofit focused on creating pathways into technology, finance, consulting, and entrepreneurship for students and veterans. He also serves in a leadership role with AuraVision Health, an AI-powered healthcare technology company focused on patient navigation and intelligent care delivery. Previously, David held senior leadership positions in government, including serving as Chief Administrative Officer for New York City and Deputy Budget Director for New York State. Across his career, he has worked at the intersection of public policy, technology, operations, and economic development, building partnerships among government, corporations, investors, universities, and emerging technology companies. David holds a Master of Public Affairs from The University of Texas at Austin and a Bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Washington.

PANELIST

Jesse Canedo

Chief Economic Development Officer | City of Bellevue

Jesse Canedo serves as Chief Economic Development Officer for the City of Bellevue, Washington, where he leads the city's efforts to attract investment, support business growth, and advance economic opportunity across one of the Pacific Northwest's most dynamic innovation corridors. With deep expertise in economic development strategy, workforce policy, and public-private partnership, he brings a frontline regional perspective to the intersection of technology, governance, and community impact.

SHOWCASE: HOW DID A CANADIAN PROVINCE BEAT SILICON VALLEY AT QUANTUM AND AI? | 3:15 – 4:00 PM

MODERATOR

Dr. Bethany Edmunds

Associate Dean of Computing Programs (West Coast) | Board President, AI Network of BC | Northeastern University

Bethany Edmunds is the Associate Dean of Computing Programs at Northeastern University and CEO & Co-founder at Happy Prime. She holds a Ph.D. in Computer Science from Rutgers University where she developed novel machine learning algorithms for robot navigation. She brings together expertise in software development, machine learning, and educational innovation to create STEM opportunities for people of all backgrounds and abilities. Dr. Edmunds currently serves as the Board President of the Artificial Intelligence Network of British Columbia (AInBC).

PANELIST

Carlyn Loncaric

Founder & CEO | AquaEye

Carlyn Loncaric is the founder and CEO of VodaSafe, the company behind AquaEye, a handheld underwater search device that uses AI to identify human targets and reduce search time by up to 90%. A former lifeguard and microelectronics engineer, she combined her frontline experience with her technical expertise to tackle the challenge of locating missing people underwater. Today, AquaEye is used by public safety teams in more than 50 countries. Carlyn is passionate about bringing AI into the hands of frontline responders through practical, intuitive tools that help save lives.

PANELIST

Kathryn Hayashi

Board Chair | Quantum Algorithm Institute (QAI)

Kathryn Hayashi is CEO and Director of the Quantum Algorithms Institute, where she is leading its evolution into the BC Quantum Gateway to accelerate quantum innovation, industry collaboration and commercialization. A CPA, CA, she brings more than 20 years of leadership experience across quantum technologies, life sciences and nuclear medicine. Previously, she served as President and CEO of TRIUMF Innovations and founding CFO of the Centre for Drug Research and Development, now adMare BioInnovations. Her work connects research, industry, government and capital to translate scientific breakthroughs into real-world applications and economic impact.

PANELIST

Orlagh Neary

Chief Marketing Officer | Photonic

Orlagh Neary is Chief Marketing Officer at Photonic, responsible for global marketing, communications, thought leadership, brand, and market development. Orlagh brings over two decades of experience building and scaling markets for transformative technologies, from cloud computing and AI to quantum computing. Prior to Photonic, Orlagh spent over 20 years at Microsoft, most recently serving as General Manager of Microsoft Quantum and AI Ecosystem Engagement. An active board advisor, Orlagh is a passionate advocate for women's leadership and is recognized for building communities that foster wellness, professional growth, and innovation. She holds a B.A. in Applied Languages from Dublin City University and a professional certificate in quantum computing from MIT.

PANELIST

Zheng Cui

VP Field Engineering | IonQ

Zheng Cui is the CTO, Field Engineering at IonQ, where he leads technical go-to-market in the Americas. Zheng has a combination of deep technical expertise in quantum technologies and extensive experience in strategy consulting with large enterprises and organizations - having a PhD in quantum computing and sensing from Stanford University, and formerly a Partner at the Boston Consulting Group prior to joining IonQ. He helps customers understand the technology across IonQ's portfolio, bridge the gap between tech capabilities and commercial value, and deploy IonQ products to drive real-world impact. In his previous roles, Zheng has advised business & government leaders around the world on quantum investment & ecosystem strategies and adoption roadmaps.

CLOSING KEYNOTE: CONVERGENCE | 4:00 – 4:30 PM

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Alvin Wang Graylin

Digital Fellow, Stanford HAI | Professor, University of Washington | Author, Our Next Reality | Stanford University

Alvin Wang Graylin is a Digital Fellow at Stanford's Human-Centered AI Institute, Senior Fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute Center for China Analysis, Professor of AI and Technology Policy at the University of Washington, and author of Our Next Reality. He advises governments, multilateral organizations, and Fortune 100 leaders on AI policy, global governance, and the national security and socioeconomic implications of advanced technologies. With more than 35 years of industry leadership experience across AI, semiconductors, data center, digital media and cybersecurity in both MNCs and technology startups, he brings a rare cross-cultural perspective from extensive work in the United States, Mainland China and Taiwan. He started researching neural networks in the early 90s, designed GPU functionality into Intel chips in the mid 90s, deployed data centers across the Pacific in the late 90s, brought to market a conversational AI system to tens of millions of users across China in the mid 2000s, and have driven PC, smart phone, and immersive glasses businesses globally. He's a sought after speaker and commentator on the transformative impact of AI and exponential technologies for major events and media outlets.

Cascadia Reception

ANCHOR PARTNER

Craig Weichel

Consulate General of Canada in Seattle | Canada

Craig Weichel (BA Hons, Wilfrid Laurier University, 1994; MA, McMaster University, 1996) joined the Consulate General of Canada in Seattle in September 2024.As Canada's Consul General to the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska, Mr. Weichel is responsible for strengthening trade and economic ties; enhancing political, academic and cultural links; and assisting Canadians visiting or living in those four states.

Prior to his arrival in Seattle, Mr. Weichel headed the Environment and Energy program at Canada's Embassy to the United States in Washington, DC (2019 to 2024). In this capacity, he managed a number of files of importance to Canada-U.S. relations, including cross-border energy infrastructure, critical minerals collaboration, and transboundary environmental issues.

A career Foreign Service officer, Mr. Weichel has also served abroad at Canada's Embassy in Rome, Italy (2009 to 2013); at the Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Vienna, Austria (2002 to 2005); and at Canada's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York (2000).

At Headquarters of Global Affairs Canada in Ottawa, Mr. Weichel most recently served as Director of the North Korea Task Force (2018 to 2019) and the Civilian Security Policy and Natural Disaster Response Division (2016 to 2018). He also served as President of the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers from 2007 to 2009.

Born and raised near Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Mr. Weichel enjoys various outdoor pursuits as well as explaining the nuances of Canadian football to Americans.

Attendees:

The following curated leaders are joining us as attendees on October 28, 2026.

1. **Jason Appelgate | NA — Senior Strategic Sourcing Manager, Tech professional. JD background**. 8+ years at Microsoft negotiating strategic sourcing and AI deals. Jason Appelgate is an accomplished procurement executive and attorney who built an impactful eight-year career at Microsoft, most recently serving as a Senior Procurement Manager and Strategic Sourcing Manager until September 2026. Based in the Greater Seattle area, he specializes in large-scale corporate negotiations, complex SaaS/cloud infrastructure contracts, and commercial risk mitigation.
2. **Thomas Armbruster | Calgary Economic Development — Business Development Manager.** Thomas Armbruster is the Business Development Manager for Enterprise Technology at Calgary Economic Development (CED). A born-and-raised Calgarian, he is an expert ecosystem builder who specializes in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), establishing trade corridors, and promoting Calgary's competitive advantages to the international technology community.
3. **Adam Bird | Birdsight — Founder & Responsible AI Practitioner.** Adam Bird is Founder and Responsible AI Practitioner at Birdsight, where he works with nonprofits, public agencies, and purpose-driven companies to define their positions on AI use, assess proposed AI solutions, and lead implementation, all in ways that hold to their values and advance their mission. His experience includes 11 years in engineering and AI leadership at Amazon, where he led Alexa Smart Home AI teams through the Alexa+ launch. He holds an M.S. in Software Engineering Management from Carnegie Mellon University.
4. **William Bridges | Gordon Thomas Honeywell Government Relations — State Lobbyist.** 30 years public policy experience with the Washington State Senate, Lumen Technologies, and the Bonneville Power Administration.
5. **Subhadeep Chatterjee | Visible Benefit — VP of partnerships.** I've spent the last two decades building revenue engines at some of the biggest names in tech—Cisco, T-Mobile, Openwave, Xura, Synchronoss, and Google—working across sales, partnerships, and business development. At Google Cloud, I've spent the last five years scaling enterprise AI adoption and mana...
6. **Dennis Chenard | Northeastern University — Director of Industry Partnerships.** We do embedded projects and research projects with external partners across the west coast with our Master of Computer Science grad students. Happy to make connections with our Seattle, Oakland, Silicon Valley and Vancouver, BC Canada campuses. https://www.khoury.northeastern.edu/research/capstone-p...
7. **YB Choi | Cercano — Partner.** Co-head of venture capital at Cercano (formerly Vulcan Capital), which invests broadly across asset classes. VC investing since 2008 with generalist and early stage focus.
8. **Dr. Anamika Dubey | Washington State University & Pacific Northwest National Laboratory — Huie-Rogers Endowed Chair Professor**. Dr. Anamika Dubey is Huie-Rogers Endowed Chair Professor of Electrical Engineering in the School of EECS at Washington State University, Pullman. She also holds a joint appointment as a Research Scientist at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and serves as the Co-director for the WSU-PNNL Advanced Grid Institute. She received her MSE and Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin in 2012 and 2015, respectively. Her research develops scalable, data- and model-driven methods to support decision-making in increasingly complex electric power systems. She is a recipient of the National Science Foundation CAREER Award (2019) and the IEEE PES Outstanding Young Engineer Award (2023).
9. **Nick Ellingson | WTIA — VP, Innovation & Entrepreneurship.** Nick Ellingson serves as the VP of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA). Widely recognized as a central ecosystem builder and a premier "human rolodex" for the Pacific Northwest tech community, he specializes in connecting early-stage founders with investor matchmaking, mentorship, and vital go-to-market scaling resources.
10. **Robert Fiddick | Global Affairs Canada — Trade & Investment Officer**. Robert (Rob) Fiddick serves as a Trade Commissioner for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at Global Affairs Canada. Based in the Greater Seattle Area, he helps Canadian companies successfully expand into the United States market.
11. **Nikola Fischerova | Invest Vancouver — Sector Development Lead.** Nikola is the Sector Development Lead at Invest Vancouver, driving foreign direct investment (FDI) into the region. Holding a Master's in Economics and Business Law and backed by over seven years of economic development experience, she

helps global companies navigate regulatory frameworks and government incentives to successfully scale in Metro Vancouver.

12. **John Flemming | Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce — Managing Director.** John Flemming is the Managing Director of CIBC Innovation Banking, the specialized technology lending and growth capital division of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC). Based in the Greater Seattle area, he is responsible for leading the bank's presence and debt-financing operations across the Pacific Northwest region.
13. **Thomas Fridmann | Quebec Government Office in Seattle — Junior Attaché in Economic Affairs**. My name is Thomas Fridmann. I am an intern at the Government of Quebec at their office in Seattle where I am assisting the team with research of the economic and political landscape of the Pacific Northwest.
14. **Zach Golkhou | JP Morgan — Director of Applied AI and Quantum ML Researcher**. Dr. V. Zach Golkhou is an Executive Director of AI and Data Science for the Asset & Wealth Management business at J.P. Morgan. Operating within the firm's AI Center of Excellence, he is a highly recognized leader in applied artificial intelligence, quantitative finance, and Quantum Machine Learning (QML) algorithms.
15. **Seaton Gras | SURF Incubator — CEO**. Helping Seattle tech startups for more than 20 years. Always eager to learn about new tech innovations.
16. **Michael Grossman | Clean Up Marketing — CEO**. Michael Grossman is the CEO of Clean Up Marketing, a Seattle firm that helps technology companies win support from investors and customers in specialized and regulated markets with long sales cycles. He's also the author of You-Based Marketing: Messaging For Complex Technologies in a Selfie-Obsessed...
17. **Natalie Hawkins | Seattle Quantum Computing Meetup Group — Founder**. Natalie Hawkins is a prominent software engineer, biostatistician, and quantum ecosystem builder based in the Pacific Northwest. She serves as the Secretary of the Northwest Quantum Nexus (NQN) and is the Founder and Lead Organizer of the Seattle Quantum Computing Meetup.
18. **Joydeep Hazra | South Seattle College — Program Director.** Program Director of Federal grant, leading Aviation & Electric Propulsion vehicle research. Boasting over 25 years of experience in telecommunications, network engineering, and emerging technologies, Hazra specializes in leading rapid prototyping, workforce development, and aerospace-adjacent innovation initiatives.
19. **Kristiina Hiukka | Finland — Honorary Consul of Finland**. Kristiina Hiukka is an international leadership coach, consultant, and the Honorary Consul of Finland for Washington, Montana, and Idaho. Appointed as a consular officer in 2009, she serves as a diplomatic liaison, supports Finnish nationals, and fosters trade and cultural relations between the Pacific Northwest and Finland. In 2021, she was knighted by the President of Finland into the Order of the White Rose for her dedicated service
20. **Melissa Hutchins | Certifi AI — Cofounder & CEO**. Building multimodal deepfake detection models. Motivated by her personal experience surviving a severe cyberstalking campaign, Hutchins launched the company to build detection, monitoring, and compliance tools that safeguard digital likenesses and protect women and girls from non-consensual AI deepfakes and online abuse.
21. **Shih-Chieh Hsu | University of Washington — Professor**. Dr. Shih-Chieh Hsu is a Professor of Physics and an Adjunct Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Washington (UW). He is an experimental particle physicist working at the intersection of high-energy physics, high-performance computing, and real-time artificial intelligence.
22. **Stan Kabacheuski | Boston Consulting Group — Project Leader.** Stan is a Project Leader at Boston Consulting Group. I work with private equity funds to evaluate tech companies, including how AI changes their risk and upside. I also build my own AI tools for deal work, so I'm here to swap notes with other builders on what holds up beyond one user.
23. **Nathan Karbonik | Calgary Economic Development — Business Development, Tech & Digital Media.** Nathan Karbonik serves as the Business Development Associate for Tech & Digital Media at Calgary Economic Development (CED). He plays a key role in advancing Calgary's tech sector by attracting international investment, creating strategic partnerships, and positioning the city as a thriving hub for digital innovation and creative media.
24. **Bilal Khan | Stragentech — CTO Founder/CTO**. Tech Advisory; Strategic Systems Modernization, Pragmatic AI Adoption; Engineering & Operational Excellence; Ex-Amazon, Boeing, Motorola
25. **Brandon Kim | SQK INC. — CEO**. Brandon Kim is the CEO, Co-Founder, and Chief Product Officer (CPO) of SQK Inc. (Super Quantum Kinetics). The company is a deep-tech pioneer building quantum-AI technologies designed for trusted medical imaging, scientific computing, and next-generation data intelligence. Based in Kirkland, Washington, he is an experienced executive with over 20 years of leadership in software engineering, project management, and strategic market expansion.

26. **Sergey Lapin | Washington State University — Professor**. Dr. Sergey Lapin is a Scholarly Professor of Mathematics and Statistics at Washington State University (WSU) Everett and serves as the Director of WSU's Data Analytics Program. He is recognized as a highly interdisciplinary researcher and educator who applies mathematical modeling to real-world medical, scientific, and global problems.
27. **Derek LaSalle | Cappz.ai – President/CEO**. I co-invented windows secure boot and bitlocker amongst many other patents (Biztalk Server). Cappz.ai based on my latest info-sec patent subsumes them all providing ontology anchored ai agent governance on a decentralized platform. Cappz.ai is a zero-trust, ontology anchored, distributed, autonomous ai agent feedback, control and governance platform.
28. **Noel Le | MindCast AI — Founder | Architect.** Predictive Behavioral Economics + Dynamic Game Theory simulations of innovation economics, quantum-AI merger, global investment flows.
29. **Tommy Lofgren | Resect.AI — Co-Founder, Chief Product and Marketing Officer.** Tommy Lofgren is Co-Founder and Chief Product and Marketing Officer of Resect AI, responsible for synchronization of the product and user experience, including the commercialization of inventions from the Research and Development team. A core member of Resect AI's "Core Four" executive group, Tommy has co-founded four companies on the premise that design-led product development benefits the end-user and enhances the overall development process. Early in his career, Tommy worked at General Motors designing and overseeing e-commerce platforms, followed by full-scale product deployments with Amazon, Cox, The Chicago Tribune, and Kelly Blue Book spanning development, marketing, sales, data, cybersecurity, accounting, and legal departments.
30. **Lori Salow Marshall | The Quantum Links Group LLC — Managing Member.** Lori Salow Marshall is a founder and deep tech commercialization expert. She is focused on the topic of Human-Time vs. AI-Time in the context of agentic, physical AI and quantum use cases.
31. **Ryan McIntosh | Resect.AI — Chief Growth Officer and Head of Open Source Community.** Ryan McIntosh serves as the Chief Growth Officer and Head of Open-Source Community at Resect AI, with responsibility for driving the company's growth across individuals, government, education, and other verticals. His leadership is grounded in a servant-leader mindset, connecting user growth, product adoption, and AI community through focused engagement. As part of Resect AI's executive team, Ryan's mission is to accelerate customer adoption through trusted, partnership-driven, customer-concentric growth across all open-source avenues including forums, events, social engagement, and AI industry outreach that connect thinkers and doers on influential stages. Across more than 30 years of enterprise and startup experience — including Microsoft, AT&T, Nordstrom, Xandr, and Buy.com — Ryan has applied this model to help scale new products and communities
32. **Randa Minkarah | WTIA – Chief Operating Executive.** Randa Minkarah is the Chief Operating Executive and Executive Board Chair of the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA). Based in Seattle, Washington, Minkarah is a seasoned executive, media entrepreneur, and technology leader with over 15 years of experience specializing in digital transformation, business operations, and artificial intelligence applications.
33. **Josh Moles | Snoquera — Founder & CEO**. Josh Moles is the Founder and CEO of Snoquera, a company focused on field-deployable quantum sensors for national security and energy. He is an alumnus of Portland State University with a diverse background spanning the U.S. Department of State, Google, and IonQ.
34. **Khadija Montgomery | Boeing — Business Systems Manager.** Khadija Montgomery is an IT professional, systems specialist, and data analyst who has worked as a Manager and Data Analyst at Boeing. During her tenure at the company, she specialized in business intelligence, data systems, and emerging corporate technologies. In June 2024, she was officially recognized by the company as a verified Generative AI Advocate, highlighting her involvement in bridging enterprise data with AI-driven operations.
35. **Steve Myers | Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) – Director.** Steven Myers is Director of Program Management at the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER), with extensive experience in government relations, technology policy, and regional economic development. He brings together legislators, industry leaders, and researchers from the United States and Canada to address shared challenges in infrastructure, innovation, critical minerals, and workforce development. He has presented in state, provincial and federal capitals on policies related to energy and innovation. His work connects emerging technologies with the policies, partnerships, and infrastructure needed to support economic growth. He brings a regional policy perspective to discussions on the intersection of artificial intelligence and energy, including implications for infrastructure investment, resource supply chains, and regional competitiveness.
36. **Eli Novershtern | Morrag Investments – Founder and Managing Partner.** Eli Novershtern is a prominent Israeli venture capitalist, global civil society leader, and the Founder and Managing Partner of Morrag Investments. Operating at the upper echelons of international finance and diplomacy, Novershtern

commands over two decades of experience spanning tier-one venture funds, corporate venture capital (CVC), elite military intelligence, and global Jewish leadership

37. **CS Park, PhD, MS | Kyral Inc. — Founder & CEO.** Building AI infra, establishing governance, shaping policy. Sehwan Park, PhD, MS (professionally known as C.S. Park) is a scientist, health tech entrepreneur, and expert at the intersection of neuroscience, precision medicine, data privacy, and healthcare law. He is the Founder and CEO of Kyral Inc. (also operating as Kyral Health), a company building decentralized, patient-centric infrastructure for biological and healthcare data.
38. **Mark Mueller-Eberstein | Adgetec Corporation — Investor.** Investor, keynote speaker, entrepreneur, and best-selling author in 12 languages. For over a decade, Mark has been a digital transformation leader for blockchain, cryptocurrencies, IoT, AI, and cloud computing.
39. **Tony Mullen | Northeastern University — Teaching Professor**. Teaching professor in CS, currently teaching graduate level courses on CS and quantum computing
40. **Vijay Neti | Accenture — Global Software and Platform Engineering Lead.** I am responsible for growing Software and Platform Engineering for Accenture globally using AI
41. **Bo Peng | Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) — Computational Scientist**. In PNNL, my research focus is the co-designed quantum many-body framework for deciphering quantum phenomena in complex system.
42. **KT Pickard | QuantaSeq — Founder.** K. Thomas "KT" Pickard is an American technology executive, entrepreneur, and strategic advisor specializing in health IT, medical imaging, precision medicine, and next-generation enterprise compute. He is also the founder or key technical mind behind QuantaSeq, a software project or initiative linking advanced data architectures with genomics and bioinformatics.
43. **Aaron Pinto | Government of Ontario Office in San Francisco — Consul & Head of Trade & Investment.** Aaron Pinto is the Head of the Government of Ontario's Trade & Investment Office in San Francisco, where he leads Ontario's trade, investment attraction and innovation engagement across the Western United States. Previously, he led Ontario's New York office. He focuses on helping connect U.S. co...
44. **Nick Polachek | Launch Consulting — EVP, Global AI Strategy & Transformation**. Nick Polachek, CFA is an American technology executive and business strategy consultant specializing in cloud applications, big data, and enterprise-grade AI transformation. He serves as the Executive Vice President and Global Head of AI Strategy and Transformation at Launch Consulting Group, where he leads efforts to help Fortune 1000 organizations transition from experimental AI pilots to measurable business value
45. **Sierra Ré Hyson | John Squared — Chief Growth Officer.** I'm a mom and global deep tech ecosystem builder. I serve as lead for Deep Tech Week Seattle, on the board of Space Northwest, and as a diaspora ambassador for the Africa Quantum Consortium. Specializes in quantum mechanics, critical technologies, and strategic market scaling for deep-tech ecosystems. Known for her cross-disciplinary leadership, she bridges the gap between emerging science and complex business execution.
46. **Chami Ro | Korea Startup Center Seattle — Marketing & Program Manager**. Chami Ro (professionally known as Chami Jo Ro) is an international business development professional, marketing executive, and community organizer based in Seattle, Washington. She is the Marketing & Program Manager (also functioning as Startup Business Development Manager) at the K-Startup Center (KSC) Seattle, an initiative operated by the South Korean government's Korea SMEs and Startups Agency (KOSME)
47. **Jessica Roberto | WA State Department of Commerce — Knowledge Economy Lead**. Jessica Roberto is the Knowledge Economy Lead within the Office of Economic Development and Competitiveness at the Washington State Department of Commerce, working to advance the growth, innovation, and competitiveness of the global health, life sciences, and information and communication technology (ICT) sectors across the state. Jessica received her PhD in Pathobiology from the University of Washington in 2013 and has held a variety of roles within the Seattle-area life sciences startup ecosystem, including within venture capital groups, consulting organizations, academia, and innovation-focused non-profits.
48. **David Carlos Raphael Ruiz | Quebec Government Office in Seattle — Delegate.** The Québec Government Office in Seattle, opened in 2025, promotes trade and investment between Québec and Washington State, particularly in technology, including AI and quantum. For this event, our office supported the participation of LawZero's Jonathan Barry, Vice President, Global Government Affairs.
49. **Rep. Cindy Ryu | Washington State Legislature — Representative**. State Rep. Cindy Ryu Chairs the House Technology, Economic Development and Veterans Committee. She is finishing her 8th term in the state Legislature and has a BS in Microbiology and an MBA in Operations Management from UW-Seattle.
50. **Menda Sanketh | AWS (views=own) — Cryptographer.** Post-quantum cryptography. Quantum algorithms. Menda specializes in post-quantum cryptography, applied cryptographic protocols, and core privacy architectures.

51. **Nico Santo | Trade and Invest — BC Director.** Nicolas "Nico" Santo is an international investment executive, legal scholar, and economic development strategist. He serves as the Director for the Pacific Northwest at Trade & Invest British Columbia, a government initiative that facilitates foreign direct investment (FDI) and trade flows between global regions and western Canada.
52. **Vaisakh Ramakrishna Sarma | Compassion8Innovation — Founding Researcher.** Product and program leader with 12 years in ecommerce, logistics, trade, and technology. Now researching on space tech research and trade analysis
53. **Rohit Sarna | WTIA – AI & Marketing Specialist.** Rohit Sarna is an AI & Marketing Specialist at the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA). Based in Seattle, Washington, Sarna is a tech professional specializing in applied AI, LLM workflows, and cloud architecture. He leads AI adoption across the WTIA organization by identifying manual process inefficiencies and developing automated solutions
54. **JP Saucier | Invest Québec — Director of Foreign Direct Investment.** Working for Québec Economic development organization, visiting Seattle for the AI summit. Over my career, I attracted several high profile tech companies to QC.
55. **Jana Schuster | StackIQ — Founder & CEO.** Jana is the CEO leading AI transformations for companies including pricing intelligence and cost optimization. Jana Schuster is the Founder and CEO of StackIQ, an AI-native software asset intelligence platform designed to eliminate enterprise tech waste. An expert in corporate strategy and operational transformation, she has scaled multi-billion-dollar P&L portfolios across top-tier companies. Her extensive executive background includes leading digital growth, pricing, and category strategy as a Senior Manager and Category Leader at Amazon, alongside serving as Vice President at The Honest Company and Global VP at Deputy. She holds an Executive MBA from Kellogg.
56. **Erik Schmidt | Washington State Department of Commerce (Office of Economic Development & Competitiveness) — Policy & Strategic Initiatives Manager**. Erik Schmidt is the Policy & Strategic Initiatives Manager in the Office of Economic Development & Competitiveness (OEDC) at the Washington State Department of Commerce, where he helps lead the statewide economic development strategy. He previously served as chief of staff to a Seattle City Councilmember and worked on economic development strategy for the Victorian State Government in Australia. He holds a master's in international business from the Cologne Business School in Germany and a Bachelor of Science in Finance from Santa Clara University.
57. **DeiMarlon Scisney | The Data Guys™ LLC — President.** Dei'Marlon "D" Scisney, MS, PMP, CISA is an American data engineer, artificial intelligence strategist, and civic technology leader. He is the Founder and President of The Data Guys™ LLC, a Seattle-based data and AI engineering firm specializing in modernizing data systems, tracking public funding, and creating equitable tech infrastructure.
58. **Amit Shukla | Seattle University — Professor of Mechanical Engineering.** Dr. Amit Shukla is a Professor of Mechanical Engineering and the former Howard Wright Dean of the College of Science and Engineering at Seattle University. An expert in nonlinear dynamics, he has spent over two decades driving inclusive STEM education and academic innovation. His extensive leadership background includes serving as Department Chair at Miami University, where he was also the Founding Director of the Center for Assistive Technology. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Cincinnati.
59. **Ben Slivka | Wissner Slivka Foundation — Trustee**. 20 start-ups: Atomic Machines, Stoke Space, biotech, hardware, software; 60 nations; software engineer, philanthropist; Seattle; Northwestern; DreamBox, AMZN, MSFT, IBM. Ben Slivka is a software engineer, investor, and philanthropist. During 14 years at Microsoft, he famously started and led the Internet Explorer team through the release of IE 3.0. In 1997, he and his wife Lisa established the Wissner-Slivka Foundation, a family foundation primarily dedicated to supporting education and life science research
60. **Ted Smith | Resect.AI — Chief Sales Officer and Head of Partnerships**. Ted Smith is Chief Sales Officer and Head of Partnerships at Resect AI, leading all sales initiatives across enterprise clients and commercial partnerships. He strategically aligns Resect's groundbreaking, patented technologies to solve for the growing challenges of global governance and compliance in the application of AI across enterprises. With over 25 years of revenue leadership experience, Ted is recognized industry-wide as a leader who translates emerging technologies into board-level trust and outsized commercial growth. He began his career in senior sales leadership at Condé Nast, Hearst Corporation, and The Wall Street Journal, and served as Chief Business Officer at Audigent, where he built and scaled a high-performing recurring revenue engine through the company's acquisition by Experian in 2024.
61. **David Sparks | NLM Photonics — VP Corporate Development**. David Sparks is an executive and serial entrepreneur with 30 years of success scaling high-growth tech companies. As Head of Corporate Development at NLM Photonics, he drives international investments. Sparks has built and exited three tech startups and formerly served as President of the Stevens Pass Sewer District Board.

62. **Dominic Suciu | ArcanaBio, ehf — Chief Scientific Officer.** ArcanaBio is developing a label free protein detection system based on far-UV nano-photonics. We use classical and quantum mechanical methods to predict protein spectra. Our protein-microstate application can be the ground truth for protein binder design. We are based in Iceland and Denmark. In we were in Novo Nordisk's Bio Innovation Institute 2024 cohort of Biotech startups.
63. **Brian Tagami | Snoquera — Sr. Commercial Advisor.** I sit at the intersection of commercial enterprise use cases and technology innovation for network, datacenter and applications. I help enterprise CX make buying decisions around next gen tech: AI, 6G, MEC, Quantum and work with the vendor community to translate technical capability into functional ...
64. **Ty Takeshita | Amazon Web Services — Senior Applied Scientist**. Tyler Takeshita is a Senior Applied Scientist for Quantum Computing with AWS. Prior to joining AWS, he was the Lead of Quantum Technology at Mercedes-Benz Research and Development North America, a Daimler company. Tyler received his PhD in Chemistry in 2015 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign specializing in theoretical quantum chemistry. He then went on to be a postdoctoral fellow in the College of Chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley.
65. **Daniel Tappana | Economic Alliance Snohomish County — Director of Economic Development**. I'm Daniel Tappana with Economic Alliance Snohomish County. I support companies find sites, hire talent, and connect with the right partners. If you're growing, I can make the path easier.
66. **Clement Utuk | Kednus Corporation — CEO.** Clement Utuk, CEng, PMP is an American technology executive, systems engineer, and regulatory technology entrepreneur based in Seattle, Washington. He is the CEO and Co-Founder of Kednus Corporation, an enterprise software firm utilizing artificial intelligence to build modern compliance, audit automation, and financial intelligence layers for heavily regulated institutional industries and digital-asset networks.
67. **Oscar Veliz | Northeastern University — Assistant Professor.** Oscar Veliz is an Assistant Professor at Northeastern University in Seattle teaching Quantum Computing and Artificial Intelligence courses.
68. **Marvin Warner | Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) — Chief Science Officer for Quantum Science.** Dr. Marvin Warner is technology leader at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory working at the intersection of quantum systems, materials science, chemistry, national security, and AI-enabled discovery.
69. **Alma Weber | Washington House Dem Caucus (TEDV Committee) — Policy Analyst.** Alma P. Weber is an American public policy professional, legislative analyst, and public administrator. She serves as a Senior Policy Analyst and Communications Staff member for the Washington State House Democratic Caucus (HDC) in Olympia.
70. **Jennifer Yi | Ladybug Ventures – Founder**. Ladybug Ventures is developing a new startup with a quantum future, and would like to explore their thesis at this event. Jennifer Yi is a prominent global events, branding, and marketing leader in the gaming industry, based in the Greater Seattle Area. With over 20 years of experience, she has managed growth strategies for both small indie developers and massive AAA studios.
71. **Dae Yu | Yellow Umbrella Ventures — Managing Director.** Dae Yu | Dae Yu is an American Enterprise Critical Network Infrastructure Solutions Engineer, deep tech investor, and startup advisor based in Seattle, Washington. He is a Managing Director at Yellow Umbrella Ventures, an investment firm focusing heavily on internet plumbing, decentralization, infrastructure software, and early-stage blockchain architectures. He is widely recognized in the Pacific Northwest tech corridor for his work bridging traditional enterprise network infrastructure with emerging Web3 and decentralized networks.
72. **Xinmiao Zhang | The Ohio State University** — Professor, IEEE Fellow. Dr. Xinmiao Zhang is an American and Chinese electrical engineer, researcher, and academic. She is a Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at The Ohio State University (OSU) and an IEEE Fellow, recognized globally for her contributions to very large scale integration (VLSI) implementations and error-correcting codes.