2024 IT Expo Judge Bios

**Cheryl Crumb** is a trainer, coach and consultant with a mantra:???? Courage in Action.?? Her organization of 27 years, Cheryl Crumb & Associates, directs service strategies for premier customer-driven enterprises.?? Located outside of Toronto, she has worked on four continents to improve the Customer Experience.?? Recognizing that a cultural shift is at the root of most organizational transformation, Cheryl challenges conventional thinking:???? satisfaction does not produce loyal customers, obedience and respect for authority are the enemies of proactivity, and listening begins by hearing the unsaid.?? Cheryl received the High-Performance Organization Partner of the Year Award in 2006 from Celestica Inc. which recognizes supply partners who have made a significant contributions towards making Celestica a high performance and learning organization.?? The Customer First program she designed and delivered throughout the Celestica world fostered a sense of ownership and personal responsibility for delivering superior service to customers. Her practical approach helps people see that they can choose to make a difference in the lives of others, turn resentment and resignation into ambition, and opt for empowerment vs obedience.?? The result:???? The establishment of a long-term competitive advantage through a more engaged workforce and a loyal customer base.

For additional information, please visit www.ccrumb.com and feel free to contact Cheryl directly at 705-357-0389 or by email at cheryl@ccrumb.com.



**Walter Miron** is a senior technology executive with over 30 years of experience delivering transformational projects at multiple telecommunication service providers, enterprises, governing and advisory boards. His experience in information technology, telecommunications and cybersecurity technology development, engineering, and operations provides valuable insight on delivering excellent business outcomes with technology.

As a staunch advocate for Canadian innovation and talent development, Walter has built a history of strong collaboration with customers, industry, and academia, serving in leadership roles on industry and academic advisory boards with a focus on driving excellent business outcomes and Canadian innovation.

Walter’s advocacy of open source and software networking, proven experience leading change, and track record of industry and academic collaboration has been recognized with global innovation awards, industry recognition, and commendations for exceptional performance and leadership.

Recently Walter received the prestigious 2023 TELUS Legend Award from TELUS’ CEO recognizing exceptional performance and leadership and exemplifying excellence across all four leadership values: embracing change and initiating opportunity, demonstrating a passion for growth, believing in spirited teamwork, and having the courage to innovate.

Walter has published articles on Innovation, Intra and entrepreneurship, Critical Infrastructure protection, and cybersecurity and is frequently a speaker at industry conferences and working groups.

Walter holds a Master of Applied Science in Technology Innovation Management Engineering from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada.

A person in a suit and glasses

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**Mandip Kanjiya** is a seasoned entrepreneur with expertise in various areas such as software development, technology entrepreneurship, and community organizing. With a background in computer engineering and an MBA, Mandip has founded and co-founded multiple successful companies, including HeyFlyer and Techpreneurs. Currently, Mandip serves as the Founder of Vite HR, where Mandip focuses on employee retention and engagement. As a Community Organizer at Techpreneurs, Mandip plays a crucial role in creating a supportive ecosystem for tech entrepreneurs to collaborate and share experiences.  
A person in a brown jacket

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**Christophe Merlier**, born and raised in France, is a seasoned professional with a diverse background in industrial design. Armed with a BTech in Industrial Engineering, Christophe's journey into the world of technology and innovation began early on. His familial ties to the printing industry, with his mother owning a print shop, instilled in him a deep-rooted passion for everything related to printing and coding.

With a career spanning decades, Christophe has held positions such as Director of Industrial IT at Bertelsmann before venturing into entrepreneurship. He successfully founded and led multiple companies, including Nord Computing, IPI Graphic, Ingepack, and iDaro (Ideas are the roots).

After his move to Canada in 2019, Christophe joined Buskro, a company he previously represented as a dealer in France, and became Senior Industrial Solution Designer.

Known for his leadership by example, Christophe is passionate about fostering creativity and innovation. He believes in the transformative power of design and innovation across various domains, including art, music, and industry. To him, each machine design is a unique piece of art, embodying the fusion of engineering and creativity. He lives with the idea that “the difference between an engineer and another engineer, is everything that does not make him an engineer”.

Christophe is enthusiastic to join the panel of Judges for IT Expo 2024 at Durham College, and is eager to share and discover what the new generation of talents has to offer.



**Zach Deleon** - With nine years of dedicated experience in sales and customer service, I am a highly collaborative professional known for my expertise in crafting efficient workflows and adeptly managing CRM systems. My career is characterized by a genuine commitment to teamwork and a relentless drive to support my colleagues, consistently going above and beyond to ensure collective success.

Beyond my day-to-day responsibilities, I am deeply passionate about fostering economic growth within my local community. This passion fuels my endeavors to explore innovative solutions and embrace emerging technologies, positioning me as an early adopter keen on driving progress through innovation.

My journey is defined by a relentless pursuit of excellence, coupled with a genuine enthusiasm for leveraging technology to streamline processes and enhance overall efficiency. My collaborative nature, coupled with a strong dedication to empowering others, makes me a valuable asset in any professional environment.

Whether it's devising intricate workflows, optimizing CRM systems, or championing the adoption of cutting-edge technologies, I thrive on the challenges of modern business and remain steadfast in my commitment to achieving collective goals. With a steadfast dedication to teamwork, a passion for technological advancement, and a relentless pursuit of excellence, I am poised to make meaningful contributions wherever I go.”



**Patrick** Shaw, Founder of Cyber Catalyst (Canada)

Pat initiated Cyber Catalyst Talent Solutions in 2022 to assist veterans in obtaining meaningful and rewarding careers using skills developed through their upskilling or reskilling efforts. Cyber Catalyst secures employment opportunities in cybersecurity, software development and tech-adjacent roles for veterans, their partners, reservists, and active-duty military personnel by leveraging job-specific microcredentialling aligned with widely recognized industry certifications that meet the specific needs of employers.

As a founder of Coding for Veterans in 2018 Pat led the assembly, curation, and delivery of cybersecurity curriculum and secure software development programs in an online asynchronous learning approach which was made available to nearly 500 learners. Those courses provided more than 120,000 hours of technical upskilling while establishing the unique self-paced, instructor and mentor supported learning environment now continuing in the Cyber Catalyst job-focused initiatives.

Industry networking and professional collaboration is a cornerstone of career development – factors that Pat leveraged through eight years as Executive Director of TechConnex, the GTA organization for small and mid-size technology businesses (York Technology Alliance). At TechConnex he established a vibrant Peer Group networking initiative that grew to nearly 20 monthly professional learning and collaboration sessions sharing insights and issues in a wide array of technical and business matters. He has led business initiatives in major Canadian companies in the areas of Investor, Government and Public Relations.

A person with glasses and a beard

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**Nima Salehi** is the co-founder of VALID Insurance Services, a family insurance business established in 1981. He is an Insurance and Financial Advisor specializing in assisting families, founders and independent consultants to enhance their financial resilience and propel forward their financial growth with best financial, insurance, and tax strategies.  
Nima enjoyed a rewarding 20-year tenure in Telecommunication and Cybersecurity from 1999 to 2019, when he transitioned back to his family's insurance business as a full-time insurance and financial advisor. Throughout his technology career, he led corporate strategy development, technology innovation, implementation and operation with great focus on team member development and transformational projects that support revenue growth and efficiencies in various of Canada's largest telecom backbone and enterprise critical infrastructure projects.  
In his current role as an Insurance and Financial Advisor, he is dedicated to leveraging the most successful industry practices to assist technology founders and professionals in achieving their dreams of business and financial freedom. He aims to help them build, and enhance a resilient financial posture, save on taxes, and increase their investment dollar efficiency.  
Nima is a marathon paddler, cyclist, and wilderness enthusiast. He finds grounding in nature and enjoys the great outdoors. Currently, he serves as a director on the Brock Board of Trade, contributing to various community and economic development projects. This includes liaising with academia and partnering with Durham region and Brock Township to promote eco and cycling tourism.  
Feel free to contact Nima at (416) 797-0307 or by email at [nima.salehi@visg.ca](mailto:nima.salehi@visg.ca).



**Eric McFetridge**

As the Additive Manufacturing Manager at Agile Manufacturing, Canada’s premier 3D printing service bureau, I bring over nine years of extensive experience in the forefront of additive manufacturing technology. A proud graduate of Mechanical Engineering Technology at Georgian College, my career has been driven by a passion for pioneering advancements in 3D printing, operations excellence, and quality management.

At Agile Manufacturing, I have played a pivotal role in steering the company towards operational efficiency and excellence. My focus has consistently been on harnessing the transformative power of computer systems and additive manufacturing to improve production processes. This has entailed a deep dive into process improvement, automation, and the implementation of technical solutions to enhance production outcomes and efficiencies.

My journey in the industry has been marked by a continuous quest for knowledge and innovation. I have contributed to Agile Manufacturing's reputation as a beacon of innovation, capability, and quality in the 3D printing sector. My work involves collaborating closely with our team of technicians to push the boundaries of what's possible in additive manufacturing, ensuring that Agile Manufacturing remains a leader the industry.



**Rob Baxter**

Embarking on a programming journey at the young age of 10 with batch programming on DOS, my passion for technology has only deepened with time. This early interest led to explorations in HTML and Javascript, laying a solid foundation in the computational sciences. During my high school years, I was introduced to Visual Basic .NET through an advanced computer science course, further shaping my path in the tech world.

Professionally, I have consistently played a pivotal role in the IT departments of every company I've been part of. Presently, I hold the position of Technical Director at Agile Manufacturing, Inc., a leader in 3D printing services. In this capacity, I'm deeply involved in all technical aspects of the company, directing the SLS department and overseeing our offerings in 3D printers, materials, and the comprehensive support and training programs that accompany them.

My tenure at Agile marked a significant evolution of our IT infrastructure to the cloud, adopting virtual desktop infrastructures with an emphasis on cybersecurity and data consolidation. This strategic move, managed with Terraform and a mix of Powershell, bash, and packer, highlights my skill set in cloud architecture and DevOps.

Complementing my professional experience, I completed a certificate course in computer science with Harvard online (CS50) three years ago. This program expanded my expertise in computer languages, systems, and theories, preparing me as a proficient full-stack developer skilled in C, Python, Javascript, HTML, CSS, and SQL.

With a 16-year tenure at Agile, I have led departments for the major technologies in 3D printing: Stereolithography (SLA), Fused Deposition Modeling (FDM), and Selective Laser Sintering (SLS). This experience not only affirms my proficiency in 3D printing and manufacturing but also in the sophisticated systems that underpin this cutting-edge industry.

From my beginnings as a curious child to becoming a cornerstone in technological advancements and IT management, my career is a testament to a lifelong commitment to leveraging technology for innovation and improvement.

A person taking a selfie

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**Rahul George** is currently a Program Manager at TBDC and an ex-Founder thriving on building ecosystems that nourish and elevate early-stage startups through mentorship and investments. This mission is one he actively pursues in his current role at TBDC and previously fulfilled as the Head of Startup Pipeline & Investments at York Angel Investors. With a background as a founder who has developed innovative products tailored for emerging entrepreneurs across various industries and markets, he deeply understands the intricate journey of transforming a vision into reality.

His passion lies in creating connections between ideas and success, fostering an environment that encourages growth, innovation, and positive social impact.

