

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## ***Profiles in Leadership Journal™* Announces the 2026 Mid-Year Leadership Class**

**CLEVELAND, OH (May 22, 2026)** *Profiles in Leadership Journal™* is pleased to announce the 2026 Mid-Year leadership class. Each of these distinguished individuals will be featured with a full-page layout, highlighting their exceptional contributions. Our awards recognize those who exemplify a new era of leadership—rooted in purpose, driven by service, and committed to fostering a more dynamic workplace. Below is a list of the awards presented, along with the respective winners in each category.

- Asian Leadership
- Emerging Leaders
- Employee Resource Groups Leadership
- Human Resources Leadership
- Latino & Hispanic Leadership
- Leadership Through Community Engagement
- Mentoring Leadership
- STEAM Leadership
- Women Worth Watching® in Leadership

### **Asian Leadership Award Winners**

- **Clarissa Cu**, *Director*, Stretto
- **Su He**, *Attorney, Of Counsel*, Porter Wright Morris & Arthur LLP
- **George Ku**, *Vice President of M&A*, Litera
- **Chang Lim**, *Partner*, Knobbe Martens
- **Angela Tsai**, *Managing Director*, Stretto
- **Li Yu**, *Partner*, Bernstein Litowitz Berger & Grossmann LLP
- **Nabeed Zaman**, *Vice President, Corporate Compliance*, New York Life Insurance Company

### **Emerging Leaders Award Winners**

- **Katie Gray**, *Partner*, Mayer Brown
- **James Leit**, *Partner*, Norton Rose Fulbright
- **Endrine Rafuna**, *Lead Product Marketing Manager*, Litera
- **Meghan Redding**, *Partner*, Dechert LLP

## Employee Resource Group Award Winners

- **Aaron Ball**, *Executive Vice President and Head of the Foundational Business*, New York Life Insurance Company
- **Jason Kim**, *Manager*, Information Governance, Epiq

## Human Resources Leadership Award Winners

- **Alison Bernard**, *Chief Talent and Human Resources Officer*, Dechert LLP
- **Kevin Grove**, *Vice President of Human Resources*, PENN Hollywood Charles Town
- **Jerry Hofman**, *Sr. Director, Human Resources*, Epiq
- **Kathleen Navarro**, *Senior Vice President, Human Resources Business Enablement & Chief Diversity Officer*, New York Life Insurance Company
- **Sandra O'Sullivan**, *Chief People and Operations Officer*, Curriculum Associates

## Latino & Hispanic Leadership Award Winners

- **Jessica Achtsam**, *Partner*, Knobbe Martens
- **Jerry Alcazar**, *Minneapolis Head of Litigation and Disputes*, Norton Rose Fulbright US LLP
- **Chris Burciaga**, *CEO*, R3 Wound Care & Hyperbarics
- **Marisa Calderon**, *President & CEO*, Prosperity Now
- **Alexander Calle**, *Founder & CEO*, JC Luxury Group at SERHANT
- **Jaime Cardenas-Navia**, *Partner*, Reichman Jorgensen Lehman & Feldberg LLP
- **Tina Cordova**, *Director/ Producer*, downwind film llc
- **David Cruz**, *Head of Institutional Annuities*, New York Life Insurance Company
- **Dennis Garcia**, *Vice President & General Counsel*, Litera
- **Gina Maloto**, *Head of Brand Strategy*, Oncourse Home Solutions
- **David Martinez**, *Partner*, Robins Kaplan LLP
- **Ricardo Tejada**, *Managing Director*, Stretto
- **Wallace Torres**, *Co-Founder and Head of Operations at WellTheory*, SolComms

## Leadership Through Community Engagement Winner

- **Heather Nesle**, *President of the New York Life Foundation*, New York Life Insurance Company

## Mentoring Leadership Award Winners

- **Sarah Gragert**, *Partner*, Complex Commercial Litigation Practice; Vice Chair, Inclusion, Opportunity & Community Committee; Chair, Mentoring Subcommittee, Latham & Watkins LLP
- **Brent Harting**, *Client Director*, Orbital Engineering, Inc
- **Irfan Lateef**, *Partner*, Knobbe Martens
- **Jason Richards**, *Director of Engineering*, Orbital Engineering, Inc

## STEAM Leadership Award Winners

- **Christy Lea**, *Partner*, Knobbe Martens
- **Marina Printz**, *Vice President, Artificial Intelligence*, New York Life Insurance Company
- **Marina Schwarz**, *Partner*, Dechert LLP
- **Gloria Ring**, *Corporate Partner*, Latham & Watkins LLP
- **Bryan Shive**, *Senior Vice President, Heavy Industrial Services*, Orbital Engineering, Inc
- **Sharon M. Sintich, Ph.D.**, *Partner*, Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP

## Women Worth Watching® in Leadership Award Winners

- **Charlene Azema**, *Partner*, Knobbe Martens
- **Charlotte Baigent**, *Associate*, Holwell Shuster & Goldberg LLP
- **Rachelle Bauer**, *Founder & Co-Founder*, Workforce Connections & Veteran Connections
- **Sheryl Betance**, *Senior Managing Director*, Stretto
- **Laurie Braxton**, *Senior Vice President and Site Head, Holly Springs, NC*, FUJIFILM Biotechnologies
- **Jessica Caterina**, *Partner*, Moses & Singer LLP
- **Brittany Chapman**, *Director of Transmission*, Orbital Engineering, Inc
- **Abbey Davis**, *Executive Director*, Organizational Development & Impact, AAON
- **Madison Gardiner**, *Associate*, Holwell Shuster & Goldberg LLP
- **Allison Geewax**, *Partner*, Smith Currie Oles LLP
- **Cheryl Ginsburg**, *Partner*, Braverman Greenspun
- **Carol Goodman**, *Partner, Chair of Employment Practice, Co-Chair of Litigation Department, Member of Executive Committee*, Herrick, Feinstein LLP (“Herrick”)
- **Chelsea Ireland**, *Associate*, Cohen Ziffer Frenchman & McKenna LLP
- **Zerlina Jackson**, *Vice President, Experience & Digital Marketing*, New York Life Insurance Company
- **Ellen Jalkut**, *Counsel*, Robins Kaplan LLP
- **Megan Johnson**, *Partner*, Dechert LLP
- **Dr. Mariann Jordan**, *Founder and CEO*, J & P National Youth Empowerment Network, NFP
- **Sara LaBarge**, *Director of Strategic Partnerships*, Native Forward Scholars Fund
- **Gabby Levin**, *Partner*, Mayer Brown
- **Valencia McClure**, *Vice President of Governmental, Regulatory, and External Affairs*, Exelon – BGE, Delmarva Power (MD) & Pepco
- **Kaci Patterson**, *Founder and Chief Architect*, Social Good Solutions
- **Yamuna Rajasekhar**, *Senior Director, Learning Science & AI Strategy*, zyBooks (A Wiley Brand)
- **Rachael Rekart**, *Chief of Staff to the CEO*, Litera
- **Kelly Sia**, *CEO*, Curriculum Associates
- **Grace Chamoun Taranto**, *Associate*, Krauss Shaknes Tallentire & Messeri LLP
- **Trisha Thomas**, *President*, Reading Horizons

## About Profiles in Leadership Journal™

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Now in its 28th year, *Profiles in Leadership Journal*™ remains a trusted platform for recognizing and celebrating leadership that transforms organizations and communities. We partner with forward-thinking companies to honor individuals whose vision, courage, and commitment are shaping a better tomorrow.

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