



# From Prototype to Production Panelist Bios

Oct. 8, 2025 • 8 am – 5:30 pm • CONVERGE Innovation Center, 1201 Technology Dr., Aberdeen, MD 21001

**Greg Paulsen** is Director of the Applications Engineering Team at Xometry, working with customers and suppliers on unique projects and sharing the capabilities of Xometry's proprietary digital manufacturing marketplace. He sits at the intersection of technology and manufacturing, and, under his direction, his team plays a key role in Xometry's mission of accelerating the digitization of the industry. He is also a subject matter expert with 15 years of experience in additive manufacturing (3D printing), CNC machining, injection molding, and beyond.

**SJ Jones** is a Principal Manufacturing Engineer with Northrup Grumman, helping tackle the challenges and opportunities of the next generation large format LPBF machines. Experienced in a wide array of disciplines, SJ's technical specialties include computational design, print simulation, in situ monitoring, support design, topology optimization, light weighting, lattice work, and generative design.

**Michael Pecota** served as an electronics technician on H-60 helicopters and intermediate-level repair while on active duty. Since 2015, he has helped stand up the Additive Manufacturing/Digital Thread Integrated Product Team at Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) and now serves as Contract Support for the Navy Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA). He holds several additive manufacturing certifications from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Penn State, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and the Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

**Dr. Sudarsanam (Suresh) Babu** is Clark Distinguished Chair Professor of Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Maryland. With 33 years of experience in advanced manufacturing, welding metallurgy, additive manufacturing, and computational

materials science, he has published over 280 papers and is a fellow of AAAS, ASM, AWS, and SME. He previously held leadership roles at ORNL, the Ohio State University, and the University of Tennessee, and was appointed to the National Science Board in 2020.

**Dr. Eric Wetzel** is the Team Leader for Strategic Polymers Additive Manufacturing at the DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory (ARL) in Aberdeen, MD. His research interests include ballistic textiles, multifunctional composite materials, additive manufacturing, and two-dimensional polymers. Dr. Wetzel has co-authored 90 peer-reviewed journal publications and book chapters and holds 27 patents. Dr. Wetzel was recognized in 2018 as a Distinguished Career Alumni of the University of Delaware Mechanical Engineering Department, and in 2020 was appointed a Fellow in the National Academy of Inventors.

**Kimberly Justus**, CWDP, GCDF, is the Executive Director of the Susquehanna Workforce Network. With a steadfast dedication to workforce development, she began her tenure with SWN in 2012, contributing significantly to the BRAC response initiative. Kim holds certifications as a Resume Writer, Workforce Development Professional, and Global Career Development Facilitator, sh. She earned her BS in Mathematics and Economics from Temple University. Before joining SWN, Kim's career was centered around education, influenced by her experiences as an Army wife, which necessitated frequent relocations. She has taught high school mathematics and managed the Math and Science Tutoring Center at Northern Virginia Community College's Woodbridge Campus.

**Bruce Warner** is a Program Manager for TMG, a values-driven Program Management company. TMG analyzes, designs, develops,

pilots, implements, and transitions Leader Performance and Workforce Productivity systems for many companies such as the United States Navy Talent Pipeline Program, Newport News Shipbuilding, Liebherr Mining Equipment, Lifetouch Studios, Ball Metal Beverage Packaging, BAE Systems Ship Repair, L3 Communications, North Florida Shipyards, Measurement Specialties, NBTY and ITS Technologies. Bruce has more than thirty years of experience in results-oriented environments, with a proven track record in organizational excellence, operations management, and adult education design. Bruce previously served in the U.S. Army.

**Dr. J. Heather Handler** is the Program Coordinator for Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Cecil County Public Schools, where she champions workforce ready learning with over 17 years of experience across Florida, Delaware, and Maryland. A passionate leader in STEM education, she shaped innovative programs at middle and high school levels, preparing students for future careers., and she earned the 2025 Regional MCTA Administrator of the Year award. Dr. Handler expanded robotics initiatives and launched Cecil County's Youth Apprenticeship Program. She helped to design and pilot Maryland's first Summer Lineworker Program and continues to open doors for students of all backgrounds. Before entering education, Dr. Handler served as a U.S. Navy Search and Rescue Swimmer, specializing in Anti-Submarine Warfare—a testament to her resilience and strategic mindset.

**Sarah D. Sheppard** brings a wealth of knowledge in education and workforce development to the Maryland Department of Commerce. She serves as the Director of the newly formed Office of Talent and Workforce, developing strategies for partnerships and workforce solutions, and manages the

## Panelist Bios (cont.)

Maryland E-Innovation Initiative Fund. Ms. Sheppard previously worked for the Maryland Department of Labor as the Director of Workforce Engagement for the Governor's Workforce Development Board and the Director of Policy and Planning for the Division of Unemployment Insurance. She previously worked as the Executive Manager for a manufacturing company, and as a lobbyist in a private law firm, with almost 20 years of experience working with state, local, and federal governments. Ms. Sheppard holds a BA in political science and studio art from Washington College and a Juris Doctorate and Master of Public Administration from the University of Baltimore.

**Amy Duray** serves as the Program Manager, Federal Business Relations with the Department of Commerce's Division of Business & Industry Sector Development's Office of Military and Federal Affairs. Amy brings 20+ years of experience leading projects in the Federal Sector and managing operations, quality, and compliance for small businesses in the defense industry. She is also an 11-year Army Veteran. Amy is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) with extensive experience leading transformation and business process improvement efforts, including efforts to modernize federal procurement practices and information systems.

**Tracy Batman** leads Veritech's daily operations and resource management. Before joining Veritech, Tracy devoted 25 years in senior management and leadership roles as a civil servant, federal contractor, and in the U.S. Army Reserves. She supported several Public, Private, and DoD agencies to include the Army Corps of Engineers, Army Force Management Support Agency, and the Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defense. Her roles have included direct support to Senior Executive Service, contract management, and acquisition programs. Tracy holds Project Management Professional and Scrum Master certifications. She serves on several volunteer boards and committees including the Harford County Chamber of Commerce, Susquehanna Workforce Network, Maryland Girl Scouts of America, Harford County Military Committee, and Chesapeake Professional Women's Network.

**Mick Maher** is co-founder of Maher & Associates, ASTRO America, and is Chief Strategy Officer for Amaero Advanced

Materials and Manufacturing where he oversees technical and commercial teams, leveraging decades of technical and managerial experience in defense manufacturing fields. A renowned expert in manufacturing processes and materials, Maher served as a leading program manager at Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), managing a portfolio of programs specializing in advanced materials and manufacturing. Prior to joining DARPA, Maher worked for the U.S. Army Research Laboratory (ARL) and oversaw research and development programs in armor material, coatings, composite technologies, and hybrid material systems, and had twenty years of prior experience in the defense industrial base.

**Dr. Brad Baker** had a 36-year career in the Navy, retiring as a Captain with degrees in Marine Engineering, Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy, and a PhD in Mechanical Engineering. He served leadership positions in submarines followed by over 10 years as a Permanent Military Professor at the U.S. Naval Academy, where he designed, built, and maintained an additive manufacturing curriculum and the MakerSpaceUSNA facility, with over 30 3D printers supporting hundreds of student, faculty, and staff users every year. He was selected as one of the 20 most influential academics in smart manufacturing in 2021, and the first ever education and workforce development award by America Makes in 2024. After his military retirement, he became Vice President of Engineering and Engagement at Energetics Technology Center, bringing his leadership and technical expertise to expand the engineering analysis and strategic policy around energetic materials and advanced manufacturing. His technical areas of expertise include materials science, nuclear engineering, microscopy, and additive manufacturing.

**Charlie Steinert** began as an intern at the U.S. Army Chemical Biological Center in 2003 while he was a student at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. He began working on small to medium design projects, such as the Joint Biological Point Detection System trailer and Biologically Integrated Detection System. He was key in the Colorimetric Reconnaissance Squad Screening Set Project, a major effort that saw over 20,000 kits delivered to theatre for use on the battlefield. Charlie rose to become a Branch Quality Manager, Acting Branch Chief

of the Systems Integration Branch, and currently serves as Supervisory Team Lead in the Advanced Manufacturing Branch.

**Joshua Taggart-Scarff** is a mechanical engineer at the U.S. Army Research Laboratory, where he began as a summer intern in 2012. He attended University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) where he received his BS in Mechanical Engineering in 2017 and then Penn State's World Campus where he earned a Master of Engineering in Additive Manufacturing in 2025. Joshua served six years in the Maryland Army National Guard as an Allied Trades Specialist, achieving the rank of Sergeant.

**Brian Kristaponis** joined Phillips Corporation in 2016 as an Applications Engineer in the Federal Division and quickly advanced to Applications Manager. He and his team supported the U.S. Government with Haas CNC systems and emerging additive technologies. In 2020, Brian collaborated closely with Meltio to develop the first Haas-Meltio Hybrid system, a major milestone in hybrid manufacturing. He now leads the Phillips Hybrid Division, overseeing the development of customer applications, design and integration of hybrid systems, customer training, and technical support. Under his leadership, the Phillips Hybrid team has expanded and recently launched new products in the Directed Energy Deposition (DED) space—including wire arc, laser blown powder, and multi-wire hybrid deposition systems—helping customers unlock advanced manufacturing capabilities across industries.

**Ben McGlaughlin** is the Manufacturing Program Manager for the Maryland Department of Commerce Office of Manufacturing. He is responsible for developing initiatives, partnerships, and programs to connect manufacturers with tax incentives and other funding, as well as to connect them with trade associations and academic organizations to support economic growth. He is passionate about leveraging technology automation, workforce development, securing supply chain optimization and employing efficiency and quality improvement within the manufacturing sector in Maryland. Ben has 30 years of business management and leadership development experience including 20 years in manufacturing, serving as CEO of a food manufacturer, partner and general manager of a plant automation company, leading the organization through significant growth and

## Panelist Bios (cont.)

acquisitions. Ben received his B.S. from West Chester University and studied Public Administration at Saint Joseph University's Graduate program, and is a Certified Lean-Six Sigma Black Belt.

**Tom Regnante** serves as Managing Director for Commercial Banking at JPMorganChase in Maryland, where he fosters strategic partnerships with local companies, governments, and industry organizations, and leads a talented team of bankers supporting Maryland businesses. As JPMorganChase's first employee in Maryland more than a decade ago, Tom champions mentorship and growth for the more than 1,000 employees across the state. Tom actively participates in community efforts, serving on the Board of Trustees for the Hippodrome Foundation and the World Trade Center Institute, and is an active member of the National Italian American Foundation where he serves as Mid-Atlantic volunteer coordinator. He holds a bachelor's degree in international studies from American University and a Master of Business Administration from George Washington University.

**Alex Giambone** is the Senior Director of Supply Chain Strategy & Strategic Sourcing for Northrop Grumman Mission Systems. He has held leadership roles in Finance, Strategy, Engineering, Quality/Mission Assurance, Manufacturing, and Talent Development. Alex is a former Army officer, and his last duty station was at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Alex's education includes an MBA in Finance from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and a BS in Environmental Engineering from the United States Military Academy.

**Brandon Cannaday** is a seasoned security professional with over 20 years of experience, currently serving as the State Cybersecurity Program Manager at the Maryland Department of Commerce. Here he develops partnerships with stakeholders and plans and oversees programs to showcase Maryland's pivotal role in the cybersecurity industry. Brandon also serves as the Director of the Small Business Cybersecurity Resiliency In Maryland program, a \$1 Million grant program, where he provides small businesses with cybersecurity assessments, cyber hygiene training, and industry-specific cybersecurity training identified risks designed to mitigate future cyber threats. He serves on the planning committee for the Maryland Department of Emergency Management. With a B.S. in

Cybersecurity, Brandon has held leadership positions throughout his career. A staunch advocate for mentorship, diversity, equity, and inclusion, Brandon is deeply passionate about empowering others to achieve their full potential in both their professional and personal endeavors.

**Chad Schneider**, P.E., MSE, founded Root3 Labs in 2012, where his team helps medical device, aerospace, and defense technology manufacturers design and engineer innovative, market-ready products with a complete manufacturing supply-chain solution. Mr. Schneider is a professional mechanical engineer with over 25 years of experience in the process of product development. He enjoys designing practical, efficient, and robust electro-mechanical systems and offers extensive knowledge of various rapid prototyping and manufacturing techniques.

**Ron Hill** is a cybersecurity leader with over 25 years of experience helping organizations modernize IT infrastructure, strengthen security, and achieve compliance. As Lead Certified CMMC Assessor (LCCA), Principal Consultant and owner of Hill Tech Solutions, he guides SMBs and government contractors through CMMC readiness, risk management, and scalable technology strategies. Ron also facilitates peer groups, fostering collaboration among security professionals. His expertise blends deep technical knowledge with a practical, people-focused approach to cybersecurity.

**Tarit Mitra** is the Senior Director of Cyber & Information Security at Xometry, where he leads global cybersecurity strategy, compliance, and risk management initiatives. He previously held roles at OneMain Financial and Deutsche Bank, where he managed enterprise security programs in highly regulated environments. Tarit holds an M.S. in Management from Harvard University and a Bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto. He is a recognized thought leader in cybersecurity with experience in business innovation and regulatory compliance.

**Rick Moore** serves as Chief of the Advanced Manufacturing Branch of the US Army Combat Capabilities Development Command's Chemical Biological Center (CBC). Mr. Moore has an associate's degree in CAD Technology from the Community College of Baltimore County. Mr. Moore has over 30 years' experience in Additive Manufacturing and has led CBC's Lab for

over 25 years. Mr. Moore achieved a Master Certification in Rapid Prototyping & Manufacturing from the Society of Manufacturing Engineers as well as a Distinguished Innovator Operator Award from the Additive Manufacturing User's Group. In January 2024, he was awarded a patent for a device that was co-developed with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms used for collecting forensics evidence at shooting crime scenes. Mr. Moore has mentored several local high school and college students in the Additive Manufacturing field. Under Mr. Moore's leadership, CBC's Advanced Manufacturing continues to lean forward and evolve into one of the most comprehensive and recognized facilities of its kind within DoD.

**Luke Chow** is president and CEO of Prime Manufacturing Technologies, Inc. located in Howard County, MD. He is a chemical engineer by training from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and held various positions with Allied Corporation from R&D to manufacturing engineering. In 1991, he started Prime Mfg. Technologies, doing plastic injection molding, composites and CNC machining, with emphasis on lean and agile manufacturing processes. A believer in utilizing technology to drive innovation and manufacturing, rapid tooling, additive 3D printing has always been part of Prime's operation.

**Michael Raphael** is the Founder and CEO of Direct Dimensions, Inc., a 3D scanning services and product sales firm based in Owings Mills, MD. Founded in 1995, Direct Dimensions performs 3D scanning projects across all industries from aerospace, automotive, art, and architecture to museum, military, medical, and movies. Michael graduated from Virginia Tech with a BS degree in Engineering Science and Mechanics, followed by a Masters of Engineering Administration from George Washington University.

**Dr. Anne Walker** is the Senior Engineer for the Prototyping and Convergent Manufacturing Division at the US Army DEVCOM Chemical Biological Center. She leads the Center's Materials, Engineering, and Technology for Education and Operational Readiness (METEOR) and Respiratory Protection for Biodefense programs. Dr. Walker's focus is on integrating advanced manufacturing into research and development operations and using it to enhance traditional



## Panelist Bios (cont.)

manufacturing to speed prototype development and allow exploration of novel design concepts without sacrificing manufacturability.

**Ernie Paszkiewicz** has been in public accounting for 47 years and has an extensive background in working with businesses of all types. He retired from a large local firm in 2023 to start his own small business practice. His past engagements ranged from bookkeeping clients to full financial audits of privately help businesses and nonprofit organizations. He currently focuses on working with small organizations that need tax and advisory work. Ernie earned his bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in accounting from Towson University in 1979 and was named Towson University's accounting department alumnus of the year in 1995. He is currently a member of the Maryland Association of CPAs and the American Institute of CPAs.

**Michael Ginski** is a CPA and partner at Citrin Cooperman and is based out of the firm's Owings Mills, MD office. He specializes in state income tax, sales and use tax, real property tax, personal property tax, and unclaimed property. For over 20 years, Mike has consulted on multistate state and local tax issues and is skilled in statistical sampling methodologies. He has been a sought-after speaker on audit defense techniques and other topics at national conferences such as Institute of Professionals in Taxation (IPT).

**Jeffrey Peisach** has a degree in accounting from the University of Maryland and has attained CPA certification. He co-Founded Ms. Desserts Inc. a wholesale bakery, distributor, and retailer of gourmet desserts and prepared foods. He was President with lead roles in Finance, Accounting, Sales & Marketing. Jeffrey grew the business to \$10M in annual sales and over 150 employees before selling the company to Weston Foods, remaining as President until 1992. He started a new long-term career in SBA Lending as Business Development Officer with GE Capital in 1999. He now owns a company, Small Business First Financial LLC, providing consulting services to small business owners, including SBA loan preparation and placement, SBA compliant projections and business plans.

**Michael Kelleher** is the CEO of the Maryland MEP, a non-profit committed to growing and strengthening Maryland's manufacturers and building the manufacturing ecosystem. He oversees all aspects of the

organization and its array of programs and services that help local manufacturers operate more efficiently and grow profitably. Under the direction of Mr. Kelleher, MD MEP has generated more than \$2 billion in economic impact for Maryland and created more than 4,000 jobs. Mr. Kelleher holds a degree in accounting from the University of Maryland and has been a business owner and strategic advisor for the manufacturing sector, leading several successful startup and consulting organizations over the last 25 years. He is very active in the community, serving on several advisory boards, volunteering as part of the Howard County Youth Apprenticeship Program, and coaching club lacrosse.

**Daniel Scott Mitchell** is co-founder of Takton, making fast, affordable manufacturing tech designed to small and medium factories. He developed manufacturing expertise at Tesla, Rivian, and Formlabs, working across launch, production, engineering, and supply chain. He continues to learn invaluable insights from visiting 100 factories (and counting), taking learnings from the shop floor directly into building practical tech. His mission is to bring capabilities once limited to industry leaders within reach of the long tail of manufacturers.

**Ryan McClelland** has been captivated by futurism and technology from a young age, aspiring to contribute to a brighter future. As a Research Engineer in NASA GSFC's Instrument Systems and Technology Division, he pursues the development and infusion of digital engineering technologies for space-flight missions. Ryan is particularly excited about the potential of Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, Generative Design, and Digital Manufacturing to accelerate space systems development. Ryan has played a significant role in various flight missions, including designs currently on-orbit aboard the Hubble Space Telescope and International Space Station.

**Ryan Miller** is Director of Organizational Resilience for Edwards Performance Solutions, where he supports the strengthening of organizations and their ability thrive despite hazards that threaten operational success. He is a past Emergency Management Director for Howard County, MD, where he led emergency and disaster responses, including the flash floods in Ellicott City. Ryan and his team all became green belts in Lean Six Sigma - the only local emergency management office in Maryland to do so. He

is Secretary for the Maryland World Class Consortia and is on the Maryland Governor's Emergency Management Advisory Committee. Ryan is also adjunct faculty in the Sellinger School of Business and Management at Loyola University of Maryland and the School of Engineering and Applied Science at The George Washington University. Ryan holds an M.S. in Engineering Management from The George Washington University. He is a Project Management Professional (PMP) and holds certifications in risk management, business continuity, and emergency management.

**Adam Marsh** is President of Ledge Inc., a firm specializing in quality management systems and AI integration for manufacturers. He leads initiatives that streamline quality compliance, implement efficient quality systems, and deploy AI-driven tools to enhance production processes. Adam is dedicated to helping manufacturers transition to industry 4.0 with an eye on simplicity while ensuring quality and operational excellence throughout the journey.

**Bob Jacob** is the owner of Chesapeake CNC Manufacturing, a leading precision machining company based in Chestertown, MD. Born and raised in Rock Hall, he has deep roots in the community and a strong commitment to its growth. As a dedicated public servant he was a Kent County Commissioner from 2018-2022, where he worked to advance local infrastructure and economic development. Bob Jacob continues to drive excellence in both business and civic leadership with a passion for innovation and community service.

**Steve Beels** is a seasoned Business Development Specialist with over 20 years of success driving strategic growth across industrial, educational, and manufacturing sectors. Known for solution-based selling and long-term client retention, he consistently exceeds sales targets and expands market reach. At PRI Registrar, he is a leader in domestic and international certification sales, earning multiple performance awards. Steven brings deep expertise in ISO and aerospace standards, consultative sales, and project management, backed by a BS in Business Administration from Clarion University.

