Emerging Leaders Forum

WINNING THE TALENT WAR

Talent shortages and workforce challenges aren't unique to any one industry. So what can construction—and other sectors—learn from industries that have successfully attracted and retained top talent? This session brings together a diverse panel of speakers from tech, music, healthcare, and gaming to share insights on setting company culture, engaging young workers, and creating career pathways that inspire the next generation.

When? March 13, 2025 (Thu), 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM
Cost? FREE

Register

DJ Symphony

Official DJ, Wu-Tang Clan

A world-renowned DJ, producer, and entrepreneur, recognized as the official DJ for GZA of the Wu-Tang Clan. Known for his electrifying performances and impeccable turntablism, he has toured globally, bringing his signature sound to major festivals, arenas, and high-profile events.

In addition to performing, DJ Symphony is a celebrity instructor at Cuts DJ Academy, with locations in San Diego and Orange County, California. Passionate about passing on his skills, he mentors the next generation of DJs, teaching techniques and the art of performance. With a career rooted in hip-hop culture and education, DJ Symphony continues to inspire while leaving an indelible mark on the music industry.

Amjed Aboukhadijeh

Vice President of Sales, Socket

Amjed Aboukhadijeh is the Vice President of Sales at Socket, a cutting-edge cybersecurity startup that has raised over $65 million to protect enterprises and government agencies from cyber threats. With a track record of driving success at industry giants like Google and Oracle, he has worked with some of the world's largest organizations to navigate complex security challenges. After graduating from UCLA, Amjed moved to San Francisco, where he quickly immersed himself in the fast-paced world of technology sales, developing a deep understanding of what it takes to build and sustain a winning culture. A TEDx speaker, he has shared insights on thriving in an ever-evolving tech landscape, offering a compelling perspective on leadership, adaptability, and resilience in high-stakes environments.

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Aaron Hinojosa, Ph.D.

Manager DEI Workforce, Children's Hospital Los Angeles

Aaron Hinojosa, Ph.D. is a dedicated leader in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion, serving as the Manager of DEI Workforce at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. In his current role, he collaborates across departments to design and implement innovative strategies that integrate DEI principles into recruitment, training, and organizational culture. With a deep commitment to fostering environments where every voice is valued, Aaron is instrumental in advancing practices that ensure both patients and staff experience genuine belonging and equitable opportunities.

Drawing on his robust academic background and hands-on experience, Aaron bridges theory and practice to inspire systemic change. He is passionate about mentoring emerging leaders and amplifying the strengths of diverse communities, paving the way for transformative initiatives in healthcare and beyond.

Derek Smith

Creative Director, Activision

Derek Smith is a veteran game developer and creative director with over 15 years of experience in the gaming industry, specializing in mobile and live-service games. Currently serving as a Creative Director at Activision, Derek has played a key role in shaping the visual and gameplay experiences for Call of Duty: Mobile and Call of Duty: Warzone Mobile, leading teams to deliver compelling content for millions of players worldwide.

Prior to Activision, Derek held Art Director roles at Scopely and Electronic Arts, working on major franchises such as Star Wars: Galaxy of Heroes and Heroes of Dragon Age. With a background in game art, live operations, and franchise development, Derek has extensive experience in building and scaling teams, developing engaging seasonal content, and driving creative strategies that align with both player expectations and business goals.

Passionate about game design, world-building, and player engagement, Derek continues to push the boundaries of mobile gaming, ensuring that beloved franchises remain innovative and immersive across platforms.

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