

COLUMBIA BASIN SECTION RECOGNIZED FOR 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY ASQ PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

by Jo Haberstk

Congratulations to ... US!!

We were recently notified that our **Columbia Basin Section** has received **ASQ PEP SILVER Award** recognition for our 2024 efforts.

The PEP award program was created to recognize outstanding performance by Member Units for reinforcing ASQ's vision and mission and enriching offerings to members and customers.

Measures included in the 2024 award program:

- Contributions to ASQ thought leadership, as measured by myASQ content postings
- Member engagement and experience, as measured by myASQ activity
- Fiduciary responsibility, as measured by adherence to budget
- Achievement of business plan objectives, as measured by progress on meeting goals and targets
- Meeting ASQ requirements and due dates for submittal of reports, completion of training, etc.

Many thanks to our 2024 section leadership team members for their efforts – creating, implementing, and tracking the annual business and budget plans and achieving goals set, meeting or exceeding all ASQ-set requirements and due dates, and planning and promoting section meetings and other activities throughout the year.

Congratulations to the other sections in our ASQ Pacific Region who also received PEP recognition awards:



San Gabriel – Silver
San Fernando – Silver
Orange Empire – Silver
Seattle – Silver
Hawaii – Bronze

Excellent efforts! Way to go!!

WHAT A DIFFERENCE QUALITY MAKES!

by Steve Prevette, Section Nominations Chair

NOTE: I wrote this article while cruising on the Adriatic Sea, heading into Dubrovnik.

What a difference quality can make! For example, you can see it and feel it with the crew and officers of the Majestic Princess on which my wife and I have been for the past 13 days. Attention to detail and, for the few minor issues that came up, a prompt and appropriate response from management. I must admit that has not happened on the past few cruises on newer ships.

If you are passionate about quality, I hope you are also passionate about ASQ and our local Section. What a difference quality can make ... in leading a team, in recruiting and welcoming new members, in ensuring regular communications, and in contributing with others toward meeting shared goals.

Please consider volunteering for a leadership position with the Section. It can be a very rewarding experience. The knowledge and experience gained and accessibility to your peers' knowledge and experience can help advance your career. (You can also earn recertification credits [RUs] for serving.)

We need to fill the following positions for 2026: Section Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chair and Nominations Chair.

Please let me know (prevetteis@gmail.com) if you are interested in supporting your section - or talk to any of our current Leadership Team members. Help us navigate through the quality seas.



Invitation from Phoenix ASQ Section July 10, 2025 Virtual Webinar

DATE:

Thursday,
July 10, 2025

Demystifying Internal Audits

This is a virtual/online webinar via Zoom. Log-in information will be provided on the registration confirmation email.



TIME:

600 pm to 8:00 pm PDT
(check website to confirm time)

Jennifer Stepniowski, ASQ Fellow and CMQ/OE Quality Systems Manager, Modine Advanced Thermal Systems

Internal audits help individuals and organizations determine how effective their management systems are by assessing processes. While not everyone enjoys the idea of an audit, reviewing requirements and standards is important, and audits help teams learn where improvements can be made and if there are any gaps in current practices that need to be addressed.

This presentation will focus on internal auditing, from developing the program to tips and tricks throughout implementation and management.

Whether you're required to conduct internal audits to comply to a standard or if you're just wanting to support continuous improvement efforts, participants will learn about the benefits and dive into scheduling, principles, auditor competency, process, reporting, and more.

Takeaways from this session will include insights from real-life examples and general knowledge that supports a successful program.

There is no charge for ASQ members or non-members

[Advance registration](#) is required for planning purposes and to receive RU credit following the meeting.

More information about the Phoenix ASQ section is available [here](#).

For more information about our ASQ section and other upcoming events: www.asq614.org/ or our [myASQ community site](#)

About the speaker: Jennifer Stepniowski is an ASQ Fellow with nearly three decades of experience providing quality solutions to a number of industries. As a CMQ/OE, Jennifer has built and executed quality systems for several organizations including a global implementation for Milwaukee Tool and more recently for Modine's Advanced Thermal Systems. As a certified IATF 16949 auditor, she has supported the certification and management process for production within the automotive industry. Currently, Jennifer is using certifications in ISO/SAE 21434 cybersecurity and ISO 26262 for functional safety of road vehicles to manage Modine's implementation of these standards for automotive parts with embedded software.

A public speaker, author, and former adjunct instructor, Jennifer is passionate about educating and inspiring quality professionals and others. Based in Milwaukee near the home of ASQ, she enjoys spending free time hiking with her Australian Shepard and reading mystery novels.

Invitation from San Fernando Valley ASQ July 15, 2025 Virtual Meeting

DATE:

Tuesday,
July 15, 2025

This is a virtual/online
(Webex) event. Log-in
information will be provided
on the registration
confirmation email.

TIME:

6:00 pm to 7:30 pm PDT

(check website to confirm time)

**There is no charge for ASQ
members or non-members**

**Advance registration is
required for planning
purposes and to receive RU
credit following the event.**

**Information about San
Fernando Valley ASQ Section
706 is available [here](#).**

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AI as a Catalyst for Quality: Transforming Practices Across Diverse Industries



Monica Shukla-Belmontes, Ph.D.

**Acting Dean for the School of Business and Professional Studies
at University of Massachusetts Global**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is fundamentally reshaping the field of quality across various business sectors.

This presentation will start by demystifying AI and explaining its core concepts like Machine Learning and Deep Learning from a practical, business-oriented perspective.

We will explore specific AI applications within quality, showcasing real-world examples from diverse industries such as manufacturing, healthcare, financial services, and management. Included will be information about how AI enhances quality planning and design through predictive analytics and digital twins, and revolutionizes process control and monitoring with real-time anomaly detection and automated visual inspection.

The role of AI in improving product and service quality by analyzing customer feedback using Natural Language Processing and optimizing supply chain quality through advanced risk assessment will be examined. In addition, critical challenges in AI implementation will be discussed, including data quality, the "black box" problem, and ethical considerations.

This presentation is intended to empower Quality professionals to recognize their pivotal roles in leading this technological transformation, ensuring AI is deployed responsibly and effectively to elevate quality standards.

About the presenter: Monica Shukla-Belmontes has been involved in the field of higher education since 2008. She has been recognized in the 2024 and 2020 Orange County Business Journal for Women in Business, in 2022 as OC Register's Top 125 Most Influential, and as a Greater Irvine Chamber 40 Under 40 Award Recipient. Her most recent work is in the area of AI integration in higher education to support educational equity. At University of Massachusetts Global, Monica has been at the forefront of Competency-Based Education, presenting a Master Class to the U.S. Department of Education and engaging with the California CBE Collaboratory, where she has partnered with over 100 California Community College Presidents.

Monica's educational background consists of a B.S. Mathematics, B.A. Communication Studies, M.S. Human Resources, M.A. Organizational Leadership, M.S. in Project Management from USC, and Executive Certificate in Public and Nonprofit Leadership. She has also completed her Ph.D. in Education with an emphasis in Cultural and Curricular Studies at Chapman University.

Invitation from ASQ Innovation Division July 24, 2025 Virtual Webinar

DATE:

Thursday,
July 24, 2025

AI-Driven Innovations Revolutionizing Acquisition Modernization: Unleashing the Power of AI Tools in Capture Management

This is a virtual/online
webinar via Webex. Log-in
information will be provided
on the registration
confirmation email.



Skip Blackburn

Founding Partner & CEO, BIT Solutions, LLC

Time: 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm PDT

(check website to confirm time)

**Cost: No charge for ASQ
members and non-members**

**Advance registration is
required for planning
purposes and to receive RU
credit following the event.**

**More information about ASQ's
Innovation Division is
available [here](#).**

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upcoming events:
www.asq614.org/ or our
[myASQ community site](#).**

AI is transforming the landscape of acquisition modernization, with AI-driven tools revolutionizing capture management strategies. Traditional methods of identifying and securing deals in the marketplace often rely on outdated capture tools and manual processes, which can limit efficiency and scalability. By leveraging cutting-edge AI technologies, organizations can gain a competitive edge by utilizing advanced algorithms to identify not only more lucrative opportunities but also deals that are more winnable and a better fit for the organization.

The evolving role of AI in the capture management process will be examined, showcasing how it enhances the discovery of high-value deals while ensuring alignment with an organization's capabilities and strategic goals. AI tools enable organizations to predict the likelihood of success in securing specific opportunities, allowing for a more targeted approach that reduces risks and maximizes the chances of winning. From data-driven insights to predictive analytics, AI is revolutionizing how acquisition teams assess and prioritize deals, making the process more efficient, precise, and effective.

This presentation will offer a comprehensive overview of how AI can be integrated into your capture management framework, comparing it with existing tools on the market. Learn how to harness the full potential of AI to modernize your acquisition processes, improve operational efficiency, and secure better deals faster, with greater precision, and more strategically aligned with your organization's strengths.

About the speaker: Skip Blackburn is the Founding Partner and Chief Executive Officer of BIT Solutions, LLC. Since leading the company through its reinvention in 2012, he has played a pivotal role in the startup phase, overseeing design and development as well as spearheading sales and marketing initiatives. Under his leadership, BIT Solutions has experienced consistent growth and has emerged as a leader in its field.

Before founding BIT, Skip co-founded a software firm in the late 1970s, where he served as a partner for 20 years. The company specialized in designing and developing enterprise software solutions for nonprofit associations, which ultimately led to its successful sale. Skip then transitioned to executive roles at leading companies, including Sarcom, Accenture, IBM, and SAIC, honing his expertise in capture management and leading teams and divisions through large, complex capture efforts. Skip then created CaptureExec™, a comprehensive capture management software, and transformed BIT Solutions into the dynamic company it is today.

Skip was a founding member of the Board of Directors of the Chesapeake Regional Technology Council. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Mathematics from Towson University and attended the MBA program at Loyola College of Baltimore.

ASQ MEMBERS - GET YOUR FREE MONTHLY GIFTS

Be sure to check out the free ASQ Member Gifts for July!

Every month the focus is on a different aspect of quality, and the gifts include a variety of valuable resources.

The June gift (available through June 30) included access to resources related to Cost of Quality tools, including webinars, articles, benchmarking reports, and best practices.

You can also earn Recertification Units (RUs) for watching ASQ webinars and videos, reading e-books, etc. Be sure to [access](#) this month's free gifts by July 31.

UPCOMING ASQ CERTIFICATION EXAMS

ASQ Certification has impacted careers for decades with over 400,000 certifications issued worldwide. Offering independently accredited certifications with a proven track record, you can be confident that your certification will maintain its value throughout your career. By achieving ASQ Certification, you join a proud legacy of quality professionals and demonstrate your pursuit of excellence through quality. Acquire the knowledge to position yourself and your organization ahead of the competition and get certified by ASQ today!

Applications are now being accepted for ASQ Certification exams that will be offered September 1-30. The application deadline is August 10 for the following:

- CQT (Quality Technician)
- CQI (Quality Inspector)
- CRE (Reliability Engineer)
- CFSQA (Food Safety and Quality Auditor)
- CMDA (Medical Device Auditor)
- CMQ/OE (Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence)
- CSSBB (Six Sigma Black Belt)
- CSSYB (Six Sigma Yellow Belt)
- CSQP (Supplier Quality Professional)

You can apply [online](#) or you can download an exam application for mailing or faxing. You will need your resumé and credit card to complete the application. For more details about ASQ certifications (19 different certifications are offered), click [here](#).

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Don't let negative and toxic people rent space in your head. Raise the rent and kick them out."

~ Zig Ziglar

ARE YOU ACTIVE IN MYASQ?

The myASQ platform offers all ASQ members easily accessible information, meaningful networking, and interaction with like-minded quality professionals.

This is a centralized, online resource designed to support members in learning and using quality tools. To access some areas, you need to log in to your ASQ account.

Our section has an active myASQ Community. We would love to see more members check it out and become more involved in discussions there. Do you need some ideas about how to address a workplace quality issue? Has your team come up with an innovative way to solve an ongoing problem? Consider posting a quality-related topic for future discussion.

Check out our myASQ Community [here](#).

LEAN: THE SECRET POWER OF GREAT LEADERS

ASQ Lean Enterprise Division Webinar

July 9 from 10:00 am to 11:00 am PDT

Explore how Lean principles, pioneered by the Toyota Production System, empower leaders to thrive in today's resource-constrained, environmental, social, and governance (ESG)-focused landscape.

This transformative webinar with Dr. Adil Dalal, will uncover the power of Lean beyond manufacturing, delving into its application in leadership to drive sustainability, efficiency, and innovation.

Learn how Lean fosters resilience and agility while minimizing waste. Discover the "Science of Simplicity" as a framework for tackling complex challenges, streamlining operations, and achieving social impact.

There is no charge, but [advance registration](#) is required.

Has your email address changed? Help us keep you informed of Columbia Basin ASQ events and information by updating your contact information and email preferences at <http://www.asq.org/>. Log in and click "My Account" to update your membership record. You can add or make email, address, and phone changes in the "Contact" tab, and then click on the "email preferences" tab to be sure you are subscribed to receive future Section communications.

HYBRID WORK SOLUTIONS: FIVE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES THAT DELIVER

Live HRDQ-U Webinar

July 9 from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm PDT

Hybrid work has changed how teams communicate, collaborate, and achieve results - but many leaders are still operating under old assumptions. When some people are in the office and others are remote, defaulting to traditional leadership methods can cause breakdowns in communication, feelings of exclusion, and decreased productivity.

Hybrid work isn't just about location - it's about rethinking how we lead, build trust, and create results with hybrid work solutions that are built for today's teams.

Presenter Wayne Turmel will discuss:

- How to distinguish between a true hybrid workplace and a compromise
- How to design work that fosters intentional collaboration
- How to build stronger cross-functional and cross-team partnerships
- How to implement outcome-focused performance metrics
- How to reimagine your physical office space for hybrid effectiveness
- How to develop the leadership skills needed to thrive in this new normal

There is no charge, but [registration](#) is required.

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS – NETWORKING EVENT

July 10 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm PDT in Richland

The Tri-City Regional Chamber offers monthly opportunities to meet and network with other business professionals at existing and new businesses in our area. Each month a different sponsor hosts the event and has the opportunity to showcase their goods and services amid a fun and social atmosphere.

This month's event is being hosted by the Children's Development Center, located at 1549 Georgia Avenue SE, in Richland.

There will be refreshments and beverages. Bring your business card to enter to win a door prize.

No reservations are required. It's free to attend - bring a friend! More information is available [here](#).

NEXT LEVEL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STRATEGIES

Ask the Experts Hybrid Event

July 15 from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm PDT in Kennewick (or via Zoom)

Ask the Experts is a series of monthly workshops that provide information on crucial business topics, offered free of charge to the Tri-Cities business community through the Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce and funded by STCU. Each session features local professionals who have demonstrated expertise in the featured monthly topic and are willing to share what they have learned, as well as answer questions from participants.

Would you like to learn more about how AI tools can enhance, automate, and transform your business and human resources practices?

Panelists Marci Ballard (Christensen, Inc.), Tyler Best (Abadan), and Reanette Etzler (Leadership Trainer) will share practical strategies to help you integrate AI effectively across your organization - both internally and in customer-facing applications. Explore next-level approaches to leveraging AI for smarter operations, better decision-making, and stronger engagement.

Ask the Experts is offered in hybrid format - in-person at the Bechtel Board Room at the Tri-Cities Business and Visitor Center in Kennewick (with light refreshments), as well as live on Zoom. There is no charge. Register [here](#).

IMPOSTER SYNDROME

San Gabriel Valley ASQ Virtual Meeting

July 16 from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm PDT

Imposter syndrome is a psychological phenomenon that affects many individuals, causing them to doubt their abilities and feel like frauds, even when their accomplishments speak otherwise.

This presentation, with Lucy Paulise, will explore signs, triggers, and strategies to overcome imposter syndrome, empowering participants to recognize and challenge self-doubt. Through understanding the cultural, familial, and individual factors that contribute to imposter syndrome, attendees will learn effective tools to confront their inner critic and shift their mindset toward self-compassion and confidence. The session will also provide practical strategies such as seeking support, embracing personal strengths, and practicing self-care to build resilience and achieve career success.

There is no charge or registration required. Just log in to join the meeting; the Webex link can be found [here](#).

NAVIGATING ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS

East Bay ASQ Virtual Meeting

July 16 from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm PDT

Navigating organizational politics is a critical leadership skill that drives influence, alignment, and outcomes across all levels of an organization. Leaders with strong political savvy are better equipped to manage complexity, build alliances, and drive change effectively.

This interactive webinar with Dr. Mary Kay Taylor will equip leaders with practical tools and strategies to enhance their political acumen, ensuring they lead with both impact and integrity.

After attending this session, participants will be able to:

- Define political savviness and its role in effective leadership and understand why it is essential for organizational success
- Debunk three common myths that hinder politically effective leadership
- Apply five key tools to navigate and leverage organizational politics with confidence

There is no charge. Additional information, including the Zoom link, can be found [here](#).

PMP and CAPM CERTIFICATION BOOT CAMP

In-Person! July 21-25 in Richland

Are you interested in earning Project Management Professional (PMP) and/or Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) credentials?

In-person “boot camps” are a great way to learn, network, and grow. Cost for the July event with instructor Nate Crews is \$1495. More information is available [here](#).

NAVIGATING CHANGE WITH FMEA AND VALUE STREAM MAPPING

San Francisco ASQ Virtual Webinar

July 24 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm PDT

Are you interested in learning more about how Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA) and Value Stream Mapping can be used to empower professionals across sectors and career levels?

Presenter Norma Antunano will provide a framework for integrating these powerful methods into any professional environment and will provide additional resources to deepen your expertise.

There is no charge, but [reservations](#) are required.

ASQ SYNERGY FOR SUCCESS 2025

Virtual Conference- July 22-24

Five ASQ Divisions/Technical Communities are hosting this virtual event: Quality Management, Software, Energy & Environmental, Government, and Design & Construction.

The conference theme is “Driving Excellence Across Industries.” There will be a Keynote presentation each day and three concurrent session tracks running from 7:00 am to 12:00 pm PDT each day. RUs will be awarded for attendance.

Keynote Speakers include Dr. Adil Dalal, Peg Pennington, and Dr. Nicole Radziwill.

Three distinct tracks will be available, each designed to highlight cross-industry challenges and opportunities.

- Cutting EDGe (ASQ Energy and Environment [E] Design and Construction [D], and Government [G] Divisions) practices
- Process Excellence
- Digital Transformation

Cost is \$199 for ASQ members and \$249 for non-members. Use code “EarlyBird25” for a \$30 discount if you register by July 4. Additional information can be found [here](#).



FIREWORKS SAFETY TIPS

It's that time of year ...

Here are some safety tips for a fun & safe Fourth of July:

- ✓ Always have a responsible adult present
- ✓ Never give fireworks (even sparklers!) to kids to use on their own
- ✓ Alcohol and fireworks don't mix
- ✓ Only use fireworks outdoors on a hard, flat, fireproof surface
- ✓ Stay away from dry grass, buildings, and people
- ✓ Keep a hose or water bucket nearby
- ✓ Light one firework at a time, and never re-light a dud
- ✓ Wear safety glasses
- ✓ Don't throw or carry fireworks in pockets
- ✓ Soak used fireworks in water before tossing

SUMMER SUPPORT REQUEST

Tri-City Union Gospel Mission

Every day, the Tri-City Union Gospel Mission donation truck is parked by the 3rd Avenue gate to their men's facility in downtown Pasco. Donations of household goods, clothing, cleaning supplies, paper products, garbage bags, and more are accepted between the hours of 8:00 am and 6:00 pm daily.

Summertime means hotter weather. When you donate much-needed summer items, you help individuals in need and you also help the Mission save money, which can be used toward other services.

- Children's summer clothing and shoes
- Sunscreen
- Women's and men's lightweight clothing, hats, and shoes
- Bottled water
- Powdered drink mixes
- Paper towels and toilet paper
- Food items – eggs, pancake mix, ground beef

Download their full Urgent Needs list [here](#).

LET'S SMILE FOR A WHILE

Lovers of the English language might enjoy this.

- There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meaning than any other two-letter word, and that is UP. Yep. We seem to be pretty mixed UP about the word UP!
- It's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awake in the morning, why do we wake UP?
- At a meeting, why does a topic come UP?
- Why do we speak UP, and why are the officers UP for election, and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report?
- We call UP our friends.
- And we use it to brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver; we warm UP the leftovers, and clean UP the kitchen.
- We lock UP the house, and some guys fix UP the old car.
- When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP.
- When the sun comes out, we say it is clearing UP.
- When it rains, it wets the earth and often messes things UP.
- When it doesn't rain for a while, things dry UP.
- We open UP a store in the morning, but we close it UP at night.

One could go on and on, but I'll wrap it UP, for now my time is UP, so.....it is time to shut UP!

2025 COLUMBIA BASIN ASQ

LEADERSHIP TEAM

January 1 - December 31, 2025

Section Chair	Denise Fast
Secretary	Denise Clements
Treasurer	Robert Boykin
Membership Chair	Jo Haberstok
Nominations Chair	Steve Prevette
Newsletter Editor	Robert Boykin
Publicity Chair	Jo Haberstok
Webmaster	Steve Prevette
Programs Chair	Vacant
Social Media Chair	Vacant
Voice of the Customer Chair	Vacant

Publication Information

This newsletter is published on a regular basis to inform members and potential members about Columbia Basin ASQ activities and other news/information that may be of value to quality professionals. To be considered for the next newsletter, input must be received by the 21st of the month.

