



*Now announcing our theme  
for the 2017 Annual  
Conference...*

**“Achieving True  
North:  
Lead-Engage-  
Accelerate-Now”**

**NORTH POLE**

We will achieve True  
North August 2-4, 2017

### **Keynote Speakers:**



**Mr. Bob Richard**

Robert A. Richard is Senior Vice President of Major Enterprise Projects for DTE Energy (NYSE:DTE), a Detroit-based diversified energy company involved in the development and management of energy-related businesses and services nationwide. Its operating units include an electric utility serving 2.1 million customers in Southeastern Michigan and a natural gas utility serving 1.2 million customers in Michigan. The DTE Energy portfolio includes non-utility energy businesses focused on power and industrial projects, natural gas pipelines, gathering and storage, and energy marketing and trading. As one of Michigan's leading corporate citizens, DTE Energy is a force for growth and prosperity in the 450 Michigan communities it serves in a variety of ways, including philanthropy, volunteerism and economic progress.

Richard is responsible for major projects in Power Generation, Distribution, Renewable, Nuclear and Gas Midstream platforms. This assignment leverages his experience as an operating Executive in Gas Midstream, Power Generation and the Gas Utility of DTE Energy.

Prior to joining DTE Energy, Richard was vice president of operations and process improvement at Bethlehem Steel. This role was responsible for sales, marketing and operations of the eastern division. Previously, he spent 13 years at General Electric where he served in a variety of leadership roles. Richard was senior executive for GE LEXAN Americas Manufacturing and responsible for Phenolics, BPA, SAN, Chlorine and Polycarbonate extrusion.

Richard earned bachelor of science and master of science degrees in chemical engineering from The Ohio State University. At Ohio State, his graduate work was in coal technologies, which included liquefaction, gasification and the microbial desulfurization of coal. Richard attended the Nuclear Reactor Technology course of MIT and he is a certified Master Black Belt from GE and the Six Sigma Academy. He received the Whitney Award for technical achievement at GE. Richard is a member of the board of directors of the Wildlife Habitat Council where he serves on the finance subcommittee. He is active in the Boy Scouts of America and is a lifetime member of the National Eagle Scout Association.



**John Lehman's** career in the fire service spans more than 30 years. The majority of his professional experience was earned in Aurora, Il. With the Aurora Fire Department. He Graduated with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Fire Service Management from Southern Illinois University. Before retiring as Fire Chief in January 2016, Chief Lehman served his community in a wide variety of roles with the Aurora Fire Department. As Fire Chief, he was responsible for more than 200 personnel and directed fire service operations in a city of 200,000 residents. Fire Chief Lehman joined the Grand Rapids Fire Department in June of 2016 and his wife Rebekah and 4 daughters reside just east of the city.



## **Jeff Fuchs**

Since 2008, Jeff has served as the Executive Director of the Maryland World Class Consortia, a non-profit organization that helps members understand lean principles, achieve performance excellence, and strengthen the state and regional economies. He served on the Consortia's founding member Advisory Board in 1996, and has previously been a consulting service provider to MWCC member organizations. Jeff is also President of Neovista Consulting, a services firm specializing in operational excellence, Lean Thinking, leadership development, change management, and building cultures of continuous improvement. Jeff's passion for Lean Thinking began 23 years ago, as the plant manager of a small aerospace firm where lean manufacturing provided the cornerstone of a dramatic multi-year business turnaround. He has served in other roles including quality manager, engineering director, and lean champion in industries including automotive, machining, aerospace, and solar power. Jeff was deeply involved in the creation and expansion of a nationally recognized system of Lean Certification that is today jointly supported by the Society of Manufacturing Engineers, the Association for Manufacturing Excellence, the Shingo Institute, and the American Society for Quality. He is currently pursuing his Lean Silver Certification and he has served on the Lean Certification Oversight Committee continuously since its inception in 2006. Jeff's current interests are in lean leadership, using lean to improve personal and administrative processes, and lean government. Jeff is the architect of several lean training and coaching programs that have together graduated over 1,000 lean leaders across a range of government agencies and from private sector companies. He has designed the training curriculum for Virginia Tech's Lean Academy program. Jeff received his Bachelor's Degree in Aerospace Engineering from West Point. He is a lifelong student of team leadership, a combat veteran of the first Gulf War, and was awarded a Bronze Star Medal and a second Bronze Star for Valor. He is an examiner for both the Shingo Prize and AME's Manufacturing Excellence Award. He is the past Chairman of the Maryland Advisory Commission for Manufacturing Competitiveness, and serves on the Board of Directors of Open Works, a Baltimore community maker space, educational resource, and small business incubator.



**Jeffery J. Downs** is one of FranklinCovey's practice leaders in the 4 Disciplines of Execution. He specializes in working with executive teams in both private and public organizations to translate strategy into the fewest number of executable targets. Jeff has had numerous years of executive leadership experience and record-breaking results.

He has consulted companies such as Intel, CISCO, Boston Scientific, Comcast, Husky Energy, Payless Shoe Source, Staples Promotional Products, Siemens, Trimble Navigation, TEP, State of Colorado, Seattle Study Club and many more. Each of these organizations have experienced tremendous success implementing and using the 4 Disciplines of Execution.

He most recently sold Best Practice Systems, Inc. a successful eBill business he started with two partners and using principles outlined in the 4 Disciplines of Execution, in just under seven years, lead the company to unprecedented growth earning the status of one of the 500 fastest growing companies in America.

In growing Best Practice Systems, Jeff worked with senior business leaders in companies such as Blue Cross Blue Shield, Graybar Electric, Stericycle, Glaxo Smith Kline, Allscripts, Eastern Propane and Oil, Davey Tree, City of Scottsdale, and many others on how to optimize business systems, increase profit, and improve customer satisfaction.

As a leader in the 4 Disciplines practice, Jeff is asked to speak often to thousands of individuals in large corporate events and facilitate strategic goal setting with executive leaders of Fortune 500 businesses. Without fail, after hearing Jeff speak or facilitate, organizations in hospitality, insurance, healthcare, government, financial, technology, and general business, come away with a new way of approaching what is wildly important.

Jeff has been married for 25 years to his sweetheart, Jami. He is the proud father of seven children between the ages of 5 years and 22 years old. He is a fitness enthusiast with a passion for running completing 2 marathons, 13 half marathons, and scores of smaller races. He is also an avid reader of fiction and non-fiction alike.