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Risk Honors and “Triple Vision” Keynotes Inspire and Engage at RISKWORLD

by Justin Smulison

RIMS honored its past and celebrated its future during Tuesday afternoon’s Main Stage sessions. From the Skyline Ballroom at McCormick Place, a new format for day two debuted to wide acclaim: Before the trio of keynotes, new inductees to the Risk Management Hall of Fame were announced, along with the winner of the Spencer-RIMS Risk Management Challenge and the RIMS 2025 Rising Risk Professional.

RIMS Vice President Manny Padilla and Treasurer Christy Kaufman led the awards session, naming Dr. Gert Cruywagen (posthumously), Bradley Wood, and 1999 RIMS President Susan Meltzer to the Risk Management Hall of Fame.

The next generation of risk leaders was also recognized. Megan Smalter of Lloyd’s was named the RIMS 2025 Rising Risk Professional. IIRM Hyderabad, DePauw University, and the University of Wisconsin were announced as finalists in the Spencer-RIMS Risk Management Challenge, which focused on climate risks facing Huntington, West Virginia. The University of Wisconsin–Madison was named the 2025 winner of the competition.

“It’s really amazing to see so much participation from so many international universities,” Padilla said, referring to the 61 schools that took part. “It really reflects this community. Around the globe, risk professionals are recognizing the value of RIMS and the power of collaboration.”

The remainder of the midday session featured three TED-style keynotes under the theme, “Triple Vision.” The first speaker, communication expert Rachel DeAlto, presented “The Power of Relatability,” exploring how genuine human connections define effective leadership. She opened by acknowledging her own business mistakes and highlighted the cost of professional disconnection—valued at \$1.33 trillion—due to failed leadership.

“When apps came out, [my company] became obsolete overnight, but it wasn’t just the technology that failed,” DeAlto said. “I had created a leadership facade without a leadership foundation. I had chosen authority and control over connection, and it’s the reason I have been studying connection ever since.”

Through compelling, interactive storytelling

Continued on page 9



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Spencer 5K Fun Run Generates Funds for Future RMI Leaders

Funds raised for student scholarships and university grants

Early Tuesday morning, over 276 RISKWORLD conference attendees registered to run or walk along the Chicago Harbor, a picturesque waterfront path by Lake Michigan, as part of the annual Spencer 5K Fun Run, sponsored by Sedgwick.

"Sedgwick has enthusiastically supported the Spencer Educational Foundation 5K Fun Run at RISKWORLD since its inaugural year in 2015," said Jonathan Mast, Director of Corporate Events at Sedgwick. "Running alongside passionate individuals in risk management and insurance has been inspiring, and it adds a bit of fun competition and bragging rights as well. Together, we strive to support the next generation of industry professionals and leaders."

The Spencer-Sedgwick 5K Fun Run is one of several fundraising events hosted by the Foundation during RISKWORLD. The other events include a Pickleball Social and a Golf Tournament designed to enable working professionals to network in an energizing environment. This year's 5K Fun Run raised more than \$134,000 for Spencer through sponsorships, registration, and individual and team fundraising.

Spencer congratulates all who participated, including the race winners. The top three women are: Emily Drew of Helmsman Management Services, Kristen Gomez of McGriff, and Ali Kehmna of Liberty Mutual. The top three men are: Peter Bransden of WTW, Paul Dobson of Hamilton Americas, and Killian Brady of Old Republic Cyber. All race results can be found at go.rims.org/RW25Spencer5K.

In addition to title event sponsor Sedgwick, Spencer would like to thank the generous support of sponsors in various categories. Special thanks to: Gold sponsor Chubb; Silver sponsors Allied World, AXA XL, Descartes, Liberty Mutual, Marsh, Safety National, Swiss Re Corporate Solutions, Travelers, WTW, Zurich, and Zywave; and Bronze sponsors Arch, Dual, Optum, and RT Specialty. The Hydration Station was sponsored by Philadelphia Insurance Companies and the t-shirt sponsor was BluSky.

The Spencer Educational Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to fostering the education and professional development of risk management and insurance students. Since its establishment in 1979, the foundation has been helping students succeed by providing scholarships, grants, and internships to talented individuals pursuing careers in these fields. To learn more about the Spencer Educational Foundation and its programs, please visit www.spencer.org. ■



"Sedgwick has enthusiastically supported the Spencer Educational Foundation 5K Fun Run at RISKWORLD since its inaugural year in 2015."



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Q & A



“...I realized how things were beginning to ‘click’ for me and that I could bring greater value back to my company...”

RIMS-CRMP Q&A: Kristen Peed

Interview by Justin Smulison

Kristen Peed was named Chief Risk Officer at Sequoia in 2024 and is widely known as RIMS President in 2025. She discussed how earning the RIMS-CRMP helped facilitate her risk management career.

RIMS: You received your RIMS-CRMP in 2022 with several years in risk management behind you. What led you to pursue the RIMS-CRMP from the outset?

Peed: I am a lifelong learner and really value education. The RIMS-CRMP is the only ANAB-accredited certification associated with risk management, and I wanted to demonstrate my expertise to my company.

RIMS: How did your experiences at CBIZ (and other companies) prepare you for the exam?

Peed: Every role in risk management I’ve held, dating back to my time at STERIS, prepared me for this exam. As I transitioned from a risk analyst to a risk manager and then to a director of corporate risk, my responsibilities grew, and I had more insight into how risk management was much more than just placement of insurance. It was more about being strategic with leadership on how best to identify, mitigate, and manage risk—regardless of whether insurance was involved.

RIMS: How supportive was CBIZ when you were studying and preparing for the exam?

Peed: I was fortunate to have an amazing boss and mentor at CBIZ who encouraged me to pursue additional educational opportunities. Since I worked in the legal department, my colleagues had CLE requirements and so it was just integrated in the framework of how we operated.

RIMS: When did you know or realize that the RIMS-CRMP was enhancing your work and your career?

Peed: When I started attending RIMS ERM Conference several years ago, I realized how things were beginning to “click” for me and that I could bring greater value back to my company and enhance their risk profile. It helped me identify opportunities that could enhance company operations—like captives!

RIMS: You are now a Chief Risk Officer. Why should more CROs pursue the RIMS-CRMP?

Peed: The RIMS-CRMP certification has value for all career levels—whether you are an analyst, risk manager, director, VP, or CRO. It can also accelerate early career development. For CROs, it demonstrates to your company that you have achieved a proficiency in your knowledge that can help your company. I look forward to the day where the RIMS-CRMP is a requirement on risk management job descriptions.

RIMS: How did you study or prepare ahead of the you took the exam?

Peed: I used the study guide and reviewed that along with the suggested reading materials. Since I have been “on the job” for over 20 years, my own experience was also very helpful!

RIMS: What tips do you have for anyone studying for the exam now?

Peed: I am one who enjoys studying alone—so I used the physical study guide and just set aside time on my calendar each day leading up to the exam. I think this will be highly dependent on a person’s learning style. I know that our instructor-led exam prep workshops have also been very popular. ■



University of Wisconsin–Madison Wins 2025 Spencer-RIMS Risk Management Challenge

by Joshua Salter, RIMS–CRMP, ARM

At the Spencer Educational Foundation's 2025 Spencer Soirée, Spencer's Executive Director Megan Miller announced the University of Wisconsin–Madison student team as the winners of the 2025 Spencer-RIMS Risk Management Challenge.

The team, comprising four risk management students, competed against a record-breaking 244 students from 61 universities and delivered the award-winning risk management presentation in front of industry leaders at RISKWORLD® in Chicago.

The winning University of Wisconsin–Madison team included:

- Grace Dai
- Hattie Killeen
- Joshua Schaefer
- Noah Oachs
- Professor: Carl Barlett

The challenge began seven months ago, with 61 universities dedicating their time and effort to address a risk management case study based on City of Huntington, located in West Virginia, United States. During RISKWORLD, the field was narrowed to three university teams and those finalists presented one last time in front of the conference attendees and a panel of judges.

"The students in the top eight teams have shown incredible maturity, talent, and creativity in tackling this year's Challenge, which focused on climate change," said Tandeka Nomvete, External Engagement Director for the Spencer Educational Foundation. "The innovative

solutions they constructed are poised to create a significant impact, not just in Huntington, but far beyond. Regardless of their final rankings, their participation in this Challenge and attendance at RISKWORLD will jump-start their careers in our industry!"

"RIMS 75th Anniversary is as much about recognizing the Society's remarkable history as it is about celebrating its future," said RIMS CEO Gary A. LaBranche, FASAE, CAE. "The Spencer-RIMS Risk Management Challenge gives the next generation of risk management leaders a platform to showcase their skills and carve a path for their professional future. Congratulations to University of Wisconsin–Madison for winning this year's Challenge, as well as to all the other university teams and volunteer risk professionals who helped make the 2025 Spencer-RIMS Risk Management Challenge a success."

DePauw University (USA) took second place in this year's Challenge, and IIRM Hyderabad (India) took third place. The top three teams received cash prizes and trophies—the first-place university received \$10,000, the second \$7,500, and the third \$5,000.

To learn more about the annual Spencer-RIMS Risk Management Challenge, visit www.spencered.org/risk-management-challenge.

The Spencer Educational Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to fostering the education and professional development of risk management and insurance students. Since its establishment in 1979, the foundation has been the foremost organization helping students succeed by providing scholarships, grants, and internships to support talented individuals pursuing careers in these fields. To learn more about the Spencer Educational Foundation and its programs, please visit www.spencered.org. ■

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Continued from page 1

Risk Honors and “Triple Vision” Keynotes Inspire and Engage at RISKWORLD



Rachel DeAlto



Holly Ransom

enhanced with AI and sound effects, DeAlto shared key interpersonal qualities—rooted in her proprietary research—that inspire trust, motivate teams, and foster collaboration.

Next was former NFL offensive lineman Ryan Harris. In “Lead to Win,” he demonstrated how a leader’s mindset shapes their effectiveness. Drawing on his Super Bowl 50 victory and 10-year NFL career, Harris engaged the audience with humorous and poignant stories of overcoming adversity, teamwork, and resilience.

He emphasized that self awareness, adaptability, and a commitment to collective goals empower individuals and organizations to achieve sustained success.

“When you choose your mindset, people will be wrong about you all the time,” Harris said. “To create your purpose, choose your mindset... each and every place you go in your personal and

professional life. Lead by example and celebrate every win to make sure you are having fun.”

Closing the session was Holly Ransom, who explored “Humanizing Leadership in a Tech-Enhanced World.” She noted the billions of hours professionals spend in meetings and argued that leaders must harness technology to go beyond traditional metrics, embracing human-centric qualities to build resilient, high-performing teams.

Drawing on her experience with elite teams and corporate leaders, Ransom shared strategies for blending social and emotional intelligence into everyday leadership. Her approach equips leaders to foster inclusive cultures, maximize creativity, and drive innovation, while managing the emotional demands of modern leadership.

“The future doesn’t belong to those who can just control the algorithms,” she said, emphasizing that it is the attendees who can lead by tapping into their own best qualities. ■

RISKWORLD Snapshots



RISKWORLD Snapshots



BEST IN SHOW Top Exhibitors at RISKWORLD



Expedited Service Partners
Small Booth Winner #213



CLARA Analytics
Medium Booth Winner #1355



The Hartford
Large Booth Winner #1301

Chicago Sights: Bronzeville

by Shauntay Jones

The Bronzeville neighborhood is a vibrant hub of African American culture, history, and creativity. The area is renowned for its historic landmarks and contributions to jazz and blues music. From the inspiring Bronzeville Walk of Fame to cutting-edge art galleries, Bronzeville offers a soulful, unforgettable experience.



GALLERY GUICHARD

436 E 47th St | galleryguichard.com | 773.791.7003

Gallery Guichard showcases a dynamic mix of contemporary paintings, sculptures, and mixed-media art from global artists. Visitors can explore rotating exhibitions, attend events featuring live music, and experience the Great Migration Sculpture Garden. With a mission to uplift underrepresented talent, Gallery Guichard offers a welcoming space where art and community converge. ■



BRONZEVILLE WALK OF FAME

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Dr between 25th and 35th Sts

The Bronzeville Walk of Fame is an outdoor exhibit that honors influential African American figures—ranging from civil rights icon Ida B. Wells to Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Gwendolyn Brooks and astronaut Robert H. Lawrence Jr. Ninety-two bronze plaques embedded in sidewalks, medians, and crosswalks create a powerful journey through history. ■



S.R. CROWN HALL

3360 S State St | 312.567.3230

S.R. Crown Hall at the Illinois Institute of Technology is a masterpiece of modern architecture by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Completed in 1956, this National Historic Landmark is a column-free open-floor plan that exemplifies Mies's vision of "universal space." Its minimalist design and innovative use of steel and glass make it a must-see for architecture enthusiasts. ■



ROBERT W. ROLOSON HOUSES

3213–3219 S Calumet Ave

The Roloson Houses were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1894 for client Robert W. Roloson, a grain merchant. Featuring steeply pitched gables, these four homes are a rare example of his early work in the row house format. They were designated a Chicago Landmark in 1979. ■

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RISKWORLD Snapshots



Chicago Eats: Bronzeville

by Shauntay Jones

Bronzeville's restaurant scene is a celebration of heritage, creativity, and community. From southern soul food to global bites, every meal blends rich history with bold flavor. In Bronzeville, food isn't just nourishment—it's a cultural experience.



SHAWN MICHELLE'S HOMEMADE ICE CREAM 46 E 47th St | shawnmichelles.com | 773.675.4032

Visit Shawn Michelle's Homemade Ice Cream for a rich, nostalgic treat made with high-quality ingredients. There are even ice cream and baked dessert pairings such as "The Ultimate Stress Reliever" which combines pound cake, peach cobbler, and vanilla ice cream. With over 20 flavors, including vegan options, there's something for everyone. ■



BRONZEVILLE WINERY 4420 S Cottage Grove Ave | bronzevillewinery.com | 872.244.7065

Bronzeville Winery blends global flavors, local ingredients, live music, and a curated wine list in a stylish, art-filled space. Guest favorites include dishes like Creole salmon tagliatelle and shrimp + stoneground grits. The dinner menu includes suggested wine pairings; the wine list highlights selections from Black-owned and women-owned producers. Visit Bronzeville Wine for a sophisticated and welcoming dining atmosphere. ■



YASSA AFRICAN RESTAURANT 3511 S King Dr | yassaafricanrestaurant.com | 773.488.5599

Yassa African Restaurant offers a warm, inviting atmosphere where Senegalese flavors shine. Signature dishes like Yassa Chicken—marinated in a blend of lemon juice, mustard, and spices—and hearty portions of djolof rice and fried plantains are customer favorites. While service can be leisurely, the freshly prepared meals and friendly staff make it worth the wait. ■



SIP & SAVOR | 43RD STREET 528 E 43rd St | sipandsavorchicago.com | 773.855.2125

Sip & Savor offers a cozy and stylish atmosphere, making it a perfect spot for coffee lovers and community gatherings. The shop offers an extensive beverage menu, which includes customer favorites such as the Banana Caramel Latte and the Honey Lavendar Latte. Guests can also enjoy small bites with their drinks, such as breakfast/lunch sandwiches and baked goods. Stop by Sip & Savor to enjoy quality beverages in a warm and inviting setting. ■

RISKWORLD Snapshots

