CEO WORLD

September 2026

LEADERS

DEVELOPING THE WHOLE CHILD THROUGH PURPOSEFUL LEARNING

ADAPTABILITY AND INNOVATION WITH A CLEAR PURPOSE

LEADING WITH PURPOSE IN A GLOBALIZED LEGAL LANDSCAPE

Dr. Amanda Campbell Cooley

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Transforming Today's Students for Tomorrow's Leaders

Founder & Superintendent, Unlimited Dreams Christian Learning Center | Owner & Director, Greater Expectations Children Learning Center

Building educational environments rooted in faith, literacy, trust, and opportunity, Dr. Amanda Campbell Cooley is advancing a vision where every child is encouraged to discover their potential and believe that their dreams are unlimited.

Where Education Begins with Love and Purpose

Education has the power to influence far more than academic performance. It can shape confidence, nurture character, open doors to opportunity, and help young people recognize their own potential. For Dr. Amanda Campbell Cooley, this broader understanding of education has guided her professional journey and the organizations she has built. As Founder and Superintendent of Unlimited Dreams Christian Learning Center and Owner and Director of Greater Expectations Children Learning Center, she is committed to creating learning environments where children are valued as whole individuals.

At the heart of her educational philosophy is a principle that reflects both her leadership style and her approach to teaching: "Love and Build Trust First and Teach Second." For Dr. Cooley, trust is not separate from education. It is the foundation that enables children to feel secure, engage with learning, overcome challenges, and develop confidence in their abilities.

Her work is shaped by the belief that children should not be defined by their circumstances, test scores, previous experiences, or the labels placed upon them. Instead, they deserve opportunities, encouragement, individualized support, and meaningful expectations that help them move forward.

This commitment led to the establishment of Unlimited Dreams Christian Learning Center in 2020. What began as a vision developed into a tuition-free Christian educational organization serving students from PreK through 12th grade. Alongside this initiative, her leadership at Greater Expectations Children Learning Center reflects her focus on early childhood development and the importance of establishing strong educational foundations from the beginning.

Together, these organizations represent an approach to education that extends beyond traditional instruction. They bring together academic development, literacy, Christian principles, mentoring, leadership, and community engagement, with the intention of supporting children and families across different stages of learning.

A Calling Shaped by Children and Conviction

Dr. Cooley's career began with a genuine concern for children and a conviction that education should address the whole person. Her professional experiences allowed her to observe how children's abilities can be overlooked when they are judged primarily through academic results or their circumstances. These observations strengthened her determination to create environments where students receive the attention and encouragement they need.

She believes that some children require someone who is willing to continue believing in them, particularly when they struggle to believe in themselves. This perspective became an important influence on her vision for educational institutions that combine individualized learning with structure, accountability, Christian instruction, and academic support.

Her journey has not been defined by the expectation that building an educational organization would be easy. Rather, she describes it as a necessary undertaking driven by faith, sacrifice, prayer, creativity, and relationships within the community. The development of her institutions has required her to continue moving forward even when the path ahead was not fully visible.

In 2020, the establishment of Unlimited Dreams Christian Learning Center provided an opportunity to put these beliefs into practice. The organization's motto, "The School Where All Achieve," reflects its commitment to educational opportunity, while its mission, "Transforming Today's Students for Tomorrow's Leaders," expresses its focus on preparing students for their future.

Dr. Cooley's work is also connected to her responsibilities as an educator, administrator, entrepreneur, author, mentor, Christian life coach, wife, mother, and community servant. These different roles contribute to her understanding of service and the importance of creating meaningful opportunities for others.

Her motivation remains closely connected to the progress of the children she serves. Whether a student learns to read a word that once seemed difficult, develops a new skill, gains confidence, discovers a talent, or reaches graduation, she sees these moments as reminders of why education matters.

For Dr. Cooley, the objective is not simply to help children survive their school experience. It is to encourage them to recognize their abilities and understand that their future possibilities are not limited by their starting point.

Developing the Whole Child Through Purposeful Learning

A central element of Dr. Cooley's educational approach is the belief that academic achievement should be accompanied by social, emotional, spiritual, and personal development. While literacy and academic support remain important priorities, she also seeks to create opportunities for children to develop character, leadership skills, creativity, faith, and a sense of service.

Unlimited Dreams Christian Learning Center incorporates a range of educational and developmental approaches, including individualized learning, literacy intervention, reading comprehension, phonics, Orton-Gillingham strategies, mentoring, technology, Christian education, leadership development, community service, and extracurricular activities.

This combination reflects her understanding that children learn in different ways and may require different forms of support. A structured classroom environment can provide consistency, but meaningful learning can also occur through activities that connect education to practical experiences and personal interests.

Dr. Cooley encourages her team to consider learning beyond the traditional classroom. Books, technology, music, cooking, STEM activities, Bible study, mentoring, field experiences, community service, and meaningful conversations can all contribute to a child's development.

Her emphasis on literacy is particularly significant. She views reading and comprehension as foundational skills because stronger reading abilities can help students access learning across other academic subjects. Through reading intervention and literacy-focused initiatives, her organization seeks to provide students with additional opportunities to strengthen these essential capabilities.

Greater Expectations Children Learning Center complements this vision by focusing on younger learners. The center brings together learning, nurturing, structure, development, and preparation, reflecting the belief that children benefit from strong foundations established early in life.

Its identity, "The Place Where Learning Meets Potential," captures the organization's emphasis on recognizing and developing children's abilities. Together, the two institutions represent Dr. Cooley's broader commitment to education that begins with early development and continues through the school years.

Her philosophy emphasizes that learning should not be restricted to academic performance alone. Children also need encouragement, positive relationships, opportunities to explore their interests, and environments where they can develop confidence and responsibility.

Adaptability and Innovation with a Clear Purpose

The educational sector continues to evolve, requiring educators and leaders to respond to changing student needs, instructional approaches, and technological developments. Dr. Cooley approaches this evolution through a commitment to lifelong learning and purposeful innovation.

She continuously explores instructional methods, literacy strategies, educational resources, professional development opportunities, and technology that may improve the learning experience for students and support teachers in their work.

However, her approach to innovation is not based on adopting something simply because it is new. Instead, she evaluates whether a particular approach can create meaningful benefits for children, teachers, and families.
Her guiding questions include whether an innovation helps children learn, strengthens teaching, improves educational experiences, or supports families. This perspective places educational outcomes and student needs at the center of decision-making.

For Dr. Cooley, adaptability also requires listening. Students, educators, parents, families, and community partners each offer perspectives that can help identify challenges and opportunities for improvement. By remaining attentive to these voices, educational organizations can better respond to the needs of the communities they serve.

She also recognizes that innovation does not always depend on expensive technology or extensive resources. Sometimes, it involves the willingness to reconsider an approach that is not working and make the necessary adjustments.

This principle reflects her broader leadership philosophy: progress requires openness, reflection, and the courage to act with purpose.

A Leadership Philosophy Rooted in Service

Dr. Cooley's leadership approach begins with service. She believes that a leadership title identifies a position, but service demonstrates the way a leader supports the people around them.

As Founder, Superintendent, Owner, and Director, she does not view any responsibility as beneath her. Instead, she emphasizes the importance of working alongside the people she leads and remaining connected to the daily realities of education.

Her expectations for her team include accountability, consistency, compassion, communication, and excellence. She believes that staff members should understand the purpose behind their work and recognize that their responsibilities extend beyond completing tasks.

At the center of her leadership decisions is one question: "What is best for the child?"

This question provides a guiding principle when decisions become difficult. It connects the organization's educational responsibilities with its wider mission of supporting children's development and future opportunities.

Dr. Cooley also places importance on encouraging her team. Teachers and childcare professionals carry significant responsibilities, and she believes their contributions deserve recognition and appreciation. She seeks to create a culture in which staff members understand that their work has meaning and that they are part of a wider educational family.

Her approach to creativity is closely connected to this culture. She encourages teachers to contribute ideas, solve problems, and explore different approaches without feeling afraid to try something new. When educators feel valued, she believes they are more comfortable sharing their creativity and participating in organizational development.

This combination of high expectations and compassion forms an important part of her leadership practice. Accountability provides structure, while communication and encouragement help strengthen relationships within the team.

The Power of Community Partnerships

The development of Unlimited Dreams Christian Learning Center has been supported by relationships with churches, businesses, organizations, educators, volunteers, donors, parents, families, and community members.

Dr. Cooley describes these partnerships as an important part of the organization's journey. Support has included financial contributions, educational resources, food, technology, supplies, volunteer service, mentorship, encouragement, and prayer.

Organizations and supporters, including Temple Baptist Church, local churches, community organizations, literacy initiative supporters, and individuals invested in children's development, have contributed to the wider mission.

These relationships illustrate the role that community involvement can play in educational initiatives. Schools and learning centers operate within broader communities, and collaboration can provide additional resources, experiences, and support for students and families.

For Dr. Cooley, meaningful partnerships are not limited to receiving assistance. She believes the strongest collaborations emerge when people share a commitment to strengthening children, families, education, and communities.

This understanding shapes her approach to community engagement. Rather than viewing education as the responsibility of one institution alone, she emphasizes the importance of relationships and shared purpose.
Her vision is rooted in the belief that communities can contribute to solutions when individuals and organizations are willing to participate, offer support, and work together toward common goals.

Learning from Challenges and Growing Through Experience

Building and leading educational organizations requires patience, planning, and the ability to respond to unexpected challenges. Dr. Cooley's experiences have reinforced the importance of allowing a vision to develop in stages rather than expecting every objective to be achieved immediately.

As a visionary leader, she explains that it can sometimes be difficult to slow down when the desired outcome is already visible in her mind. Over time, she has learned to place greater emphasis on timing, delegation, organization, and careful planning.

This understanding has influenced the way she approaches growth and decision-making. She recognizes that not every opportunity is the right opportunity and that not every person will accompany a leader through every stage of a journey.

Rather than viewing setbacks as final outcomes, Dr. Cooley believes they can become opportunities for reflection and learning. Her approach involves evaluating experiences, making adjustments, praying, and continuing forward with greater intention.

She acknowledges that difficult circumstances have helped her become more discerning, organized, and deliberate in her leadership. They have also strengthened her dependence on faith and her willingness to reassess how she works toward her goals.

Her perspective highlights an important element of sustainable leadership: progress does not always happen at the pace a leader initially expects. Patience and the ability to learn from experience can help create a more considered approach to organizational development.

This lesson extends to her advice for future leaders. She encourages individuals to maintain their integrity, build relationships, learn from mistakes, and avoid becoming so focused on success that they lose sight of their purpose.

Balancing Leadership, Family, and Personal Well-Being

Dr. Cooley's professional responsibilities extend across education, administration, entrepreneurship, mentoring, writing, coaching, and community service. Alongside these commitments, she also values her roles as a wife and mother.

Managing these responsibilities requires ongoing reflection and a willingness to recognize personal limits. She openly describes work-life balance as an area in which she continues to grow.

One of the lessons she has embraced is that a person cannot continually give without taking time to restore their own energy. Prayer, family time, rest, boundaries, reflection, and self-care are important parts of maintaining her well-being.

A particularly meaningful piece of advice came from her mother: "Manda, you can do anything and everything you want if you just pace yourself."

These words have influenced Dr. Cooley's approach to managing her responsibilities. She is learning to prioritize what matters most, delegate when possible, and recognize that productivity does not require constant activity.

Her perspective offers an important reminder for leaders who carry multiple responsibilities. Purposeful work and personal commitments can coexist, but maintaining balance requires attention, boundaries, and the willingness to pace oneself.

For Dr. Cooley, this process is ongoing. It reflects her understanding that personal growth is not separate from professional leadership, but an essential part of sustaining the work she is committed to doing.

Expanding Educational Opportunities Beyond the Classroom

Looking toward the future, Dr. Cooley describes an exciting period of expansion through The Unlimited Experience, an initiative designed to extend educational opportunities beyond the traditional school day.

The planned and continuing programs include literacy and reading initiatives, tutoring, mentoring, Bible study and Bible clubs, Girls With Grades/Girls With God, Breakfast and Books with Kids, Brunch and Books with Women, community reading initiatives, dyslexia support, leadership development, and family-centered educational programs.

These initiatives reflect her intention to create opportunities that address both educational needs and the wider development of children and families.

Literacy remains an important focus, with reading programs and tutoring designed to provide additional support. Mentoring and leadership development offer opportunities for personal growth, while faith-based activities reflect the Christian foundation of her educational mission.

The inclusion of family-centered programming also highlights the importance she places on relationships beyond the classroom. By engaging families and communities, educational initiatives can create broader opportunities for participation and encouragement.

Dr. Cooley is also expanding programming through the Keys to Success Center, which provides another avenue for literacy, mentorship, Christian development, educational support, and community engagement.

These efforts form part of her wider vision of developing an educational and community ecosystem. She does not want to build only one program; she aims to create a network of resources and opportunities where children and families can find learning, mentorship, encouragement, faith, and hope.

Her approach suggests that educational development can extend across different settings and stages of life. Through a combination of institutional learning, community initiatives, and family engagement, she seeks to build a foundation that supports continued growth.

Writing, Publishing, and Inspiring Through Resources

Alongside her educational leadership, Dr. Cooley is developing a body of writing and publishing work intended to encourage children and adults. Her projects include books, educational resources, Christian leadership materials, children's literature, literacy resources, workbooks, and inspirational initiatives.

Writing provides another avenue through which she can share ideas, support learning, and communicate messages of encouragement. Her interest in educational and inspirational resources aligns with her broader commitment to helping individuals discover their abilities and pursue personal development.

These projects are connected to her vision of creating resources that extend beyond the immediate classroom environment. Books, workbooks, and other learning materials can offer additional opportunities for engagement and reflection, supporting educational activities and personal growth.

For Dr. Cooley, publishing is not an isolated undertaking. It forms part of an integrated approach to education, leadership, and community service, with the intention of making learning and encouragement available through different formats.

Her continued development of these resources reflects the breadth of her professional interests and her commitment to sharing knowledge through both institutional and written work.

A Legacy Measured Through People

When Dr. Cooley reflects on the legacy she hopes to leave, she does not focus primarily on institutional titles, programs, or accomplishments. Instead, she emphasizes the people whose lives may be influenced by her work.

She hopes that children will grow into adults who remember that someone believed in them when they struggled to believe in themselves. She also wants educators to understand that teaching can be an expression of service and that caring for a child can influence the direction of that child's life.

This perspective reflects her belief that the long-term impact of education extends beyond measurable academic outcomes. Confidence, character, relationships, and the ability to recognize one's own potential can all become meaningful parts of a person's development.

She also encourages communities to recognize their capacity to contribute to solutions. In her view, people do not always have to wait for others to address every challenge. Sometimes, a vision can become an invitation to participate in meaningful change.

Her message to future educational and business leaders is grounded in practical principles: begin with the resources available, serve people well, maintain integrity, build relationships, and learn from mistakes.

She believes that an individual does not need unlimited resources to possess an unlimited vision. This principle captures the spirit behind the name of her educational organization and the aspirations she holds for the children she serves.

Her legacy, ultimately, is connected to faith, purpose, service, and the development of others. She hopes that her students, children, and future generations will understand that their possibilities are not defined solely by the resources they possess.

Looking Ahead with Faith and Purpose

Dr. Amanda Campbell Cooley's journey reflects an educational vision built around trust, literacy, Christian principles, and the belief that every child deserves an opportunity to grow.

Through Unlimited Dreams Christian Learning Center and Greater Expectations Children Learning Center, she continues to develop educational environments that seek to support children at different stages of their development. Her work incorporates academic instruction, early learning, literacy intervention, mentoring, leadership development, and community engagement.

Her approach to leadership emphasizes service, accountability, and compassion, while her plans for future initiatives demonstrate a commitment to extending educational opportunities beyond the traditional classroom.

As she continues developing programs, writing resources, and community partnerships, her focus remains on the children and families at the center of her mission.

The philosophy that guides her work is simple but meaningful: love and build trust first, then teach. It expresses her conviction that education is most effective when children feel valued, supported, and encouraged to recognize their potential.

For Dr. Cooley, the pursuit of educational excellence is closely connected to faith and purpose. Her ongoing efforts demonstrate a commitment to building opportunities for learning, personal growth, and leadership.

Through her institutions, initiatives, and future projects, she seeks to contribute to an environment where students can develop confidence, strengthen their skills, and envision possibilities for their lives.

Her story is one of educational leadership shaped by a belief in children, a commitment to service, and a vision that extends beyond the classroom. As she looks toward the future, she continues to pursue an approach to education in which opportunity, encouragement, and purpose remain central to the learning experience.

Yuka Hongo

Bridging Cultures, Building Trust, and Redefining Cross-Border Estate Planning

Leading with Purpose in a Globalized Legal Landscape

In today's interconnected world, legal challenges increasingly transcend borders, languages, and cultures. Few professionals understand this reality better than Yuka Hongo, Owner and Managing Attorney of Hongo Law Office, LLLC. Through her unique bicultural perspective and specialized expertise, Hongo has established herself as a trusted legal advisor for individuals and families navigating complex estate planning and administration matters across the United States and Japan.

Her journey is not simply one of professional achievement; it is a story of cultural understanding, perseverance, and a commitment to serving a niche community that often struggles to find legal guidance tailored to its unique needs.

From Japan to the United States: A Journey Shaped by Two Cultures

Born in Japan and raised in both Japanese and American environments, Yuka Hongo's life has been defined by her ability to navigate multiple cultures. While her family built a career in accounting, Hongo chose a different path—one that would ultimately allow her to combine her international outlook with her passion for helping others.

Determined to become an international lawyer, she attended law school in Los Angeles, California, one of the world's most diverse and globally connected cities. The experience provided her with a strong legal foundation and reinforced her desire to work in cross-border environments.

After law school, she gained valuable international experience in Japan before an opportunity emerged that would shape the next chapter of her career. When her family launched a business venture in Hawaii, Hongo relocated to Honolulu and established her own legal practice.

What began as a professional move soon evolved into a mission-driven career.

As she observed the challenges faced by many of her father's Japanese accounting clients, she noticed a recurring issue: estate planning and asset management concerns often lacked adequate legal support from professionals who truly understood both the American and Japanese perspectives.

While many Japanese-speaking attorneys in the United States focus on corporate law or immigration law, Hongo identified a significant gap in estate planning and estate administration services for Japanese and international clients. Recognizing this need, she dedicated her practice to helping individuals and families protect, manage, and transfer wealth across jurisdictions.

Finding Purpose Through Service

For many legal professionals, success is measured by the size of a firm or the number of clients served. For Hongo, success is defined differently.

Her daily motivation comes from knowing that there are people who need legal guidance from someone who understands not only the law but also the cultural nuances that influence important family and financial decisions.

"I know there are clients out there—especially Japanese and international clients—who need help from a lawyer who can speak their language and assist them with U.S. and cross-border estate planning and administration needs," she explains.

What makes her approach distinctive is her humility. Rather than focusing on accolades or titles, Hongo concentrates on providing practical solutions for clients facing complex legal situations.

Her bicultural background enables her to bridge communication gaps, clarify misunderstandings, and create legal strategies that align with both cultural expectations and legal requirements. This ability has become one of her greatest professional strengths and a defining feature of her practice.

Staying Relevant in a Rapidly Changing Legal Environment

The legal profession is constantly evolving. New regulations, changing tax laws, shifting economic conditions, and emerging global trends require attorneys to remain informed and adaptable.

For Hongo, continuous learning is not simply a professional responsibility—it's a daily habit.

One of her most notable initiatives is the creation of a monthly newsletter distributed to clients, professional contacts, and industry connections. Through this publication, she analyzes developments in U.S. and Japanese laws, tax regulations, and estate planning strategies.

The process requires extensive research and a commitment to staying informed about changes that could impact her clients.

Beyond legal research, Hongo also dedicates time to reading books on finance, wealth management, and broader economic topics. This multidisciplinary approach allows her to understand the bigger picture surrounding her clients' financial and personal goals.

By combining legal expertise with financial awareness, she ensures that her advice remains relevant in an increasingly complex world.

Building Knowledge Through Global Collaboration

Although Hongo Law Office remains a boutique practice, collaboration plays a significant role in its success.

Hongo maintains strong relationships with attorneys, accountants, and professionals in Japan who regularly exchange knowledge, referrals, and insights. These professional partnerships provide valuable perspectives on developments occurring in both countries and help her deliver more comprehensive support to clients facing cross-border issues.

These collaborations also reflect one of the core principles that guide her career: meaningful professional growth rarely happens in isolation.

By remaining connected to a network of experts across multiple disciplines and jurisdictions, she continues to expand her knowledge while creating stronger outcomes for clients.

The ability to leverage international relationships has become increasingly important as globalization creates more complex legal and financial situations for families with ties to multiple countries.

A Specialized Practice Serving Unique Client Needs

At the heart of Hongo Law Office is a commitment to personalized service.

The firm's primary areas of focus include estate planning, estate administration, probate matters, trusts, wills, and U.S. estate tax filings for non-residents. Additionally, the practice provides guidance on cross-border legal and financial issues affecting international clients.

Many of the firm's clients include Japanese nationals, Japanese-American families, international investors, and married couples in which one spouse is Japanese. These clients often face unique legal considerations that require specialized knowledge of both U.S. and Japanese systems.

Whether helping families preserve wealth across generations or assisting individuals in navigating estate administration after the loss of a loved one, Hongo approaches each matter with sensitivity and attention to detail.

Her ability to communicate effectively across cultures has become a key differentiator in a field where trust, clarity, and understanding are essential.

Leadership Through Empathy and Client-Centered Service

As an entrepreneur and legal professional, Hongo views leadership through the lens of service.

While she acknowledges that her organization is still growing, she has a clear vision for the culture she hopes to build in the future. Rather than focusing solely on operational efficiency or financial metrics, she emphasizes the importance of understanding the client's perspective.

In her view, successful legal representation begins with listening.

Clients seek legal assistance during some of the most important and emotionally significant moments of their lives. Whether creating an estate plan, administering a loved one's estate, or managing cross-border family assets, clients need professionals who genuinely understand their concerns.

Hongo believes that by carefully listening to client needs and delivering thoughtful, personalized solutions, legal professionals can build lasting relationships based on trust.

This philosophy not only enhances client satisfaction but also encourages long-term loyalty and referrals—two critical components of sustainable business growth.

Lessons Learned Through Entrepreneurship

Building a business is rarely a straightforward journey, and Hongo openly acknowledges the challenges that come with entrepreneurship.

Like many business owners, she has faced uncertainty regarding which decisions, strategies, or investments would produce the best results. Yet these experiences have taught her one of the most valuable lessons in leadership: perfection is not always possible.

Instead, success often comes from making the best decision available with the information at hand and adapting as circumstances evolve.

Her perspective reflects a level of resilience that many entrepreneurs develop over time. Mistakes, setbacks, and unexpected outcomes are inevitable, but they also create opportunities for learning and growth.

Rather than allowing challenges to become obstacles, Hongo views them as part of the ongoing process of building a meaningful and sustainable practice.

Creating Balance in a Demanding Profession

The legal profession is known for its demanding workload and high-pressure environment. Maintaining personal well-being can be difficult, particularly for entrepreneurs who manage both client responsibilities and business operations.

For Hongo, balance comes through simplicity.

She enjoys cooking and taking walks along Hawaii's beautiful beaches—activities that allow her to recharge and gain perspective outside of work. Although she continues to explore new hobbies and interests, these moments of relaxation play an important role in maintaining both personal well-being and professional effectiveness.

Her approach serves as a reminder that sustainable success requires more than professional accomplishment. It also requires time for reflection, self-care, and meaningful personal experiences.

Looking Toward the Future

As she continues to expand her practice, Hongo remains focused on growth opportunities that align with client needs and market demand.

One area of particular interest is real estate law, which she hopes to explore further in the future. Given Hawaii's unique real estate market and the growing number of international investors with interests in U.S. property, this expansion represents a natural evolution of her expertise.

At the same time, she remains committed to strengthening the firm's existing capabilities in estate planning, estate administration, and cross-border legal services.

Her long-term vision is not simply about growing a larger practice. It is about creating greater value for clients while continuing to serve as a trusted bridge between cultures.

A Legacy Beyond the Practice of Law

When asked about the legacy she hopes to leave behind, Hongo's answer extends beyond legal accomplishments or business success.

As someone who was born in Japan and moved to the United States during her teenage years, she has spent much of her life navigating two cultural identities.

Rather than viewing this experience as a challenge, she has transformed it into a source of strength.

Her goal is to demonstrate that bicultural and bilingual individuals possess unique advantages that can create meaningful impact in professional and personal settings. By embracing both sides of her identity, she has built a career dedicated to helping others navigate complex cross-cultural environments.

For future generations of professionals, entrepreneurs, and leaders, her story offers an important message: differences can become strengths when used to serve others.

Through her work, Yuka Hongo continues to prove that legal expertise combined with cultural understanding can create extraordinary value. In a world where international connections are becoming increasingly common, her commitment to bridging cultures, building trust, and empowering clients stands as a powerful example of modern leadership.

As she continues her journey, one thing remains clear—her impact reaches far beyond legal documents and court proceedings. It is reflected in the families she helps, the relationships she builds, and the example she sets for professionals navigating multiple cultures in an increasingly globalized world.

The Invisible Industry

the Hidden Power of Trade Shows

By all appearances, trade shows are temporary events. Booths rise overnight, crowds flood convention halls for a few days, and then everything disappears as if nothing had happened. Yet behind those brief moments lies one of the most powerful economic engines in the modern world: an industry responsible for millions of jobs, billions in tax revenues, and the launching pad of products and partnerships that shape global commerce.

For more than fifty years, Larry Kulchawik lived inside that world. As an exhibit designer, executive, industry leader, author, and international advocate, he witnessed firsthand how trade shows evolved from local exhibitions into a trillion-dollar global ecosystem. Today, through his books The Invisible Industry and Trade Shows from One Country to the Next, Kulchawik is finally giving this hidden business community the recognition it deserves.

“Every major business deal, every product launch, every brand that changed the way you live your life, somewhere along the way, a trade show was involved,” Kulchawik explains. “Yet almost nobody talks about the industry that made it all possible.”

This realization became the driving force behind his writing and his mission: to shine a spotlight on an industry that has long operated beneath public awareness while quietly fueling economies around the world.

The Origins of an Industry Hidden in Plain Sight

The roots of modern trade shows can be traced back to the great World’s Fairs of Europe and America. Those historic exhibitions introduced revolutionary inventions, new technologies, and groundbreaking ideas to the public. They became the stages where nations demonstrated industrial progress and businesses unveiled their innovations that would transform society.
According to Kulchawik, the World Fairs inspired industries to create specialized events dedicated to their own products and services. Early exhibitions in the United States included automobile shows, bicycle shows, electrical expositions, and home and garden fairs. Over time, the concept evolved into business-to-business trade shows where attendance was limited to qualified professionals and buyers.

As industries expanded, hotels could no longer accommodate the scale of these gatherings. Major American cities responded by building convention centers that became the backbone of a rapidly growing events industry. Around these centers emerged a sophisticated support network of contractors, designers, logistics providers, hospitality workers, marketers, and production specialists, as well as hotels and restaurants.

What began as a simple exhibition eventually transformed into a financial ecosystem generating more than a trillion dollars in economic impact for each city.

“The convention and events industry does not make products,” Kulchawik says.

“It makes the conditions under which products are introduced to the world.”

That distinction defines the true power of the trade show industry. It is not merely about displays and exhibits. It is about creating environments where relationships are formed, deals are negotiated, ideas are exchanged, products are displayed, and industries prosper.

A Career Built by Accident and Passion

Ironically, Larry Kulchawik never planned to enter the trade show business.

After studying design at Southern Illinois University, where legendary futurist and inventor Buckminster Fuller influenced his thinking about creativity and problem-solving, Kulchawik returned to Chicago searching for a job. At that exact moment, Chicago's famous McCormick Place convention center had suffered a devastating fire and was being rebuilt.

This reconstruction created opportunities in exhibit design, and Kulchawik took a position in the field almost by chance.

"I had a degree in design," he recalls. "But design what?"

That accidental beginning became a lifelong calling.

Kulchawik eventually joined Greyhound Exhibitgroup, then the largest exhibit company in the world, where he rose through the ranks to become president of the Chicago division. Along the way, he developed a deep understanding of how trade shows influenced industries, economies, and international business relationships.

But more importantly, he discovered something else: almost nobody intentionally entered the industry.

"Most people working in this industry had never gone to school to prepare for it," Kulchawik explains. "Like me, they stumbled into it and learned by trial and error."

Yet once they discovered the energy and excitement of the business, many stayed for life.

Trade shows require rapid problem-solving, teamwork, creativity, technical skill, and the ability to perform under pressure. Every event comes with hard deadlines and high expectations. For people who thrive in dynamic environments, the work becomes addictive.

"A trade show is only three or four days long," Kulchawik says, "but it can take three months to prepare for, unlike a building that can take a year."

The Industry Nobody Sees

Despite its enormous economic influence, the trade show world remains largely invisible to the general public.

Unlike concerts or sporting events, most trade shows are private gatherings restricted to industry professionals. They receive little mainstream advertising because attendance is invitation-based. As a result, millions of people pass convention centers every day without realizing the economic activity unfolding inside.

Kulchawik compares the industry to a stealth operation working quietly beneath the surface.

"Trade shows are stealth bombers flying below the radar," he says. "They nurture businesses, launch products, and stimulate local economies without most people even noticing."

Behind every successful event exists a vast workforce. Carpenters construct booths. Electricians wire displays. Graphic designers produce branding materials. Forklift operators move freight. Audio-visual technicians create immersive experiences.
Caterers feed thousands of attendees.
Travel coordinators manage logistics. Marketing teams promote exhibitors. Event managers oversee operations.

Together, these professionals form an intricate support system that allows exhibitions to function seamlessly.

The scale of each event is staggering.

In the United States alone, the events and exhibitions industry supports approximately 6.6 million jobs and generates hundreds of billions of dollars in direct spending across hotels, restaurants, airlines, transportation services, retail businesses, and entertainment venues.

Yet for decades, the people driving this economic engine rarely received public recognition.

That invisibility became one of the central themes behind Kulchawik's book The Invisible Industry.

Writing the History of a Hidden World

After fifty years in the business, Kulchawik retired in 2025 alongside colleague and co-author Bob McGlincy. Rather than simply stepping away, the two veterans decided to document the history and evolution of the trade show industry for future generations.

McGlincy, a passionate historian, focused on the origins of World's Fairs and the early development of exhibitions in Europe and America. Kulchawik concentrated on the rise of convention centers, exhibit companies, industry associations, and the individual people who shaped the modern events business.

Together, they created a comprehensive narrative explaining how trade shows became one of the world's most influential economic systems.

Their work also addresses an important educational gap.

For decades, there were few formal pathways into the industry. Most professionals entered through unrelated careers and learned on the job. Kulchawik believes that must change.

"The industry realized we could no longer depend on people simply fumbling into it," he explains.

Today, universities and professional organizations are beginning to create structured training programs in exhibit design, event management, and meeting planning. Institutions such as UNLV, Auburn University, Bemidji State University, and FIT in New York now offer specialized programs connected to the events industry.

Industry groups, like IAEE (International Association of Exhibitions & Events), and the Exhibition and Events Workforce Development Federation, and others continue to play a vital role in shaping talent pipelines, strengthening industry awareness, and driving long-term innovation across the sector.

"The gears are now in motion," Kulchawik says. "The industry is no longer going to remain invisible."

The COVID Crisis and the Industry's Resilience

Perhaps no event tested the trade show industry more severely than the COVID-19 pandemic.

Virtually overnight, conventions, meetings, and exhibitions around the world came to a halt. Convention centers emptied. Workers lost jobs. Supply chains collapsed. Many businesses faced uncertainty about whether live events would ever fully recover.

Virtual meetings briefly emerged as an alternative. Companies experimented with online exhibitions and digital networking platforms. But according to Kulchawik, the industry quickly discovered that technology could not replicate the emotional power of face-to-face interaction.

"No other communication method could replace the power of in-person selling," he says.

Human connection remains central to business relationships. Buyers want to see products firsthand. Companies want direct conversations with clients. Exhibitors want emotional engagement that digital screens simply cannot deliver. When restrictions were lifted, the industry rebounded with remarkable speed.

Trade shows returned stronger than expected, proving that live experiences still hold enormous value in a digital world. However, the pandemic also revealed workforce shortages, prompting renewed efforts to recruit and train skilled labor across the industry.

For Kulchawik, the recovery reinforced a simple truth: trade shows are not optional luxuries. They are essential drivers of commerce, innovation, and economic growth.

Taking Trade Shows Global

While The Invisible Industry explored the historical and economic foundation of exhibitions, Kulchawik's second book tackled a different challenge: international trade show strategy.

After serving as president of the Exhibit Designers & Producers Association (EDPA), Kulchawik recognized that many American companies lacked experience exhibiting overseas. While European and Asian businesses had long embraced international trade fairs, U.S. companies traditionally focused primarily on domestic markets.

That began to change in the early 2000s as globalization accelerated and companies sought new opportunities abroad.
Kulchawik became deeply involved with IFES, the International Federation of Exhibition and Event Services, eventually becoming the first American president in the organization's history.

His work exposed him to exhibit professionals from dozens of countries, each with unique business customs, cultural expectations, labor systems, and exhibition styles.

He soon recognized a recurring problem: companies often assumed their domestic trade show strategies would work the same way internationally. "They don't," Kulchawik says bluntly.

A successful exhibit approach in Las Vegas may fail completely in Dubai, Paris, Shanghai, or São Paulo. Cultural expectations differ dramatically. Communication styles vary. Business etiquette changes from country to country.To address these challenges, Kulchawik gathered insights from exhibition experts across 45 nations and compiled them into Trade Shows from One Country to the Next — a practical guidebook designed to help companies navigate international exhibiting successfully.

His core message is simple but powerful:

"There is no right way or wrong way," he explains. "There is only a different way."

The book emphasizes cultural awareness, adaptability, and respect for local business practices principles increasingly critical in today's interconnected economy.

The Human Side of Trade Shows

Beyond economics and strategy, Kulchawik believes the exhibition industry ultimately revolves around human behavior.

Trade shows create environments where people gather to exchange ideas, build trust, solve problems, and create opportunities. In many ways, they reflect one of humanity's oldest instincts: coming together in marketplaces to share goods and knowledge.

"We didn't invent trade shows," Kulchawik says. "We inherited them, and we made them better."

That perspective helps explain why the industry has endured despite technological disruption, economic downturns, and global crises. Human beings still crave direct interaction. Relationships still matter. Experiences still influence decisions.

In an age increasingly dominated by automation and digital communication, trade shows continue to provide something irreplaceable personal connection.

A Legacy Beyond Exhibits

Today, Larry Kulchawik's legacy extends far beyond exhibit halls and convention centers.

Through his leadership roles, international advocacy, and writing, he has helped document the history of an industry that quietly shapes the modern economy. More importantly, he has elevated awareness about the millions of people whose careers depend on live events and exhibitions.

His books are not merely historical records; they are calls for recognition.
Recognition for the designers who create immersive brand experiences.
Recognition for the crews who work overnight to build convention floors.
Recognition for the organizers who coordinate massive events behind the scenes.
Recognition for the educators preparing the next generation of professionals.
Recognition for an industry that drives innovation while remaining largely unseen.
Trade shows may still operate behind the scenes, but thanks to voices like Larry Kulchawik's, the world is finally beginning to understand their true impact.
And perhaps that is the greatest achievement of all: transforming an invisible industry into a visible force worthy of appreciation, investment, and future growth.

CEO WORLD
LEADERS

DEREK CAFFERATA

Founder of Travel Advances

TRAVEL ADVANCES

The industry is now at an inflection point. The global travel market is projected to surpass $11 trillion over the next decade, with digital platforms capturing an increasingly dominant share.

TRAVEL ADVANCES:

Why I Chose to Build a Movement Instead of Another Travel App

I created Travel Advances because I saw something the industry had stopped seeing. After decades of leading teams, scaling brands, and building systems across continents, I realized that travel, one of the most emotional experiences in a person's life, had been reduced to a transaction. It had become a marketplace of noise. Every platform promised the "best deal," the "smartest itinerary," or the "top ten must-see attractions," yet travelers were not feeling any smarter or more confident. If anything, they were more overwhelmed. They were drowning in options, starving for clarity, and increasingly unsure of who to trust. At some point, the industry had mistaken chaos for innovation. I knew the world did not need another travel app. It needed a movement. It needed a platform that advanced not just where people go, but how they feel while going there.

My background shaped that conviction long before Travel Advances had a name. I had spent years architecting organizations where clarity, emotional intelligence, and disciplined execution were the difference between momentum and mayhem. I learned that people do not respond to noise. They respond to confidence. They respond to connection. They respond to feeling understood. And if you can deliver that consistently, people will follow you anywhere, even across time zones. I had seen this play out in boardrooms, in global operations, and in the countless teams I had the privilege to lead. The pattern was unmistakable. When people feel supported, they perform better. When they feel seen, they trust more. When they feel guided, they move forward with conviction.

Meanwhile, the travel industry was moving in the opposite direction. It was becoming more transactional, more algorithmic, and less human. The irony was almost comedic. Travel is one of the most human things we do. We travel to celebrate, to heal, to reconnect, to escape, to rediscover ourselves. Yet the tools guiding us had become some of the least human experiences imaginable. I remember thinking, "If travel platforms were people, most of them would be shouting at you from across the room." That was the moment I knew something had to change.

That insight became the philosophical foundation of Travel Advances. I set out to build a platform that restored emotional intelligence to travel, something the industry desperately needed but had never prioritized. I wanted to create a space where travelers felt guided rather than pressured, supported rather than sold to, and understood rather than analyzed. I wanted to build technology that behaved more like a trusted companion and less like a vending machine.

The entrepreneurial journey that followed was defined by intentionality. In the early days, our prototypes looked like everything else in the market, feature-heavy, data-dense, and indistinguishable from competitors. If you squinted, you could barely tell which app was ours and which belonged to a billion-dollar incumbent. That was my wake-up call. Through rigorous testing and honest internal debate, I recognized that complexity was the enemy of confidence. Travelers did not need more buttons. They needed more breath. They needed a platform that felt like a guide, not a puzzle. So, I made a decisive pivot to simplify the experience, sharpen the language, and make clarity the core product value. That pivot became our first defining milestone. It aligned the team around a philosophy that would ultimately become our competitive advantage. And it taught us something important. When you remove the noise, people finally hear what matters.

As the vision sharpened, I knew I needed partners who could elevate the mission. When Roger Thomson, Vice Chairman and former Chief Operating Officer of Capital Markets for HSBC, joined as a strategic co-author of the movement, everything accelerated. Roger brought global financial discipline, narrative clarity, and a rare ability to translate vision into investor-ready language. He helped articulate what I had always believed. Emotional intelligence is not a soft differentiator. It is a strategic one. His influence transformed Travel Advances from a promising concept into a compelling investment thesis.

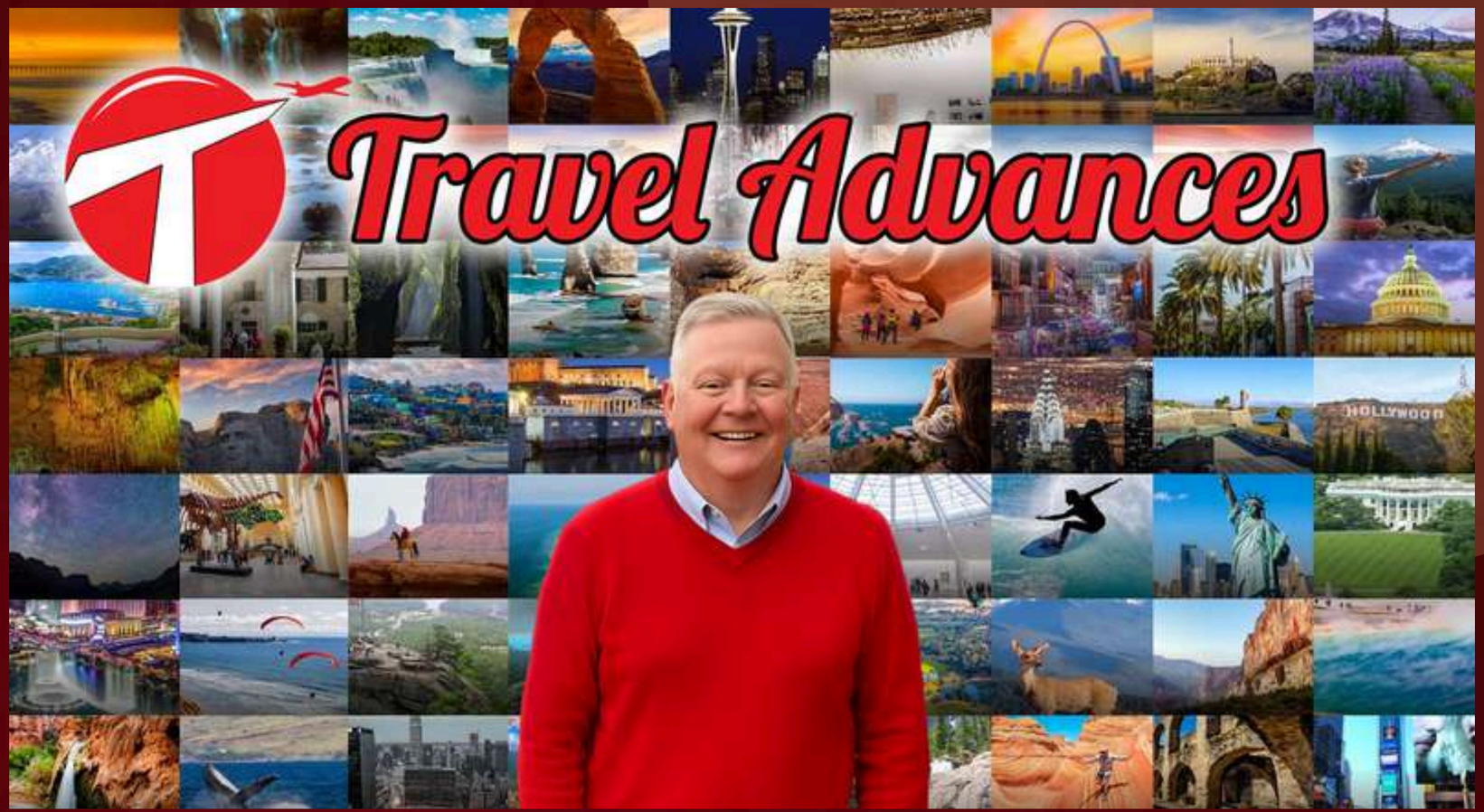
But vision alone is never enough. To build something that could scale globally, I needed a technology leader who could turn philosophy into architecture. That is where Rakesh Mittal entered the story. With his background as a Managing Director at Genpact, Rakesh brought the engineering discipline, architectural rigor, and operational clarity required to build a platform capable of global expansion. He engineered the systems that transformed Travel Advances from a beautifully designed idea into a resilient, enterprise-grade product. His approach was methodical and uncompromising. Every system had to be transparent. Every workflow had to be reliable. Every feature had to reinforce our philosophy of emotional intelligence. Under his leadership, the technology became a fortress, scalable, secure, and built for long-term growth. Investors immediately understood the significance. With Rakesh, the company was not just visionary. It was structurally sound.

Travel Advances

From the beginning, I designed our business model around a single belief. Travelers do not need more tools. They need more trust. They need a platform that reduces noise, restores confidence, and helps them make decisions with clarity rather than anxiety. Every part of Travel Advances exists to solve that problem. I built the company to remove friction, not add to it. I built it to guide people, not overwhelm them. And I built it to create a travel experience that feels human, intuitive, and emotionally intelligent. The strength of our model comes from that purpose. It is simple, scalable, and grounded in a universal truth. When people feel supported, they travel more. When they trust the platform guiding them, they stay loyal. That is why Travel Advances works.

My growth strategy has always been rooted in clarity and discipline. I have never believed in chasing trends or building features just for noise. I have seen too many companies sprint toward whatever is fashionable that quarter, only to discover they have built a product that impresses everyone except the people who actually use it. We expand intentionally, guided by data, user behavior, and emotional resonance. The innovation is not in the number of features, but in the intelligence behind them. Travel Advances is not trying to outdo competitors. We are trying to clarify them. And in a world where travelers are overwhelmed by choice, the platform that reduces friction and increases confidence will win.

Leadership is the heartbeat of that philosophy, and I have always believed that a company's quality is a direct reflection of its people. I built Travel Advances on a foundation of clarity, discipline, and team-driven execution. Clarity is treated as a strategic asset, not a communication style. Discipline is embedded in every decision. We move with purpose, not noise. And our breakthroughs come from collaboration between product and engineering, editorial and design, leadership and frontline teams. I have worked with many teams in my career, but this one is different. This one is built on trust, candor, and a shared belief that emotional intelligence is not a luxury. It is a competitive advantage



Roger Thomson amplifies that belief in a way only he can. Roger is the kind of leader who can take a complex idea, strip it down to its essence, and articulate it with such clarity that investors lean forward in their chairs. His background as Vice Chairman and former Chief Operating Officer of Capital Markets at HSBC gives him a global perspective and a strong financial discipline that strengthens every strategic decision we make. But what makes Roger invaluable is not just his experience. It is his ability to elevate the narrative. He helps translate the heart of Travel Advances into language that resonates with sophisticated audiences. He brings a calm, steady intelligence to the table, and he has an uncanny ability to see around corners. When Roger speaks, people listen. And more importantly, they understand.

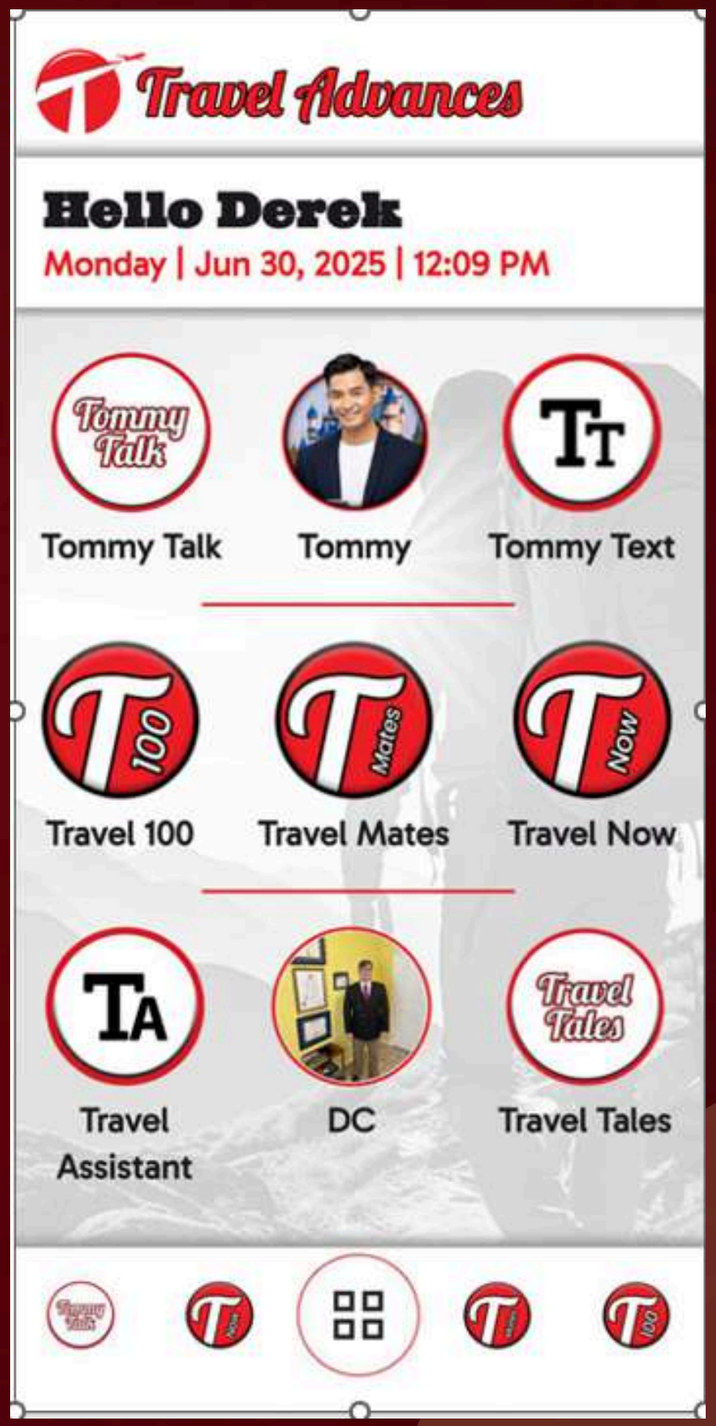
If Roger is the voice that amplifies our mission, then Rakesh Mittal is the architect who ensures it can scale. Rakesh brings a level of engineering discipline and operational clarity that is rare in any industry. His background as a Managing Director at Genpact means he has built systems that not only work but also endure. When Rakesh joined, he did not simply refine our technology. He rebuilt our foundation. He engineered the systems that transformed Travel Advances from a beautifully designed idea into a resilient, enterprise-grade platform. His approach is methodical, rigorous, and uncompromising. Every workflow must be reliable. Every system must be transparent. Every feature must reinforce our emotional-intelligence philosophy. I often joke that if emotional intelligence had a structural engineer, it would be Rakesh. Under his leadership, our technology became a fortress, scalable, secure, and built for long-term growth.

Together, Roger and Rakesh represent the two sides of Travel Advances: the narrative and the architecture, the story and the system, the vision and the execution. And the broader team reflects that same balance. They bring creativity, resilience, and momentum. They challenge assumptions. They push for clarity. They care deeply about the traveler's experience. I have always believed that great teams are built, not found. And this team is the strongest proof of that belief.

The challenges along the way have shaped us. The travel technology sector is crowded, and early skepticism was inevitable. Some questioned whether emotional intelligence could truly differentiate a platform. We proved that it could. Others wondered whether simplicity could scale. Rakesh's engineering systems demonstrated that it could. And as we grew, we faced the challenge of maintaining emotional resonance at scale. Roger's narrative clarity and our editorial discipline ensured that growth did not dilute the mission. Each challenge became a catalyst for refinement and alignment. And each challenge reinforced something I have always known. When you build with the right people, you can build anything.

The industry is now at an inflection point. The global travel market is projected to surpass $11 trillion over the next decade, with digital platforms capturing an increasingly dominant share. Yet the space remains fragmented, noisy, and largely undifferentiated. Most platforms compete on price or convenience, leaving a wide-open lane for a brand that competes on trust, clarity, and emotional resonance. Travel Advances is positioned precisely in that lane. We are not participating in the travel market. We are redefining it.

My vision for the future is ambitious and global, and I say that without hesitation because ambition without direction is noise, but ambition with clarity is momentum. I want Travel Advances to become the world's most trusted travel companion, emotionally intelligent, globally connected, and universally accessible. Not the loudest platform. Not the flashiest. The most trusted. The one traveler's instinctively opens when they need clarity, reassurance, or simply a moment of calm in the middle of a chaotic airport. The roadmap ahead reflects that intention. We are building deeper AI-driven personalization that feels less like technology and more like intuition. We are expanding Travel Mates globally to help people find meaningful connections in a world that is increasingly mobile yet often emotionally disconnected. We are curating travel experiences that resonate more deeply, the kind that stay with you long after the suitcase is unpacked. And we are forging partnerships with airlines, hospitality brands, and cultural institutions that understand the value of elevating how people feel, not just where they stay.



The long-term opportunity is not just to build a platform. Platforms come and go. Movements endure. What we are building is a movement that reshapes how people experience the world, one emotionally intelligent interaction at a time. I want Travel Advances to be the quiet confidence behind every great journey, the companion that makes people feel supported, understood, and empowered. If we do that well, the rest will follow.

And at the center of that movement, I remain guided by the same conviction that started it all. Travel is emotional. People want clarity. People want confidence. People want to feel understood. These truths are universal. They do not change with trends, technology cycles, or the latest buzzwords. They are the constants that define human experience. Travel Advances is my commitment to building technology that honors those truths rather than ignoring them. It is my answer to an industry that forgot the emotional side of travel, somewhere between the price comparison widgets and the endless pop-ups insisting you “book now before someone else does.”

The message I want to leave readers, investors, and future leaders with is simple. The most powerful innovations begin with a person who sees the world differently. Not louder. Not faster. Differently. I believe the future of travel belongs to those who understand not just where people want to go, but how they want to feel along the way. That belief is what drives me. That belief is what built Travel Advances. And that belief is what will carry this movement forward.

Because at the end of the day, travel is not about miles. It is about the meaning. And meaning is something worth building for.

Travel Advances

Kelly Bagla, Esq.

World's Most Fearless Leader in Law, 2026

The Journey

What possessed a 15-year-old girl to leave her family, cross an ocean, and enter a field where few women had succeeded? Even as a young teen, Kelly Bagla possessed remarkable courage and ambition, fearlessly embarking on her childhood dream of practicing law in the United States.

Today an internationally acclaimed corporate and securities attorney, Kelly Bagla, Esq. serves high-net-worth founders, investors, and enterprises navigating the legal complexities of safeguarding their assets, mitigating risks, and achieving long-term success. She is known for her rare blend of legal precision, entrepreneurial insight, and global perspective. Founder and CEO of Bagla Law, APC, Kelly is a trusted advisor to domestic businesses as well as to worldwide clients seeking to enter the United States market.

Fearless Leader in Law

CEO WORLD LEADERS Magazine has named Kelly Bagla, Esq. the World's Most Fearless Leader in Law, 2026. And for good reason. Her entire journey has exhibited a winning combination of ambition, vision, and courage.

Graduating top in her class Kelly earned multiple law and business degrees, in the United Kingdom and the United States, including a Master's degree in law. She then took the bold step of interviewing at the number one Mergers and Acquisitions law firm in the world. It never occurred to Kelly to aim anywhere but for the top. She was hand-selected by Baker McKenzie LLP and spent several years serving both domestic and international clients. The experience was invaluable, enhancing her understanding of domestic and global corporate law. A promising, secure career was afforded her within the prestigious firm. But Kelly made a daring decision that changed the course of her life.

Branching Out

It had become evident to Kelly that too often the legal services of a mega firm fell short for entrepreneurs. Business founders had difficulty navigating the complex legal systems (and cost structures) designed for large corporations. They needed more accessible guidance that could be tailored to early-stage or growth-focused businesses. Entrepreneurs could be better served.

Kelly, a successful attorney, always had a heart for entrepreneurs. Her father was a business owner who worked his way from the ground floor to eventually buy and transform the business. Kelly saw first-hand the dedication, vision, and risk required of an entrepreneur. She inherited her father's entrepreneurial spirit and has modeled her fearless approach after his example.

Remaining at the world's largest firm would have been the safe plan. But Kelly saw that she could provide entrepreneurs something better. She founded Bagla Law Firm, APC, specializing in business formation & asset protection with a vision of shaking up the corporate legal field, by putting the client's best interests at the forefront of every interaction and decision. For more than two decades, she has provided founders with tailored legal strategies to protect their assets in all phases of starting, growing and exiting their businesses. Bagla Law Firm's boutique services include entity formation, securities law, mergers and acquisitions, and international market entry.

Kelly's revolutionary transparent flat-fee structure lets business owners know up front what their legal fees will be. No longer are they suddenly surprised with hidden billable hours.

Her bold move to start her own firm has earned her great success and numerous accolades including California's Attorney of the Year and the 2025 and 2026 Lawyer International Legal 100 Award.

The Entrepreneur's Attorney

An entrepreneur at heart, Kelly is always envisioning the next opportunity. Kelly is CEO and founder of two additional enterprises, GoLegalYourself.com, a Do-It-Yourself online legal protection company to help entrepreneurs acquire the right legal documents, and ***Pitbulls 'n Pearls ®,*** a business and personal development coaching company. She hosts her ***Biz Queen ®*** Podcast, – listened to in 26 countries and named in the top 20 Business Law Podcasts. And she is the author of 5 books, including a New York Times, best seller, ***Go Legal Yourself! ®***. Kelly is a compelling online and broadcast guest, including her roles as a judge on the Emmy award-winning tv series, ***Everyday Edisons ®*** and on ***The Blox ®,*** an entrepreneur reality show in its 20th season.

Kelly's dual perspective, being both an award-winning attorney and a celebrated entrepreneur makes her the ideal Entrepreneur's Attorney. She understands the unique risks and challenges of business owners. And she knows how to navigate complex corporate law to create strategies for advancing her clients' dreams while protecting their assets.

The Essence of Courage

Kelly has been more than fearless throughout her career. She has been courageous. In her view, courage is the best foundation for fearlessness. In other words, taking risks fearlessly simply for the adrenalin rush can be fun but pointless unless it is grounded in a greater purpose.

Each of her corporate enterprises was founded on her mission to inform, equip and inspire entrepreneurs. Her purpose to help others achieve success provided the courage to undertake each business venture.

In addition to her companies, Kelly has embarked on surprising risky endeavors requiring other forms of courage. Entering the 2010 Ms. Southern California BODYBUILDING CHAMPIONSHIP presented Kelly with the opportunity to push herself beyond what she had believed she could achieve. The extreme training and discipline tested, broke, and built a new level of confidence. Everything she learned through the grueling experience has fortified her confidence and benefitted her career. Kelly won Ms. Southern California BODYBUILDING CHAMPIONSHIP and was the first Indian female to win it.

Kelly entered an entirely different kind of competition after she happened to visit a toy fair in Los Angeles. Walking up and down the aisles all she saw were unattractive, imported toys with very little emotional substance. She had an idea, researched the market, spoke with a patent expert and toy designer and invented the plush toy collection, Eardorables®. She entered a television contest THE TOY BOX on ABC, won the Mattel® Award and entered into a licensing agreement. The knowledge and experience she gained have applied to all of her business ventures since.

It also takes courage to stand up for one's values and to persevere in the face of opposition. Kelly is unapologetic for her strong belief in the American Dream. She crossed an ocean to follow her dream and now speaks boldly to audiences of aspiring entrepreneurs and professionals to assure them that America is still the Land of Opportunity. A British immigrant, and naturalized citizen, Kelly has become a walking, breathing example of the successful American Entrepreneur with a mission to help others on their journey.

Future Ventures

Kelly will continue building her brand and expanding her enterprises and global influence to advise entrepreneurs and investors in building durable businesses. She has no intention of slowing down but sees her momentum grow as her domain expands.

Outside of her career Kelly is a staunch supporter of veterans, evident through her pro bono work with the Veterans Chamber of Commerce and the various magazine publication contributions she provides to outlets like Homeland and San Diego Veterans Magazine. Bagla Law Firm, APC offers veterans discounted legal fees to say “thank you” to everyone who has defended this country. Kelly’s husband, Brent Waters is a retired US Marine and her most trusted advisor in all aspects of her career and personal life. They are both devout American Patriots.

The other passion in Kelly’s life is rescuing dogs! (5 rescues and counting…) The cause nearest and dearest to her heart is ensuring every dog finds its “fur-ever” home with a loving family. Bagla Law Firm, APC regularly donates to and supports Last Chance At Life: All Breed Rescue and Adoption, where Kelly enjoys donating her time. The focus of the non-profit is helping the animals in San Diego County. They have a special fondness for boxers, which Kelly shares! Kelly and Brent have always chosen to adopt dogs. The couple currently has three (3) four-legged rescues in their family. Affectionately known as “the girls,” the pups join Kelly each morning on a daily run.

Together Kelly and Brent share a vision to open their own dog sanctuary. The planning and dreaming have been in the works for years. Their goal is to treat canine guests in the sanctuary like family. Dogs will be properly fed with nutritious food, enjoy exercise and loving care. Stay tuned for this and other adventures ahead for Kelly.

Every challenge will be met with fearless courage and every success will be grounded in the values that have guided her through the decades.

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