



## Excellence Celebrated and Honored by ASQ for Outstanding Contributions and Achievements in Quality

*Seventeen Quality Professionals Presented with ASQ Awards & Medals*

**MILWAUKEE, May 17, 2026** — The American Society for Quality (ASQ), the world’s largest network of quality experts and resources, has honored 17 quality professionals with awards and medals to recognize their inventive contributions and accomplishments in the field of quality.

ASQ medals are the highest distinction for service from the Society, and awards recognize individuals for superior achievements in the development, promotion, and communication of quality information and technology.

The honorees were celebrated during ASQ's annual [World Conference on Quality and Improvement](#) (WCQI) in May, which took place in Orlando, Florida. 2026 WCQI was successful in uniting quality experts from various sectors such as manufacturing, consulting, healthcare, government, education, aerospace, and others. Over the course of more than three days, participants engaged in extensive learning sessions aimed at fostering lasting advancements in their organizations' quality objectives.

**David Levy, ASQ Chair**, welcomed award and medal winners, their families, and special guests praising recipients for their outstanding contributions. Levy remarked, “The ASQ awards recognize individual achievements and highlight advancement of quality in the world! The recipients are extraordinary in demonstrating leadership in their expertise and commitment to the advancement of quality worldwide.”

### 2026 Awards

**Brumbaugh Award**, for the paper making the largest single contribution to the development of industrial application of quality control, presented for co-authoring *A review of leveraged sample selection in variation reduction projects*, *Quality Engineering Journal*, 37:3, 403-418, to:

- **Stefan Steiner** (University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada)
- **Mahsa Panahi** (University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada)
- **Jeroen de Mast** (Universiteit van Amsterdam, Amsterdam)
- **Jock MacKay** (University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada)

### 2026 Medals

- **Distinguished Service Medal**, for lifetime contributions to the quality movement, presented to:
  - **Edwin Garro** (PXS, San Jose, Costa Rica) - For his outstanding leadership, dedication, and global contributions to the quality profession. For serving ASQ in many capacities including Regional Director (Latam) and Board Member. For advancing operational excellence across industries in Costa Rica and beyond. And for globally spreading the voice of quality as a professor, speaker, coach and ambassador.
  - **James O. Spichiger** (National Electric Coil, Newark, Ohio, United States) - For over 30 years of outstanding, dedicated and selfless service to ASQ and the greater quality community. For significant and enduring contributions to the quality movement: multiple presentations and publications; educating hundreds of quality practitioners on quality concepts and techniques; contributions for the on-going development of quality standards; steadfast support of performance excellence awards.
  - **Jane D Keathley, MS** (Keathley and Company, Charlottesville, Virginia, United States) - In recognition of her visionary leadership, tireless advocacy, and enduring impact on the quality profession. As a founding member of ASQ's Innovation Division and a practical champion in the medical device and healthcare technology fields, she has transformed the conversation around innovation, promoted excellence at every level, and inspired generations of professionals through six decades of distinguished service and scholarship.
- **Deming Medal**, for statistical thinking & management contribution, presented to **Ron S. Kenett** (KPA Ltd., Ra'anana, Israel) - By applying the management principles of Dr. Deming, Ron Kenett has combined a productive career spanning industrial, consulting and academic dimensions. His contributions helped address current and future challenges combining quality, statistics, AI and ML in industry and services.
- **Feigenbaum Medal**, for young professionals, presented to **Raed Al Kontar** (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States) - For advancing the science and practice of quality through innovative analytics, impactful applications in manufacturing and healthcare, and exemplary mentorship, embodying the quality ethic and inspiring the next generation of quality leaders.
- **Freund-Marquardt Medal**, for contributions to quality standards, presented to **John Vandembemden** (Q-Met-Tech, LLC, Union, Kentucky, United States) - For significant contribution as a leader in the development and implementation of management system standards, supporting technical standards, and national and international quality-related standards. Special consideration for leading the creation of ASQ/ANSI ID1:2021 Inspection Techniques and Requirements – Guidelines.
- **Grant Medal**, for meritorious educational program, presented to **Tracy L. Owens** (Dublin, Ohio, United States) - For exemplary leadership in designing and delivering a focused university program in quality engineering and process improvement that moves smoothly

from the classroom to the field and drives student learning and practical value for capstone project sponsors.

- **Hromi Medal**, for contributions to inspection, presented to **Michelle Bangert** (BNP Media, Brooklyn, New York, United States) - For outstanding contributions to the quality community through the publication of over 80 articles and hosting 25 podcasts related to the science of inspection and metrology. Also, for awe inspiring leadership as the Managing Editor of Quality Magazine resulting in the monthly publication of a leading industry source of information.
- **Hutchens Medal**, for social responsibility, presented to **Dr. Kevin J. Dooley** (Arizona State University, Chandler, Arizona, United States) - In recognition of his pioneering work developing and applying complexity science and quality systems approaches to supply chain management. As Chief Scientist of The Sustainability Consortium, he has been instrumental in creating its science-based system that guides major brands and retailers to quantify, benchmark, and improve environmental/social performance.
- **Ishikawa Medal**, for human aspects of quality, presented to **Balaji Govindaswamy** (Thales DIS Singapore Pte Ltd, Singapore, Singapore) - For championing a human-centered culture of quality - empowering global teams, advancing environmental and social engagement, and transforming employee and customer experiences through inclusive leadership, celebration, and continuous improvement, while fostering pride, joy, and respect for people across industries and communities.
- **Lancaster Medal**, for international contributions, presented to **Debashis Sarkar** (Proliferator Advisory & Consulting, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India) - For pioneering Lean management beyond manufacturing in Asia, innovating the use of behavioral science in quality improvement, demonstrating thought leadership in customer centricity and operational excellence through multiple published works, and mentoring many to become impactful change agents in quality.
- **Shainin Medal**, for problem solving methods, presented to **Matthew Peterson** (Shainin, Greenville, South Carolina, United States) - For the development of an innovative method for assessing system complexity that considers functional interactions. The Functional Complexity Score (FCS) has broad application in reducing system complexity and enhancing quality and reliability by pointing users to the best improvement opportunities.
- **Shewhart Medal**, for technical or statistical contributions, presented to **Kwok-Leung Tsui** (University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, Texas, United States) - For contributions to pioneering research in robust design, broad-scope research in statistical process monitoring, and long-established research in data science with impact to manufacturing and other industries.

For more information about ASQ awards and medals, visit ASQ's [website](#).

## About ASQ

The American Society for Quality (ASQ) is the global authority on quality practices, empowering professionals to build safer systems, stronger businesses, and better results. With a legacy of excellence and a forward-thinking approach, ASQ connects a diverse, global community of over 60,000 members across 130+ countries.

ASQ champions quality as the driver of innovation, professional growth, and community. Through industry-leading certifications, learning solutions, and strategic partnerships with ASQE and Exemplar Global, ASQ supports individuals and organizations in improving performance and transforming the future of quality.

Learn more at [asq.org](https://www.asq.org).

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