

San Diego’s Transformative Technology Leaders Celebrated at 18th Annual Top Tech Awards Presented by Cox Business

San Diego, CA – September 19, 2025 –Fourteen of San Diego County’s technology innovators were recognized during the 18th annual [Top Tech Awards](#) held at Snapdragon stadium on Thursday, September 18, 2025. The awards celebration honored the region’s information technology (IT) leaders, people who inspire and effect change in the areas of business, education, government, and nonprofit organizations. More than 500 people were in attendance. [Cox Business](#) has been the event’s presenting sponsor for the last 17 years.

Cox Business California Vice President Jodi Duva delivered opening remarks for the event. She was joined by Stephanie Casperson, executive director of Technology at San Marcos Unified School District, and Ray Chan, vice president of information technology for the San Diego Padres, both judging chairs of Top Tech Awards 2025.

Honorees for the Top Tech Awards were nominated by their peers and customers and selected by an impartial panel of judges that consist of local tech leaders and past winners of the award.

Asokan Ashok, founder and CEO at Unfold Labs, Inc., received the Top Tech of the Year Award,**John Merritt**, senior vice president and CIO for YMCA of San Diego County was presented the Community Exemplary Award and Abhijeet Gulati, senior director of engineering and AI of Mitchell International was presented with the Cox Innovation Award.

The 14 category honorees, selected from more than 275 nominations, include:

Education Category	Jennifer	Oliveira	South Bay Union School District
Government Category	Sean	Soriano	San Diego Poilice Department Crime Laboratory
Nonprofit Business Category	Ben	Mortensen	SAY (Social Advocate for Youth) San Diego
Hospitality & Entertainment Category	Tara	Sparks	Jamul Casino

Healthcare & Biotech Category	Shane	Hansen	Thomson Instrument Company
Cybersecurity Category	Lisel	Newton	Gossamer Bio
Emerging Technology Category	Alex	Yurkowski	ClickUp
Community Exemplary Award	John	Merritt	YMCA of San Diego County
Cox Innovation Award	Abhijeet	Gulati	Mitchell International Inc.
Start-up Category	Lou	Sacco	Daisy Health
Private Small Medium Business Category	Jaye	Connolly	RippleNami Inc.
Private Large Business Category	Jeff	Spate	Endsight
Public Company Category	Roberta	French	WD-40
Top Tech of the Year Award	Asokan	Ashok	UnfoldLabs Inc.

The Top Tech Awards 2025 featured innovative networking, a photo booth presented by Ring Central, a digital caricature artist sponsored by Citrin Cooperman, a golf simulator experience brought in by Savya Solutions, craft beverages, mocktails, and local San Diego tacos and fare. Over 500 tech leaders were in attendance.

“We were thrilled once again to celebrate the giant talent driving San Diego’s technology sector,” said Jodi Duva, California vice president of Cox Business. “The 2025 recipients exemplify the entrepreneurial spirit and creative problem-solving that make our region a true hub for technological advancement. We’re proud to shine a light on the many achievements and positive impact they’re making throughout our city and beyond.”

Presenting sponsor Cox Business is joined by sponsors CBS News 8 San Diego, RapidScale, Citrin Cooperman, Flok, Savya Solutions, Ring Central, Rivian and supporting sponsors; Athena San Diego, San Diego Association of Information Technology Professionals (AITP), Athena, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, Start Up San Diego, and Fresh Brewed Tech.

About the Top Tech Awards

Since 2008, Cox Business has lauded the incredible information technology innovators in San Diego. The Top Tech Awards pays homage to the wealth of talent in our community, people who have vision, take risks, and implement new cutting-edge technologies, all in the name of making their organizations more connected, more productive, and more successful. Since its inception, the Top Tech Awards has grown expansively and stands today as the premier information technology event in San Diego. For more information, visit www.toptechawards.com.

About Cox Business

Through Cox Business, Hospitality Network, RapidScale and Segra, Cox Communications provides a broad commercial services portfolio including advanced cloud, managed IT and fiber-based network solutions that create connected environments, unique hospitality experiences and support operational applications for nearly 370,000 businesses. For more information, please visit www.coxbusiness.com.

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