

2026 GALA HONOREE

MICHAEL MASCAROPrincipal Program Manager
NVIDIA

Michael A. Mascaro is a Principal Program Manager at NVIDIA, where he helps build world-class high-performance computing clusters across the globe powering Artificial Intelligence. Over a three-decade career, he has held leadership roles at some of the world's most innovative companies—including NVIDIA, Google, Meta, Amazon Web Services, Corning Optical, and Comcast—leading complex engineering and infrastructure programs that support billions of users worldwide.

Michael has helped launch large-scale computing environments on nearly every continent, enabling Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning initiatives and powering critical digital experiences across industries. His career reflects a consistent theme: transforming complex technology into practical infrastructure that connects people, solves problems, fuels innovation, and expands opportunity for those who need it most.

A proud native of East Hartford, Connecticut, Michael began his journey at Howell Cheney Regional Technical School in Manchester, where he studied electrical theory and began an electrical apprenticeship before becoming a licensed electrician. That milestone launched a career that set him on a path to global technology leadership.

Michael's Big Brothers Big Sisters story began 43 years ago, when he joined the Nutmeg program as an eight-year-old growing up on welfare with a single mother determined to keep her sons on the right path. The program opened doors he never knew existed, exposing him to new experiences and possibilities at a pivotal time in his life. Michael credits his Big Brother, Tim Ruark of Simsbury, with believing in him long before he fully believed in himself. To this day, Tim and Michael remain close — and Tim will always be — Michael's Big Brother.

That early mentorship shaped Michael's lifelong belief in the power of one caring, consistent adult—and inspired his commitment to giving back. As an adult, he returned to the organization as a member of the Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters Board of Directors and as a Big Brother to several Littles. During his time at Comcast, he helped launch the Beyond School Walls workplace mentoring program, creating new pathways for young people to envision themselves in professional environments and expand their sense of what's possible.

His professional leadership and community service have earned numerous honors, including the Hartford Business Journal's 40 Under Forty award, the New England Patriots Myra Kraft Community MVP Award, induction into the Corporate Mentoring Hall of Fame, the Benjamin Gilman Award, and a State of Connecticut Governor's Citation for charitable work.

Michael's education and career journey is proudly nontraditional. He advanced step by step—role by role—without a college degree, guided by grit, ongoing curiosity, and mentors who opened doors along the way. He currently resides in Charlotte, North Carolina, with his wife, Kristina, their three-year-old daughter, and their chocolate Labrador. From his early days as a boy in East Hartford to his leadership roles within some of the world's technology titans, Michael remains grounded in the values his mother, mentors, and Big Brothers Big Sisters instilled in him: integrity, hard work, and a responsibility to lift others as he climbs.