



**Vijay Singh, IBRL**

Dr. Vijay Singh is a Founder Professor in Grainger College of Engineering, Distinguished Professor of Bioprocessing in the college of ACES, Executive Director of Integrated Bioprocessing Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Deputy Director of the Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation. His research is on the development of bioprocessing technologies for corn/biomass to ethanol, advanced biofuels, food and industrial products. In his role at IBRL, Dr. Singh provides leadership in developing industrial partnerships, bioprocess pilot-scale proof-of-concept activities, and techno-economic analyses to facilitate commercialization of innovative technologies. .



**Brian Jacobson, IBRL**

Brian Jacobson joined IBRL in February 2012 and is responsible for management of the IBRL, FSHN-PPP, and associated programs. He oversees the five technical departments (Fermentation, Downstream Processing, Food Processing, Laboratory, and Operations & Safety) and staff for these areas. In addition, his team is responsible for scheduling, facility & equipment maintenance, budgeting, and interaction with the HR and other business functions of the University. Brian is active in the food and bioprocessing industry, serving as chair of the BioMADE Fermentation Scale-Up Subcommittee, a judge on the XPRIZE: Feed the Next Billion prize challenge, and member of numerous related associations and organizations.



**Matt Stasiewicz, FSHN**

Dr. Stasiewicz is an Associate Professor of Applied Food Safety in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition UIUC. His work uses risk assessment and improved data analytics to advance food safety microbiology. At MSU he earned both a B.S. in Biosystems Engineering, focusing on food process engineering, and a B.A. in Philosophy, focusing on ethics. At Cornell he earned an M.S. and Ph.D. in food microbiology, working on risk analysis. The lab has many projects using simulation and risk assessment to improve sampling and testing for, and management of, foodborne pathogens in large-scale food productions environments.



**Marissa Nyland, IBRL**

Marissa Nyland joined IBRL in January 2022 as a member of the fermentation team. In February of 2024 she was promoted to the Assistant Director of Operations & Safety to manage safety programs, oversee construction projects, and ensure the smooth day-to-day operation of the pilot plant. She has a Bachelor's in Chemical Engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Previously, Marissa worked as a chemist and nuclear equipment operator at Clinton Power Station and a technology transfer specialist at a pharmaceutical manufacturing facility.



**Michael Tai, Boston Bioprocess**

Michael is a bioprocess business leader that focuses on scaling up fermentation lab technology into economical commercialization. He has a PhD in Biological Systems Engineering, 6 years experience at ADM across R&D and production, and 2 years at Motif FoodWorks as Head of Bioprocess, developed heme bovine myoglobin bioprocess and successfully scaled up to metric ton level production. Michael co-founded Boston Bioprocess Inc. in 2022 as a scale up platform to help bio-ingredient companies develop and scale up their bioprocesses to get into commercial manufacture.



**Johannes Kung, Boston Bioprocess**

Johannes is an expert in bioprocess development & process optimization of both, upstream and downstream unit operations. He holds a PhD in biochemistry and Masters in Biology with focus on microbiology, cell biology & organic chemistry. His experience from over 13 years work experience post-graduation include positions in strain development, protein expression & purification at both pharmaceutical & food development companies like Motif FoodWorks and Evelo Biosciences. His passion for working at a CDMO led him to join Boston Bioprocess in early 2023 as Head of Bioprocess to build an efficient, knowledgeable & devoted team to help bio-ingredient companies bring their best process to production scale.



**Tom McKenna, IBRL**

Tom McKenna joined IBRL in March 2022. He has a Bachelor's in Molecular and Cellular Biology from UIUC. In August of 2023, Tom was promoted to Senior Pilot Plant Specialist and currently leads IBRL's DSP Team. Previously, he spent 10 years at a chemical manufacturer in both quality and research positions where he scaled industrial resin and specialty chemical technologies from the lab bench to commercial quantities. He hopes to bring to the IBRL his experience with product and industrial process development, chemical handling and manufacturing equipment, and lab procedure development.



**Richard Mathies, Alfa Laval**

Richard Mathies, BS, ChE is a Business Development Manager at Alfa Laval. He has 30 years of practical engineering and sales experience helping customers solve separation related problems. Primarily focused on continuous centrifugation in Life Sciences applications and industries - Biotechnology, Industrial Fermentation but also in Brewery and Specialty Chemicals. In Biotechnology; mammalian and microbial cell separation is of particular focus.



**Antoine Charbonneau, Applexion**

Antoine Charbonneau is Process & Sales Manager for the Applexion American team, based in Denver. He has been working for Applexion for more than 12 years, specializing in various markets including food, functional ingredient and bio industries (fermentation) activities. Prior to that, he worked for several years as Process Engineer in Shanghai, China where he designed and engineered number of projects in the field of biotech and food & beverage, either for complete turnkey plants, or specific purification process units. He also published scientific articles in international reviews such as the Sugar Journal.



**Steve Lane, iBioFoundry**

Steve Lane manages iBioFAB, the automated biofoundry at the University of Illinois. With a background in molecular and synthetic biology, he transitioned after earning his Ph.D. to focus on synthetic biology automation. His work advances synthetic biology research, streamlines high-throughput workflows, and drives innovation in robotic biofoundry design.



**Beth Conerty, IBRL, iFAB**

Beth Conerty joined IBRL in December 2017 as the Business Development Manager. Since joining IBRL, she has also become the Regional Innovation Officer of the iFab (Illinois Fermentation and Agriculture Biomanufacturing) Hub. She is working to grow relationships with industry and help bring projects into the IBRL facility. Beth has a Bachelor's in Chemistry and a Professional Science Master's in Bioenergy from University of Illinois. She has a doctorate in Energy Science and Engineering from the University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Lab.



**Dr. Minto Michael, Hydrosome Labs LLC**

Dr. Minto Michael has been working passionately for over 17 years for the betterment and advancement of the food industry. His educational background is in food science and engineering, with work focused on food microbiology and safety. Dr. Michael is currently a Senior Scientist in the Microbiology and Process Engineering teams at Hydrosome Labs LLC, where he leads research on optimizing ultrafine bubble technologies and their microbiological applications. Before joining Hydrosome Labs LLC, he was an R&D Senior Scientist in the Food Protection and Preservation team at Kerry, where he worked on optimizing various food fermentation processes, especially vinegar.



**Gitanshu Bhatia, Lanza Tech**

Gitanshu Bhatia is a scientist specializing in strain improvement and fermentation at LanzaTech. He leads projects for commercial strain improvement, applied experimental support and does commercial plant support. He holds an M.S. in Agricultural and Biological Systems from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and a B.Tech (Hons.) in Biotechnology and Biochemical Engineering from IIT Kharagpur. He has co-authored multiple peer-reviewed publications in the field of corn processing and ethanol fermentation.



**Juan Niko Hazbon, Merrick**

Niko is a process engineer with 7 years of experience in process development, scale-up, and design. His expertise is in fermentation, batch processing, and bioprocessing industries, with several projects including first-of-their-kind technology. Niko enjoys the variety and challenge that comes with projects using novel technologies and processes, and his favorite aspect of engineering is experiencing the design of a project come to fruition after start-up.



**Jack Higgins, Merrick**

Jack is a process engineer with 7 years of experience in process development, scale-up, and design. His expertise is in fermentation and downstream processing, particularly for commodity chemicals and food proteins. Many of these have been first-of-their-kind technologies. He enjoys working on more sustainable and economical ways to make products. His favorite part of being an engineer is seeing a project start as a concept and become reality.



**Matt Menegay, ADM**

Matt Menegay is the Modeling Capability Manager at ADM in the Research & Development division, where he leads a team of engineers and student interns in building computer simulations to help optimize existing processes and to bring to light the value and risk potentials for new technology development. He has over 12 years of experience across a range of industries, and has held a variety of roles in process modeling, process development, project management, and R&D. He is a graduate of the University at Buffalo, where he earned a B.S. in Chemical Engineering, and a Master of Engineering in Industrial Engineering - Engineering Management.