



Jim Liefer
CEO

Jim Liefer is a Chief Executive Officer at Ambi Robotics where he is responsible for all facets of the business. Jim brings more than 35 years of operational leadership and technology development experience from established Fortune 50 companies to high growth Silicon Valley Startups. Prior to Ambi Robotics, Jim served as CEO of Kindred AI which was acquired by Ocado Group. During his tenure with Kindred AI, Jim brought distinct AI-enabled robotic solutions to the warehouses and fulfillment centers of global retailers; building solutions from concept to customer deployment. Before Kindred he was the COO of One Kings Lane, VP of Operations at Walmart.com and VP of Technology at UPS. With One Kings Lane and Walmart, Jim successfully developed processes and systems that scale for rapid growth and lower costs. During his tenure at UPS he was responsible for global supply chain technology systems that continue to thrive at UPS today.



Jeff Mahler
Co-Founder and CTO

Jeff Mahler is a Co-founder and the Chief Technology Officer at Ambi Robotics, previously serving as CEO of the company. Jeff is responsible for guiding the vision and execution of the company's advanced operating system, AmbiOS, to power highly-dexterous robotic systems in commercial production. Jeff obtained his Ph.D. from UC Berkeley as a member of the AUTOLAB and Berkeley Artificial Intelligence Research Lab. His dissertation research is on the Dexterity-Network (Dex-Net) and he has also published on deep learning from demonstration and control for surgical robots. His research papers have been nominated for numerous awards including Best Manipulation Paper (ICRA 2016) and Best Human-Robot Interaction Paper (ICRA 2016) His open source code, training datasets, and neural network weights receive hundreds of downloads per month. Along with Prof. Ruzena Bajcsy, he helped start EE 106B, the UC Berkeley course on mathematical models for robot manipulation. He co-founded the 3D scanning startup Lynx Laboratories in 2012, which was acquired by Occipital, Inc., and he received the National Defense Science and Engineering Fellowship in 2015.



Stephen McKinley
Co-Founder and COO

Stephen McKinley is a Co-founder and the Chief Operating Officer at Ambi Robotics, responsible for deploying fleets of robotic solutions to the company's global partners. Stephen is a Post Doctoral Researcher at the University of California Berkeley. His research has spanned low-cost robotic arms for Reinforcement Learning and Learning from Demonstration, Gripper Design, Radiation Oncology, Agricultural Robotics, Surgical Robotics, and Legged Locomotion. Stephen holds a Doctorate in Mechatronics Design from UC Berkeley, a MS in Mechanical Engineering Design and Materials from UC Berkeley, and a BS in Mechanical Engineering from UMass Amherst. During his graduate studies he was the winner of the National Science Foundation IGERT Fellowship, awarded to facilitate interdisciplinary research. Stephen has experience leading his own class curriculum at UC Berkeley as a Lecturer in the Industrial Engineering and Operations Research Department. He has extensive experience in fabricating systems on all scales (from micro to massive). Stephen has published over a dozen research papers and has applied for three patents relating to his work.



David Gealy
Co-Founder and VP of Hardware

David is a Co-founder and the VP of Hardware for Ambi Robotics, responsible for robotic hardware engineering and control systems. David obtained his PhD from UC Berkeley, studying Mechanical Engineering, Machine Systems Controls, and Design. He has worked and published in surgical automation, precision agriculture, gripper design, and currently leads a team of ten researchers developing low cost 7-DOF robotic arms for AI based manipulation research. David is a winner of the National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowship (NSF GRFP).



Matt Matl

Co-Founder and VP of Software

Matt is a Co-founder and the VP of Software for Ambi Robotics, leading the design and implementation of software programs and operating system infrastructure. Matt obtained his PhD from UC Berkeley, where he significantly contributed to the success of The Dexterity Network (Dex-Net), leading developments of suction contact models, 3D mesh processing and grasp sampling pipeline, 3D model libraries, and rendering modules. Matt holds a BSE in Electrical Engineering from Princeton University, where he worked on high-throughput parallel systems and was awarded the James Hayes-Edgar Palmer Prize as Princeton's top engineering student. Matt is an NDSEG Fellowship winner, and he also contributes to several open-source projects, including Python's most popular 3D mesh processing library, Trimesh, and several other tools for rendering and visualizing 3D data.



Joseph Ruck

VP of Marketing and Communications

Joseph Ruck is the VP of Marketing and Communications for Ambi Robotics, where he is responsible for all facets of the company's strategic brand management, communications, and customer acquisition. In this role, Joseph often looks beyond the C-suite and on to the warehouse floor to bring connection to the people who use the technology most - robot operators. He is a seasoned business professional with progressive experience and a passion for integrated sales and marketing. In previous roles, Joseph focused on bringing identity to various brands with a thesis to breathe humanity into the world of tech. During his time at Home Delivery Service, he supported senior-level leadership for the company's vision of a state-of-the-art ecommerce platform, powered by AI and advanced robotics. While at Kindred AI, he developed and implemented innovative marketing strategies, brand vision and communication programs that helped lead the company to acquisition by the Ocado Group. Joseph obtained his Bachelor of Science and Business Administration from the University of Denver - Daniels College of Business.



Sandra Kazee
CFO

Sandra Kazee is the Chief Finance Officer for Ambi Robotics, and a key member of the Executive Team. Her team oversees all aspects of financial strategy and business operations for the company. Prior to joining Ambi, Sandra spent several years providing key innovation leadership and being a strong advocate for organizational maturity with several successful start-ups. She is keenly attentive to the balance of driving transformational change and timely, accurate financial controls. Earlier in her career, Sandra spent over 10 years with large globally recognized organizations; including Walmart eCommerce and client UPS, where she held strategically important financial positions, conceiving and implementing finance solutions in the US and internationally, predominantly in Latin America. Her teams also oversaw the inventory accounting and controls at those organizations. Sandra started her accounting career with KPMG after graduating from UC Berkeley with a degree in Economics.



Joe Mahaney
VP of Sales

Joseph “Joe” Mahaney is the VP of Sales for Ambi Robotics, where he leads enterprise revenue strategy, go-to-market execution, and commercial expansion across North America. He is responsible for scaling the company’s commercial growth and bringing Ambi’s AI-powered robotics solutions to some of the world’s largest logistics operators. He brings more than 15 years of executive sales and revenue leadership experience across automation, logistics, packaging, and enterprise technology, with a strong track record of commercializing complex, capital-intensive solutions and building disciplined go-to-market systems that drive predictable growth. Prior to Ambi Robotics, Joe held senior commercial leadership roles at Berkshire Grey and Packsize, where he led strategic enterprise sales and go-to-market expansion for advanced automation solutions. At Berkshire Grey, he strengthened relationships with major parcel, retail, and third-party logistics operators across North America. Earlier at Packsize, he built and led the company’s top-performing regional sales organization, consistently exceeding revenue targets while developing sales planning and leadership programs later adopted nationally. Joe is recognized for his ability to bridge emerging technology with the operational buying realities of Fortune 500 enterprises, helping scale new automation platforms from early adoption to enterprise deployment.



Ken Goldberg
Co-Founder and Chief Scientist

Ken Goldberg is William S. Floyd Jr. Distinguished Chair of Engineering at UC Berkeley where he leads research in robotics as Director of the Automation Science lab (AUTOLab) and Director of the CITRIS "People and Robots" Initiative (75 faculty across 4 UC campuses). Ken also serves as Professor and Department Chair of the Industrial Engineering and Operations Research, with secondary appointments in Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, Art Practice, the School of Information, and UCSF Radiation Oncology. Ken co-founded and served as Editor-in-Chief of the IEEE Transactions on Automation Science and Engineering (T-ASE). Ken has undergraduate degrees in EE and Economics from UPenn/Wharton and a PhD from CMU. He has been involved in a number of startups and served as expert witness in six patent cases and serves as an Advisory to RoboGlobal, an international Exchange Traded Fund. Ken has published over 250 peer-reviewed papers, and awarded eight US patents, the NSF Presidential Faculty Fellowship (PECASE 1995), the Joseph Engelberger Award (top honor in Robotics, 2000), the IEEE Major Educational Innovation Award (2001), and elected IEEE Fellow in 2005.



Emily Yost
Head of People

Emily Yost is the Head of People for Ambi Robotics, where she leads all facets of people operations, employee experience, and organizational development across the company. She is responsible for recruiting, onboarding, workforce development, employee engagement, and Ambi HQ operations, supporting the teams behind Ambi's AI-powered robotics systems. Since joining Ambi, Emily has played a key role in scaling the company during periods of rapid growth, helping expand the workforce while maintaining a strong focus on employee experience and operational excellence. Prior to Ambi Robotics, Emily held leadership roles at Hillstone Restaurant Group, where she spent nearly seven years leading operations, team development, and customer experience management across multiple markets. Her background in hospitality shaped her approach to people leadership and operational discipline. Emily obtained her Bachelor of Science and Business Administration from the University of Denver – Daniels College of Business.