

TRICIA BALLAD

AI-Native Engineer · Technical Program Manager (AI) · Product Builder

tballad@me.com · 309-310-9314 · linkedin.com/in/triciaballad · hexcodestudio.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

AI-native engineer and technical program leader with a CS foundation, 20+ years driving cross-functional software delivery, and recent hands-on production experience building LLM-integrated applications. Returned to engineering in 2025 via AI-assisted development — not just using AI tools but architecting and shipping production systems with them. Builds Python/FastAPI backends with LLM provider abstraction, native iOS apps in SwiftUI, and end-to-end data pipelines. Bridges two worlds most candidates cannot: deep enough in engineering to build production applications and experienced enough in program leadership to drive complex AI initiatives across teams.

FEATURED PROJECTS

SignalForge | AI Lead Intelligence Platform

Production Python/FastAPI application integrating LLMs to monitor startup companies and surface fractional CTO opportunities. Designed and shipped end-to-end.

- ▶ Architecture: FastAPI · PostgreSQL · SQLAlchemy 2.x · Alembic migrations · Jinja2 · multi-provider LLM abstraction layer
 - ▶ Built custom multi-dimensional scoring system (LGPS) combining signal ingestion, LLM analysis, and outreach governance
 - ▶ Implemented ethical AI guardrails: cooldown enforcement, stability caps, bias audit jobs, human-in-the-loop review — no auto-outreach
 - ▶ Production-grade: migration-driven schema management, internal job endpoints with token auth, event-driven pipeline (ingest → derive → score → lead feed)
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TECHNICAL SKILLS

AI / LLM	LLM integration · Prompt engineering · RAG (learning) · LangChain (learning) · Agentic AI · Human-in-the-loop design · AI governance
Backend	Python · FastAPI · SQLAlchemy · Alembic · PostgreSQL · REST API design · PHP
Mobile	SwiftUI · Core Data · UserNotifications · Apple IAP · offline-first architecture
Cloud	AWS · GitHub · Cloudflare · Digital Ocean
AI Tools	Cursor · Claude · ChatGPT · Copilot · Custom GPT configuration · Power Automate
Program Mgmt	Cross-functional execution · Dependency & risk management · Agile (Scrum/Kanban) · PMI-ACP · Stakeholder alignment · Release readiness

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Fractional CTO / Technical Program Strategist | DisEntangled Tech, LLC — Remote | 2025–Present

Provide technical program leadership to SaaS companies, startups, and mission-driven organizations — translating business objectives into cross-functional execution plans while hands-on building production AI applications.

AI-Native Development

- ▶ Built SignalForge end-to-end: designed architecture, wrote production Python/FastAPI code, managed database migrations, and integrated multi-provider LLM abstraction — modeling AI-assisted development practices
- ▶ Shipping three native iOS apps in SwiftUI (myApothecary, myTarot, Creative Pantry) using AI-assisted development workflows
- ▶ Evaluated and governed AI integration risks — data exposure, hallucination handling, human-in-the-loop checkpoints — embedding governance into delivery frameworks

Program Delivery

- ▶ Built program operating infrastructure for AI-assisted SaaS engagements including a cybersecurity operations platform — owning scope, sequencing, dependency management, and release readiness end-to-end
- ▶ Conducted stakeholder discovery; translated business requirements into technical specifications, epics, and sequenced delivery plans aligned to architecture constraints
- ▶ Key engagement (12 Skies Tech): execution owner between business stakeholders, clients, and engineers — ran discovery, translated findings into epics and acceptance criteria, managed delivery dependencies

Director of Technology — Product & Platform Delivery | EXACT Sports — Chicago, IL 2025

- ▶ Launched three SaaS products within six months, coordinating cross-functional delivery across engineering, infrastructure, and business stakeholders
- ▶ Rebuilt program operating cadences — sprint planning, dependency tracking, release readiness — improving delivery throughput significantly while reducing critical outages
- ▶ Grew engineering team by 75% while improving productivity by 150%

PMO Coordinator — Enterprise Technology Portfolio | Chicago Transit Authority — Chicago, IL 2023–2024

- ▶ Built program governance infrastructure from scratch — dependency tracking, risk reporting, stakeholder communication cadences — across a multi-team, multi-vendor enterprise portfolio
- ▶ Designed and deployed workflow automation using Microsoft Power Automate to streamline procurement approvals, reducing manual coordination overhead across departments
- ▶ Served as liaison between executive leadership, technical teams, and vendors; reviewed and clarified technical requirements, SOWs, and vendor deliverables

Program Manager | Assurance Data — Remote 2021–2022

- ▶ Led FedRAMP readiness program end-to-end — coordinating engineering, compliance, security, and executive stakeholders through a multi-phase, high-stakes regulatory initiative
- ▶ Owned program lifecycle from discovery through release: backlog prioritization, dependency tracking, sprint alignment, and release readiness across engineering, marketing, and leadership

Founder / Digital Transformation Consultant | Disentangled Tech, LLC — Remote 2004–2023

Nearly two decades leading digital transformation programs — system integrations, platform launches, workflow modernization — for small businesses and organizations. Developed technical writing, client communication, and cross-functional execution skills that underpin current AI program work.

EARLIER ENGINEERING CAREER

Web Application Programmer · TransUnion
Web Programmer · Follett Library Resources

Systems Engineer · RBS Greenwich Capital
Technical Co-Founder · Pchy (2024) · Subsidio
(2023–24)

EDUCATION, CERTIFICATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

BA, Computer Science & Creative Writing

Bradley University

PMI-ACP (Agile Certified Practitioner)

Project Management Institute

Human-Centered AI Leadership

AI-Powered Women / MIT Collaboration

Published Author — Technical Books

*Access Control, Authentication & Public Key
Infrastructure*

Jones & Bartlett Learning

Securing PHP Web Applications

Addison-Wesley Professional

*PHP & MySQL Web Development All-in-One Desk
Reference*

For Dummies / Wiley