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ASSOCIATION

**2023 FALL CONFERENCE**

**Speaker Bios & Session Overviews**

## 2023 PEDA FALL CONFERENCE - SPEAKER BIOS

### ***Jamal Abodalo, Community Development Director, City of Reading***

A bio for this presenter is forthcoming.

### ***Ellen Albright, Director, Strategic Partnerships for Pre-College & Summer Programs, Albright College***

Ellen C. Albright is a Berks County native with a deep passion for bridging connections between employers and educators to ensure that workforce needs of the future are being met in our community.

Ellen's interest for talent development and retention began in her first career role, as the program director for Junior Achievement of Berks, Lehigh + Northampton Counties. In this role, she focused on JA's mission of educating and inspiring young people through three pillars: entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and work readiness skills. Working side by side with business and industry to provide practical learning experiences for students, this opportunity opened Ellen's eyes to the depth of need for critical life skills to be brought into the classroom for overall student preparedness as they enter the world of work.

Keeping with the theme of community, Ellen moved into her next role with the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance as the communications coordinator for all chamber-related activities. A few years into that role, she transitioned into the newly created position of Talent + Workforce Development Director, allowing her the opportunity to continue to find ways to remove barriers for educators and employers to connect + collaborate. In this role, she also connected with regional, state, and federal partners on grants, programming and conferences to broaden our reach in best practices.

In 2021, Ellen joined the team at Total Experience Learning® at Albright College, as the Director of Strategic Partnerships. Under the leadership of founder, Adelle Schade, Ph.D., and with a rapidly growing slate of program offerings, this organization is striving everyday to revolutionize education by "uncovering the genius in every learner." In this role, Ellen focuses on strengthening relationships with business and industry locally, while also planning for regional, state, national, and worldwide partnerships in the very near future.

Ellen resides in Berks County with her husband, Joe, and her wild-hearted toddler, Rowan. She also has three stepsons, and is outnumbered 5-1 in a house full of boys! When she is not feeding a house of five hungry guys, she is volunteering on the Exeter Community Education Foundation Board, pursuing her MSB with Albright College, and trying to get her steps in for the day! Her bachelor's degree is from West Chester in Communications Studies – *Go Rams!*

### ***James P. Cinelli, P.E., BCEE, Principal, Liberty Environmental***

James P. Cinelli, P.E., BCEE, is an Environmental Engineer and the president of Liberty Environmental, Inc., an environmental consulting firm which he co-founded in 2004. The company has 30 employees and has offices in New York City, Philadelphia, Lancaster, PA and Reading, PA. The company's clients include local, regional and international companies, and include banks, real estate developers, oil and gas companies, and large manufacturing firms.

Mr. Cinelli has over 30 years of experience in environmental consulting with an emphasis in the areas of soil and groundwater remediation, brownfield redevelopment, water resource engineering, building assessments and energy efficiency auditing.

Mr. Cinelli is currently Chairman of the Board of the Reading Science Center, serves on the Presidential Advisory Council at Alvernia University and is a board member for the Asian Real Estate Association of America Manhattan Chapter. He is a licensed Professional Engineer in five states and a Licensed Professional Geologist in New York, and a Board Certified Environmental Engineer. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Lehigh University, a Master of Engineering degree in Environmental Engineering from Penn State University and a Master of Business Administration degree from St. Joseph's University.

***John Dever, Business Consultant, Kutztown University SBDC***

John is a seasoned leader and manager, experienced in both B2B and D2C business sectors. Prior to joining the KU SBDC as Business Consultant, John had most recently provided leadership and management direction for a B2B organization in the service sector, achieving over 100% growth in sales and client portfolio in three year period. For fifteen-plus years prior to that engagement, John lead a men's sportswear design/manufacturing/marketing organization to five time participant in Inc. Magazine's Inner City 100 list, recognizing the company as one of the fastest growing inner-city companies in the U.S.A. John has also served as management consultant, having worked with multiple small to mid-sized companies in both B2B and D2C sectors, as well as not-for-profit organizations, in developing strategically focused and successful initiatives.

***Winona Dimeo-Ediger, Co-Founder & Chief Creative Officer, RoleCall Talent Attraction Agency***

Winona Dimeo-Ediger has been a digital content creator for nearly a decade, writing about culture, travel, and politics for publications like National Geographic, Rolling Stone, and NPR. As editor-in-chief of Livability.com, she created talent attraction content and marketing campaigns for communities around the country and oversaw proprietary research about the factors that drive relocation decisions, with a focus on effective place marketing to Millennials and Gen Z. In 2020, she co-founded RoleCall, a talent attraction agency that helps cities and states across the country align their marketing campaigns with their tangible talent attraction goals, with a focus on creating actionable "paths to yes" for new residents. She specializes in helping places hone their authentic voice and personalizing their outreach to the talent they need.

Her thought leadership in talent attraction has been recognized by LinkedIn, Realtor.com, CNBC, and MarketWatch. She has presented on talent attraction innovation and best practices at ACCE and IEDC, as well as statewide conferences on tourism and economic development. The highlight of her career was a shoutout on SNL's "Weekend Update".

***Nick Felice, President & CEO, Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation***

With 27-years of community and economic development experience, Nick has worked in six Pennsylvania communities, including Somerset, Meadville, Huntingdon, Latrobe and Johnstown, before settling in Lewistown. He

has been the lead administrator in seven organizations, supervising varying numbers of staff and volunteers. Nick has overseen improvements and marketing of twelve development sites, and was involved in the successful effort to bring North American Hoganas to the Johnstown region. As the Main Street Manager of the City of Latrobe, he founded the “Great American Banana Split Celebration.” Professional and community service has included the Southern Alleghenies Regional Economic Developers Committee and Workforce Development Board, Focus Central Pennsylvania Board, PEDDA Conference Committee and board member of the Rotary Club of Lewistown. In 2017, he took over as President/CEO of MCIDC. 2018 saw his collaboration with the Juniata Valley River Valley Chamber to found the Entrepreneurial Meetup Program. Felice believes entrepreneurial development and foreign direct investment hold the most promise for economic growth in Central Pennsylvania.

***Tom Frawley, Executive Director, Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority***

Mr. Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq., has over forty-two years of experience in transportation projects, primarily focused on passenger rail but including all rail modes as well as Bus Rapid Transit, highways and airports. Mr. Frawley’s skills include planning, engineering, project delivery strategy, procurement and contracting including P3, financial analyses, regulatory compliance, and system start-up, operation, and management. His experience includes several transit and rail system start-up projects as well as numerous feasibility studies/alternatives analyses, privatization studies, operations analyses, regulatory compliance reviews, station designs, maintenance facilities designs, and rolling stock technology studies and specifications.

*Selected Relevant Experience:*

- *Amtrak* – Developed Long-Term Facility Plan. Scope included verification and correction of Amtrak real property asset database information, documentation of anticipated future needs, and identification of cost saving opportunities. Previously performed assessment of Amtrak facilities at Los Angeles Union Station and Redondo Yard, and in Oakland, California to support business case for facilities improvements.
- *Borough of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania* – For the Mayor’s Task Force, performed feasibility study for potential restoration of passenger rail service between Philadelphia and Phoenixville via Norristown. Scope included conceptual level ridership analysis, operational analysis, examination of institutional issues vis-à-vis facilities owners SEPTA and Norfolk Southern, location of potential station sites, conceptual level cost estimates, and support of initial outreach with SEPTA and Norfolk Southern.
- *Amtrak* – Project manager of the Operations Team for the National Market-Based Network Analysis. Identified, developed and analyzed operations, business and network strategies to improve Amtrak performance. Assignment included capacity assessments of potential high-speed corridors and long distance routes. Developed models that generated statistics that in-turn drove cost and demand estimating models.

*Credentials:*

- Registered Professional Engineer in Pennsylvania and California
- Admitted to the BAR in Pennsylvania.

*Education:*

- B.S., Industrial Engineering, Lehigh University 1980
- M.B.A., Pepperdine University 1993
- J.D., Temple University 2009

***Nina Gabbidon, PMP, RACP Program Manager, Tetra Tech***

Tetra Tech's RACP team provides services on behalf of the Commonwealth, which includes conducting reviews of Application and Business Plans and providing construction monitoring services, to ensure programmatic compliance with RACP guidelines and requirements.

As the RACP Program Manager, Nina is the primary point of contact with the Office of the Budget, providing oversight and management of staff members, reviewing project financing to ensure compliance with the grant agreement, and ensuring grantees meet statutory and administrative requirements.

Before Tetra Tech, Nina was the Senior Compliance Analyst for Milligan & Company's RACP team. Nina's involvement in noteworthy RACP projects includes Philadelphia Museum's Art Core, Philadelphia Fashion District, Downingtown River Station, and York Academy Regional Charter School. Ms. Gabbidon earned a B.A. in Political Science and English at Rutgers University and is a PMI certified project manager.

***Aaron Gantz, MPA, Senior Director, Economic Development, Greater Reading Chamber Alliance***

As the Senior Director of Economic Development at the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance, Aaron brings over 12 years of economic development experience to her position. She works with both the public and private sectors to enhance and facilitate economic development opportunities across Berks County.

Aaron graduated from West Virginia University where she earned both her B.A. in Political Science and MPA, Master of Public Administration degree.

She recently served on the Reading Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors and is an active member of the West Reading Borough Economic Development Committee. She is a 2020 Lehigh Valley Business 40 Under 40 Honoree, a 2018 Reading Eagle's 40 Under 40 Honoree, and 2011 Rising Star Award from the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Aaron resides in Wyomissing with her husband John, daughter Wyatt, and dog Kai.

***Sara Holzer, Senior Director, Business Engagement, Allegheny Conference on Community Development***

Sara Holzer joined the Allegheny Conference in January 2023 as senior director, business engagement. In this role, Sara helps drive the Pittsburgh region's overall strategy for attracting and retaining high-demand talent by engaging employers in national talent marketing efforts and managing a college student retention and engagement strategy. Sara has over 18 years of experience in destination marketing sales for Allegheny County, providing her with extensive relationships with community partners and a deep understanding of how to market the Pittsburgh region.

***Nancy Keeler, Principal, Allium Development Group***

Nancy Keeler is the Principal of Allium Development Group.

Allium partners with organizations, businesses, developers, and local governments to create better communities for people and for businesses. As principal of Allium Development Group, in 2010, Nancy began consulting as an independent contractor. In 2021, after over ten years of projects, she formalized her work and founded Allium Development Group. Allium Development Group focuses on place-making for businesses, creating and refining place-based initiatives, and improving communities' quality of life. Allium does this through strategic consulting, ecosystem mapping, project ideation and startup planning, and mixed methods research informed analysis.

Nancy is the mother of two girls, loves gardening, cooking, and reading. She and her husband, Jacob, have a small real estate portfolio and are partners in the Milton 66, a beer garden located in Milton, NC.

***Kelly Kundratic, Agriculture Policy Director, Team Pennsylvania***

Kelly Kundratic is Agriculture Policy Director at Team Pennsylvania. Kelly joined Team PA in 2018 to grow the organization's partnership with the PA Department of Agriculture and the private sector. In this role, she directs state-level, strategic economic growth for Pennsylvania's food and agriculture industries through the Agriculture Cross-Sector Collaborative.

Kelly's passion for Pennsylvania agriculture was born at a young age, spending summers on her grandparents' dairy farm in Wayne County. Before joining Team PA, Kelly worked at the MD Department of Agriculture and as a high school agriculture teacher. She graduated from The Friedman School at Tufts University with a Master of Science in Agriculture, Food, and Environment focus in Public Policy and holds a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural and Extension Education from West Virginia University.

Away from the office, Kelly competes as a nationally-ranked NHRA drag racer. She cares deeply about her communities and demonstrates that commitment by raising awareness for organ donation and transplantation and serving as Board Chair of The LEAF Project. Kelly was recently recognized in Drag Illustrated's 2022 30 Under 30 and Harrisburg Young Professionals 20 in their 20s for her active engagements in her communities.

Want to learn more about the Ag Collaborative? Contact [agriculture@teampa.com](mailto:agriculture@teampa.com).

***Erica Kunkel, Director, Continuing Education & Outreach, Penn State Berks***

Erica Kunkel is the director of continuing education and outreach at Penn State Berks, where she provides leadership and direction for workforce and professional development programs, ensuring that these programs meet local employers' needs to fill open positions and upskill current Berks County employees. A Penn State University graduate, she acquired experience in business development, sales, marketing, and management before entering higher education. Erica acts as a conduit between Penn State Berks faculty, staff, and leadership and the Berks County community. She also serves as the director of the Berks LaunchBox, an incubation hub of Penn State Berks and Penn State Health St. Joseph which assists early-stage entrepreneurs and startup companies with accessing the tools and resources they need to launch and

grow in Greater Reading. Erica currently serves as secretary for the Emerging Entrepreneurs Academy Board of Directors and as a member of the Advisory Board for Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

***Kathy Kyle, CPA, RACP Administrator, Pennsylvania Office of the Budget***

Kathy has been with the Office of Budget, RACP administration since January 2005 and currently performs duties as Consultant Liaison. Previously, she was in public practice with Laventhol & Horwath, CPA, and then private practice as a CPA for a total of 20 years after graduating from Shippensburg University with a degree in accounting. Kathy also spent a few years in the mid-1980's with the Department of Revenue and then the Bureau of Audits, Office of Budget during the initial implementation of the Single Audit concept. While working in the Bureau of Audits, Kathy prepared a training manual called "Quality Assurance Reviews of Audit Operations".

***Kenneth E. Lawrence, Jr., Commissioner, Montgomery County***

In 2017, Ken Lawrence Jr. was appointed by the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas to the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners to fill out the term of newly-elected Attorney General Josh Shapiro. On February 2, 2017, he was unanimously elected as Vice Chair of the Board of the Commissioners. Commissioner Lawrence was elected on November 5, 2019 to serve a full four-year term.

On February 2, 2023, Commissioner Lawrence was elected to serve as Chair of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners following a reorganization of the board. He is the first African-American Commissioner in Montgomery County's history.

Commissioner Lawrence was elected to serve as a Chair of the Montgomery County Board of Elections on March 16, 2017, and has served in that role his entire tenure. The Board of Elections oversees the administration of the election process in the County, including the polling locations, ballots, voting machines, and campaign expense report filings. As Chair of the Election Board, Commissioner Lawrence led the County's purchase of a new voting system in 2019 and the implementation of mail-in ballots in 2020. Commissioner Lawrence has also initiated new efforts to recruit poll workers by speaking with civic groups, colleges, and high schools across the County. He was appointed by Governor Wolf and confirmed by the Senate to the Pennsylvania Election Law Advisory Board in 2020 and was elected Chair.

Transportation and infrastructure have been key focuses of Commissioner Lawrence. He has served as a Montgomery County appointee to the board of SEPTA since 2011 and currently serves as the Vice Chairman of the board. He also serves on the board of the Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association, chairs the 422 Transit Task Force, and serves on the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority.

Commissioner Lawrence has taken a hands-on approach to learning and experiencing all facets of Montgomery County's government and programs. Lawrence is an avid user and promoter of the County's parks and trails and has completed the Montgomery County Trail Challenge every year since 2017. He joined the Share Montco Hunger Solutions Advisory Group after participating in the Your Way Home Food Stamp Challenge for a week, eating food that could only be purchased with a budget of \$4.75 per day of SNAP benefits. Lawrence also completed the QPR Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Program offered to County residents by the Montgomery County Suicide Prevention Taskforce.

A resident of Montgomery County for nearly 35 years, Lawrence brings a diverse set of skills and experience to the Board. Lawrence has served as Temple University's Vice President for Alumni Relations overseeing the activities of the Office of Alumni Relations and the Temple University Alumni Association. He was the first Vice President appointed to this position in Temple history. Previously, he served as Senior Vice President for Government, Community and Public Affairs at Temple where he oversaw the offices of Government Relations and Community Relations directing all of Temple's outreach and advocacy activities at the state, local and federal levels of government and community engagement.

Prior to joining Temple, Lawrence built his own successful public affairs firm in Montgomery County – Public Affairs Strategies – where he represented corporate and non-profit clients. Lawrence also previously worked at Merck & Company, Inc., handling public relations, product support, community relations, corporate contributions, crisis communications, issues management, government relations. Prior to that, he worked in media relations and at the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce as a Public Policy Representative performing policy development and analysis, grassroots outreach and lobbying on regional business issues.

Lawrence's prior board service includes the Avenue of the Arts, Inc., Big Brothers Big Sisters of Montgomery County, Committee of Seventy, Easter Seals of Southeastern PA, the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, the James A. Finnegan Foundation, North Penn Chamber of Commerce, the North Penn Valley Boys and Girls Club of the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation and the marketing committee for the Montgomery County Industrial Development Corporation. Lawrence has been a volunteer youth sports coach for several years in the Plymouth JR ABA and the Colonial Soccer League.

Lawrence has been the recipient of several awards including; 2019 Cheltenham Area NAACP President's Award, 2019 Cluster Community Award from the Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities, the 2018 Raymond H. Miley, Jr. Distinguished Service Award from the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Montgomery County, the 2018 Driving Fatherhood Award from the Maternity Care Coalition, the 2016 Philadelphia Tribune: Most Influential African Americans, the 2005 Philadelphia Business Journal: 40 Under Forty Award, and the 1999 Big Brother of the Year (North Central Philadelphia).

Lawrence began his college career attending Montgomery County Community College and received Associate in Science in Liberal Studies. He holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Temple University's College of Liberal Arts, and a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Pennsylvania's Fels Institute of Government.

Lawrence lives with his wife, two sons and two dogs in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania.

***George Leach, RACP Specialist I, Pennsylvania Office of the Budget***

George Leach grew up in the Harrisburg area and holds a Bachelor's degree from Millersville University in French with a concentration in International Business and Marketing, and a Master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in Education Policy. He has international experience teaching English in Japan, and has worked for the



Commonwealth for over six years including time with the tax credits division at the DCED, and has been with RACP for two and a half years.

***Christian Leinbach, Chair Commissioner, County of Berks***

Berks County Commissioner Christian Leinbach was first elected in 2008 and serves as Board Chair since 2012. Commissioner Leinbach is a member of the Election Board and the Prison Board. He chairs the Salary Board and the Retirement Board, which manages a 100% funded county employees' pension fund. Additionally, Leinbach is a Director on the Berks County Conservation District and the Berks Community Television Board.

In 2013 Leinbach was President of the County Commissioners Association of PA (CCAP) and continues as a member of the CCAP Board. Leinbach was elected to the National Association of Counties (NACo) Board in 2012 and remains a board member today. Commissioner Leinbach served on the NACo Executive Committee from March of 2014 through July of 2020.

Christian and his wife Jennifer have been married for 41 years and live in a log home. They have three children and three grandchildren. He and his family attend SVBC where he is in church leadership and sings with the worship team. Christian enjoys history, hiking, gardening and working on projects around the house.

***Dr. Susan Looney, President, Reading Area Community College***

Dr. Susan Looney took office as the sixth president of Reading Area Community College in Reading, PA on July 1, 2018. She is a shining example of how opportunity, access, excellence and hope offered by the community college can change lives.

At age sixteen Susan dropped out of high school, choosing to continue her family's equestrian legacy with a career in harness horse racing. An accomplished racer, Susan holds the record for being the youngest driver to win a race at the Meadowlands and was the first female driver to win a race at Garden State Park. She also represented the United States in the World Women's Harness Races in Canada and Switzerland. Then a serious racing accident changed her focus and the course of her life. She retired from racing and entered Brookdale Community College in New Jersey to first complete her GED, then seek an Associate's Degree. Susan was selected as the Outstanding Business Student, graduating Summa Cum Laude in 1991, and ultimately was elected the Graduate Student Trustee for the Brookdale Community College's Board of Trustees in 1991-92.

Dr. Looney completed her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and her MBA at Monmouth University in New Jersey. She obtained her Juris Doctorate at Widener University School of Law in Delaware, and completed her Doctorate in Education, specializing in Higher Education Leadership at Nova Southeastern University in Florida.

Susan never lost her passion for the community college environment and in 1998 accepted an appointment as associate professor in the business department at Mohave Community College in Kingman, AZ. As the advisor to the college's honor society, she was honored with Phi Theta Kappa's Paragon Award.

In 2002, Susan returned to her home state of Delaware as professor of business at Delaware Technical Community College. In 2006, she was elevated to the role of assistant campus director where she oversaw strategic planning, marketing and fundraising.

Between 2011 and 2014, Dr. Looney served as business coordinator and interim vice president for academic affairs at Colorado Mountain College. In the fall of 2014, she became dean of instruction at her current institution, Reading Area Community College. In the summer of 2015, an appointment by the president and the board of trustees, to the senior vice president of academic affairs/provost soon followed. In the spring of 2018, following an extensive nationwide search, Dr. Looney was named the sixth president of Reading Area Community College.

Dr. Looney maintains strong ties to the community and strives to enhance the college's partnerships with area organizations and nonprofits. She is the chair of the Reading Hospital Board of Trustees, and serves on the boards of Berks Latino Workforce Development, United Way of Berks County, the Berks Alliance, the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance and the Greater Berks Development Fund. Nationally, she is a board member of the American Association of Community Colleges, and is a member of the Executive Committee for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

***Stephen McKnight, President & CEO, Altoona Blair County Development Corporation***

Stephen has more than 30 years' experience in "placed-based" economic development strategies, project management and public policy. He has assisted with numerous business expansion projects resulting in millions of total investment. During his career, Stephen has worked for both private development companies and industry trade organizations in Washington, D.C. He contributed to the formation of federal transportation and economic development policy.

As a co-founder of Fourth Economy Consulting, he worked with communities and industry across the country building competitive operational growth strategies. Stephen has demonstrated core competencies in site selection, budget analysis, government relations, proposal development, public/media relations, event planning, membership development, fundraising, image branding, public policy analysis and issue driven coalition building.

Stephen currently serves on the Board of Directors of Goodwill of the Southern Alleghenies and the Pennsylvania Economic Development Association. When not working, and sometimes even while he is, he can be found skiing, hiking and cycling throughout our great mountain communities.

***Debra Millman, President, Greater Berks Development Fund***

Debra L. Millman, Esq. is President of the Greater Berks Development Fund ("GBDF") and Vice President of Development for the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance ("GRCA"). Debra began her career in Berks County in the City of Reading's Community Development Department and has worked for GBDF for the past 25 years. Her experience in community and economic development has ranged from brownfield development to the oversight of the Berks County Keystone Opportunity Zones, the Greater Reading Keystone Enterprise Zones, and Greater Reading Keystone Innovation Zone. She has been successful in obtaining grant funds in excess of \$20+ million from state and federal sources to support projects in the City of Reading and Berks County.

Current responsibilities as GBDF President include management of real estate holdings, administration of financing programs, and implementation of GRCA's economic development strategy.

Debra graduated from Seton Hall University with a B.S. in Finance and earned her J.D. at Widener Commonwealth Law School. She serves on the Berks County Workforce Development Board and is a member of the Board of Directors of the 18th Wonder Improvement Association.

***Eddie Moran, Mayor, City of Reading***

A bio for this presenter is forthcoming.

***Marian Moskowitz, Commissioner, Chester County***

Marian D. Moskowitz was elected to the Chester County Board of Commissioners in November 2019 and was sworn in as Chair of the Board in January 2020. In her role as Chair, she has led the county through the COVID-19 pandemic. During this unprecedented time, she prioritized getting vaccines and testing to the county's most vulnerable population and underserved.

*Environmental:* In her role as a county commissioner, she has made environmental issues a top priority by charging the Chester County Environmental and Energy Advisory Board with establishing a Climate Action Plan which was adopted in October 2021. The County signed a renewable electric supply purchase agreement to offset 100% of our electric supply. In March 2021 the County of Chester was recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a Green Power Partner.

*Rail Authority:* One key focus that Marian has spearheaded is the creation of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority (SRPRA) which will oversee and implement the restoration of passenger rail service between Reading and Philadelphia, with stops in Pottstown and Phoenixville. This Authority is supported with equal representation and funding from Berks, Chester, and Montgomery Counties.

*Zero Waste:* Another initiative that Marian is passionate about is the Zero Waste Plan that the Chester County Solid Waste Authority launched in 2021. This initiative is focused on minimizing the amount of waste produced at the source.

*Open Space Preservation:* Chester County is well known for its open space preservation program. As of December 2021, Chester County has preserved 30.2% or roughly 144,000 acres as open space. The county's massive trail system encourages outdoor activity which is important for keeping the 525,000 thousand residents healthy.

*Entrepreneur:* Prior to becoming a county commissioner, Marian was a true entrepreneur. Her local businesses have been in the areas of cosmetics, trucking (repair, sales, and long-haul trucking) and retail. Internationally, she was CEO of a mobile kiosk company, which imported and exported products to and from North and Central America.

*Revitalization:* Marian has been working diligently on the revitalization of Phoenixville Borough for the last 20 years with other community members. The Borough lost its main job center in the late 1970's when it was a working steel town. With the community's intense focus and hard work, Phoenixville has become a vibrant place to live and work. As a commissioner she continues to work on the revitalization of the county's Urban Center and the City of Coatesville.

*Economic Development:* Marian is excited to work on economic development issues as a county commissioner, especially in areas struggling with low income and those affected by job loss and/or transportation needs. Marian enjoys thinking outside the box when approaching these types of problems. Marian, in cooperation with SEPTA and URBAN Outfitters, held a job fair in Coatesville in hopes of bringing jobs to job seekers.

*Franklin Commons:* Marian is well-known for the adapted reuse of an old manufacturing facility in Phoenixville. Marian and her husband purchased “Franklin Commons”, a 225,000 sq. ft. abandoned industrial building that now houses multiple educational facilities, businesses, and various community institutions, most of which are owned and run by women. Purchased in 2006, it is now a vibrant educational and mixed-use complex. It was named “Best Mixed-Use Project of 2011” by the Philadelphia Business Journal and “Best Land Use Project of 2011” by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

She is most proud of Franklin Commons creating over 400 jobs and has offered opportunities for new entrepreneurs to start businesses in the building. In 2008, Marian installed solar panels on the south facing roof overlooking the garden to help offset the tenants’ utility cost for the building’s common area.

*Mentoring:* Marian enjoys mentoring small business owners and has put great effort into helping women-owned small businesses. She has mentored and helped financially with reduced rents and the drafting of business plans until they became successful.

*Boards:* Marian has been involved in her community for the last 30 years. She currently serves on the board of the Southeastern Economic Development Company of Pennsylvania (SEEDCOPA), who funds loans through the Small Business Administration (SBA). She also serves on the board of West Chester University, Council of Trustees. In 2021, Governor Tom Wolf re-appointed her to the Board of Governors of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). Ms. Moskowitz currently serves on the board of The Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority, Chester County Economic Development Council, Colonial Theater, People’s Light, and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA). In 2015, she was named to the Board of the Delaware River Port Authority by Governor Tom Wolf and served until 2017. Marian has also served on the Board of Neumann University, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Phoenixville Community Health Foundation, and she has served as Chair of the Jewish Federation of Chester County and has been a board member of the Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind for over 28 years.

*Democratic Committees:* Marian, along with Representatives Mary Jo Daley and Tina Davis, founded Emerge in 2015. Emerge is a non-profit organization that trains Democratic women to run for office. The first graduating class included Senator Carolyn Comitta, Representative Melissa Shusterman and Representative Kristine Howard. Marian also served on the Pennsylvania State Democratic Committee from 2016-2022. She was appointed to one of the Chair’s seats. She has worked for many years supporting and helping candidates running for elected office. Marian has been a lifelong Democrat and started working polls for various elections over thirty years.

*Personal Life:* Marian has been married to her husband Dave for 37 years. She has 2 children, 3 stepchildren and 5 grandchildren and resides in Malvern, with her beloved dog Lucca. Marian loves to travel and has traveled extensively around the world, both for business and pleasure. She loves to cook, read, walk, and spend time with her children and grandchildren.

***Ryan Nornhold, RACP Specialist I, Pennsylvania Office of the Budget***

Ryan studied Business Management at The Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport, PA before returning home to Central PA. He worked as a Golf Professional at the West Shore County Club in Camp Hill, PA before securing his first job at the state. He has been with the Commonwealth for over 9 years, including experience at the Pennsylvania Lottery and over two years with the RACP program.

***Sully Pinos, Executive Director, BLOOM Business Empowerment Center, York County Economic Alliance***

As the inaugural Executive Director of the Bloom Business Empowerment Center, an initiative of the York County Economic Alliance, Sully Pinos oversees the strategic mission to grow small businesses by offering a suite of services such as capital, technical assistance and much more. The BLOOM Business Empowerment Center provides resources countywide, with an intentional focus to help small businesses owned by women and BIPOC communities. In her six years at YCEA, Sully has led the Business Solutions & Innovation team with YoCo Bloom grant programs, workforce development and talent attraction, and women's programming. What she loves most about her job is connecting York County businesses, organizations, and residents to resources, which make for a stronger and thriving community. Most recently, she was recognized by the Association for Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE)'s 40 under 40 program for her efforts throughout the pandemic to launch a virtual career fair series and provide outreach support for small businesses by connecting them with funding resources. She was instrumental in designing and implementing COVID relief programs which awarded just over \$29 million in federal CARES and ARPA funds to nearly 2,000 York County businesses in 2020 and 2021.

Prior to her role with the York County Economic Alliance, she served as the Chief of Staff for former State Representative Kevin J. Schreiber of the 95th District in York. A Brooklyn native, St. John's University alum and daughter of Ecuadorian immigrants, Sully has been in York, PA for ten years, where she had moved to work on President Barack Obama's re-election campaign. She enjoys volunteering for several causes and supporting local businesses. She proudly serves on the boards and committees of the South Central PA Workforce Investment Board (SCPaWorks), United Way of York County, York County Alliance for Learning, York City Parks Conservancy, York County Reentry Coalition, Braided River Collective, Confronting Racism Coalition, and York County Hispanic Coalition.

***Dr. Rodney Ridley, VP of Research, Economic Development & Innovation, Alvernia University***

Dr. Rodney S. Ridley, Sr. is Vice-President of Research, Economic Development and Innovation as well as the Founding Dean of the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics (STEAM) College at Alvernia University ("AU"). He also serves as the Chief Operating Officer of the O'Pake Institute for Economic Development & Entrepreneurship at AU. He is tasked as the key implementor of the Reading CollegeTowne initiative, which is transforming the University and revitalizing downtown Reading. The O'Pake Institute was redesigned in 2019 under his leadership to

house “CollegeTowne” and serve as a catalyst for experiential education, entrepreneurship, and economic development. He founded the O’Pake Student Fellows Program, Business Incubator, Technology Transfer Office, Professional Mentor Program and Micro-Grant Fund. He also oversees AU’s Industry Outreach & Venture Investment activities.

Prior to joining AU, he was the Executive Director and Distinguished Professor of the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship at Wilkes University. There, he was the founding Director of the Wilkes Business Incubator, the Technology Transfer Office, the Industry & Community Outreach Office, and a Micro-Grant Fund. In June 2017, he was named “Innovator of the Year” by the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce.

His professional experiences include Chair/Director and Associate Professor in the ABET accredited Engineering & Physics Division at Wilkes University, Engineering Director at Velox Semiconductor, Vice-President of Technology at Data Friendly Inc, and Principal Engineer & Key Technologist at Fairchild Semiconductor.

Ridley holds 28 US patents, numerous foreign patents and authored more than 35 journal and conference articles. He holds a Ph.D. in Engineering Science and a M.S. degree in Electrical Engineering from Penn State University, and a B.S. degree in Physics from Lincoln University (PA). He is also a Registered Technology Transfer Professional (RTTP).

***Lisa Riggs, Senior Managing Director, Economic Growth Strategy and Partnerships, Team Pennsylvania***

Lisa Riggs is Team Pennsylvania’s Senior Managing Director, Economic Strategy & Partnerships. She previously served as the President of the Economic Development Company of Lancaster County for nine years, leading a focus on business retention and expansion and economic analytics. Ms. Riggs has served in a number of other economic development roles over her more than two decades of experience, including as the President of the James Street Improvement District, a community and economic development organization focused on parts of the City of Lancaster, and as Vice President of Economic Development for the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore (Baltimore, MD). She also served for two seasons as the President of the Lancaster Barnstormers, a professional minor league baseball team.

A graduate of Johns Hopkins University, Ms. Riggs resides in Lancaster County. She currently serves on the boards of the Pennsylvania Economic Development Association, Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Central PA, the Lancaster STEM Alliance, Discover Lancaster and the Lancaster Clean Water Partners.

***Adelle Schade, MS, M.Ed., Dean, Pre-College & Summer Programs, Albright College***

Adelle Schade is the Dean of Pre-College and Summer Programming, at Albright College, Reading, PA. Prior to Albright College, Adelle was a science teacher at Conrad Weiser High School, Robeson, PA for 25 years. Adelle is the Founder of Total Experience Learning®, formed in 2015, and the CEO of ConvergedEd, LLC, formed in 2018. Adelle founded the trademarked learning and instructional methodology, Total Experience Learning®. Total Experience Learning® was named a top 4 STEM program in the United States in 2019 by District Administrator Journal. In December 2022, the program received international recognition during a ceremony by the United Nations, New York, as the Most Innovative Educational Model by the Materials Science sub-division of the United Nations. In 2022, Adelle was named the recipient of the Whitaker Center’s Women in STEM Game

Changer Award. In 2023, she was named a Berks County Take the Lead winner by the Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania (“GSEP”) and the ATHENA Leadership Award winner by Greater Reading Chamber Alliance Women2Women.

Adelle earned a Bachelor of Science from West Chester University. In 2006, she earned a Master of Education degree from Kutztown University in Biology Education. In 2015, she earned a Master of Science degree in Clinical Microbiology from the Jefferson Graduate School of Biomedical Science, Philadelphia, PA. Currently, Adelle is a PhD candidate in Cell and Molecular Biology at St. Joseph’s University, Philadelphia, PA. Additionally, she holds an appointment as an Adjunct Instructor of Pediatrics in the Penn State College of Medicine.

***Alan Shuman, President, Shuman Development Group***

Alan Shuman has been developing real estate for over 30 years, almost exclusively within the City of Reading, with over 1,000,000 square feet of development totaling over \$100 million. Notable projects include the redevelopment of the Abraham Lincoln Hotel, Berks County’s tallest privately owned building and the Reading Outlet Center Neighborhood Redevelopment which revitalized an entire neighborhood over a nine year redevelopment that included ten buildings, totaling 640,000 square feet.

Alan holds a bachelors degree from Penn State University and has completed courses at Bucknell University, Wharton School of Business at University of Pennsylvania, and Harvard University. He also served in the United State Army as an Executive Officer of a Combat Armor Company.

***Rick Siger, Secretary, Pennsylvania DCED***

Rick Siger was appointed by Governor Josh Shapiro as Acting Secretary of the Department of Community and Economic Development on January 17, 2023.

In his current role, Rick leads the commonwealth’s efforts to grow our economy and build a better future for Pennsylvanians. He is committed to helping small businesses thrive, spurring innovation, and increasing opportunities in communities to make Pennsylvania a national leader in growth and innovation.

Prior to his current role, Rick served as Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor to the President at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) in Pittsburgh and led CMU’s growth strategy at Hazelwood Green, a former Pittsburgh industrial site re-envisioned as a new model for economic development and translational research.

Rick served President Barack Obama for more than seven years in multiple roles, including as Chief of Staff at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and Deputy Chief of Staff at the Department of Commerce. He also worked as former Governor Tim Kaine’s Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Trade in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Rick was born and raised in Pittsburgh and currently lives there with his wife Kinsey Casey, daughter Margaret, and dog Amos. He holds a B.A. in political science from Columbia University.

*Marshall W. Snively, President, Lancaster City Alliance*

Marshall W. Snively is President of the Lancaster City Alliance (“LCA”). Created as of July 1, 2013, LCA represents the consolidation of two non-profit organizations; the James Street Improvement District and the Lancaster Alliance, both dedicated to community and economic development for the City of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. With a focus of empowering neighborhoods and setting the stage for increased investment, LCA was charged with the development of **Building On Strength**, the City’s 15-year economic development strategic plan. Implementation of that plan remains LCA’s largest body of work. LCA also manages Lancaster’s Downtown Investment District and most recently, Lancaster’s City Revitalization and Improvement Zone (CRIZ).

At the inception of LCA, Marshall was named Executive Vice President & COO, until assuming the role of President in 2016.

Marshall joined the James Street Improvement District (JSID) as Vice President in May of 2007 and, in 2012, assumed the role of Interim President. His areas of focus included leading economic development initiatives; coordinating marketing programs; and implementing a business retention, expansion, and recruitment strategy for Downtown and Northwest Lancaster City.

He moved to Lancaster City from Downtown Baltimore, Maryland, where he lived and worked for over 15 years. Marshall’s career has always revolved around the strengthening of urban communities, from both the non-profit and for-profit perspectives.

Marshall was Vice President of Economic Development and Planning at Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, a non-profit business improvement district. In his 10 years at the Partnership, he spearheaded the development and implementation of strategic plans for both business and economic development initiatives. These included the design of streetscape and public space improvements, and the management of a Downtown retail feasibility study and recruitment program. In this role, he also directed the Partnership’s economic development department, which was responsible for membership recruitment, the annual State of Downtown Report and leading the Partnership’s business retention and attraction efforts.

Before his move to Lancaster, Marshall served as Special Projects Director for Struever Bros. Eccles & Rouse; a real estate development company focusing on restoring and strengthening existing urban communities through the redevelopment of historic properties and in-fill new construction.

Marshall graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the University of Maryland, College Park in 1993. While in Baltimore, he served on the Board of the Baltimore Architecture Foundation and served on many Boards and committees including the Executive Committee of the Urban Land Institute’s Baltimore Chapter. In Lancaster, Marshall has served on Lancaster City Planning Commission, as well as the Boards of the Lancaster Parking Authority, SACA (Spanish American Civic Association) Development, the YMCA, and Lancaster Office of Promotion. Marshall is currently serving on the Boards of Lancaster Equity, Fulton Theatre and Community Basics, Inc. He also played regional



leadership roles as the ULI Philadelphia Central PA Satellite Council Co-Chair and International Council of Shopping Centers (“ICSC”) Pennsylvania Alliance Public Sector Chair.

***Ryan Spak, Principal, Spak Group***

Ryan has a passion for Philadelphia’s neighborhoods, their history and its real estate. This passion, coupled with fifteen years of entrepreneurial experience in building maintenance, construction and real estate development ignited his firm belief that no distressed property should ever remain in an inhabitable, unsafe condition.

This was the basis for Project Rehab, a program Ryan developed and spearheads for University City District to help property owners remediate distressed properties. Since its inception in 2011, Project Rehab has positively affected development in over 63 buildings (175+ residential and commercial units) in University City creating approximately \$37+ million in additional real estate value.

Because of his community development efforts, Ryan is a member of several boards and local committees, mentors through the JumpStart program and has been a guest speaker at National Conferences on Vacant Land National Code Enforcement and the Philadelphia Poverty Conference.

As a result of his creative solutions to resolving distressed property, Ryan has won the University City Historical Society’s “Outstanding Preservation Award” three times and Spak Group’s Larchwood Flats property has won the 2016 Extreme Makeover Award and the Preservation Alliance Grand Jury Award for 2017.

Within his organization, Ryan focuses on property acquisition, joint venture partnerships, construction management and financing for Spak Group. Over the past four years, Spak Group has organically tripled in size with 200+ residential / commercial units under management and another 71 units under construction, in development or planning.

Ryan loves being a resident of West Philadelphia, but even more, he loves being married to his wife, Jessica and being a father to his daughter, Charlotte. When not engrossed in matters of brick, Ryan is a fanatical basketball enthusiast, loves saving animals from a cold Philly night, and is quite nuts over ‘80’s memorabilia – especially movies and television shows!

***Sarah Steltz, VP, Economic Competitiveness, The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia***

As the Vice President of Economic Competitiveness at the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, Sarah provides strategic direction and leadership in support of the organization’s mission to enhance the Greater Philadelphia region’s overall competitiveness by attracting and expanding companies, capital, and talent in key growth sectors. Sarah has a particular focus on proactively developing talent solutions to meet industry needs, marketing the region as a destination for talent, and advancing equitable strategies that create access to economic growth for all communities.

Prior to joining the Chamber in 2022, Sarah was the Deputy Commerce Director and Chief of Staff in the Department of Commerce for the City of Philadelphia. Sarah also served as University City District’s (UCD) Vice President of Workforce Solutions and Executive Director of the West Philadelphia Skills Initiative (WPSI), a nationally recognized workforce development organization. Sarah joined UCD after ten years at Drexel University, ultimately

serving as the Director, Workforce & Economic Inclusion. She holds a B.A. from Susquehanna University and an M.S. from Drexel University.

***John Stetler, Executive Director, Kutztown University SBDC***

John Stetler has over 24 years of experience working with businesses and organizations, both for profit and non profit, helping them increase profitability/productivity and improve company culture and business growth. John previously held positions as Director of Business Operations for a private small business, CFO of his family start-up and Manager of budgets, capital projects and entrepreneurship programs for Montgomery County Community College's Workforce Development and Continuing Education departments. John is currently the Executive Director for Kutztown University SBDC, responsible for oversight, planning, and developing and implementing programs offered by the Small Business Administration to the KUSBDC along with Directing the Centers strategic mission and partnerships and overseeing a staff of 8 business consultants and 10 graduate assistants. John also serves as a faculty member at Kutztown, teaching Entrepreneurial Finance.

John's areas of expertise include management, entrepreneurship, finance, human resources, project change management, culture change and business operations. His educational background includes a Master of Science (Organizational Leadership/Culture Management, Colorado State University) and a Bachelor of Science (Accounting, Colorado State University).

***Kimberly Valuntas, Regional Manager, Reading/Greater Berks County, Ben Franklin Technology Partners***

Kimberly L. Valuntas is the Regional Manager, Reading/Greater Berks County for Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeast Pennsylvania (BFTP/NEP). In her role as Regional Manager, Kimberly leads and actively contributes to the regional technology ecosystem, working with business and industry groups, economic development colleagues, higher education institutions, and other community leaders. Kimberly also works with hospitals, colleges and universities, companies, and non-profits to provide leadership to the region in support of the life sciences and healthcare technology industries as part of BFTP/NEP's mission throughout its' 21-county service area.

Kimberly has more than 20 years of sales and marketing and client support experience. Prior to her role as Regional Manager, she served as BFTP/NEP's Client Services Specialist since 2018, where she managed Ben Franklin's Solutions Network, which links clients to colleges/universities and other strategic consultants who evaluate each company and help develop a sound business plan, protect intellectual property, build sales/marketing strategies, evaluate financial systems, and/or support raising capital. Before coming to Ben Franklin, Kimberly worked in various marketing roles in the life/health insurance industry, including as Assistant Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Penn Treaty Network America Insurance Company, and served on the board for the American Independent Network Insurance Company. Kimberly also holds several leadership roles and board positions with non-profit organizations in the local community. She earned an MBA in marketing from DeSales University, Allentown, and a B.S. in marketing from the New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury, NY.

***Emily Wangolo, Executive Director, Berks County Department of Agriculture***

As Executive Director of the Berks County Department of Agriculture, Emily Wangolo is committed to the agricultural economic development in the region through agricultural land preservation, career pathway development, training for agricultural producers, community outreach, linking value chain actors, and facilitating inter-organizational collaboration.

With a BS in Environmental Science from Messiah University and an MSc in Agronomy from the University of Nairobi, Emily is passionate about bridging gaps between people, cultures, the built and natural environment, and agriculture. Emily is a native of Berks County, but has lived over 10 years in East Africa. She currently resides in Oley, PA with her husband Simon and sons Petero, Daniel, and Jeremiah.

***John Weidenhammer, Chair, Berks Alliance***

John P. Weidenhammer is Chairman, CEO and Founder of Weidenhammer Systems Corporation. John graduated from Reading High School in 1967 and Lehigh University in 1971 with a BS in Industrial Engineering. Upon graduating college, he worked as a Project Leader with a focus on the development of on-line production management systems for Carpenter Technology, a specialty steel manufacturer. He later moved on to Ernst & Young as a Management Consultant, where he travelled extensively assisting EY clients in areas related to IT Strategy, software development best practices, mergers and acquisitions operations research and application of internal controls to data systems.

In 1978, John decided to start Weidenhammer Systems Corporation. The original concept behind the business was to provide a resource for assisting organizations, large and small, with the successful implementation and deployment of information systems – essentially to fill the void between manufacturers of information technology, and the ultimate consumer. He had observed in his experience as a consultant that there was frequently considerable “weeping and gnashing of teeth” associated with the installation of business computers and sought to create a firm capable of minimizing the associated difficulties and cost. Today, Weidenhammer is among the 500 largest information technology companies in America and has customers across the United States and globally. The firm has been recognized by its industry for sales achievement and innovation. Weidenhammer, the company, has been recognized as one of the top 100 private organizations in the Lehigh Valley by the Lehigh Valley Business Journal and has been among the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance’s (“GRCA”) top 50 Berks County Organizations on numerous occasions. The firm won the GRCA’s Shining Star award in 2015.

John is not only a leader in the information technology industry, but also in the local community, where he has been a supporter of the United Way and other non-profit organizations. He currently serves on the boards of the Reading Hospital, Tower Health Partners, the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance, the Berks Business Education Coalition, the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Berks Latino Workforce Development Corporation (Tec Centro), and the Berks Alliance. He is a Trustee Emeritus of the Albright College Trustee Board and is currently a Trustee of Alvernia University. John was selected to receive the Gene Shirk Community Service award from BCTV, the Philadelphia Business Journal Technology Disrupter Award, the Corporate Executive of the Year in 2018 by the

Lehigh Valley Business Journal and the Community Service Award in 2017 by Centro Hispano. In 2019, John and his wife Nadine received the Spirit of Reading Award from the Salvation Army. John was recognized by Alvernia University, receiving the Franciscan Award.

For the last 43 years, John has been married to Nadine B. Weidenhammer and lives in Wyomissing, PA. He has a step-daughter, Daphne and two grandsons living in Oley, PA. John's hobby is helping Berks County's non-profits succeed and working toward the revitalization of Greater Reading.

***Jeremy Zaborowski, Executive Director, Berks County Industrial Development Authority***

Jeremy serves as Executive Director of the Berks County Industrial Development Authority (BerksIDA). BerksIDA provides land development, financing, and grant management services within Berks County. Currently, BerksIDA is redeveloping an abandoned WWII base into 650,000 SF of industrial space, of which 250k SF has been constructed and an additional 238k SF is fully entitled. To date, over 200 jobs new to Berks County have been created on the site. Recent financing projects include redevelopment of the dilapidated former AW Golden dealership in 2020 and a \$6 million revitalization of a plaza in south Reading, which created 180 jobs and provides grocery amenities in a part of the County considered a food desert.

Prior to his service in Berks County, Jeremy spent over a decade in Austin, TX, first as a site selection and economic development consultant working in 20 different states and three different countries and then as an associate at a power and water authority covering 200 Texas counties. An Erie native, Jeremy is thrilled to be back home in his native state and apply his experience to expand the economic opportunities in Berks County and Pennsylvania. Jeremy holds a BA from Houghton University, a masters in regional planning from Cornell University and an MS in energy and earth resources from the University of Texas Austin.

## 2023 PEDA FALL CONFERENCE - SESSION OVERVIEWS

*Agenda is subject to change*

### ***Pre-Conference Session: Demystifying RACP – A Deeper Dive***

At a high level, content of this session will include a description and overview of the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP), a discussion of the RACP process, the RACP grant agreement and special conditions, RACP compliance requirements and the RACP reimbursement process, with time allotted for Q&A throughout the session.

*Note: Registration for the pre-conference session is separate from the 2023 PEDA Fall Conference, as it is not included in the price of the conference.*

### ***Keynote Presentation: Redefining Success in Economic Development***

The future of economic development is people-centered, collaborative, nuanced, and nimble. As we envision what the next era of our industry looks like, we must redefine outdated definitions of success and address the pain points and obstacles that block innovation and collaboration. How do we balance the need for business attraction with workforce challenges? How can we effectively tell our community's story to a national audience? As we broaden the scope of our roles as economic developers, how do we prove success and maintain trust and buy-in from our stakeholders?

In this keynote presentation, national talent attraction expert Winona Dimeo-Ediger, Co-Founder and Chief Creative Officer of RoleCall Talent Attraction Agency, will share success stories from around the country and set the scene for Pennsylvania's next chapter of economic prosperity and growth. PA is primed to be an economic leader and major destination for talent. We all have a crucial role to play in the next chapter of the state — and our industry as a whole.

### ***Unleashing Your Community's Potential: Capitalizing on Assets for Talent Attraction & Place-Based Marketing***

Economic developers play a crucial role in cultivating vibrant communities. In this panel, representatives from diverse regions across Pennsylvania will share examples of how they have harnessed their community's strengths to create compelling narratives and enhance talent attraction efforts. Gain valuable insights and practical tips to leverage your community's assets and stand out in the competitive landscape of talent attraction.

### ***The Economic Impact of Agriculture***

Pennsylvania agriculture continues to be a strong, successful industry and major contributor to the state's economy. To build on the state's strengths and opportunities, it is essential to understand how the agricultural sector has changed in recent years, how the Pennsylvania Farm Bill, the COVID-19 pandemic and continued environmental shifts have impacted the industry, and the industry's importance in the state economy.

### ***Maximizing Funding Sources for Successful Development Projects***

Using the redevelopment of a historic bank building (located at 35 N. 6th Street in Downton Reading) as an example of a successful mixed-use project, this session will focus on maximizing the funding stack through the utilization of multiple funding sources (both private and public), including through a partnership with the Berks County Industrial Development Authority on a short-term bridge loan. Conference attendees will learn from real-life examples of completed projects that used several sources of funding and will learn how to support private developers in their quest to access multiple funding sources with varying time frames and requirements.

### ***All the Easy Sites are Gone – Now What?***

What happens when all the easy sites are gone? Redevelopment! This panel will highlight challenges, opportunities and success stories in redevelopment projects.

### ***Private & Public Sector Collaboration: From a Community Dream to a Community Reality***

The last passenger train left the City of Reading in 1980. Since then, the community has been eager to see the return of passenger rail. In 2019, a study to evaluate the cost and possibility of the return of passenger rail was commissioned by the private sector. Since the conclusion of the study, much has evolved over the last three years, including the establishment of a three-county authority, the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority. This is more than a session about trains, it is about public-private and cross-party collaboration to make a decades long dream a reality.

### ***The Role of Higher Ed in Revitalizing Reading & Driving Talent Pipelines***

Within the city limits of Reading, PA, are three institutions of Higher Ed providing world-class education to students of all ages, demographics and programs of study: Albright College, Alvernia University and Reading Area Community College (RACC). In addition, the Berks LaunchBox, powered by Penn State, is housed at the downtown GoggleWorks Center for the Arts. This interactive session will explore the talent pipelines that these institutions develop for the region and the impact each school, their students and their leadership have on its economic vitality. Specific points to be addressed include:

- Identification and promotion of the next generation of the workforce through partnerships between Higher Ed, the private sector and community leaders
- Provision of educational programs, by institutions of Higher Ed, designed to align with employers' needs
- Collaboration and promotion of job growth through an increasingly concentrated effort between Higher Ed and the private sector
- Envisioning what the future of education looks like as it contributes to the changing workforce (i.e., on-site credit courses, other future state initiatives, etc.)
- Discussion of the economic impact of such initiatives as CollegeTowne and Innovation Corridor and how they have impacted the economic outlook of the neighborhoods in which they reside

### ***Optional Offsite Industrial Development Bus Tour: Building on Success***

Hop on a bus for a complimentary off-site tour focused on industrial development. Featured areas will include development around the Reading Regional Airport in Bern Township. Participation is limited, based on bus capacity, and pre-registration (during the conference registration process) is required.

### ***Cultivating Entrepreneurship for Economic Growth***

Discover the power of cultivating entrepreneurship and its crucial role in positioning your community for continued economic growth. Join us for an enlightening session where you will learn from communities that have embraced and nurtured entrepreneurship, fostering a thriving and inclusive business environment. Gain insights from esteemed panelists representing the Cultivate Lancaster Entrepreneurship Coalition, the BLOOM Business Empowerment Center, the Kutztown University Small Business Development Center, and Allium Development Group. You will walk away with actionable takeaways for your community to create and/or better resource an ecosystem that fosters innovation, nurtures talent, and paves the way for sustained economic growth.

### ***Strengthening PA's Economic Competitiveness***

Pennsylvania boasts dynamic global and local businesses, world-class academic institutions, a robust workforce, and thriving communities. It has distinct economic regions from rural to urban, two dominant metropolitan areas, and incredible natural assets. Yet its economic performance lags that of other states. What are the key actions at state and regional levels that can strengthen Pennsylvania's overall economy? Lisa Riggs from Team Pennsylvania will share some perspective.