

Adams, Russel - CEO, Advanced Organic Methods, Inc.

Russel Adams is a California Civil Engineer and the Founder of Advanced Organic Methods, serving as President and CEO since its formation in 2011. He has held key roles in three other startups, contributing significantly to their technological advancements. He is the author or co-author of two issued patents and two pending applications, all focused on biomass thermal conversion.

Adler, Daniel - Deputy Director for Climate Finance, IBank

Dan Adler is the Deputy Director for Climate Finance at the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (IBank), where he leads the state's Green Bank initiatives. Previously, he was Vice President for Policy at the Energy Foundation and Managing Director of the California Clean Energy Fund (CalCEF), focusing on venture capital and project finance for clean energy. He has also held key roles at the California Public Utilities Commission, shaping the state's Renewables Portfolio Standard and climate policy, and served on boards including the American Council on Renewable Energy and the Coalition for Green Capital.

Bauer, Brian - CEO, Resynergi

Brian Bauer is the Co-founder, President, and CEO of Resynergi, with a background as a successful technology executive in the semiconductor industry. He holds a BS in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford and an MBA from UCLA Anderson. Passionate about the environment, he is dedicated to advancing waste reduction and climate preservation.

Beckett, Patrick - Environmental Engineer, BioFiltro

Patrick is an environmental engineer and industrial ecology expert focused on water, agriculture, climate change, and environmental sustainability. He leads BioFiltro's R&D in environmental biotechnology and oversees quality assurance for its vermifiltration operations. He holds a B.S. in Physics and Mathematics from Missouri Southern State University and an M.S. in Chemical and Environmental Engineering from UC Davis, along with a graduate certificate in Industrial Ecology.

Danch, Christopher - Executive Director, Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council

Christopher Danch is a legal expert with over 41 years of experience in strategic legal planning, business law, and environmental management. With 25 years in litigation at both federal and state levels, he has handled trials, arbitration, mediation, and appeals. He was the managing partner at Danch & Danch for 13 years, focusing on business law, construction, real estate, and Chapter 11 reorganizations.

DiPasquale, James - Utilization Program Manager, Acting Wood & Biomass, Region 5 State & Private Forestry

Jim DiPasquale is the Wood & Biomass Utilization Program Manager for Region 5 of the U.S. Forest Service, overseeing efforts in California, Hawaii, and the U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands. Previously a forester and silviculturist, he holds a master's in forestry from Northern Arizona University, specializing in forest operations and biomass utilization. Before his forestry career, Jim worked in corporate finance.

Dodd, Paul - Associate Vice Chancellor, UC Davis

Paul Dodd has over 20 years of experience in research leadership across government, industry, and higher education in the USA and Europe. As Associate Vice Chancellor for Grand Challenges at UC Davis, he collaborates with diverse partners to address complex issues in climate, sustainable food systems, and emerging health threats. He holds a BA and MSc in Material Science from Trinity College Dublin and a PhD from Queen's University Belfast.

Dunbar, James - General Manager, Lystek International

James Dunbar is the General Manager for Lystek International, overseeing site operations, engineering, and business development in the U.S. market. A Professional Engineer with over 25 years of experience in solid and liquid waste management in the U.S. and Europe, he holds degrees in Civil & Environmental Engineering from the University of Notre Dame and an MBA from St. Xavier University. Jim is also the current Board President of the Northwest Biosolids Association.

Erickson, Paul - Professor, UC Davis

Professor Paul Erickson, of UC Davis, specializes in thermal science and renewable energy technology. He leads the UC Davis Energy Research Laboratory, focusing on advancing energy conversion, gas-to-liquid technologies, endothermic fuels, and novel fuel utilization in combustion and electrochemical systems. With expertise in enhancing heat and mass transfer in reacting flows, he is also the Graduate Program Chair for the Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Department at UC Davis.

Fondahl, Lauren - Biosolids Coordinator, US EPA Region 9

Lauren Fondahl is the Biosolids Coordinator for US EPA Region 9, covering Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, the Pacific Island territories, and Tribal nations. She oversees compliance for biosolids management, providing guidance on EPA regulations and biosolids language in NPDES permits. Lauren also collaborates with EPA headquarters and the Pathogen Equivalency Committee to interpret EPA's biosolids standards under 40 CFR 503.

Greef, Jeff - CEO, Plumas Wood Fiber

Jeff Greef, a retired building inspector in Plumas County, California, saw his home survive the 2021 Dixie Fire due to proactive biomass clearing. Since then, he has focused on addressing excess biomass in western forests by founding Plumas Wood Fiber, engaging in controlled burns, and exploring biofuel production. With a background in ancient history, woodworking, and building inspection, Greef now advocates for turning forest biomass into a resource to reduce fire risk and create materials for agriculture and potentially jet fuel.

Guerra, Regina - CEO, Be the Earth

Be the Earth operates in the emerging field of Natural Organic Reduction (NOR), or body composting. Inspired by a friend studying mortuary science, Founder and CEO Regina launched the company to offer an environmentally conscious deathcare option. With NOR set to debut in California in 2027, Regina is currently focused on research and development to bring this sustainable alternative to her community, honoring both loved ones and the planet.

Hart, Mike - Chief Executive Officer, Sierra Railroad Company

Mike Hart, CEO of Sierra Railroad Company for 30 years, has led its divisions to significant environmental milestones, including developing America's first hybrid hydrogen locomotives. His company, Sierra Northern Railway, was named the "Most Environmental Railroad" in 2024. As CEO of Sierra Energy, he collaborates with public agencies, academia, and industry to advance zero-emission technologies like FastOx gasification, which converts waste into clean energy. Hart has received honors like the U.S. EPA's "Environmental Hero" and Obama's "Champion of Change." He is an alumnus of UC Davis, Singularity University, and Stanford's Advanced Management Program, and an Edmund Hillary Fellow.

Kaffka, Stephen - Emeritus Professor, UC Davis

Dr. Stephen Kaffka is an emeritus professor of cooperative extension agronomist at UC Davis and Director of the California Biomass Collaborative. His research focuses on crop production, resource efficiency, sustainable farming, and biomass production on salt-affected lands. He has worked on projects in the San Joaquin Valley and Klamath Basin, as well as alternative crops, dairy nutrient recovery, and IPM in sugar beet production. Dr. Kaffka has advised agencies including the California Energy Commission, USEPA, and California Air Resources Board on bioenergy and sustainability. He co-authored the SCOPE report on bioenergy and led the Long-Term Research on Agricultural Systems Project from 2003 to 2007.

Kolodji, Brian - Founder, Black Swan, LLC

Mr. Kolodji is the founder of Black Swan, LLC, and Kolodji Corp, focusing on Intellectual Property and Energy Carbon Management, respectively. With over 40 years of experience in chemical engineering, he has developed solutions for issues like acid rain, process safety, and offshore risk management. As a key figure at AIChE Spring National Meetings from 2018 to 2020, he has been recognized for his Black Swan Cycle, aimed at reducing greenhouse gases. His current focus is on addressing the energy, water, and food nexus to reverse global warming by 2030.

Kux, Rod - Logistics & Operations Lead, TakaChar

Results-driven logistics and operations leader with 15+ years of experience in team building, project management, and process optimization. Known for establishing strategic relationships and delivering exceptional customer experiences to achieve performance goals and high satisfaction rates. Skilled in tackling technical and operational challenges through strong communication, critical thinking, and a focus on efficiency and continuous improvement.

La Saponara, Valeria - Professor & Vice Chair, UC Davis

Valeria La Saponara is Professor and Vice Chair for Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at UC Davis. With a Ph.D. in aerospace engineering from Georgia Tech, she has focused much of her career on materials for aerospace, civil, naval, and wind energy applications. Her recent work explores mycelium composites for sustainable engineering, including compostable wind turbine blades and bioremediation. A recipient of the NSF CAREER Award and a Fellow of ASME, Dr. La Saponara co-founded a

start-up for designing children's helmets and won 3rd place in the 2023 Future is Fungi Award with UC Davis's "Mycotextile Futures" team.

Long, Michael - Principal, Long Thermochemical

Michael Long, Principal of Long Thermochemical, offers strategic advisory and engineering services in the bioresource and decarbonization sectors. With a decade of experience in thermochemical R&D and commercialization, he supports clients in bioresource assessment, project development, and system commissioning. Formerly Director of R&D at West Biofuels, he led projects on thermochemical synthesis and renewable natural gas production. He holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from UC San Diego and is a PhD candidate in Biological Systems Engineering at UC Davis.

Matiasek, Sandrine - Associate Professor, CSU Chico

Dr. Sandrine Matiasek is an Associate Professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at CSU Chico. She earned her PhD in Hydrological Sciences from UC Davis, focusing on organic matter cycling in irrigated watersheds. At Chico State, she advises student researchers and teaches courses on Soils, Pollution Science, and Natural Water Systems. Her research explores how land use affects water chemistry, with emphasis on urban storm runoff, wildland-urban fire impacts, and regenerative agriculture.

Mazet, Jonna - Vice Provost, UC Davis

Dr. Jonna Mazet, DVM, MPVM, PhD, is Vice Provost for Grand Challenges at UC Davis and a Chancellor's Leadership Distinguished Professor of Epidemiology. As founder of the One Health Institute, she focuses on global health, particularly emerging infectious diseases and conservation challenges. She led PREDICT, a \$200 million early-warning project for viral emergence with USAID, and was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2013. Dr. Mazet serves on multiple national committees addressing microbial threats, emerging diseases, and health policy, including advising on the COVID-19 crisis.

McDonald, Karen - Professor Emerita, UC Davis

Dr. McDonald is a Distinguished Professor Emerita of Chemical Engineering at UC Davis, specializing in plant-based biomanufacturing for producing recombinant proteins in resource-limited environments. Her research integrates synthetic biology, bioprocess engineering, and techno-economic analyses to develop efficient, cost-effective biomanufacturing systems. She has held leadership roles with BioMADE, iCAMP, and NASA's CUBES, and is an international partner with Australia's Center of Excellence in Plants for Space. A Fellow of the AIChE, she received the 2022 D.I.C. Wang Award for Excellence in Biochemical Engineering.

Mora, Fernando - Realtor, Pomo Tribe

Fernando Mora, of the Pomo Tribe, is spearheading a broad coalition intent on workforce development and bioenergy integration for forest product management. Fernando is a realtor with decades of project development experience in housing, industrial operations, and biomass conversion.

Nandi, Somen - Global HealthShare Initiative Managing Director

Dr. Nandi is the Managing Director of the Global HealthShare® Initiative (GHS) at UC Davis. Previously, he spent 12 years at Ventria Bioscience, leading the molecular breeding team to produce high levels of recombinant therapeutic proteins in rice. He also contributed to cereal grain gene expression as a Research Fellow at the International Rice Research Institute. Dr. Nandi has expertise in large-scale protein process development and regulatory affairs for plant-made pharmaceuticals. He earned his Ph.D. from Bose Institute, Calcutta, and has received honors like the Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship and the International Young Scientist Award from IUBMB.

Nassiri, Somayeh - Associate Professor, UC Davis

Dr. Nassiri is a faculty member at the University of California Pavement Research Center (UCPRC), focusing on pavement sustainability. Her work involves using sustainable materials, optimizing construction practices, and improving structural design for new, rehabilitated, and repaired pavements to enhance durability and extend their life cycle.

Noble, Dan - Founder, Noble Bioresources, Inc.

Dan Noble is the Founder of Noble Bioresources, Inc., a California-based bioproducts market and industry development firm. He has over 50 years of experience in environmental education, market research, and strategic consulting. Since 2002, he has also served as Executive Director of the Association of Compost Producers, advancing compost utilization and sustainable soil management. His work focuses on developing regenerative organics management and profitable bioproduct businesses to support local renewable economies. He holds degrees in Biology, Chemistry, Molecular Biology, and Education.

Parikh, Sanjal - Associate Professor, UC Davis

Dr. Sanjal J. Parikh is an Associate Professor of Soil Chemistry at UC Davis, focusing on biogeochemical processes impacting sustainable agriculture, climate change, soil remediation, biomass recycling, and food security. He specializes in developing zero-waste processes and recycling nutrients and carbon as soil amendments. Dr. Parikh has published over 110 scholarly works and serves as Chair of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Faculty Executive Committee. He is also the Soil Chemistry Technical Editor for the Soil Science Society of America Journal and an Associate Editor for California Agriculture and Earth Critical Zone.

Paxon, Lynda - Principal, Waste Reduction Enterprises, LLC/Phenix Resources

Lynda Loie Scarlett Paxton, a Native Californian and registered member of the Choctaw Nation, is a retired financial planner with over 33 years of experience as the sole practitioner of Paxton Planning Service. Her environmental work spans 20 years, including a Mott Foundation grant for toxics education, founding membership in California Communities Against Toxics (CCAT), and serving on the Los Angeles Waste Commission. She is a graduate of Women's Economic Ventures and co-owner of Phenix Resources, and was awarded third place in Cal Poly's 2015 Hothouse Innovator's award.

Rich, Nathan - CEO, Strong Heart Consulting

Nathan is an Indigenous Natural Resource Management Specialist with 20 years of experience in Tribal environmental programs across Mendocino, Lake, and Sonoma Counties. His expertise includes water management, system health, and the preservation of environmental and cultural resources. For the past six years, he has served as a Tribal Representative on the Leadership Council of the North Coast Resource Partnership, focusing on community resilience, ecological restoration, and strategic technology application.

Ruan, Roger - Chief Technology Officer, Resynergi

Dr. Roger Ruan, Ph.D., is the Chief Technology Officer at Resynergi and continues to serve as a technology advisor. He is also the Director of the Center for Biorefining and a Professor in the Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering Department at the University of Minnesota. His research focuses on thermochemical and biological conversion of solid wastes, including waste plastics, and the utilization of liquid wastes.

Shipley, Greg - CEO, BioEnergy Design, LLC

Greg Shipley is CEO of BioEnergy Design, LLC and part-owner of an operating biomass conversion facility in central Oregon. BioEnergy Design is currently finalizing plans for a large biorefinery in the Central Valley, California.

Simmons, Christopher - Professor & Chair, UC Davis

Christopher Simmons is Professor and Chair of the Department of Food Science and Technology at UC Davis. His research focuses on recycling and adding value to residual organic matter from the food system, transforming it into bioenergy, animal feeds, soil amendments, or pest-control compounds. Leveraging California's organic side streams, he collaborates with growers, commodity groups, and companies to develop scalable solutions.

Theroux, Michael - Vice President, JDMT, Inc.

Michael Theroux is a classically trained botanist and plant ecologist with decades of field experience, including serving as the lead field botanist for a multi-year assessment of the Grand Canyon's riparian corridor, where he published a new plant species. Now retired as a California Registered Environmental Health Specialist, he is a Principal consultant specializing in waste conversion and resource recovery. He is also the founder and Editor of an internationally recognized online platform focused on sustainable conversion of waste and biomass to heat, power, fuels, and chemicals.

Trowbridge, Darek - Founder, Old World Winery

Darek Trowbridge is a fourth-generation farmer in Sonoma County's Russian River Valley and founder of Old World Winery, one of California's first natural wineries and regenerative farms. In 2012, he developed a composted mulch to revive 120-year-old vines, leading to the creation of Soil Carbon Management Company. His product, Primordial Biome Mulch, is now used on multiple farms, earning recognition and support from local agencies for its CO2 sequestration capabilities. Darek holds a Bachelor's in Viticulture from Cal Poly and a Master's in Agricultural Chemistry from CSU Fresno.

Wilson, Kelpie - Engineer and Consultant, Wilson Biochar Associates

Kelpie Wilson is an engineer and consultant in the biochar industry since 2008, focusing on developing biochar systems from waste biomass through her company, Wilson Biochar, LLC. A founding board member of the US Biochar Initiative, she served on the board from 2010 to 2022. She holds a B.S. in mechanical engineering from California State University, Chico, and is the author of The Biochar Handbook, published in 2024.

Yazdani, Ramin - Associate Professional Researcher, Air Quality Research Center

Dr. Ramin Yazdani, P.E., is an Associate Professional Researcher at the UC Davis Air Quality Research Center with 32 years of expertise in solid waste management, GHG emissions reduction, and sustainable energy systems. A registered Professional Engineer in California, he has led projects in anaerobic digestion, composting, and landfill gas-to-energy conversion, securing over \$8.5 million in research funding. Formerly the Director of Integrated Waste Management for Yolo County, Dr. Yazdani holds a patent in landfill gas capture technology and is a recognized leader in California's waste management sector.

Yeo, Boon-Ling - Project Scientist, UC Davis

Boon-Ling Yeo is a Project Scientist at UC Davis with over ten years of experience in decarbonization, climate mitigation, and bioenergy development. She holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Policy and has supported cleantech startups through the Cleantech Open accelerator. Boon-Ling is passionate about advancing sustainability and addressing the global climate crisis.

Yonkoski, Joseph - Superintendent, UC Davis

Joseph Yonkoski is the Superintendent of the Central Heating and Cooling Plant at UC Davis, managing operations, assets, and staff. A licensed chemical engineer with a degree from The University of Michigan, he previously led operations at the campus's Renewable Energy Anaerobic Digester Facility, helping secure \$4.8M in grant funding from CalRecycle for upgrades.

Zhang, Angel - Environmental Scientist, CalRecycle

Angel Zhang is an Environmental Scientist at CalRecycle's Statewide Technical and Analytical Resources Branch, supporting SB 1383's goal to divert organic waste from landfills. As a technical advisor, she provides scientific analyses for grants related to compost facilities and technology. She is also involved in repurposing organic waste into products like compost filter socks, serving as a contract manager and contributing to related research reports.

Zhang, Ruihong - Professor, UC Davis

Dr. Ruihong Zhang is a Professor in the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering at UC Davis and a leading expert in bioenergy, biofuel production, waste treatment, and environmental quality management. She has successfully transferred innovative technologies from her lab to commercial enterprises.

Ziegenbein, Jeff - President, CA Association of Compost Producers

Jeff Ziegenbein has been composting in California for over 30 years. He is President of the CA Association of Compost Producers and on the Board of the Compost Research and Education Foundation. Jeff recently joined WM as Senior Manager of Organics to help expand composting in California.