

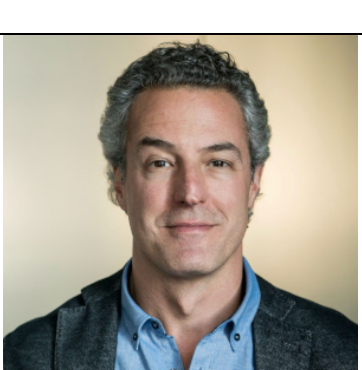



Speaker Bios

	<p><u>Acierto, Krystal – Deputy Secretary for Public Policy, Cal EPA</u> Krystal Acierto was appointed Deputy Secretary for Public Policy at the California Environmental Protection Agency by Governor Gavin Newsom in July 2023. Previously, she served as a Principal Program Budget Analyst at the California Department of Finance, focusing on climate and environmental initiatives. She holds a Master of Public Policy and Administration from California State University, Sacramento, and dual bachelor’s degrees from the University of California, Santa Cruz.</p>
	<p><u>Adams, Russel – President/CEO, Advanced Organic Methods Inc.</u> Russel Adams is a California Civil Engineer. In 2011, he was a founding Managing Member of Advanced Organic Methods LLC., and currently serves as the President and CEO of the successor Corporation formed in 2024. 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.</p>
	<p><u>Adler, Dan - Deputy Director for Climate Finance, IBank</u> 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.</p>
	<p><u>Balslev, Krud – Vice President, Strategic Alliances</u> Knud Balslev, responsible for strategic alliances at Mercurius Biorefining since 2009, is developing and nurturing partnerships with woody biomass feedstock providers, technology vendors, oil refineries and offtake partners for sustainable aviation-, diesel- and marine-fuels. He is instrumental with the risk management aspects for this important demonstration plant phase, for funding, planning, construction and operation. Before that, he contributed to the roll-out of chip payment cards in the US. Previously, Knud was the US Global Alliance Manager at HP, based in Europe.</p>



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 – Vice President of Quality and R & D, 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, Jim – Wood & Biomass Utilization Program Manager, USFS

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 Grand Challenges

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 Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering

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 – Founder and 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 - CEO, Sierra Energy; President, Sierra Railroad Company

Mike Hart has been CEO of Sierra Railroad Company for 30 years, leading it to notable environmental achievements, including developing America’s first hybrid hydrogen locomotives. As CEO of Sierra Energy, he advances zero-emission technologies like FastOx gasification, which converts waste into clean energy. Hart’s work has earned him honors from the U.S. EPA, Railway Age, and the Obama administration. He is a UC Davis, Singularity University, and Stanford Business School alumnus and an Edmund Hillary Fellow in New Zealand.



Kaffka, Stephen - Emeritus Professor, UC Davis Cooperative Extension Agronomist

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

	<p>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.</p>
	<p><u>Kolodji, Brian – Founder and CEO, Kolodji Corp/Black Swan LLC</u> 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.</p>
	<p><u>Kux, Rod - Operations Lead, TakaChar Limited</u> 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.</p>
	<p><u>La Saponara, Valeria - Professor, UC Davis Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering</u> Valeria La Saponara is a Professor and Vice Chair of Undergraduate Studies in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at UC Davis. Holding a Ph.D. from Georgia Tech, her research focuses on materials for aerospace, civil, and renewable energy uses, with recent work in sustainable mycelium composites for compostable wind turbines and bioremediation. An NSF CAREER Award recipient and ASME Fellow, she also co-founded a start-up for children’s helmet design and won 3rd place in the 2023 "Future is Fungi" Award with UC Davis's "Mycotextile Futures" team.</p>



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.



Lono-Batura, Maile – Director of Renewable Resource Program, CASA

Maile Lono-Batura is the incoming Director of Renewable Resources for the California Association of Sanitation Agencies, with a background as Director of Sustainable Biosolids Programs at the Water Environment Federation. She previously led Northwest Biosolids as Executive Director for 22 years, spearheading biosolids research and recycling initiatives. Maile holds degrees in Community & Environmental Planning and Nonprofit Leadership and is a Certified Compost Facility Operator and Board-Certified Environmental Scientist. She was recognized as a 40 Under 40 Rising Star by AAEEES in 2022.



Matiasek, Sandrine - Associate Professor, CSU Chico Earth & Environmental Sciences

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.



Mayer, Eric – Founder, NapaChar

Eric Mayer holds a PhD in Environmental Engineering from Stanford University, where he specialized in fluid mechanics and hydrology, contributing to advancements in global climate simulations. Seeking a more direct impact on the climate crisis, he founded Napachar, a company dedicated to converting vineyard and forestry waste into biochar. Utilizing flame-cap kilns, Napachar processes materials like pulled vines and forestry slash,

transforming them into biochar that enriches soil and sequesters carbon.



Mazet, Jonna - Vice Provost, UC Davis Grand Challenges

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 Chemical Engineering

Karen 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 housi industrial operations, and biomass conversion.



Nandi, Somen – Adjunct Faculty, UC Davis Chemical Engineering; Founder & Managing Director, Global Healthshare Initiative

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 - Professor, UC Davis Civil and Environmental Engineering

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.



Nelson, Erik – Waste Management Consultant

With more than 25 years in the Waste Management and Recycling industry, Erik's primary area of expertise is in maximizing material diversion by way of waste stream characterization, analysis, and management, applying these skills to individual businesses to achieve a material efficient, cost-effective, and regulatory compliant scenario.



Noble, Dan – President, 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, Sanjai - Associate Professor, UC Davis Dept of Land, Air, and Water Resources

Dr. Sanjai 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.



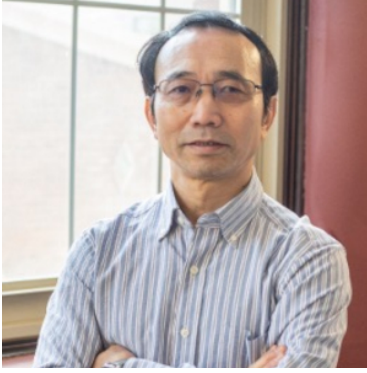
Paxton, Lynda - Principal, Waste Reduction Enterprises, LLC/Phenix Resources

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, Tribal Representative for North Coast Resource Partnership

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 – Professor, University of Minnesota Department of Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering; Center for Biorefining

Dr. Roger Ruan is the Chief Technology Officer and technology advisor at Resynergi. 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 and liquid wastes, including waste plastics.



Shipley, Greg – CEO and Founder, 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 – Department Chair and Professor, UC Davis Food Science & Technology

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 - Owner, 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 SLO and a Master's in Agricultural Chemistry from CSU Fresno.



Yazdani, Ramin - Associate Professional Researcher, UC Davis 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 - Research Scientist, UC Davis Biological and Agricultural Engineering

Boon-Ling Yeo, a Research Scientist at UC Davis, specializes in converting agricultural byproducts and forest residue into sustainable bioenergy and bioproducts. With a Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Policy, she supports cleantech startups and focuses on bio-based solutions for decarbonization and climate mitigation. Boon-Ling is committed to advancing scalable, impactful solutions for a low-carbon future.



Yonkoski, Joseph - Superintendent, UC Davis Central Heating and Cooling Plant

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.



Youtsey, Gabriel – Chief Innovation Officer, UC Davis Agriculture and Natural Resources

Business and technology leader with expertise in driving transformative innovation at the intersection of food, agriculture, environmental sustainability, and technology. Skilled at building successful teams across campus, corporate, and field environments, with a talent for identifying game-changing opportunities and developing cohesive strategies. Proven track record in leading complex projects, fostering open innovation, and forging strategic partnerships. Committed to a humble, service-oriented approach that delivers outstanding results.



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 Biological and Agricultural Engineering

Professor in the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering at University of California, Davis (UC Davis) and a leading expert in the fields of bioprocessing and bioenvironmental engineering. She is Fellow of American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers. She has successfully developed and commercialized new bioconversion and bioprocessing technologies and participated in several start-up companies. Her research and development projects include production and application of bioenergy, biochemicals and biofertilizers, and sustainable food production.



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.