

CESA Members Meeting 2026 Participant Bios



Nayan Alailima-Rose
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Nayantara Alailima-Rose is Program Manager for the Portland Solar Access Program (PSAP) at Energy Trust of Oregon. Through her work with PSAP, a city-funded grant program, Nayan collaborates with city leaders, community-based organizations, trade allies, and workforce development partners to develop a program that will provide comprehensive renewable energy and enabling repairs support to over 1,000 single- and multi-family, low-income households at no cost. The program will reduce energy burden, build resilience, and provide workforce development and training opportunities. Nayan has over a decade of experience in the energy efficiency and renewable energy field. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Architecture from the Savannah College of Art and Design.



Shauna Beland
Director, Energy Programs and Policy
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Shauna Beland is a clean energy policy and program management leader with more than a decade of experience advancing renewable energy, workforce development, and energy equity initiatives in Rhode Island. In her role with OER, she oversees a broad portfolio of renewable energy and clean energy programs, including solar initiatives, workforce development efforts, energy storage strategy, and low- and moderate-income solar access programs. Her work combines strategic planning, program design, stakeholder engagement, regulatory coordination, and team leadership to help guide Rhode Island toward a more affordable, reliable, and equitable clean energy future. Previously, she worked for the Renewable Energy Fund at Rhode Island Commerce and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center. Shauna has BAs in History and International Studies from Elon University, graduate certificates from Cornell and UMass Amherst and is a Board member and co-chair of the Rhode Island Chapter of New England Women in Energy and Environment.

Eduardo Beltran Ortega
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Bettina Bergoo (CESA Board Member)

Director, Affordability

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Bettina Bergoo is the Deputy Director at the Virginia Department of Energy. In this role, she supports all the agency's divisions with a particular focus on implementation of the 2026 Virginia Energy Plan, expanding energy affordability initiatives, developing affordable and reliable energy policies, strengthening internal processes, and ensuring Virginians understand the programs and services available to them. Bergoo joined Virginia Energy in 2021, most recently serving as Director of Affordability and Competition. Previously, she was a Green Finance Fellow with the Natural Resources Defense Council, where she split her time between increasing investments in green infrastructure and expanding access to clean energy in affordable multifamily housing. Previous to that, she worked in the Department of Defense focused on energy management and energy resilience on military bases. She has also worked in the off-grid energy sector and incubated clean energy social enterprises in East Africa and India. She earned her bachelor's degree from Georgetown University and master's degree in public policy from Princeton University.

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Alessandra Carreon

Chief Climate Officer

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Alessandra Carreon is the Chief Climate Officer at Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). In this role, Carreon oversees the [Office of Climate and Energy \(OCE\)](#), driving action to fulfill the state's mission to address climate change impacts as outlined in the state's MI Healthy Climate Plan. The office works on developing and implementing policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance energy efficiency, and support an equitable and affordable transition to renewable energy sources. Before joining EGLE, Carreon was appointed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer to the Michigan Public Service Commission as the first Asian-American commissioner in state history. Previously, Carreon also held key roles in the private and nonprofit sectors, including leading projects focused on electric vehicle battery circularity and equitable fleet electrification in carbon-free transportation at RMI and managing responsible raw material sourcing at Ford Motor Company. Alessandra is a licensed Professional Engineer and holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from Rice University, as well as a Master of Business Administration from the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business.



Sergio Carrillo

Managing Director, Clean Energy Incentive Programs
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Sergio G. Carrillo is Managing Director of Clean Energy Incentive Programs at the Connecticut Green Bank, where he leads the design, implementation, and oversight of statewide programs that advance Connecticut's clean energy goals, attract private capital, and accelerate the deployment of distributed energy resources. Since joining the Green Bank in 2020, Sergio has helped enable the deployment of more than 380 MW of residential rooftop solar across 46,000 homes, attracting \$1.3 billion in capital investment and providing \$150 million in incentives. He also oversees the statewide Energy Storage Solutions Program, which is designed to deploy 580 MW of behind-the-meter battery storage capacity by 2030.



Luke Dillingham

Departmental Analyst
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Luke Dillingham is the manager of the Reliable Energy Siting through Technical Engagement and Planning (R-STEP) program at the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy. His work centers around creating resources for local governments in Michigan to understand utility-scale renewable energy development and inform local zoning and land use decisions.



Samantha Donalds

Communications Director
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As Communications Director for Clean Energy Group and Clean Energy States Alliance, Samantha's areas of responsibility include CEG and CESA's websites, newsletters, social media, and media relations, as well as promotion and coordination for publications, events, and awards. Samantha previously worked as an administrator at Fairewinds Energy Education and as a research assistant in the environmental studies department at Brown University. Samantha graduated from Mount Holyoke College with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and a minor in French, and she completed coursework at Vermont Law School. Outside of work, Samantha serves on the Board of Directors for the Fletcher Free Library in Burlington, Vermont.



Ben Dueweke

Director

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Ben Dueweke is the Director of the Michigan Climate Investment Hub where he works to mobilize capital for climate and clean energy in the state. The Hub strengthens the connective and replicable infrastructure that enables climate investment to flow into and across Michigan - connecting capital, communities, and institutions. Ben is an experienced program leader and advocate for equitable clean energy solutions, with a strong background in community-driven initiatives and workforce development. Before his role with the Hub, he spent over a dozen years working at Walker-Miller Energy Services where he played a key role in elevating the organization's reputation as a critical and effective member of the State's rapidly developing energy efficiency and decarbonization ecosystem.



Sarah Duffy (CESA Board Member)

Director of External Affairs

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Sarah Duffy is the Director of External Affairs of the Illinois Power Agency (IPA), an independent state agency tasked with developing procurement plans and solar energy incentive programs. Sarah joined the Agency in 2021, administering renewable energy programs and advising on issues ranging from labor requirements to emerging energy technologies. Sarah has deep experience in the state climate policy space, most recently as the North American Government Affairs Manager for the Under2 Coalition, a global network of subnational governments leading on climate action. She previously worked for Georgetown Climate Center where she consulted for state policymakers on electricity policy and federal rulemaking, and for the Emmett Institute on Climate Change and Environmental Law at the UCLA School of Law, where she was a Shapiro Fellow. Sarah earned her JD and bachelor's degree from the Program in the Environment at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Julia Field

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**Brian Granahan**

Director

Illinois Power Agency

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Brian Granahan is the Director of the Illinois Power Agency (IPA). As Director, Brian oversees the development and implementation of plans to procure electricity and clean energy resources for customers of Illinois electric utilities. This work includes development of the IPA's Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, which outlines the state's approach to supporting new distributed generation and community solar projects, as well as overseeing programs providing incentives to support those projects. Previously, Brian served as IPA's Chief Legal Counsel, beginning with the Agency in April 2014. Brian began his career as an associate with Sidley Austin LLP and worked as clean energy advocate and staff attorney with Environment Illinois before shifting to the public sector and serving as a policy advisor to two Chairmen at the Illinois Commerce Commission. Prior to joining the IPA, Brian was a Vice President with the strategic consulting firm of Tur Partners LLC working to incubate a startup low-profit, limited liability company (L3C) focused on cleantech adoption by municipal governments. Brian is a former board member of the Illinois Environmental Council and Green Economy Chicago, and most recently served as the Vice Chairman of the Clean Energy States Alliance Board of Directors. Brian holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science with Honors from the University of Iowa and a juris doctor degree from New York University School of Law.

**Megha Hamal**

Chief Strategy & Communications Officer

Illinois Power Agency

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Megha Hamal is the Chief Strategy and Communications Officer of the Illinois Power Agency (IPA), where she leads strategic initiatives that advance the Agency's key priorities, strengthen stakeholder engagement, and position the IPA as a leader in Illinois' clean energy sector. She leads the Agency's multidisciplinary teams responsible for external and internal communications, media relations, external affairs, data analytics, and thought leadership. With more than 15 years of cross-sector experience in strategic communications, public relations, and marketing, Megha has had leadership roles in government, the private sector, and consulting. Her work has been featured in national and international media, including the Wall Street Journal, Entrepreneur Magazine, Crain's Chicago Business, Chicago Tribune, and Chicago Sun-Times. She holds a bachelor's degree in advertising from Minnesota State University and a master's degree in mass media from University of Illinois.



Abbie Hasenfus

Renewable Energy Programs Manager
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Abbie Hasenfus is the Chief of Renewable Energy Program Development with the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources. In this role, she manages the RI Agricultural Energy Grant program, the 40101(d) Grid Resilience Formula Grant program for states and tribes, and the RI Clean Energy Internship Program, which connects college students in Rhode Island with internships in the clean energy sector. She also played a pivotal role in the application and implementation of RI's Solar For All grant. Her areas of focus in the office straddle solar, energy storage, workforce development, and stakeholder engagement.



Nate Hausman

Senior Project Director
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Nate Hausman is a Senior Project Director at CESA, where he leads the VPP Acceleration Initiative, a national effort to scale Virtual Power Plants across the United States. He brings more than a decade of experience advancing clean energy through program design, financing strategies, and market transformation initiatives. Nate previously served at CESA from 2013 to 2021, focusing on solar energy policy and program development, before returning to the organization in 2026. During the intervening years, he held positions with the Center for Sustainable Energy, Inclusive Prosperity Capital, Green Mountain Power, and the World Resources Institute, where he worked to expand access to clean energy solutions. Nate holds a J.D. with a certificate in Environmental and Natural Resources Law from Lewis & Clark Law School and a B.A. from Colorado College.

Paul Heitmann

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Sabrina Jandreau

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Monique Jenkins

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Max Joel

Director, NY-Sun Initiative

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Max Joel is the Director of the NY-Sun Initiative at the New York State Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA). NY-Sun is a statewide initiative to build 10.5 Gigawatts of distributed solar by 2030. New York is nation's leading community solar market, with over 4 GW operational. NY-Sun includes the Solar Energy Equity Framework, which commits more than \$400 million to projects benefitting low-and-moderate income households, affordable housing, disadvantaged communities and environmental justice communities. At NYSERDA, Max also supports the EmPower+ home weatherization program for low-and-moderate income households and oversees the implementation of New York's distributed energy storage programs. In addition to his role at NYSERDA, from 2023-2024 Max served as a Subject Matter Expert to the United States Treasury Department supporting the implementation of the Low-Income Communities Bonus Tax Credit authorized by the Inflation Reduction Act.



Stefanie Keohane (CESA Board Member)

Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives

Connecticut Green Bank

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Stefanie joined the Connecticut Green Bank's Innovation team as the Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives in 2024. In this role, she supports the development of new markets where the Green Bank can make an impact and support the clean economy, and she oversees the Green Bank's federal funds strategy. Previously, Stefanie led the Clean and Affordable Energy team at the Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). At PURA, Stefanie advanced a range of clean energy, rate design, and energy affordability policies and programs, including the establishment of Connecticut's electric vehicle charging program for light-duty vehicles and the creation of a low-income discount rate for residential electric customers. Stefanie holds a master's degree from the Yale School of the Environment and a B.A. in International Affairs and Environmental Science from Lafayette College. Stefanie received the "Rising Star" award from the Connecticut Power and Energy Society in 2020. A Connecticut native, she keeps busy raising her three children with her husband.



Heidi Kunsch

Environmental Group Manager

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Heidi Kunsch serves as an Environmental Group Manager at the PA Dept. of Environmental Protection's Energy Programs Office, where she oversees a team of four staff. Her team's focus areas include: Home Energy Rebates, Training for Residential Energy Contractors (TREC), State Energy Program (SEP), virtual power plants, and V2G. She also supports the PA GreenGov Council on developing a lead-by-example Building Performance Standard policy, as well as sustainable building guidelines for Commonwealth buildings. Prior to DEP, she served as Director of the US Green Building Council Central PA chapter. Since 2007, Heidi has been a LEED Accredited Professional in Building Design & Construction.



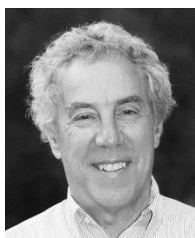
Ann Larson

Deputy Director

Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

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Ann Larson is Deputy Director for the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), where she helps guide the department's policy direction and long-term strategic priorities. She oversees EGLE's public-facing offices, including climate and energy, the Great Lakes, the department's environmental justice and clean water public advocates, legislative affairs, and public information. Ann brings nearly two decades of experience in environmental policy, intergovernmental relations, and public-sector leadership. Before returning to Michigan, she held senior roles in Washington State, advising on environmental, climate, and energy policy and leading major multi-jurisdictional restoration and resilience initiatives. A wildlife biologist by training, Ann holds degrees in Biology and Anthropology from the University of Washington. She was born and raised in Grand Rapids.



Warren Leon

Executive Director

Clean Energy States Alliance

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Warren Leon was appointed Executive Director of Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA) in June 2013, after serving CESA in several other capacities, including as Deputy Director. He oversees the organization's day-to-day operations and leads strategy development. He has written and edited many reports for CESA, including serving as lead author for *Advice for States on 100% Clean Energy Planning*, *Returning Champions: State Clean Energy Leadership Since 2015*, and *Solar with Justice: Strategies for Powering Up Under-Resourced Communities and Growing an Inclusive Solar Market*. Prior to working for CESA, Warren was Director of the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust, Executive Director of the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association, and Deputy Director for Programs at the Union of Concerned Scientists. He co-authored the influential book *The Consumer's Guide to Effective Environmental Choices*. He holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University.



Jeremy Lewis (CESA Board Member)
Deputy Director
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Jeremy Lewis serves as the Deputy Director for the New Mexico State Energy Office housed at the New Mexico Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department's Energy Conservation and Management Division. From 2019 to 2023, Jeremy was the Office of Renewable Energy Director at the New Mexico State Land Office where he launched the newly created Renewable Energy Office to lease state trust land for renewable energy projects. He guided the State Land Office's growth to their one-gigawatt portfolio of wind and solar leases. Prior to 2019, Jeremy was Planning Bureau Chief for the New Mexico Energy Conservation and Management Division, where for ten years he served to forward programs, policies, projects, and education on renewable energy, energy efficiency, and alternative fuels/transportation. He has worked as a transmission policy analyst with Western Resource Advocates to increase renewable energy access to the grid; with the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps to forward positive youth development and conservation in Northern New Mexico; and as a Peace Corps Volunteer to expand sustainable agriculture in Cameroon, West Africa. He has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Massachusetts and a Masters of Community and Regional Planning degree from the University of New Mexico.



Olivia Matthews
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Olivia Matthews is the Program Associate III of the Illinois Power Agency (IPA), an independent state agency tasked with developing procurement plans and conducting energy, capacity, and renewables procurement events and developing solar energy incentive programs. Olivia joined the IPA in 2022. In this role, she leads, tracks, and develops projects related to Illinois Shines, an IPA-administered incentive program. She is responsible for managing the Mentorship Program and overseeing the Illinois Shines outreach efforts. Prior to joining the IPA, Olivia served as a Compliance Associate for Erie Family Health Center, where she was responsible for achieving and sustaining compliance with regulatory standards such as Joint Commission, OSHA, and HRSA. In addition, Olivia has worked with various agencies including the Senate Appropriations Committee and the EPA.



Will McNamara

Policy Analyst

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Will McNamara is the Principal Investigator for the Long Duration Energy Storage (LDES) National Consortium, representing Sandia National Laboratories as the lead lab for this effort. He also leads the Policy & Regulations Tiger Team for the National Consortium. Will serves as Grid Energy Storage Policy Analyst for Sandia National Laboratories with a focus on energy storage policy development at the federal and state levels. Will has spent his entire 30-year career in the energy and utilities industry with a concentration on regulatory and legislative policy. He has served as a lobbyist in California and has represented major utilities across the U.S. in numerous jurisdictions in proceedings pertaining to integrated resource planning, procurement, cost recovery, rate design, and the development of policymaking best practices. Will's areas of subject matter expertise, in addition to LDES policy, include distributed energy resources, AMI/smart grid, renewables, and competitive retail markets.



Galen Nelson (CESA Board Chair)

Climate Finance Fellow

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Galen Nelson is a Climate Finance Fellow in the Massachusetts Governor's Office of Climate Innovation and Resilience (OCIR) where he is focused on exploring a variety of novel approaches to financing public and private sector climate mitigation and resilience projects drawing on his broad knowledge of the energy transition, climate technology markets, and clean energy and climate policy and program design and management experience at the municipal and state levels. Prior to joining OCIR, Galen served in various roles at the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center – the state's climatetech economic development agency – including Chief Climate Officer and Chief Program Officer. Galen led development of the organization's market transformation strategy, overseeing research and programs across the building, transportation, and net-zero grid sectors, and contributed substantially to an expansion of MassCEC's technology development program suite. Galen served on MassCEC's executive team helping to inform organizational strategy and direction. Prior to those roles, Galen led MassCEC's Innovation and Industry Support division, where he created and managed several tech to market and commercialization acceleration programs. Prior to joining MassCEC, Galen led clean energy business and green affordable housing policy and program development efforts at the City of Boston. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Colby College.

Ian O'Leary

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Todd Olinsky-Paul

Senior Project Director for Energy Storage Clean Energy Group and Clean Energy States Alliance

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At CESA, Todd directs the Energy Storage Technology Advancement Partnership (ESTAP), which aims to accelerate large scale electrical energy storage deployment through collaborative efforts between state energy agencies, US DOE Office of Electricity and Sandia National Laboratories. Todd is also the CESA lead for state energy storage policy support, directing the Energy Storage Working Group for state policymakers (ESWG), the Regulators' Energy Storage Working Group (RESWG) and the ADER (VPP) Working Group. Todd also provides direct policy and program development support to state energy agencies engaged in developing energy storage policies, programs and regulation. His recent work has focused on virtual power plants, battery storage as an efficiency measure, the economics of energy storage, and the equitable incorporation of solar+storage into state clean energy policy and programs. Todd holds an M.S. in Environmental Policy from Bard College and a B.A. from Brown University.



Kerry O'Neill

Chief Executive Officer

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Kerry E. O'Neill is CEO of Inclusive Prosperity Capital, Inc., a nonprofit clean energy financing organization that spun out of the Connecticut Green Bank to scale up impact for underserved communities and underinvested markets nationally. IPC works at the intersection of community development, clean energy finance, and climate impact using a suite of standardized products. In addition to its direct investments, IPC operates as national infrastructure for the community clean energy finance sector. Through platforms, programs, and partnerships, IPC supports community lenders, green banks, credit unions, state agencies, and other mission-driven financial institutions seeking to deploy capital into clean energy projects. Prior to joining IPC, Ms. O'Neill led the residential financing programs and low-income initiatives at the Connecticut Green Bank. Her work has given her keen insight into the institutional challenges – and opportunities – associated with resilient and clean energy investing for underserved communities.



Andrea O'Shea

Program Manager

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Andrea O'Shea is the Program Manager of the Illinois Shines solar incentive program, administered by the Illinois Power Agency (IPA). Andrea joined the IPA in 2022 as a Program Associate and transitioned to the Program Manager role for Illinois Shines in August 2025. In this role, she leads the Illinois Shines team and oversees Energy Solutions as the Program Administrator. Prior to joining the IPA, Andrea worked at the Energy Department for the Chihuahua State Government in Mexico, where she was responsible for organizing energy forums of public interest on trending topics regarding changes in the federal legal and regulatory framework for the Electricity, Oil and Gas Industries. Andrea holds a bachelor's degree in Renewable Energy Engineering with a minor on Solar Energy from the Universidad Tecnológica de Chihuahua in Chihuahua, Mexico and is currently working on obtaining a master's degree in Energy Management and Renewable Sources from the Tecnológico de Monterrey.



Asia Patterson

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Asia Patterson manages the Renewables Ready Communities Award (or RRCA) for the Michigan State Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy. This program is an additional revenue opportunity for Michigan municipalities that locally permit for large-scale renewable energy projects; her work revolves around RRCA administration and support. Asia is new to the renewable energy space and has previously worked in state-level environmental justice programming.



Natasha Perez

VP of Strategic Communications

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Natasha Perez is the Vice President of Strategic Communications at ACT. Natasha is a seasoned Executive and Project Manager renowned for her mission-driven approach and rich experience; she has a proven track record of leading large, diverse teams and driving complex strategic projects across healthcare, energy, and government sectors. Natasha brings extensive experience to NECEC from years of instrumental consultancy work spanning nonprofit programs, government organizations, and corporate entities. Before joining ACT full-time, Natasha served in pivotal roles, including Chief of Staff for the Massachusetts Senate and President of Alta Management Consulting. Passionate about contributing to innovative, fast-paced organizations, Natasha leverages her management experience, analytical skills, and communications expertise to drive impactful change. She fosters collaborative problem-solving and strategic vision, empowering teams to achieve organizational goals. Natasha holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Massachusetts and a Master of Science in Project Management with a focus on Marketing and Branding from Boston University.

Rand Perry

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Dana Philbin
Summer Policy Research Fellow
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Dana Philbin is a senior at the University of Michigan majoring in Environmental Studies with a minor in Energy Science and Policy. She interned with CESA this summer as a Summer Policy Research Fellow, working closely with Anna Ziai, Samantha Donalds, and Zareen Reza. She helped lead CESA's efforts to connect with Members' communications leads about clean energy affordability messaging. She also researched recent modifications to RPS and CES policies, wrote several blogs for CESA, and performed other communications tasks. She hopes to work in the clean energy and environmental policy fields after graduating in Spring 2027.

Dylan Poindexter

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Tony Reames (CESA Board Member)
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Dr. Tony G. Reames is a leading, international energy and environmental justice scholar and government policy advisor. Dr. Reames is the Tishman Professor of Environmental Justice and an associate professor in University of Michigan (UM) School for Environment and Sustainability (SEAS) where he founded the Urban Energy Justice Lab and the Energy Equity Project. He is the Director of the UM SEAS Detroit Sustainability Clinic. In June 2021, Dr. Reames took a professional leave of absence for public service from UM when he was appointed by President Joe Biden to serve at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) as Senior Advisor on Energy Justice. He was promoted to Deputy Director for Energy Justice. In 2022, he became the first-ever Deputy Director for Energy Justice Policy and Analysis when he established the Department's new Office of Energy Justice Policy and Analysis within the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity (now Office of Energy Justice and Equity). In July 2023 he was promoted to Principal Deputy Director for State and Community Energy Programs. Reames holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration from University of Kansas, a Master of Engineering Management from Kansas State University, and a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University.



Zareen Reza

Communications Specialist

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Zareen Reza is a Communications Specialist at the Clean Energy States Alliance and Clean Energy Group. She facilitates webinar programming, produces video content, and assists with newsletters, social media, events, and outreach. Prior to joining CESA and CEG, she was a communications intern for the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, updating their website with resources for voters and creating informative posts on social media. She was also an intern at Women’s Earth Alliance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting women environmental leaders with training and resources. Additionally, she was an assistant for the University of Connecticut’s Sustainable Community Food Systems program. Zareen graduated from the University of Connecticut with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and a minor in Writing. She was a finalist in Planet Forward’s 2023 Storyfest competition for her article on the impacts of climate change and financial stressors on the mental health of farmers.



Eric Rivero-Montes

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Eric Rivero-Montes is a chemical engineer with over 25 years of air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting and compliance experience. In his current role, he serves as the manager of the Renewal Portfolio Standard (RPS) Planning for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), and leads the team responsible for reporting SMUD’s Power Mix to the California Energy Commission (CEC). In his previous role with SMUD, Eric served as the supervisor of SMUD’s GHG Reporting team, where they reported emissions to the EPA, the California Air Resources Board (CARB), The Climate Registry (TCR), and CDP. Prior to joining SMUD, he was an engineer with URS, and ERM CVS, working primarily on Air Quality and GHG Inventories and permits for several different sources. Finally, Eric also served as a commissioner for the Sacramento Environmental Commission for 10 years (2014 to 2024).



Tepfirah Rushdan

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Tepfirah Rushdan is Director of Sustainability for the City of Detroit, where she leads efforts to create a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable city. Before joining local government, Tepfirah spent over 15 years rooted in Detroit’s community-driven environmental and food sovereignty movement. Her work bridges grassroots action with citywide policy, centering resilient neighborhoods, collective care, and environmental justice.

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Sam Schacht

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Sam Schacht is a CESA Project Director, leading CESA's Offshore Wind Accelerator, Member Services, Climatetech Innovation work, and partnership with the Clean Energy Connector. He is passionate about making clean energy affordable, accessible, and beneficial to everyone, especially disadvantaged and under-invested communities. Previously, Sam worked at Groundswell, a solar developer based in Washington, DC, where he managed subscriber engagement and support for Groundswell's community solar projects and the DC Department of Energy and Environment's Solar for All program. He worked with a wide range of government offices, community-based organizations, and individuals committed to equitable clean power. He holds a bachelor's degree in History from the University of Rochester, with minors in Sustainability, Anthropology, and German, and a Certificate in Financing and Deploying Clean Energy from Yale University's Center for Business and the Environment. Outside of work, Sam loves reading, going to the movies, and all things soccer.



Amanda Sen (Arthur)

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Amanda Sen is Project Director for Solar and Virtual Power Plants at CESA, where she works to advance distributed energy solutions and expand access to on-site clean energy generation. She brings experience in distributed energy resources, emissions reduction strategies, technical writing, and equitable energy program design. Amanda previously served as Distributed Energy Manager at the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, where she advanced rooftop solar, plug-in solar, VPPs, and other distributed energy resources across the Southeast. Before that, she worked in climate and resilience planning in South Carolina, supporting statewide initiatives focused on clean energy, sustainability, and community resilience through policy analysis, research, program design, and stakeholder engagement. She is a co-author of *South Carolina Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP)*, *Clean Air Strategies for South Carolina*, and *Disproportionate Regulation of Residential Plug-in Solar*, a SACE whitepaper on lineworker safety. Amanda is currently pursuing a graduate degree in Geography at the University of South Carolina, where her research focuses on energy burden, climate change mitigation, and geospatial analysis. She holds a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Westminster College and is a U.S. Army veteran.

Lacey Shaver

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Karen Stewart

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Regina Strong (CESA Board Member)

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Regina Strong leads the Office of the Environmental Justice Public Advocate (OEJPA) in Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). Regina also leads the state's Interagency Environmental Justice Response Team and established the Michigan Advisory Council on Environmental Justice. For more than 30 years, Regina has been a leader in public affairs, advocacy, and the fight for justice and equity. Achieving environmental justice and intentionally addressing systemic inequities are core elements of her work. Previously, she directed the Sierra Club's Michigan Beyond Coal campaign, leading a team focused on transitioning our energy generation to clean, renewable energy. Regina also previously served as executive director of Community Development Advocates of Detroit, the trade association of nonprofit developers building affordable housing in the city. Throughout her career, she has advocated and organized to address inequities, ensure communities can speak for themselves, and build collaborative opportunities for change. Regina earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Michigan State University and a Master of Science degree from Purdue University. She is an Environmental Leadership Program senior fellow in the Great Lakes Region.



Missy Stults

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Dr. Missy Stults is the Sustainability and Innovations Director for the City of Ann Arbor. In this role, she works with all city operations, residents, businesses, the University of Michigan, nonprofits, and others to achieve a just transition to community-wide carbon neutrality by 2030, as outlined in the A2ZERO Carbon Neutrality Plan. Prior to joining the City, Missy worked with cities and tribal communities around the nation to advance their climate and sustainability goals, including during her time as the Climate Director at ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability and as a consultant to philanthropic organizations. Missy has a PhD in urban resilience from the University of Michigan, a Masters in Climate and Society from Columbia University, and undergraduate degrees in Marine Biology and Environmental Science from the University of New England.

**Sally Talberg**

Chief Executive Officer

Michigan Saves

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Sally Talberg has over 25 years in energy policy and regulation. Sally is CEO of Michigan Saves, the nation's first statewide nonprofit green bank. Sally also serves on the New York Independent System Operator Board of Directors and chairs the Reliability and Markets Committee. Sally served on the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) from 2013 through 2020, with over four years as chair. Prior to her appointment to the MPSC, Sally was a senior consultant at Public Sector Consultants where she helped establish Michigan Saves and served as a policy advisor at the Public Utility Commission of Texas and the MPSC. Sally holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental and Natural Resources Policy Studies from Michigan State University and a MPA from the University of Texas at Austin.

**Laura Ward**

Energy Innovator

Department of Energy and Environment

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Laura A. Ward is an energy innovation leader and electrical engineer with experience as a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Clean Energy Innovator Fellow with the District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment's Clean Energy Division. During her fellowship, she was mentored by Thomas Bartholomew, Associate Director of the Clean Energy Division. Her work focuses on grid modernization, distributed energy resource integration, interconnection reform, advanced inverters, hosting capacity, DERMS/ADMS readiness, microgrids, Virtual Power Plants (VPPs), cybersecurity, Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), energy resilience, and energy security for critical infrastructure. She brings experience across public-sector energy programs, utility consulting, regulatory policy, and power system research, with a strong focus on translating technical innovation into practical clean energy implementation. Her work has included contributions to DOE's [Energy Grid Modernization](#) initiative and the [IEEE 1547-2018 Aligned High-DER Integration Methodology](#) interactive report. Prior to her work with DOE, Dr. Ward worked in power system consulting and research, including supporting transmission planning and grid integration studies at Siemens PTI. Her technical experience spans transmission and distribution system analysis, inverter-based resource integration, grid reliability, advanced power system modeling, grid-forming and grid-following inverter technologies, electromagnetic transient and real-time simulation, hosting capacity analysis, microgrids, battery energy storage, and renewable energy integration. Dr. Ward holds a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Texas Tech University and is an IEEE Senior Member.

**Jenny Whidden**

Media Relations Specialist

Illinois Power Agency

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Jenny Whidden is a multi-faceted communications specialist with a background in journalism. In her role as Media Relations Specialist with the Illinois Power Agency, Jenny coordinates day-to-day media requests, spearheads earned media efforts, and contributes to external communication content such as newsletters, success stories, and social media posts. She also leads the development of content for the IPA Blog. Jenny's prior work in journalism has been published by the Chicago Tribune, the New Jersey Star Ledger and others. She most recently served as the climate change reporter for the Daily Herald, the third-largest daily newspaper in Illinois. Having covered a vast range of topics in the climate sphere, Jenny is passionate about issues at the intersection of climate change and equity. When she's not reading the news, Jenny is planning her next backpacking trip or hanging out with her cat, Princeton.

**Daniel White** (CESA Board Member)

Energy Program Specialist

Department of Energy and Environment

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Daniel White has over 14 years of experience with the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) in Washington, DC. Daniel manages programs focused on providing access to tools and resources to encourage the integration of energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainability, and innovation into project developments across the District. His experience also includes leading collaborative efforts with federal, state and local partners to develop strategies and implement best practices for solar programs. Most recently, through the District of Columbia "Solar for All program", Daniel's work has focused on Community Solar project models to scale sharing the benefits of solar energy for households in the most vulnerable communities.

**Jon Wylie**

Senior Counsel

Lean & Green Michigan

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Jon Wylie is Senior Counsel at Lean & Green Michigan, where he assists with the development of and provides legal support for Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing throughout Michigan. Lean & Green Michigan serves as the PACE administrator for 63 jurisdictions across the state and has successfully closed 93 PACE projects totaling more than \$320 million in capital for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements. PACE enables property owners to finance improvements with fixed-rate, long-term financing, allowing them to realize utility and operational savings that can help offset repayment costs. Jon earned his law degree from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law and is a member of the State Bar of Michigan. He earned bachelor's degrees in Kinesiology and Political Science from Albion College. Before joining Lean & Green Michigan, Jon worked as a litigator handling employment, civil rights, and municipal matters.

**Ganita Young**

IT Manager

Illinois Power Agency

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Ganita Young is the IT Manager for the Illinois Power Agency (IPA). Ganita joined the IPA in 2022. In this role, she works closely with the IPA COO. She provides vision for and manages all information technology, telecom/VoIP, software analysis, and internet/email matters pertaining to the Agency. Ganita comes from a successful and diverse background in corporate America & entrepreneurship (including engineering, information technology, management consulting, project management, training & development, and organizational coordination & facilitation). Throughout her career, she's held various high-impact roles, spearheaded end-to-end ERP implementations, led testing efforts, developed/implemented classroom and CBT training for large audiences, and served as Project Manager and Change Agent for a state-wide SAP implementation. Ganita holds a BS in Industrial Engineering, multiple professional state and federal licenses, and certifications – including the Scrum Master - Lean Champion Certification (SM-LCC)™. In her spare time, Ganita enjoys volunteering, various genres of music, and traveling with family & friends.

**Maddy Zeliff**

Senior Program Manager

MassCEC

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Maddy Zeliff is a Senior Manager at the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center. She has been on the Tech-to-Market team for the past 5.5 years, working with startups and academics from the early research stage to later stage companies deploying their climate technologies, as well as incubators and accelerators across the state. Over the past few years, Maddy has been focusing on programs for growth-stage startups through the InnovateMass and CriticalMass programs, helping to support startups working on pilot and deployment projects. Additionally, Maddy helps recruit and maintain relationships with organizations, such as municipalities, universities, corporates, and other state agencies who are interested in working with climate startups.

**Anna Ziai**

Project Director of Federal Initiatives

Clean Energy States Alliance

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Anna Ziai serves as CESA's Project Director of Federal Initiatives. Her work supports states in understanding and implementing national programs, policies, burgeoning clean energy technology, and equity perspectives from across the country. Anna is a licensed attorney admitted to the Oregon State Bar. Before beginning at CESA, Anna served the Sierra Club's federal Environmental Law Program, where she researched brought cases under a wide range of federal environment legislation. Prior to the Sierra Club, Anna earned her J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School. Anna completed associate positions with major law firms and worked with the UChicago Abrams Environmental Law Clinic where she led cases before the Michigan Public Service Commission representing frontline community organizations working to bring community solar to low-income underserved communities of color in Highland Park, Michigan. Outside of work, she likes to spend time in the ocean, watch her cat sunbathe, and practice the art of resting.