



ULI WASHINGTON

FUTURE FORUM

NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM

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Speaker Biographies

February 5, 2025

[AGENDA](#)

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Keynote Speakers



Mick Cornett
Former Mayor, City of Oklahoma City
ULI Canizaro/Klingbeil Fellow for Urban Development

Mick Cornett is a businessman and former 4-Term Mayor of Oklahoma City. In 2018, he was named to Fortune Magazine's list of ["The World's 50 Greatest Leaders."](#)

In 2024, he was named by the Urban Land Institute as the Canizaro/Klingbeil Chair for Urban Development.

Cornett spent 20 years as a television sportscaster/news anchor/sports play-by-play broadcaster. Following the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 he diverted his attention to public service and served as a full-time college professor before winning a seat on the Oklahoma City Council in 2001.

In 2004, he won the city-wide election for Mayor and thus began a series of record-setting political victories. His re-election percentage of 87% in 2006 is the highest in city history. During his tenure, Oklahoma City experienced an economic renaissance that is still in progress. He based his philosophies on 'creating a city where highly educated young people will choose to live.'

In January of 2012, he was Michele Obama's personal guest at the State of the Union Address in Washington D.C.

Cornett is best known for helping to bring an NBA franchise to Oklahoma City and for addressing the community's shortcomings in areas of health and wellness. His leadership to pass the transformational MAPS 3 initiative has spurred an enormous amount of private investment into the city. Over 80,000 new jobs were created in the city while he was Mayor.

Newsweek called him one of The 5 ["Most Innovative Mayors in the U.S."](#) The European based World Mayor Organization named him the second-best Mayor in the World. And Governing Magazine proclaimed him a Public Official of the Year. He was the President of the United States Conference of Mayors in 2016-17.

In 2018, he chose not to run for a fifth term as Mayor.

He has a Journalism degree from the University of Oklahoma and an MBA from New York University.



**Stephanie Landrum
President & CEO
Alexandria Economic Development Partnership
(AEDP)**

Stephanie is President & CEO of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP). Appointed by the Board of Directors in April 2015, Stephanie has held leadership roles in the organization since 2005. In addition to her responsibilities with the AEDP, Stephanie also provides strategic and financial oversight to two related organizations: the Industrial Development Authority of the City of Alexandria and the

Alexandria Small Business Development Center. She also offers advice and information to the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission and City Departments. Stephanie serves in various capacities on Boards, Commissions and Committees related to economic development, marketing and business throughout the Washington, DC region and statewide.

Stephanie holds a Bachelor of Science in City & Regional Planning from the University of Virginia, and an MBA from UVA's Darden School of Business. One of Stephanie's favorite things about Alexandria is the variety of locally-owned places that serve great margaritas!

CREDTalk Speakers



Eran Chen
Founder & Executive Director
ODA Architecture

Since establishing ODA in 2007, Eran Chen has earned a reputation for mold-breaking designs that will deliver a better urban future. Having completed more than 50 buildings in just over a decade, he has become one of the most prolific architects in New York. Chen's work has been widely published around the world and recognized by the AIA, the Society of American Registered Architects and others. In addition to guest lecturing globally, Eran is also an Adjunct Professor at both Columbia University and New York University.

His recent projects include the renovation of the former Postkantoor in Rotterdam, an urban plan in Chicago, and the conversion of a defunct parking garage into a public park and class A office building in Buenos Aires. His writings on architecture have been published in ODA's book, *Unboxing New York*.

Eran's CREDTalk: Intensity & Intimacy

ODA Founder and Executive Director Eran Chen shares architectural interventions that strike a balance between intensity and intimacy in urban environments. He also explores how these interventions led to ODA's DC Greenways, an urban renewal concept for the central business districts of downtown Washington, D.C., offering a solution for reinvigorating the region.



**Randy Clarke
Metro General Manager & CEO
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit
Authority (WMATA)**

Randy Clarke joined the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) as General Manager and CEO in July 2022. He's not just Metro's GM/CEO; he's also a customer who uses the service every day. The insight Randy gets from his daily rides helps him lead Metro to innovate and improve on behalf of customers. In the 90 days since his arrival Randy has focused the organization on the development of a strategic transformation plan, led WMATA's Silver Line

Phase 2 start up, and targeted actions to address fare evasion.

Before joining Metro, Randy served more than four years as President and CEO of Capital Metro in Austin, Texas, where he helped secure one of the country's largest voter-approved transit referendums in US history. The initiative, called Project Connect, resulted in a multi-billion-dollar infusion for CapMetro's capital program. Prior to his work in Austin, Randy held key leadership positions in public transportation around the country. He served as the Vice President of Operations and Member Services for the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) in Washington DC from 2016 to 2018. Randy also spent more than six years in various positions with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) in Boston, including Deputy Chief Operating Officer and Assistant General Manager of Engineering, Maintenance and Preparedness, and Senior Director of Security.

Originally from Nova Scotia, Canada, Randy holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science and History from Acadia University and a master's degree in Public Policy from the University of Southern Maine. He lives in Washington DC with his wife Kimberley (they met in Boston while riding the subway to a Red Sox game) and their two dogs. You can follow Randy on Twitter @wmataGM.

Randy's CREDTalk: Shaping the Future of DMV Transit

Metro leads the nation in ridership recovery and is working with regional partners to chart the path for sustainable and world-class transit in the DMV. WMATA General Manager and CEO, Randy Clarke, will share the latest insights on Metro's ridership and financial health and where we go from here.



Calvin Gladney
President & CEO
Smart Growth America

Calvin Gladney, LEED AP, is President and CEO of Smart Growth America (SGA), a 30-person national non-profit based in Washington, D.C. that strives to make the built environment more sustainable and create equitable and thriving communities. He has led urban redevelopment efforts in dozens of communities around the country as a private real estate consultant, a real estate developer, and as a government redevelopment agency official. His work over the last 20 years has been centered on the

intersection of land use, housing and transportation – all of which will be important in addressing our climate crisis. In 2017, Mr. Gladney was the Urban Land Institute's Senior Visiting Fellow for Equity. Prior to SGA, he was Managing Partner of Mosaic Urban, a real estate advisory services and development firm. Before establishing Mosaic, he served as the VP and then interim CEO of the Anacostia Waterfront Corporation (AWC) a quasi-public D.C. government agency focused on environmentally friendly redevelopment. Before AWC, Mr. Gladney was General Counsel & Transaction Manager at BRIDGE Housing Corp., in San Francisco, one of the largest developers of affordable housing in California.

Mr. Gladney graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School, received his B.S. from Cornell University, and is a LEED Accredited Professional. He is a Trustee of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), and a Board member of the Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF), and the Center for Community Progress. He is also a member of ULI's national Responsible Property Investment Council.

Calvin's CREDTak: Rethinking Downtown

Calvin will propose a total reframing of how we think about downtown office buildings and therefore our downtowns—arguing that we first have to let go of the past to create a sustainable region in the future. He'll then explore innovative ways to help make that future happen.



Ayesha Hudson
Founder & CEO
A-Peace, LLC

Ayesha M. Hudson is a property manager & real estate developer focused on providing sustainable, resident-centered living experiences. She is a native Washingtonian & graduate of DC Public Schools where she was initially exposed to public service. Ayesha began her 24+ year career with the District's Fire & Emergency Medical Services Department & later retired from the Prince George's County Fire & Emergency Medical Services Department (PGFD) in May 2021. During her tenure with PGFD, Ayesha served as Director of the Equal Employment Opportunity Office where she established a Mediation Program as the Department's first-line tool in alternative dispute resolution for its 1200+ membership body. Ayesha continues her work as a conflict management trainer, executive coach & remains connected to the mediation community.

As Founder & CEO of A-Peace, LLC, Ayesha has purposefully grown the company's rental portfolio over the past 25 years. A-Peace owns, develops & manages its own housing stock in the DC Metro region. Ayesha's intention is to create & preserve housing in vibrant communities while incorporating resident-centered programming that supports the whole person. She also invests in "green" technology with a goal to add solar roof panels to 70% of the company's portfolio by 2026. Through collaborations with DC Green Bank, DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) & the Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE), A-Peace has preserved & constructed housing in Ward 7 & 8 through the utilization of energy efficiency programs geared toward bringing renewable energy to modest income households. As the solar asset owner, A-Peace hosts a Community Renewable Energy Facility (CREF) at one of its multifamily buildings under the District's Solar for All Program.

The company's farming program was established in October 2022 & is aimed at improving fresh food access while stewarding the land. Nettie Farm is the company's first urban farm & produces bountiful harvests that contribute to community supported agriculture (CSA) through its partnerships with a local non-profit & 2 high schools. The urban farm is also supported by DOEE's Urban Farm Tax Abatement Program.

In October 2024, Ayesha founded Community Stu-Wards, a non-profit focused on providing resident engagement services through food, education & wellness. This organization's flagship endeavor, the Stu-Ward Program, is an innovative learning experience offered as a 24-30 month "dorm style" cohort. This opportunity involves participants in a live development project while preparing them to own it. In addition to affordable housing for the duration, the Stu-Ward Program provides a pathway for participants to achieve real estate ownership while embracing whole wellness.

Ayesha is a licensed property manager & earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Management from the University of Maryland, College Park's Robert H. Smith School of Business. She also maintains certifications in EEO Investigations, mediation & Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). She actively serves on various boards & committees while volunteering at 2 public schools. Ayesha welcomes a good chess match, traveling by plane or her road bike & is joyfully married with children.

Ayesha's CREDTalk: Take Back the Future

Stewardship can transform our communities one piece at a time. You'll hear from a local servant leader whose trajectory in real estate development serves as a template to creating sustainable futures.



Rebecca Rockey
Deputy Chief Economist & Global Head of
Forecasting
Cushman & Wakefield

Rebecca Rockey is the Deputy Chief Economist and Global Head of Forecasting at Cushman & Wakefield. In her decade at the firm, her responsibilities have evolved significantly. Her focus spans economics, demographics, financial markets and commercial real estate—both at the macro and micro levels. She manages the production of national and metro-level commercial real estate forecasts across the Americas, develops predictive econometric and statistical

models to enhance the firms' analytical capabilities and contributes to numerous white papers, webinars, media requests and industry/client presentations. In her global role, she extends this expertise to other regions. She is a strategic internal and external advisor across service lines and regions, connecting research themes to actionable and tactical views on the market.

She is certified by the International Institute of Forecasters and is a member of the American Economic Association, the National Association of Business Economics (NABE) and the National Economists Club. In 2014, she was part of the forecast team that won the NABE's Outlook Award (most accurate forecaster). In 2023, she became Co-Chair of NABE's Commercial Real Estate Roundtable. Rebecca also joined the National Business Economics Issues Council in 2024.

She previously worked as a consultant at a consulting firm engineering models to forecast agency subsidy costs and loss reserves for Fannie Mae's single-family private-label MBS portfolio. Prior to that, she was a junior analyst at the Congressional Budget Office in the Financial Analysis Division (FAD). There, she contributed to numerous

analyses related to federal credit programs, accounting treatments of federal credit, and the treatment of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in the federal budget. She was particularly focused on fair value estimation of federal direct lending and guarantee credit programs and contributed to FAD's first comprehensive estimate—of more than 100 credit programs with a portfolio value of \$3.1 trillion—for the Congress. She is frequently cited in the media and is an advisor to the NYC Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the New York State Budget Division, and the DC Policy Center. She is also a participant in the Beige Book for the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Rebecca's CREDTalk: Reimagining DC: All Work and No Play

Many discussions about reimagining cities, and Downtown DC specifically, center around housing shortages, migration, return to office and the federal real estate portfolio. However, these overshadow an often-overlooked important factor in the local economy with direct implications for real estate markets. That is, the role of the experience economy and the real estate that supports it (Play).

Additional Speakers



Natalie Avery
Executive Director
Friendship Heights Alliance

Natalie Avery is the Executive Director of the Friendship Heights Alliance, a cross jurisdictional place based nonprofit. Working at the intersection of place, economy and community, she has devoted her career to fostering vibrant and inclusive neighborhoods. From 2013-2020, she served as Executive Director of the DC Business Improvement District Council, the association of Washington DC's twelve BIDs, where she led

collective communications and advocacy initiatives and coordinated around a range of operational issues. As an independent consultant, she has provided advisory services to a range of BIDs and non profit organizations including the SWBID, DowntownDC BID, the Golden Triangle BID.

Photo Credit: satsun photography



Deborah Kerson Bilek
Executive Director
ULI Washington

Deb Kerson Bilek is the Executive Director of ULI Washington, where she manages and oversees the work program, budget, and staffing for the district council. She has served as staff at ULI for nearly nine years. Most recently, she served as ULI's Vice President, Advisory Services, where she supervised and managed the operations of the national Advisory Services Panel Program. Prior to joining the Advisory Services team at ULI's global headquarters, Deb served as the Senior Director of Community Outreach at ULI Washington, where

she managed the community development work program for the Washington District Council. During her tenure at ULI Washington, Ms. Bilek worked with ULI members, partners, and stakeholders in nearly every jurisdiction in the Metro Washington Region to advance the region's economic opportunity. Ms. Bilek also has professional experience in the Legislative and Executive branches of the Federal Government, and in regional policy and planning.



Anita Cozart
Director
DC Office of Planning

Prior to her appointment as Director of the DC Office of Planning (OP), Anita Cozart served as Deputy Director of Community Planning and Design, her second tour of service at OP. In that role, Ms. Cozart oversaw OP's work on neighborhood planning and urban design. Her teams have spearheaded the recent Comprehensive Plan update, commenced the next generation of neighborhood plans, and developed the Streets for People program to activate downtown public spaces and support economic

recovery. As Director, Ms. Cozart looks forward to advancing implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, community plans, and zoning and preservation initiatives that support District goals around COVID-19 recovery, housing equity, resilience, civic resources and racial justice.

Ms. Cozart has a history of public sector work primarily focused on Washington, DC. She previously served at OP as a Neighborhood and Citywide Planner and Chief of Staff. Prior to her return to OP, she served as a managing director at PolicyLink, where she led place-based, equitable development initiatives in cities across the United States. She brings to her current work at OP a decade of experience utilizing a racial equity lens with community planning, housing, transportation and infrastructure policy.

Ms. Cozart holds a Master of City & Regional Planning from the University of California, Berkeley and a Bachelor of Science in Civil & Environmental Engineering from the University of Pittsburgh. She is a proud resident of Ward 5, where she lives with her spouse and children.



Katie Cristol
CEO
Tysons Community Alliance

Katie Cristol is the Chief Executive Officer of the Tysons Community Alliance, a place management organization catalyzing the transformation of Tysons, Virginia into an inclusive, walkable downtown. The TCA fosters collaboration and partnerships among the private sector, residents, government, and civic organizations, and leads projects in placemaking, transportation and mobility, branding and community engagement, and research and data.

Prior to joining the TCA in 2023, Katie served in elected office on the Arlington County Board for seven and a half years, including two years as Chair. During her tenure, she served on numerous boards including the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, which she chaired in 2020 and 2021, and the Virginia Railway Express Operations Board, which she chaired in 2019. Katie also held leadership roles in the Virginia Municipal League and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

Named one of the “100 People to Meet in Business” by Virginia Business Magazine, Katie’s contributions have also been recognized with awards from the Virginia Transit Association, the Alliance for Housing Solutions, the Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition, and Equality NoVA.



Brianne Dornbush
Executive Director
District Bridges

Brianne Dornbush, Executive Director of District Bridges, has dedicated her professional career to embedding sustainability and equity into community development ecosystems. She is a serial nonprofit entrepreneur, founding several organizations and supporting nonprofits locally and nationally in organizational development, fundraising, and multi-sector relationship-building to spur social innovation. In 2015, Brianne became the founding Executive Director of District Bridges. Under her leadership, the organization has grown

from a small group of dedicated volunteers to an ecosystem development organization revolutionizing how community-based economic development is done here in DC and beyond.



Kimberly Driggins
CEO
Washington Housing Conservancy (WHC)

Kimberly Driggins is Chief Executive Officer of the Washington Housing Conservancy (WHC). Founded in 2018, WHC preserves affordable and workforce housing, prevents displacement, and promotes economic mobility in the DC region. Ms. Driggins is a nationally recognized expert in urban planning, placemaking, and real estate development. Prior to WHC, she worked in Detroit's Planning and Development Department (PDD). Driggins also served as Associate Director of Citywide Planning for DC's Office of Planning,

2008 – 2015. She has a BA from Hampton University, and an MPP from the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy.



Bailey H. Edelson
Principal
Buchanan Partners

Bailey has 17 years of real estate experience in entitlement, master planning, development, and investment in a diversity of product types. She is currently responsible for a range of investment and development activities across Buchanan's portfolio. She joined Buchanan from JBG SMITH, where she oversaw the design, entitlement, and investment in over seven million square feet of mixed-use development in the DC Metro Area. Bailey began her career in the investments group at the JBG Companies and has a background in underwriting and joint venture partnerships. She is a member of Urban Land Institute, participating as a member of the Public/Private Partnership Council, serves as Treasurer and Board Member for the Northern

Virginia Housing Alliance, and is a sustaining member of the Junior League of Washington. Bailey holds a Master of Business Administration from Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business, and she graduated from Brown University with a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies.



**Andrew Flagel
President & CEO
Consortium of Universities of the Washington
Metropolitan Area**

Andrew Flagel is President and CEO of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, representing institutions serving over 300,000 students and over 100,000 faculty and staff members, with a collective annual economic impact of over 15 billion dollars. Under his leadership, the organization identifies, champions, and addresses collaborative opportunities with the largest positive impact for our students and our institutions, fostering the rise

of the Greater Washington Region as America's leading center of academic opportunity, intellectual innovation, and equitable economic development.

This includes our historic programs sharing courses across our member institutions, leading student financial literacy programs in underserved communities, and hosting the nation's foremost police academy for campus law enforcement. Today the Consortium directs collaborative research and implementation in innovative workforce housing solutions, new approaches to reducing gun violence, and collaborates with the Capital Area Food Bank to reduce student food insecurity.

As dean of enrollment for over a decade at Consortium member George Mason University, Flagel created ground-breaking programs for members of the military, veterans, international, and transfer students; designed and served as inaugural chair of the Bachelor of Applied Sciences program; and spearheaded the Pathways partnership with Consortium member Northern Virginia Community College. He left Mason to be senior vice president at Brandeis University, serving as both chief student affairs and chief enrollment officer, and then served as vice president for advancement at the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), developing innovative partnerships with foundations and corporations.

Flagel received his undergraduate and master's degrees from Consortium member George Washington University, where he served as a regional director of admissions before being appointed as director of admissions for the bi-partisan Congressional Youth Leadership Council. He received his PhD in Education from Michigan State University while serving as a director for the University of Michigan in Flint, focusing his research on economic and workforce development.

Flagel is a Visiting Senior Scholar at George Washington University and serves as secretary for the Board of Directors of the D.C. College Access Program, on the Board of Directors of the Greater Washington Board of Trade, on the Leadership Committee of

the Greater Washington Partnership, and on the Education Committee for the Economic Club of Washington, D.C. He is State Executive for D.C. for the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and represents the D.C. region on the National Association of Higher Education Systems. He is also a member of the Washington Higher Education Secretariat, the Presidents' Trust at the American Association of Colleges and Universities, Leadership Greater Washington, and the Washington Journalism and Media Conference Advisory Board. He previously served as a Senior Scholar for the National Research Center for College and University Admissions, and on the Board of Trustees for the Tremont School in Concord, Massachusetts. His wife, Jennifer, is senior director of philanthropic operations at the Trust for the National Mall, and their son is a graduate student at Consortium member George Mason University.



Aileen Fuchs
President & Executive Director
National Building Museum

Aileen Fuchs is the President & Executive Director of the National Building Museum, where she started her role in May 2021. For fifteen years, Aileen has been working at the intersection of site-specific historic interpretation, adaptive-reuse activations, and cultural destination-making. A former life-long New Yorker, Aileen served as President and CEO of Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden from 2017-2021. She oversaw the property management and cultural programming of the historic 83-acre site. Before

that, she served as Executive Director of Exhibits & Programs for the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation. Her work—through public art initiatives, immersive industry tours, education programs, and exhibitions—was transformational in building the brand of the Brooklyn Navy Yard as a national model for urban industrial manufacturing. Prior to these endeavors, she worked in exhibition development with the American History Workshop, developing content for museums and projects in NY, Philadelphia, Boston and DC. Aileen holds an M.A. and Advanced Certificate in Public History from New York University. She currently serves on the Boards of the Washington DC Economic Partnership and the Downtown DC BID, is a member of Federal City Council and serves on the Consultative Council of the National Institute of Building Sciences.



Alyia Gaskins
Mayor
City of Alexandria

Alyia Gaskins, a tenacious fighter for families, communities, and health equity, is the first African American woman to serve as the Mayor of Alexandria. She was elected in 2024 and is dedicated to building a healthier, more prosperous Alexandria for all.

In Alyia's first campaign for office in 2021, she was elected to City Council with the second highest number of votes out of 13 candidates. Alyia's

many accomplishments during her three years on Council include leading the charge and introducing the memos and budget amendments necessary to:

- expand access to affordable housing by increasing dedicated funding by nearly five million dollars.
- support access to quality job opportunities for Alexandrians through prevailing wage and labor agreements.
- give public safety officers the tools—like body-worn cameras—they need to do their jobs while building community trust and accountability.
- expand the availability of early care and education services.
- pass two historic collective bargaining agreements for police and firefighters that make significant increases in employee pay and staffing.
- fund critical infrastructure such as stormwater management and flood mitigation, increased transit options, and broadband expansion.

The same issues that motivate Alyia as an elected official—health, housing, education, public safety, and the economic, social, and physical vitality of cities— have motivated her professional career as a public health strategist and city planner. She has worked on hunger policy at D.C. Hunger Solutions and health issues at the National League of Cities, managed an affordable housing investment program at the Center for Community Investment, and was most recently a Senior Program Officer at the Melville Charitable Trust, a national philanthropic organization devoted to ending homelessness. Currently, Alyia runs her own consulting business, CitiesRX, which focuses on building physical, social, and economic health through community partnerships.

Alyia graduated from Vanderbilt University, where she majored in medicine, health, and society. She earned a master's degree in public health at the University of Pittsburgh and further honed her policy chops with a master's in urban planning at Georgetown and a Professional Certificate in Municipal Finance from the University of Chicago.

Alyia lives on the West End with her husband, son, daughter, and beagle.

For a list of committees that Mayor Gaskins represents the council on, see here: ARHA Redevelopment Work Group, Audit & Finance Committee, City Council/School Board Sub-Committee, Health & Safety Coordinating Committee, Landmark Community Development Authority Board of Directors, Legislative Sub-Committee, Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission, Commission on Information Technology, Eisenhower Partnership Board of Directors, Visit Alexandria Board of Governors, Council of Governments: Board of Directors, Council of Governments: Public Safety and Human Services Committee, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority: Governing Body, Sub-committee for the Review of Standing Committees, and Sub-committee on Personnel.



Evan Goldman
Executive Vice President, Acquisition and
Development
EYA, LLC

Evan Goldman is the Executive Vice President of Acquisition and Development at EYA, LLC. He brings a decade of mixed-use and multi-family experience to the EYA development team and works on sourcing new deals as well as shepherding projects through the development process.

Prior to joining EYA, Evan was Vice President of Development at Federal Realty Investment Trust, where he was primarily responsible for managing the development of Pike & Rose. Evan regularly guest lectures about real estate, planning, and development at local universities. He currently serves on the Advisory Board of the Urban Land Institute Washington and is a Trustee of the Milton Gottesman Jewish Day School of the Nation's Capital. In 2012, Evan received the Livable Communities Leadership Award from Washington, DC based Coalition for Smarter Growth.

Evan earned a BS in Design and Environmental Analysis from Cornell University and a MBA in Real Estate and Finance from the Wharton Business School. He lives in Washington, DC with his wife and three young children.



Letty Hardi
Mayor
City of Falls Church

Letty Hardi is currently the Mayor of the City of Falls Church, starting her third term on the City Council.

Letty is an accomplished leader and community advocate, bringing her strong analytical skills and 20+ years of management experience to local government. Since her election to the Falls Church City Council in 2015, Letty has been a champion for progressive policies in affordable and diverse housing, economic development, environmental sustainability, and pedestrian improvements to improve the quality of life for residents and business owners in Falls Church. To keep her constituents engaged, Letty writes a popular weekly blog/newsletter about Falls Church issues, making local government more transparent and accessible. In 2023, Letty also co-founded a new civic organization, Falls Church Forward to harness the energy of the next generation of leaders to support a more resilient, equitable, and vibrant Falls Church.

Prior to elected office, Letty spent 11 years at Capital One as a marketing and financial services professional, holding a variety of roles from Director of Project Management to Chief of Staff and spanned marketing, analysis, product development, project management, and people leadership. She excels in managing complex, cross functional projects and teams, driving strategy, collaboration with multiple stakeholders, and delivering real results and organization-wide impact. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia as an Echols Scholar in psychology and economics and studied health care economics at Oxford University. Letty is a first generation immigrant, born in Hong Kong, and fluent in Cantonese. She grew up first in the San Francisco Bay Area in California and then Northern Virginia, where her family still lives. Falls Church has been home to Letty and her family since 2003. In her free time, she enjoys volunteering in the PTA in her sons' classrooms, running, baking, and practicing yoga.



**Deshundra Jefferson
Chair At-Large
Prince William County Board of Supervisors**

Deshundra Jefferson assumed office on January 1, 2024, making history as the first person of color to serve as Chair of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors.

A single mom, Chair Jefferson lived in a one-bedroom apartment in Alexandria with her son so that she could save up for her first home. She made that dream come true nearly 10 years ago when she moved to Prince William County.

Chair Jefferson often refers to Prince William as “a hidden gem,” thanks to its proximity to its nation’s capital, strong school system, and cultural diversity. She ran for office to address the rising cost of living, prioritize education in the county’s budget, and create more opportunities for affordable homeownership.

Early in her career as a reporter, Chair Jefferson worked at and wrote for CNN/Money (now CNN/Business), the Associated Press, New York Magazine, and other major news outlets. She is now a strategic communications consultant with over 20 years of experience in public affairs and journalism.

Chair Jefferson sits on the Finance Committee and Governance and Personnel Committee of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) and on the Board of Directors and Transportation Planning Board for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG).

She is a graduate of Leadership Prince William and the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Virginia Certified County Supervisors’ Program.

Chair Jefferson graduated cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in political science from Columbia University and a master’s degree in communication from Johns Hopkins University.



Takis Karantonis
Chair
Arlington County Board

Takis Karantonis is an economist and urban planner with more than 25 years of experience. He was first elected in the 2020 special election and re-elected in 2021. He currently serves as the Chair of the County Board.

He represents Arlington on the Board of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCoG), after having chaired MWCoG's Region Forward Coalition, Climate, Energy and Environment Policy and Air Quality Committees, and served on the National Capital Transportation

Planning Board and the Human Services Policy Committee. He is also a member of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC), the Operations Board of the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC).

Born in Athens, Greece, Takis graduated from Berlin's (Germany) Freie Universität with a master's degree in urban and regional economics. He was a Senior Advisor for the Small Business Micro-Loan Program at the Enterprise Development Group of the Ethiopian Community Development Center and served from 2009-2016 as the Executive Director of the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO).

An Arlingtonian for 21 years, Takis served on several advisory commissions, is a former President of the Columbia Heights Civic Association, and a past Chair of Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (now EcoAction Arlington) and the Alliance for Housing Solutions (now Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance). He is a graduate of Leadership Arlington (2010) and the UVA Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership (2017).

Part of his immigrant experience is that he speaks and communicates, besides in his native Greek, also in English, Spanish, German, French, Italian, Portuguese and Catalan. He lives with his family in the Columbia Heights neighborhood.



Rodney L. Lusk
Franconia District Supervisor
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk was sworn in as Fairfax County Franconia District Supervisor (formerly Lee District) in January of 2020 and is the first African American male elected to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

Supervisor Lusk currently serves as Chair of the Public Safety and Security Committee, Vice-Chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, a member of the Successful Children and Youth Policy Team, and Board Chair of the Metropolitan

Washington Council of Governments.

Prior to being elected as Franconia District Supervisor, Rodney served 30 years as a Fairfax County employee. His accomplishments during this time include delivering human services along the Historic Richmond Highway Corridor, working for two former members of the Board of Supervisors, and serving as the National Marketing Director for the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. Rodney also served as a member of the Fairfax County Planning Commission and the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Supervisor Lusk's achievements while in office include launching the Workforce Innovation Skills Hub (W.I.S.H.) in the Hybla Valley Community Center, initiating a Bus Rapid Transit project on Richmond Highway ("The One"), funding four new bicycle/pedestrian projects, and opening Oakwood Meadows, a 150-unit affordable housing building for seniors. During the COVID-19 pandemic, his office coordinated with Fairfax County government agencies and local non-profits to distribute over three million pounds of food, the largest food distribution to date in Fairfax County.

Now in his second term, his policy objectives remain unwavering. Rodney continues to prioritize police reform, improving manufactured housing communities, initiating the revitalization of Springfield, and addressing the County's affordable housing crisis.

Rodney is a native Virginian, a Franconia District resident for over 25 years, and a graduate of the University of Virginia. Rodney and his wife Jacquelyn are proud parents to their two daughters, Addison and Sheridan.



Clark Mercer
Executive Director
Metropolitan Washington Council of
Government

Clark Mercer is Executive Director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). In this role, he is responsible for the nonprofit association's overall administration, supporting the Board of Directors and policy committees, and representing COG before a variety of government, business, and other stakeholder organizations.

Mercer is an executive leader with more than 20 years of experience in the public, private, and civic sectors, including serving as a Chief of Staff to Virginia Governor Ralph Northam.

Born and raised in Alexandria, Virginia, Mercer received a Master of Public Policy degree from The George Washington University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University.



Dalia A. Palchik
Providence District Supervisor
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Dalia A. Palchik was born in Argentina and moved to Fairfax County, Virginia with her family when she was six years old. She is a proud graduate of Fairfax County Public Schools, including Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. Dalia received her Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and French from Tufts University, and her post-baccalaureate pre-medical certificate from Johns Hopkins University.

Supervisor Dalia Palchik has represented the Providence District on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors since 2020. The District Supervisor's work consists of chairing the county's Health and Human Services Committee, the Housing Committee, and the Council to End Domestic Violence. She also serves on the Board of the Virginia Association of Counties, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, and the Successful Children and Youth Policy Team. Since taking office, Dalia has helped create the Tysons Community Alliance, launch a Guaranteed Basic Income pilot project, and create the African-American Black History Marker Project.

She continues to focus on bringing intentional transit-oriented development to Fairfax County, finding new and creative ways to increase affordable housing, expanding quality, affordable childcare, and early childhood programs, and ensuring active engagement with the community.

Prior to serving on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Dalia served as the Providence District representative on the Fairfax County School Board. She also worked as a world language teacher, as a medical interpreter, and as a microfinance and communications specialist. She currently lives in the Providence District with her husband, daughter, and mother-in-law.



McLean Quinn
President & CEO
EYA, LLC

McLean Quinn is the President and CEO of EYA, LLC, where he oversees corporate management, investor relations, and strategy and chairs the Partnership Committee.

McLean's strategic leadership has been critical to the successful development of many EYA neighborhoods, including Reston Station, Montgomery Row, Westside at Shady Grove Metro, and Chevy Chase Lake. McLean also led EYA's expansion into multifamily rental housing with the development of The Daley, The Lindley, and The Laureate (an innovative mixed-income project featured in the New York Times, FastCompany, and Vox).

McLean is a member of the Washington DC Chapter of YPO and was named to the Washington Business Journal's 40-Under-40. He is active in ULI and is a past participant in both the ULI Washington Regional Land Use Leadership Institute and Leadership Montgomery. McLean currently serves on the Board of Trustees at the Maret School in Washington, DC.

Prior to joining EYA, McLean held private equity and investment banking positions with Morgan Stanley, Wells Fargo, and Wachovia. He earned a BA in Political Science from Davidson College, where he was elected Phi Beta Kappa, and an MBA with Distinction from the Kellogg School of Management, where he was an Austin Scholar. McLean loves living "life within walking distance" in Washington, DC with his wife, Evelyn, and their children, Spencer and Sperry.



Hans Riemer
Vice President of Advocacy, Infrastructure
Arnold Ventures

Hans Riemer leads Arnold Ventures advocacy work for infrastructure policy at federal, state, and local levels. In this role, he works with the infrastructure team and a diverse coalition of partners on the ground to craft and implement policies that help our country build necessary infrastructure faster, better, and at lower cost.

Prior to joining Arnold Ventures, Hans was a senior consultant for the Department of Energy's Loan Programs Office, where he led state and local engagement initiatives. Hans previously served as a member of the Montgomery County Council in Maryland, where he championed reforms to build more housing, new transportation infrastructure, and clean energy.

Prior to serving in elective office, Hans was the national youth vote director for Obama for America, political director for Rock the Vote, Social Security project director for the Campaign for America's Future, and was the founder of a youth nonprofit policy advocacy organization called the 2030 Center, among other roles.

Hans received his bachelor's degree from the University of California, Santa Cruz.



Carmen Romero
President & CEO
True Ground Housing Partners

As President and CEO, Ms. Carmen Romero oversaw the creation of True Ground Housing Partner's current strategic plan for 2023 to 2027, and is responsible for its implementation. She supervised the organization's strategic rebranding initiative, which included changing its name in 2024, highlighting its evolution into a regional provider of affordable housing and resident services. She has also prioritized capacity building to match real estate portfolio growth.

True Ground's portfolio includes \$1 billion in assets and 23 affordable apartment communities in four jurisdictions across the region totaling 2,800+ units, with more than 5,200 individuals and families who call a True Ground apartment home.

Under Ms. Romero's leadership, True Ground has received numerous awards for its innovative contributions to affordable housing, including Affordable Housing Finance's ranking of the Top 50 Affordable Developers of 2023, in addition to the best-in-class credential for its resident services program, The Certified Organization for Resident Engagement and Services (CORES).

Recent real estate milestones include the opening of Ilda's Overlook Senior Residences, True Ground's second project to deliver in Fairfax County, and Unity Homes at Ballston in Arlington County, a mixed-use development created through a partnership with Central United Methodist Church. Ms. Romero also oversees three high-impact projects under construction: 500+ units at The Exchange at Spring Hill Station in Tysons Corner, Riggs Crossing Senior Residences in Washington, D.C., and Marbella in Arlington. Additionally, True Ground was awarded the RFP for Crystal House in Arlington, which will consist of at least 655 affordable units.

In 2021 during her first year as CEO, Ms. Romero supervised two milestone projects: the award-winning Lucille & Bruce Terwilliger Place, in partnership with American Legion Post 139, and a joint venture with E&G Group to develop True Ground's first project in Loudoun County, Loudoun View Senior Residences. Both projects delivered in 2022.

Before she became CEO, Ms. Romero led True Ground's Real Estate Development team for a decade. Under her management, True Ground created and preserved more than 1,800 new affordable housing units in Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Montgomery counties.



Senthil Sankaran
Managing Principal, Housing Equity Fund
Amazon

As Managing Principal of the Amazon Housing Equity Fund, Senthil oversees Amazon's \$3.6 billion commitment to preserve and create over 35,000 affordable homes in the Puget Sound region, Arlington, VA/Greater Washington region, and Nashville, TN.

Before Amazon, Senthil held leadership roles in real estate development in both private and public sectors. At the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA), he served as SVP, Real Estate Development & Capital Programs, leading strategic portfolio repositioning and rehabilitation. As Senior Director of Development at EDENS, he focused on the Union Market neighborhood in Washington, DC. At the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development (DMPED) for the District of Columbia, Senthil managed a multi-billion-dollar portfolio of mixed-use, public-private real estate projects,

utilizing financing tools like Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and securitized revenue bonds. He began his real estate career as a financial advisory consultant with Jones Lang LaSalle's Public Institutions practice in Washington, DC.

Senthil holds an MBA from Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business and a BA in Government/International Relations from Georgetown. He resides in Bloomingdale, Washington, DC, with his wife and two daughters.



Brant Snyder
Managing Director for Acquisitions
Urban Atlantic

As Managing Director for Acquisitions, Brant Snyder is responsible for acquiring and managing new development and investment projects around the country. Brant brings 17 years of experience in managing complex, mixed-use, and multi-family projects. He joined Urban Atlantic in January 2022 from Hoffman and Associates where he served as the Senior Vice President, Acquisitions, and was responsible for the pursuit, negotiation, and acquisition of 2.4 million square feet of development, including multi-family, affordable

senior housing, office, hotel, and retail. Previously, Snyder worked at Lowe Enterprises where he served as Vice President of Development and oversaw the execution, lease-up and sale of The Hepburn apartment building in Dupont Circle, the entitlement and design of Century Center Apartments in Crystal City and the acquisition and entitlement of the Randall School redevelopment in Southwest. Prior to his time at Lowe, he worked at Madison Marquette, where he was closely involved in the initial equity capitalization of The Wharf.

Brant holds a Master of Science Degree in Real Estate Development from Columbia University and a Bachelor of Science in Finance from Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business. Brant is an active member of ULI and currently serves on ULI Washington's Regional Housing Council, is a past member of ULI Washington's Governance Committee and is a graduate of ULI Washington's Regional Land Use Leadership Institute.



**Stan Wall, P.E.
Managing Partner
HR&A Advisors**

Stan Wall brings 20 years of public-private real estate experience in the Washington Metro Area market. Stan joined HR&A as a Partner in our Washington D.C. office in August 2015 after holding several senior positions in the mid-Atlantic region. In his previous posts, Stan worked across the entire real estate project lifecycle including strategy, planning, finance, development, and construction.

Prior to joining HR&A, Stan was the Director of Real Estate and Station Planning at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), the second busiest transit system in the United States. In this role, he reinvigorated the agency's transit-oriented development (TOD) program by helping them leverage their transit infrastructure to support housing and economic development. In the past three years, Stan helped to secure Board approval to pursue 16 new TOD projects. Eight of the 16 approved locations are now in the negotiation and/or solicitation stages; four more are in the final stages of pre-solicitation planning; and the remaining four are in the early planning stages. As these projects are implemented in the next 3-4 years, they will begin to yield significant financial and ridership benefits for the agency.

Stan also helped to enhance WMATA's relationship with local jurisdictions, which in turn served to ensure a responsiveness to the local communities and to present a consistent, unified message to interested developers. Through these efforts, coupled with a refinement to the agency's development policies and procedures, WMATA became known as a better business partner to the development community. This extended beyond TOD solicitations to include an increased responsive to developer inquiries in all other aspects of the office such as permits, easements, and other information requests.

Stan is also owner and founder of Wall Development Group, a Washington, D.C. based development firm focused on sustainable development, urban infill, and community-oriented projects. With Wall Development, Stan led a multi-disciplinary team to advise the District of Columbia on a development strategy for the Poplar Point Redevelopment project – a 110-acre site directly across the Anacostia River from the Nationals stadium and the Capitol Riverfront area. The site presented tremendous planning challenges including mitigation/restoration of existing wetlands, elevating the property out of the floodplain, relocation of Federal facilities, creation of a 70-acre park space, and construction of significant infrastructure to better connect the site to the surrounding established neighborhoods. Stan's team of consultants advised the District across all of these areas and created a development strategy to advance the project forward.

Previously Stan worked with Arup, an international firm of designers, planners, engineers, consultants and technical specialists with a focus on innovative projects in Washington D.C. While at Arup, he assisted the firm in the creation of a new business initiative focused on assisting owners and investors of real estate portfolios create value through sustainability initiatives.

Stan also worked for a number of years at Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) in Washington D.C. as a Vice President in the firm's public institutions practice. While at JLL, he assisted public sector clients in maximizing the strategic and financial value of their real estate assets through public-private initiatives. Clients included: the U.S. General Services Administration, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the District of Columbia, Prince George's County, Maryland; and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. Prior to Jones Lang LaSalle, Stan was a Manager with Deloitte Consulting, where he provided strategic advisory services to Fortune 500 companies in the areas of real estate, construction, and capital program management.

Stan is a registered Professional Engineer and began his career in Lend Lease's construction management group, where he was an on-site project engineer focusing on healthcare projects in the Washington-Baltimore region.

Stan received a Master of Business Administration in Finance and Real Estate from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Engineering from Pennsylvania State University. In 2013, the Washington Business Journal recognized Stan as one of the region's Minority Business Leader Award winners.



Alison Williams
CEO
Of Place

Alison Williams is the CEO at Of Place and manages the company's retail strategy and development management practice. Alison takes a holistic approach to placemaking with a focus on investment returns to ensure that the assets are best positioned to optimally perform during lease up and operations. During her tenure at Of Place, the company has informed planning and led retail execution for twenty mixed-use master plans nationally, each comprising between two to ten million square feet, including Water Street Tampa

in FL, Rice Village in TX, and National Landing in VA.

Prior to joining Of Place, Alison was a member of the development team with Federal Realty Investment Trust, where she participated in the development efforts for some of

the company's most notable mixed-use projects including Assembly Row in MA, Pike & Rose in MD, and Bethesda Row in MD. Alison received her M.B.A. from University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and her B.S. in Business Administration from American University's Kogod School of Business. Alison currently serves as a ULI mentor for the Washington DC region.

Lunch Tables

Topic	Lead(s)	Table Number
Housing Crisis and Opportunities	Matt Hoffman & Carmen Romero	1
Housing Crisis and Opportunities	Catherine Buell & Cheryl Cort	2
Downtown Recovery	Leah Riley & Gerren Price	3
Nexus Between Retail and Commercial Real Estate Success, and Our Thriving Downtowns	John Means & Stan Wall	4
Importance of Placemaking to Economic Development	Alison Williams	5
The Experience Economy	Martine Combal	6
Community Engagement & Equity	Anita Cozart & Ayesha Hudson	7
DC and The Regional Brand	Sibley Fleming & Catherine Timko	8
Environmental Resiliency & Sustainability	Emre Toprak	9
Transit-Oriented Communities - Our Competitive Advantage	Shyam Kannan & Stewart Schwartz	10
Federal Footprint's Impact on Regional Economic Development	Bob Peck & Norman Dong	11
Leveraging Universities for Economic Development	Andrew Flagel & Kevin Wegner	12
Infrastructure Funding & Return on Investment	Maura Brophy & Emeka Moneme	13
Economic Development in the Suburban Context	Casey Anderson & Liz Price	14
Porosity for Prosperity	Eran Chen	15