Craig Walton
Lead Product Manager
AT&T

Hilda Legg
Rural Economic Development Consultant, Legg Strategies
Former Administrator, USDA Rural Utilities Services

Kevin Donnelly
Vice President for Government Affairs
National Multifamily Housing Council

Doug Kinkoph
Associate Administrator
Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, NTIA

Elizabeth Parks
President
Parks Associates

Chad Rupe
Market President, Citizens Bank and Trust
Former Administrator, USDA Rural Utilities Services

Felicite Moorman
Technologies, Entrepreneur, Speaker & Attorney
STRATIS IoT

ADDENDUM SPEAKERS

GET CONNECTED AT THE SUMMIT
It’s the Leading Conference on Broadband Technologies and Services
Sept 27-30, 2021 • Marriott Marquis Houston – Houston, TX • 800-468-3571 • www.bbcmag.com
SPEAKERS

Michael Abensour  
Director of Policy and Advocacy  
Human-I-T

Michael Abensour has spent over two decades in leadership roles in the political and nonprofit sector, having served as an executive director, campaign manager, political consultant and in international relations. He recently joined Human-I-T, a national nonprofit focused on bridging the digital divide, as its first director of policy and advocacy, where he is responsible for pursuing progressive digital inclusion policies at the local, state and federal levels. Prior to joining Human-I-T, Abensour served as the executive director of Kramden Institute, a North Carolina-based nonprofit also working on digital inclusion issues across the state. During his 10 years at Kramden, he spearheaded the organization through a period of enormous growth and impact, including the creation of several programs including its new digital literacy and digital navigator programs in addition to its computer refurbishing and distribution operations.

Prior to moving to North Carolina, Abensour worked in Washington, D.C., as the Quebec government’s national affairs attaché, where he advocated on behalf of the province’s interests before Congress, the administration and various departments and agencies. For nine years, he led numerous congressional delegations to Quebec, advised policymakers on U.S. legislation and regulation, and developed an active outreach campaign strategy to stakeholders in the capital. He worked on a wide set of issues pertinent to Quebec including energy, climate change, homeland and border security and cross-border transportation.

Abensour earned his B.A. in political science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a M.A. in political management from George Washington University. He is a co-founder and vice chair of the steering committee of AFTRR, the Alliance for Technology Reuse and Refurbishing. He also serves as a board member on Coastal Credit Union’s Foundation and is vice-chair of Coastal’s supervisory committee. Originally from France, he is a proud dual-citizen and resides in Cary, N.C., with his family.

Lisa Alvarenga  
San Antonio Project Coordinator  
Libraries Without Borders, U.S.

Lisa Alvarenga (she/her) is an almost lifelong San Antonio resident, a graduate of the University of The Incarnate Word, and the project coordinator of the Wash and Learn Initiative in San Antonio. A proponent of digital equity, Alvarenga believes access to information and education is the most empowering tool available for marginalized populations.

Matt Ames  
Attorney  
Hubacher, Ames & Taylor

Matt Ames is a member of the law firm of Hubacher Ames & Taylor, PLLC. He specializes in cable and telecommunications law, representing private property owners and local governments in regulatory matters and contract negotiations involving access to rights-of-way and private buildings. Ames assists developers, owners and managers of residential and commercial multi-unit properties, REITs, condominium developers, single family developers, condominium associations, and homeowners associations in negotiating and drafting service contracts, marketing agreements, and right of entry documents. He also drafts and negotiates DAS agreements, rooftop antenna agreements, and site licenses with wireless companies. Since the 1990s, Ames has represented the interests of the real estate industry in a series of proceedings at the FCC dealing with access to property, including over-the-air reception devices, competitive networks, and exclusive access proceedings, and subsequent appeals. He is currently counsel to several real estate trade associations in the pending multiple tenant environment proceeding. Before attending law school, Ames served in the United States Army. He received his B.S. in 1980 from the College of William and Mary and his law degree, cum laude, from Georgetown University Law Center in 1987. He is admitted to practice law in Virginia and the District of Columbia.
Charles “Doc” Anderson  
State Representative District 56  
McLennan County

A graduate of the Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine, Doc Anderson has served as a small animal veterinarian in Waco since 1981. After over 20 years of advocacy work for small business through statewide committees on both the Texas Association of Business and the National Federation of Independent Business, as well as appointment by Governor Rick Perry to the Texas Small Business Advisory Council, Anderson was elected to represent District 56 (Waco & McLennan County) in 2004. He has been re-elected eight times.

Rep. Anderson currently serves as chairman of the Texas Legislative Rural Caucus, vice-chairman for the House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock, and serves on the County Affairs Committee. In addition, he has served on the House Committee on Elections, Energy Resources, House Administration, Economic & Small Business Development, and the House Select Interim Committee on Energy & Environment. Additionally, he holds appointments to the statewide Agricultural Policy Council, the multinational Energy Council, and agricultural, energy, and environmental task forces in both the National Conference on State Legislatures (NCSL) and American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). Representative Anderson is a board member of the Texas Conservative Coalition Research Institute (TCCRI), and serves on the international organization State Agricultural and Rural Leaders (SARL). He proudly served on President Trump’s Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Legislative highlights include major legislation concerning rural broadband initiatives, theft of service, school bus safety belts, punishment for child predators (Jessica’s Law), legislation banning the hallucinogen salvia divinorum, and a constitutional amendment approved by voters in 2011 to extend property tax exemptions to the surviving spouse of veterans who had already gained such exemption due to their 100%, service-connected disability.

For his efforts to preserve and enhance key local and state institutions, such as the Waco Center for Youth, Texas State Technical College, and rural transportation networks throughout Texas, Rep. Anderson has been honored in 2013 by the Cenikor Foundation, the Association for Community Transit, and named the Texas Auctioneers Association Legislator of the Year. He is also consistently ranked in the top tier of those dedicated to reviewing “pocketbook” issues for Texas taxpayers, including Texas Conservative Coalition, the Texas Association of Business, and Young Conservatives of Texas. He was also recognized as the outstanding alumnus of Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences in 2014, is a proud recipient of the Silver Eagle Award from the Boy Scouts of America and is a Paul Harris Fellow Rotarian. Representative Anderson married Lyn Sullivan in 2017.

Gary Bolton  
President and CEO  
Fiber Broadband Association

Gary Bolton serves as president and CEO of the Fiber Broadband Association – the largest trade association in the Americas dedicated to all-fiber-optic broadband. With more than three decades in the telecom industry, he took on the job in 2020 after serving on the association’s board as vice chairman, treasurer and vice chairs of public policy and marketing committees.

Prior to taking the leadership role at the FBA, Bolton spent 11 years at ADTRAN, serving as vice president of global marketing and government affairs. He was responsible for all aspects of marketing worldwide as well as regulatory and government affairs at the top-three global provider of broadband infrastructure solutions. Bolton has been highly involved in Washington, particularly on FCC and congressional proceedings and international trade issues.

Prior to ADTRAN, he held executive management positions at two successful venture-backed high-tech startups as well as at large, publicly traded companies in marketing and product line management. Bolton has also served as the chairman of the Huntsville Chamber of Commerce, co-chairman of BITAG (Broadband Internet Technology Advisory Group), a board member at Huntsville Botanical Garden and at the Chamber Foundation, president for SORBA-Huntsville and as an MIT CEO mentor at Hudson Alpha, Leadership Alabama, Leadership Huntsville. He serves on the University of Alabama in Huntsville college of business executive advisory board and is currently an adjunct professor in business administration and management science at the university. He holds an MBA from Duke University and a BS in electrical engineering from North Carolina State University.
Jeff Boozer  
**Market Development Strategy, Utility and Municipal Sector**  
**ETI Software**  
Jeff Boozer focuses on digital transformation outcomes for utility and municipal broadband providers. He helps companies plan and deploy new software technologies that enable the next generation of broadband services. He began in wireless 30 years ago and has led market launch for four global B/OSS solutions. He has experience in wireless, broadband, smart grid, smart city, and utilities and has led teams that helped several municipal utilities pioneer broadband service.

Russ Brethower  
**Senior Manager, Wholesale Fiber**  
**Grand PUD**  
Russ Brethower has over 35 years of experience working for publicly owned electric utilities. He has been with Grant PUD since 2001 and has extensive experience dealing with the growing pains of an open-access network – from technological to political to business.  
Prior to Grant PUD, he spent 13 years with Tacoma Power and was involved in the start-up of Click Network. Brethower started his career in public power at White River Valley Electric Cooperative in Branson, Mo, where he developed a great appreciation for all facets of a public utility and the critical services provided.

Casey Bush  
**Vice President**  
**KeyBanc Capital Markets**  
Casey Bush is a vice president in the KeyBanc Capital Markets infrastructure group focused on project finance and public-private partnerships. Over his eight-plus year career there, he has advised on over $7 billion of P3 transactions, monetizations, and refinancings that have successfully reached close. Bush is the broadband and digital infrastructure team lead on Key’s infrastructure team, covering data centers and first-, middle-, and last-mile broadband solutions.  
Prior to joining Key, he worked in KPMG’s Infrastructure group, where he specialized in advising public and private sector clients in the strategic, commercial and financial development of their infrastructure portfolios including the structuring, procuring, and financing of major infrastructure projects. This work included acting as financial adviser on first-of-its-kind statewide fiber projects such as PTC’s bifurcated DB/OMC structure.

Tom Coverick  
**Managing Director, Government, Illinois, Colorado, Utah, Municipal Broadband**  
**KeyBank**  
Tom Coverick serves as the managing director for Keybanc Capital Markets, working with their public sector division. He has extensive experience in municipal broadband and public finance in the Midwest, Southwest, and Northeast. Coverick has worked for a number of broadband initiatives including UTOPIA Fiber, the Utah Infrastructure Agency, and MiNet.

Mark Cunningham  
**Director ISP, MDU and PIP Sales**  
**DIRECTV**  
Mark Cunningham is the director of MDU sales for DIRECTV, which currently provides bulk and retail DIRECTV video services to multi-family communities in all 50 states through their authorized MDU dealers. Cunningham has worked in the multi-family video business over the past 25 years and has held leadership roles with private cable operators, telecommunication companies and DIRECTV. DIRECTV continues to evolve its video products to provide best in class service to the multi-family space.
Sarah Davis  
**Senior Director Government Affairs and Wholesale Strategies**  
**Consolidated Communications**

Sarah Davis is senior director of government affairs and wholesale strategies at Consolidated Communications. She has a law degree from the University of Maine School of Law and a B.A. in government from Clark University. For the past 13 years, Davis has been involved in most regulatory matters involving Consolidated Communications in its 23-state footprint.

Angie Dickison  
**Executive Director, Office of Broadband Development**  
**Department of Employment and Economic Development**  
**State of Minnesota**

Angie Dickison is the executive director for Minnesota’s Office of Broadband Development, where she leads broadband strategy and program development efforts for the state. She also oversees a portfolio of $126 million dollars in broadband infrastructure investments through Minnesota’s Border to Border Broadband grant program.

Prior to joining the team in Minnesota, Dickison served as Wisconsin’s state broadband director. Working together with industry and community stakeholders in Wisconsin, she helped launch a first-in-the-nation Telecommuter Forward community certification program. She was also appointed by FCC Chairman Pai to serve as a member of the FCC’s Intergovernmental Advisory Committee.

Dickison has an MBA from the University of Wisconsin and was a 2014 Public Policy Fellow at the University of Minnesota’s Humphrey School of Public Affairs.

Joshua Edmonds  
**Director of Digital Inclusion**  
**City of Detroit, Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT)**

Joshua Edmonds is the City of Detroit’s inaugural director of digital inclusion and is America’s first municipal director of digital inclusion. He is responsible for the creation of Connect 313 – Detroit’s sustainable digital inclusion strategy designed to bridge the digital divide. Since being appointed, Edmonds has testified in front of Congress on digital equity, hosted Detroit’s first Digital Inclusion Summit, established the city’s first Digital Equity Fund, and most recently, helped raise a combined $30 million for distance learning and telehealth initiatives for Detroit residents. He also chairs the telehealth workgroup within the Federal Communications Commission’s intergovernmental advisory committee.

Prior to his current role, Edmonds served as a digital inclusion policy fellow for the University of Michigan’s Poverty Solutions Initiative, as a digital innovation fellow at The Cleveland Foundation, and a public service fellow at the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority working on President Obama’s ConnectHome initiative. He has been recognized by Forbes, the Federal Communications Commission, Next Century Cities, Government Technology, and the National Digital Inclusion Alliance for his contributions to the field.

Ernesto Falcon  
**Senior Legislative Counsel**  
**Electronic Frontier Foundation**

Ernesto Falcon is senior legislative counsel at the Electronic Frontier Foundation with a primary focus on intellectual property, open internet issues, broadband access, and competition policy.

He represents EFF’s advocacy, on behalf of its members and all consumers, for a free and open internet before state legislatures and Congress. Falcon’s work includes pushing the state of California to pass the strongest net neutrality law in the country in response to federal repeal efforts, as well as leading EFF’s research and advocacy to promote universally available, affordable, and competitive fiber broadband networks.
Tabinda Ghani  
**Portfolio Officer**  
**Humana Foundation**

Tabinda Ghani serves the Humana Foundation as a portfolio officer. She has served in the nonprofit sector for over a decade in refugee resettlement, senior services and financial capability. She has extensive experience in program design and evaluation, strategic planning, fundraising, and partnership development and holds a Master of Social Work alongside her MBA from the University of Houston. Ghani also holds a certification in Nonprofit Management from Rice University. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling, baking and spending time with her family.

Debra J. Hall  
**Chair, Midcoast Internet Coalition**  
**President, Midcoast Internet Development Corporation**

Debra Hall has 40 years of experience as an international corporate, regulatory and technology attorney. She co-founded and is the co-owner of a technology company that holds a U.S. registered patent in the field of artificial intelligence.

Hall has long been an advocate for high-speed broadband. As president of two homeowners’ associations, she led a successful effort to bring fiber-to-the-home to 541 residences in Naples, Fla. As a member of various committees and task forces, and as an elected member and chair of the Rockport Select Board, she strives to expand high-speed internet throughout the Town of Rockport and Midcoast Maine.

She chairs the Midcoast Internet Coalition, which consists of more than a dozen municipalities interested in establishing municipally owned fiber optic networks. She is also the president of the Midcoast Internet Development Corporation, a newly formed nonprofit regional utility district focused on building fiber optic networks to all homes and businesses within a geographic region of Maine.

Clint Harp  
**Senior Vice President of Telecommunications Business Development**  
**Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA)**

Clint Harp oversees the Lower Colorado River Authority’s work to provide fiber capacity or facilities to help enable greater broadband service connectivity in Texas. He also leads business development efforts for LCRA’s radio system, which is used by cities, counties and a number of public safety and first responder organizations. He previously served as vice president of transmission strategic services and chief of staff. Before joining LCRA in 2014, Harp was the director of business development for Texas, working under then-Gov. Rick Perry, and served as an appointed board member to the Texas Economic Development Corporation. He first joined the governor’s staff in 2008 as executive aide and then special adviser to the governor. Harp serves on the Hill County Conservancy board of directors and is an alumni chapter leader for his alma mater, Pepperdine University, where he earned a bachelor’s degree.

Christine Havey  
**Senior Director, People Services**  
**Congruex**

Christine Havey is the senior director of people services at Congruex, a broadband network design and build operator. She oversees global marketing and communications to drive a positive employee experience through strategic planning and delivery of people-focused initiatives. Prior to her current role, she held various leadership positions related to talent acquisition, organizational development and engineering operations as the chief of staff to the president and CEO of CHC Consulting, a Congruex company. Havey holds a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and communications from California State University of Fullerton and is a senior certified HR professional through the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM-SCP).
Alison Johnson  
**Associate Vice President of Content and Program Strategy**  
**National Multihousing Housing Council**  

Alison Johnson is responsible for designing and managing executive-level knowledge programs of strategic importance to NMHC’s mission and industry advocacy. With experience in finance and nonprofit management, Johnson is a practiced program manager who has conducted research and knowledge sharing initiatives in a variety of subject matters, including corporate citizenship, urbanization, leadership, and community building. She holds a B.A. in political and economic philosophy from Wheeling Jesuit University in Wheeling, WV, and earned a master of urban planning from the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University.

Virginia Lam Abrams  
**Senior Vice President, Government Affairs and Strategic Advancement**  
**Starry**  

Virginia Lam Abrams is a seasoned communications and public affairs executive with two decades of experience working in technology, media and politics. She is currently senior vice president of government affairs and strategic advancement for Starry, Inc., a wideband hybrid fiber wireless technology company focused on building competitive, affordable, high-quality broadband across the United States. Abrams is responsible for leading Starry Connect, the company’s digital equity program focused on developing partnerships with public and affordable housing owners to deliver ultra-low-cost internet solutions to their residents. She also advocates for and represents Starry in front of governmental agencies at the local, state and federal level and engages with policymakers and the public interest community in advancing pro-consumer policies that protect privacy and competition in the broadband marketplace. Abrams also leads media and investor relations for the company and certain business development functions.

Prior to Starry, Abrams served as senior vice president of communications and government relations at Aereo, where she spent three years guiding the company’s communications, advocacy and lobbying efforts. Prior to joining Aereo, she was senior vice president of public affairs at Rubenstein Communications, where she managed a portfolio of clients spanning the media, technology and real estate industries. Prior to joining Rubenstein, she served as a deputy press secretary and spokesperson for New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg during his second term, where she led communications for the Mayors Against Illegal Guns Coalition and managed a portfolio of city agencies including the NYPD, FDNY, Department of Education, and Law Department. In 2010, she served as deputy campaign manager and communications director for the Republican nominee for NYS attorney general and was recognized by The Capitol as one of the magazine’s “40 under 40 Rising Stars in New York Politics.”

Abrams holds a Bachelor of Science in journalism and political science from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. She serves as the chair of the board of directors of Public Knowledge and on the advisory board of Engine.

Gerry Lawlor  
**CEO**  
**Open5G**  

After many years working on Wall Street in New York City and in finance around the globe, Gerry Lawlor moved to a remote island community in Washington State in 2011. He learned the hard way that surviving with terrible connectivity wasn’t an option. So in 2014, he decided to fix his issues, which resulted in developing and running a very unique broadband business serving the San Juan Islands. This led next to starting and running T-Mobile’s national fixed Broadband business in early 2018. He now runs Open5G, a very innovative startup that is assisting communities with their broadband deployment needs.
SPEAKERS

Martin Lee
President
The Light Brigade

Martin Lee was appointed CEO of Light Brigade, the leading fiber optic skills training company, in August 2020. He has held leadership positions in mobile telecommunication installations and with several global fiber optic interconnect companies, including Huber+Suhner, Rosenberger and Carlisle Interconnect, and has worked globally including in North America, Europe and Asia. He lives now in Washington State. Lee, who served a four-year electronic engineering apprenticeship himself, is passionate about professional, vocational training and the upward mobility it can provide.

Casey Lide
Partner
Keller and Heckman LLP

Casey Lide advises and represents public- and private-sector clients on contract drafting and negotiation matters, including fiber optic IRUs and leases, easements, franchises, attachment agreements, ISP service agreements, interconnection and collocation agreements, strategic MoUs and others. He also helps clients identify, apply for, implement, and comply with the terms and conditions of federal grants, loans, and other funding opportunities.

Brian Lippold
President
Casco Bay Advisors, LLC

Brian Lippold is president of Casco Bay Advisors, LLC, a telecommunications and broadband consulting firm located in Gardiner, Maine. Lippold specializes in developing broadband feasibility studies for state, county and locally funded broadband expansion initiatives (150+ Maine communities to date), with an emphasis on facilitating and implementing public/private partnerships. Casco Bay also provides network planning, engineering, make-ready project management and construction management services for service providers and government funded networks.

Prior to establishing Casco Bay Advisors in 2012, Lippold served as EVP/COO of Integra Telecom, a Portland, Oregon, based CLEC providing services across the western third of the United States. Over the course of his 30+ years in the telecom industry, he has held key executive leadership roles, including SVP network planning and engineering for FairPoint Communications, where he built and led the business, government and wholesale sales channels across northern New England; SVP of state government, research and higher education sales at Level 3; VP carrier services at TelCove and general manager of Kansas, Oklahoma and Missouri for TelCove. His early telecom career was devoted to various engineering and operations leadership roles within the long distance industry.

Tracy Marshall
Partner
Keller and Heckman LLP

Tracy Marshall advises clients on a range of regulatory matters, including privacy and data security, advertising and promotions, telemarketing, and intellectual property matters, as well as business counseling and transactional matters. She helps clients implement privacy, information security, and security breach response programs, develop privacy policies for websites and mobile apps, and respond to security incidents.
Linh Nguyen
Customer Success Director
COS Systems

Linh Nguyen, the customer success director at COS Systems, joined the company earlier this year in response to the surge in demand in the North America broadband market. He is responsible for the successful on-boarding of the COS Service Zones (a surveys and demand aggregation tool) and COS Business Engine (OSS/BSS) solutions for all new fiber network operators.

Nguyen has a long career in telecom in both the long-haul optical transports and FTTH access networks. Prior to joining COS, he spent five years with Nokia in a business development role to promote xPON and Wi-Fi solutions in the rural markets. He also spent 10 years in various roles from business analyst to VP of engineering and operations covering all aspects of development, planning and deployment for 15 FTTH Indiana communities for Metronet. He holds an electrical engineering degree from the University of Tulsa.

Michelle Norris
Vice President of MDU Sales
BAIConnect

Michelle Norris leads a national team focused on growing premium revenue and enhancing the B2B experience for clients, while driving sales strategy and market development, at BAIConnect, the leading independent provider of internet, video and voice services to the MDU industry in the Western United States. She most recently led the successful master integration process of two companies following BAIConnect’s acquisition of Bel Air Internet. Throughout her career at Bel Air Internet, Norris held a variety of leadership roles that were key in the transformation of Bel Air Internet from a small start-up into a highly profitable and rapidly growing telecom provider. She has over 16 years of MDU, sales and telecommunications experience.

Born and raised in Southern California, Norris is highly familiar with the area’s MDU markets and has built an extensive network of clients in that region. She currently resides in Los Angeles with her husband and two children.

Carter Old
Co-founder, President and Chief Growth Officer
Tachus LLC

Carter Old serves as president of Tachus LLC, one of the fastest-growing privately held FTTH companies in Texas. He has a background as a co-founder in tech-focused startups, namely OmniEarth Inc., which sold to EagleView in 2017, and as an investment banker at Fieldstone Partners, where he co-led the space and ground Infrastructure finance group. Before joining the private sector, Old also served as a surface warfare officer in the U.S. Navy.

Nicole Page
Vice President of Sales, Senior Living Division
Touchtown Inc.

Nicole Page, the vice president of sales for the senior living division of Touchtown, a Uniguest company, has over 11 years of experience in senior living. Her passion for seniors, combined with over 20 years working within the tech industry in multiple capacities, allows her to proudly represent both the Touchtown and Sagely brands.

Touchtown offers simple senior living technology for communities that want to seamlessly connect with residents, staff, prospects, and families. Its family of Sagely solutions empowers senior living teams to connect through data-driven engagement tools.

With a combined 1,800 senior living communities using its services, Touchtown is proud to be one of the largest technology providers in the senior living field.
SPEAKERS

Matt Passalacqua
Regional Business Development Manager, MDU Wave
Matt Passalacqua, a senior enterprise and market development executive, has led nationwide direct and indirect multifamily market development teams with dedicated vertical focus on multifamily solutions since 2006. Since joining Wave G (Wave Broadband) in 2019, his focus has been leading teams in growing Wave’s serviceable fiber footprint while also taking charge of enhancing and improving standard multifamily deployment methods creating seamless as well as touchless “already on” end-user solutions. As the world and multifamily resident needs continue to change, Passalacqua and his team are dedicated to maintaining Wave’s ability to develop dedicated solutions to meet client needs at every level.

Theodore (Ted) Pietz
Principal, Aquidneck Light
Contracting Officer’s Representative, United States Navy
Ted Pietz has over 15 years of computer networking experience supporting the communications networks of the United States Navy at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center in Newport, R.I. In January 2020, he cofounded Aquidneck Light, where an effort is underway to bring FTTP to increase access to faster, cheaper and more accessible broadband for residents and businesses on the Newport County island. The Aquidneck Light’s mission is to free the Rhode Islanders captured by a monopoly landline broadband provider and is guided by old school internet ideals.

For the Department of the Navy, Pietz’s role includes solving complex application integration problems and “cradle-to-grave” network support, which includes system design, end-to-end system integration and testing, system deployment onboard nuclear submarines, and in-service engineering activities. With a penchant for strong technical authorship and project management, he additionally serves as a contracting officer representative (COR) of a $31 million multiyear contract supported by over 90 contractors.

Pietz holds a master’s degree in information systems and a bachelor’s degree in computer science with a minor in business administration, both from the University of Maine. Since 2017, he has served in leadership roles for several municipal advisory committees, including as vice chair of the Portsmouth, R.I., economic development committee (PEDC).

Nathan W. Robertson
Senior Analyst
Lewis Young Robertson & Burningham, Inc.
Nathan Robertson joined Lewis Young Robertson & Burningham in 2006. As a member of the firm’s production team, he works closely with relationship managers to provide quantitative analysis, credit ratings presentations and other services to a number of cities, school districts, charter schools, and water districts.

Sean Robertson
Senior Manager of Channel Partner Marketing
Plume Design, Inc.
Sean Robertson, the senior manager of channel partner marketing at Plume, helps empower partners and communications service providers around the world to manage and scale services that connect people. Previously, he held partner marketing positions at ADTRAN, SmartRG, and Rakuten. Robertson’s expertise spans a variety of technology sectors, including software, services, networking technology, and hardware. He is a seasoned SaaS marketer with a passion for building and bringing to market products in emerging categories. He holds a Bachelor of Science in management and leadership from Portland State University in Portland, Oregon.
Peggy Schaffer  
**Executive Director**  
**ConnectMaine**

Peggy Schaffer has been the executive director of the ConnectME Authority, Maine’s program to expand broadband to unserved areas of the state, for the past three years. Prior to joining ConnectME, she was the small business advocate in the secretary of state’s office and served as the co-chair for the Maine Broadband Coalition, a statewide advocacy organization that is focused on expanding high-speed broadband. Schaffer has also served as the chief of staff in the senate majority office and in the senate president’s office and has worked as the lobbyist for the department of economic and community development, where she helped develop and implemented many of the state's key economic initiatives under Governors Angus King and John Baldacci. She holds a bachelor’s degree in public administration from the University of Maine at Augusta and an MBA from Thomas College. Schaffer lives in Vassalboro, Maine.

Nancy J. Shemwell  
**COO**  
**Trilogy Networks**

Nancy Shemwell serves as COO of Trilogy Networks, the leading provider of distributed cloud infrastructure across the United States. She is responsible for guiding the company’s ongoing growth and executing the founders’ vision to deploy 1.5 million square miles of edge-compute capability across rural America, providing the essential infrastructure for 5G, agriculture, and energy solutions.

Shemwell has also served as COO of IoT Community and the CEO of Entegra Technologies, Inc., which offers cyber security solutions for mission critical, industrial control systems (ICS). With a 20-year track record of driving high performance transformational global organizations, Shemwell has been Ranked #93 in ExecRank’s Top CSO Rankings, earned a 2021 Dallas Business Journal Women in Technology Award and was named a Phenomenal Woman by Texas Wall Street Women.

Shemwell holds a bachelor of business administration from Baylor University and an M.S. from Texas A&M. She serves on a number of boards and boards of advisors across multiple technologies.

Mari Silbey  
**Senior Director of Partnerships and Outreach**  
**US Ignite**

Mari Silbey is senior director of partnerships and outreach for US Ignite, and program director for the platforms for advanced wireless research (PAWR) program, a $100 million initiative funded by the National Science Foundation and a consortium of more than 30 wireless companies and associations. Silbey has 20 years of experience in communications and technology. She has worked previously as a writer, analyst and consultant in the private sector, and as a journalist covering broadband and wireless infrastructure.

Deborah Simpier  
**CEO**  
**Althea**

Deborah Simpier is CEO of Althea - an innovative routing and billing platform utilizing the blockchain, which empowers open access and multi-stakeholder networks. Althea is also proud to support tribal and rural broadband through partnerships with nonprofits and universities.
SPEAKERS

**Taft Singletary**  
**Senior Sales Engineer, Dish Business**  
**Dish Network**

Taft Singletary is a senior sales engineer at Dish Business, a commercial services division at Dish Network that provides instantly available, secure, gig-enabled Managed Wi-Fi and live streaming TV to the MDU community. Taft has over 20 years experience delivering broadband solutions and services within the telecommunications industry including serving in senior sales, solutions engineering, and solutions architecture roles for major service providers and equipment vendors like Bellsouth Wireless (AT&T), Cox Communications, Comcast, Motorola, and Harmonic.

**Will Stetson**  
**Product Line Manager**  
**ADTRAN**

Will Stetson, product line manager for ADTRAN’s subscriber solutions and experience team, has more than 20 years’ experience in the networking and telecom industry. He has responsibilities for ADTRAN’s wireless technologies including enterprise Wi-Fi, IoT and fixed wireless access.

**Sean Stokes**  
**Partner**  
**Keller and Heckman LLP**

Sean Stokes represents clients on a wide range of communications matters including broadband, cable television, wireless communications, right-of-way management, pole attachments, barriers to community broadband initiatives, and public-private partnerships. He has developed and negotiated scores of agreements involving access to poles, ducts, conduits, dark fiber, towers, and other infrastructure.

**Joe Varello**  
**VP National Sales**  
**Spectrum Community Solutions**

Joe Varello heads up the national sales organization and is accountable for sales, revenue, margin and overall growth of product and customer relationships. He is also responsible for ensuring Spectrum products and services are best aligned with customers in multi-family and single-family communities and ensures the company’s targeted goals and objectives are achieved. Lastly, he provides leadership across the Spectrum Community Solutions organization in representing customer requirements and works with the organization to develop the bulk pricing and packaging of video, internet, managed Wi-Fi and voice services.
James Wagar
Partner
Frontbridge Capital

James Wagar has over 20 years of experience in private capital markets, including buyouts, venture capital, growth equity, and private credit. In addition to being a co-founder and partner of Frontbridge Capital, he is a registered representative of Thomas Capital Group ("TCG"), a FINRA/SEC-registered broker-dealer he joined in 2016 to build and lead its investment banking and direct investment capabilities. Those efforts led to the collaboration that became Frontbridge Capital ("FBC"), a merchant bank focused on technology, media, and telecommunications currently working on several projects in the broadband sector.

Previously, Wagar was a partner of Alpine Pacific Capital, an independent private equity sponsor, and a managing director and credit committee member of Builders Capital, a direct lending fund providing capital to production builders of single-family residences following the financial crisis.

Prior to joining Builders Capital, he was a principal and investment committee member of Northern Lights Capital Group ("NLCG" merged w/ Treasury Group Limited to form Pacific Current Group – ASX: PAC), a private equity firm providing capital and resources to the investment management industry to support the formation, expansion, or generational transfer of fund management organizations. While at NLCG, he led the execution of seven investment transactions, which became the core of the Pacific Current Group portfolio, and also completed the sale of a minority stake in NLCG to BNP Paribas.

Prior to NLCG, Wagar was a partner of Montlake Capital ("Montlake"), a private investment firm focused on growth-stage opportunities. Prior to joining Montlake, he was a co-founder and served as the EVP/CFO of Torrent Technologies, Inc. (acquired by Marsh – NYSE: MMC), a business process outsourcing/SaaS company focused on flood insurance in the United States.

Earlier in his career, Wagar was an investment professional at NCA Partners (formerly Northwest Capital Appreciation), a lower middle-market private equity firm. While at NCA, he was involved in capitalizing and growing the largest non-bank lender to the security alarm industry and other recurring revenue businesses.

Wagar earned a BBA in business administration with a finance concentration from Pacific Lutheran University. He is an Eagle Scout and is active in the community, currently serving on the information technology advisory committee for Seattle Public Schools and as a board member of XBOT Robotics, a nonprofit focused on creating STEM opportunities for underrepresented youth.

Chris Walker
Senior Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy
NoaNet

Chris Walker’s work at NoaNet includes the management of network growth and expansion, strategic planning, capital development of the outside plant program, and community consulting and engagement for emerging public benefit networks. He has led many of NoaNet’s critical functions in his 20 years there including network operations and engineering, outside plant construction, the statewide network operations center, professional services, and community outreach initiatives. Before NoaNet, Walker served 12 years in the armed forces.
Nate Walowitz
Regional Broadband Director
Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

Nate Walowitz, an innovative telecommunications and technology program executive, serves as the regional broadband program director for the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) http://nwccog.org/programs/broadband/. Since 2014, his technical advisory services to local governments have brought over $9M in grant funding to northwest Colorado community broadband projects, leading to the deployment of broadband to unserved areas. Most recently, NWCCOG was awarded a $1M matching grant to build out Project THOR, an open access, resilient middle mile network across 10 counties in northwest Colorado. Prior to NWCCOG, Walowitz spent years as a consultant to industry and governments, providing innovative business solutions in IT, wireless deployment, terrestrial networks and applications, as well as public safety communications solutions and standards. He started his career in telecommunications with world-class corporations including Avant-Garde Computing, Southwestern Bell and Wildfire Communications.

Monica Webb
Head of Market Development & Strategic Partnerships
Ting Internet

Monica Webb, the head of market development and strategic partnerships at Ting Internet, works with local stakeholders in existing Ting towns and evaluates existing and prospective gigabit network locations and related business projects. Webb spent her early career working in marketing and management in the financial services industry, where she launched channel marketing platforms that continue to dominate channel strategy in the mutual fund industry today. In 2002, she spearheaded efforts in Massachusetts to create a regional municipal fiber-to-the-premises network in unserved towns.

Julie Wheeler
President Commissioner
York County, PA

Julie Wheeler was elected to her first term on the York County Board of Commissioners in 2019, bringing extensive business acumen. She started her career at Adhesives Research and then went on to work for General Electric, where she most recently served as the general manager for a medical device business. Wheeler grew up in York County and graduated from Dallastown Area High School. She earned a degree in biology from Randolph–Macon Woman’s College.

Scott D. Woods
Senior Broadband Program Specialist
National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), U.S. Department Commerce

As a senior broadband program specialist with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s (NTIA) BroadbandUSA Initiative, Scott Woods serves as the team lead for the Connecting Minority Communities (CMC) Pilot Program. He also serves as a principal liaison between the BroadbandUSA program office and key strategic partners and external stakeholder groups, including representatives from state and local governments, telecommunications companies, for-profit and nonprofit corporations, and colleges/universities.

Woods has also managed the BroadbandUSA Technical Assistance Program and numerous broadband network construction projects under the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), including ones in California, Arizona, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Texas, West Virginia, Arkansas, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Prior to joining NTIA, Woods served as an associate attorney in the telecommunications, media and technology group at Bingham McCutchen LLP in Washington, D.C. He has a B.A. from Morehouse College, a master of arts in public policy from American University, and a juris doctor from Howard University School of Law.
Wes Wright  
Partner  
Keller and Heckman LLP  

Wes Wright counsels and represents clients on compliance issues related to telecommunications service provider and VoIP regulations, state tariff requirements, private wireless licensing, 911 reliability and call handling, customer proprietary network information, the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, and other related obligations. He is a recognized expert on the FCC’s wireless spectrum and tower siting rules.