

NWCCOG Regional Economic Summit

Thursday, May 1, 2025

SPEAKER BIOS

In order of appearance

Patti Clapper | County Commissioner | Pitkin County

Patti Kay-Clapper has lived and worked in Pitkin County since June 1980. Married into the long time Clapper Family for 30 years with 2 children born and raised in Aspen. She believes in the preservation of community values; sustainable ranching and agriculture; open space, trails, and public lands. She has been involved with NWCCOG for over 20 years serving as Pitkin County representative on the NWCCOG Council as well as EDD board of directors where she currently services as Vice-Chair.

Jon Stavney | Executive Director | NWCCOG

Jon Stavney, as Executive Director of Northwest Colorado Council of Governments, is a leader passionate about improving local government through information sharing, innovation and best practices. Since being hired in November of 2016, Jon has worked closely with program directors at NWCCOG to develop clear goals and maintain the highest possible scores from the state and federal agencies which review each program, and to increase the visibility of services and of the organization as a whole. Jon learned public service on the job over more than twenty years in various roles. Elected to the Town of Eagle Board of Trustees in 1998, 2002 and Mayor in 2004, he served on the Board in Eagle until 2008. In that time while working as a Superintendent then Project Manager building Custom Homes, town provided his night class where he “studied” governance, land use, law and public policy “by doing” as the town grew more than 15% each year. That decade included multiple major development negotiations as town that more than doubled a historic footprint. He is most proud of the Town renovating Broadway with an award-winning streetscape, building a concert stage during a makeover of town park. The town grew dramatically but community surveys showed quality of life measurements increasing for residents during his tenure. Jon served 5 years as an Eagle County Commissioner from 2008-2013 where his proudest accomplishments were establishing Castle Peak Senior Center (a 120 unit assisted living facility), working closely with stakeholders on the Colorado River to purchase 5 key river access points and conservation parcels, and also spearheading the Eagle Valley Land Exchange, a ten-parcel, 1, 549-acre multi-party agreement involving the USFS, Colorado State Land board and four local jurisdictions. Jon was served on the Colorado River Water Conservation District board when it negotiated the historic Colorado River Cooperative Agreement in involving Denver Water and 15 West Slope entities. He was on the Public Lands Committee at CCI. Jon stepped down as Commissioner in 2013 when he was hired to serve as Town Manager in Eagle. During that time the leadership team Jon led at the town drafted and completed Annexation and Development Agreement negotiations for the 800 unit Haymeadow Development, concept planning for the future Eagle River Park, and de-evolution of Highway 6 through town. Jon

resigned with a severance as Town Manager in December of 2015. Prior to joining NWCCOG, in 2016, Jon performed an office assessment for the 5th Judicial District, he trained and worked as a raft guide with Sage Outfitters, and framed homes in Gypsum for Habitat for Humanity. Jon and his wife live in Eagle, Colorado in a home that he designed and built in 2001. Their two adult children are in college. Jon enjoys the travel, research and writing involved in his job and keeps a personal blog on the topic at www.a-public-observer.com.

Greg Totten | Economist | State Demography Office

Greg Totten is the Economist at the State Demography Office. Prior to joining the SDO in 2022, Greg spent over a decade working in affordable housing, specializing in the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. In addition to his work at the SDO, Greg also serves on the board of NEWSED Community Development Corporation. Greg has a B.A. in Ethics, History, and Public Policy from Carnegie Mellon University, and an M.A. in Economics from Colorado State University.

Catherine Schaaf | Executive Director | Early Childhood Options, Summit County

Catherine came to Summit County in 2006, after graduating college in New Hampshire. She began her career in Early Childhood Education as teacher at the Carriage House, then working at the FIRC as a Parent Educator. She has a decade of experience in the Early Childhood Education field between working at Carriage House, FIRC and recently as Program Director at Early Childhood Options. She has a strong passion for ensuring that all young children in her community are valued, healthy and thriving. Catherine enjoys spending her free time with her family, husband Michael, and two children William and Annabel, where they all get out and enjoy the wonderful activities that Summit County has to offer. catherine@earlychildhoodoptions.org | 970-406-3067

Katy Hale | Executive Director | Grand Beginnings, Grand County

Originally from Madison, Wisconsin, Katy has been with Grand Beginnings since 2013 and specializes in early childhood health prevention and systems-building across the health and early childhood sectors. Katy holds two Bachelor of Science degrees in Neurobiology and Spanish from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She also has a Graduate Certificate in Global Health from UW-Madison's Global Health Institute and a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree from UW-Madison's School of Medicine and Public Health, where she specialized in infectious disease epidemiology as well as the relationships between social justice and health within individual communities. Her work with Grand Beginnings has led to the Colorado Trust John R. Moran Jr. Grantee Leadership Award in 2015 and recognition as an Early Childhood Colorado Partnership Emerging Leader in Early Childhood in 2017. As the Executive Director, she works to promote a child-centered early childhood system that fosters early learning, facilitates healthy child development, and promotes family success in Grand and Jackson Counties.

Amron Wagoner | Owner, Red Buffalo Coffee & Tea

Hello, I'm Amron, I moved to Summit county 6 years ago from eastern North Carolina with my husband and daughter. We started our life in Summit living in Silverthorne. My background is in Coffee, so working at Red Buffalo Coffee and Tea was a dream come true at making the move from across the country go smoothly. My husband Evan Myers and I were married on the frozen Lake Dillon in the winter of 2020. January 2nd, 2021 we welcomed our son Ronin as the Summit County New Years Baby! When Ronin was about 6 months old we had learned the struggles of having a young child here in the mountains. We had to make a choice, do I continue working which will only pay for childcare or pivot and try something new. This led to me starting my own very casual in-home daycare, I worked with five families and charged a fair price to look after their kids. Six months into starting this venture I ended up having health issues which would lead to a diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis. That quickly shut down the daycare as now I had to focus on getting a plan of care. Fast forward some time, I have a plan of care and we had to get serious and figure out how we would continue to afford to live in Summit County. There was an opportunity for me to work as a teacher for Wildflower Nature School. This would solve the issue of childcare and my work. Unfortunately my auto-immune disease became an issue as I was sick very often from working with tiny humans who had very new immune systems. With me being sick so often I wasn't making enough to justify keeping the job. Timing seems to be everything, as in the Fall of 2023 a dinner with Erin Young (original owner of Red Buffalo Coffee and Tea) led to my husband and I buying the coffee shop and officially becoming the owners on May 15, 2024. I am now making the shop a more family friendly space adding toys, books and in the Summer a fairy garden by the Blue River. All of that helps make having our kids there with us more enjoyable there for them, because the truth is, childcare is still too expensive.

Margie Joy | Community Relations Manager | CHFA

Margie Joy joined Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) as a Community Relationship Manager for the Western Slope in 2020. She brings to the role a strong career background in community engagement and economic development. As Community Relationship Manager, Joy is an ambassador for the organization, engaging with communities throughout the Western Slope to learn and help address their needs, challenges, and opportunities. Prior to joining CHFA, Joy served as the Information and Marketing Director for Pioneers Medical Center in Meeker, Colorado; conducted outreach programs as a state liaison for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association; managed community engagement for the North Front Range Metropolitan Organization; and worked in investor relations for Northern Colorado Economic Development. Joy currently serves on the HopeWest-Meeker Advisory Board, Meeker Chamber of Commerce Board, and Colorado Northwest Community College Foundation Board.

Jason Dietz | Housing Director | Town of Vail

Jason Dietz has over 25 years of experience in public and private sector housing development, land acquisitions and property management. He joined the Town of Vail as Housing Director in June of 2024. Since joining the Town, the Town has broken ground on

Timber Ridge Village, a 302-unit, for sale, modular condo redevelopment project. Finalized entitlements, permits, agreements and contracts for the 268-unit West Middle Creek apartment project, utilizing tax exempt bond financing scheduled to close and break ground in May. Followed by the closing of a CDOT parcel the Town is entitling for approximately 20 for sale workforce housing units. These new 590 units in the pipeline will be in addition to the Towns existing 1034 deed restricted unit inventory managed by the Housing Department. The Housing Department also manages housing buy downs, the Vail InDEED program, and various EHU exchange programs.

Matt Andrews | Housing Outreach Coordinator | Eagle County Housing & Development Authority

Matt leads strategic communications and outreach for the Eagle County Housing and Development Authority. He oversees public relations, marketing, and community engagement to support equitable housing across the region. Matt manages communications for housing programs, real estate through The Valley Home Store, and new developments, with a focus on culturally competent outreach. His work centers on effective storytelling and stakeholder engagement to advance the organization's mission. Prior to joining the Town of Vail, Dietz served as Summit County Housing Director. In Summit, Dietz lead the expansion of the recently formed Housing Department, starting projects and programs ranging from new development, preservation of existing housing stock, adaptive reuse, ADU stock plans, streamlining of codes and housing policies.

Michelle Bonfils Thibeault, AICP | Planning Director | Town of Basalt & WMRHC

Michelle is a seasoned municipal leader with over 20 years of experience in public and private sector planning, housing policy, infrastructure project management, and strategic community development. Her attainable housing experience spans public private partnerships, LIHTC and municipal projects delivering over 300+ deed-restricted units in the Roaring Fork Valley.

April Long | Executive Director | West Mountain Region Housing Coalition

April Long is the Executive Director of the newly formed nonprofit, West Mountain Regional Housing Coalition, focused on increasing the availability and accessibility of affordable housing in the Roaring Fork and Colorado river valleys. April is a professional engineer, with a career (and bio) that has nothing to do with affordable housing (and lots to do with the management and protection of water). But like all good engineers, April enjoys solving problems, especially those involving scarce and precious resources, like water and housing. She has 20-plus years of experience assisting local governments in the creation, development, and implementation of programs, policies, and projects. She also has six years of experience in regional collaboration, bringing together local elected officials to find solutions that span jurisdictional boundaries. She is a certified facilitator and serves on several local, regional, and state boards, most recently as the governor's western slope appointee to Colorado's Water Quality Control Commission and the chair of the Colorado Basin Roundtable. She is the secretary of NW COG's QQ Committee (QQ = Water Quality/Quantity).

Paige Omohundro | Business Development Manager | CHFA

Paige Omohundro is the Business Development Manager at Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) and has over 20 years of experience in affordable housing and community development. At CHFA, Paige manages the home finance business development team, providing outreach and training opportunities for lenders, real estate agents, nonprofit groups, and consumers to learn more about CHFA's homebuyer programs and services. Prior to joining CHFA, Paige worked for the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation where she managed similar programs in her home state of Texas. Paige earned a master's degree in Urban and Environmental Planning from the University of Virginia and a bachelor's degree in Environmental Design from Texas A&M University. In her spare time, she serves as the Board Vice President of the Colorado Mortgage Lenders Association and loves exploring Colorado with her husband and daughter.

Lucy Kay | President & CEO | Breckenridge Tourism Office

Lucy Kay, CEO for the Breckenridge Tourism Office since 2014, led the company's transition to a highly successful destination marketing and management organization which helps drive over \$900 million in taxable sales revenue to Breckenridge, CO. She currently serves on the CTO's Destination Stewardship Committee, OneWest Tourism's Managing Wildfire/Smoke Committee, as well as, Breckenridge's Arts & Culture Steering Committee leading a new master planning process.

She has served as the former Chair of CADMO (Colorado Association of DMOs), TIAC Board member (Travel Industry Association of Colorado), Colorado Tourism Office, Board Member and Chair of CTO's International Promotions Committee. In 2021 Kay was honored with the Outstanding Individual Contribution to CO Tourism award at the Governor's Conference on Tourism. Kay previously held executive roles within Vail Resorts including COO, Breckenridge Ski Resort, and VP Marketing for Breckenridge and Keystone Resorts. As Principal, L. Kay & Associates, Kay supported clients including Intrawest, Replay Resorts, Telluride SkiCo, Vail Valley Jet Center, USA Pro Challenge. She also served as one of two Governor-appointed Colorado Commissioners for the Cumbres Toltec Scenic Railroad.

Kay holds a BA in Economics (University of Pittsburgh), Masters in International Management (Thunderbird School of Global Management). She has completed extensive post graduate work at the University of Denver, and holds multiple professional certificates, most recently completing Artificial Intelligence: Implications for Business Strategy from the Executive Program at MIT.

Jill Corbin | Deputy Director, Destination Stewardship | Colorado Tourism Office

Jill Corbin is the Deputy Director of Destination Stewardship at the Colorado Tourism Office. She leads efforts to foster a balance between residents' quality of life and visitors' quality of experience, while helping protect Colorado's natural and cultural resources. Jill oversees programs related to destination development, grant funding, education, and visitor services. She also works closely with statewide partners, including the Destination Stewardship Council, Inclusivity in Travel Coalition, and Care for Colorado Coalition.

Prior to joining the CTO over eight years ago, Jill was Vice President of the Vail Valley Partnership. Her background also includes work in community development with the Peace Corps in Ecuador, the UN Development Programme in Chile, and experience as a small business owner in Colorado's creative industries. She holds a BA in Global Studies from the University of Iowa and a Master's in Cross-Cultural Communication from the University of Sydney.

Meridith Marshall | Director, Rural Opportunity Office | OEDIT

Meridith Marshall is the Director of Colorado's Rural Opportunity Office within the Governor's Office of Economic Development and International Trade, where she leads statewide efforts to foster sustainable economic growth across Colorado's rural communities. She brings a unique blend of practitioner experience and strategic vision to the role, having worked extensively with local leaders, businesses, and government agencies to implement initiatives that drive meaningful impact.

Prior to joining the Rural Opportunity Office, Meridith served as CEO of UNCHARTED, where she partnered with organizations to create thriving, people-centered workplaces through data-driven insights and one-on-one coaching. Her time at UNCHARTED sharpened her focus on building environments that attract and retain talent, an essential component of rural economic development.

During her time at the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, Meridith led the rapid and record-setting deployment of federal disaster recovery funds following Hurricane Sandy. At the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), Meridith played a pivotal role in designing and implementing Colorado's statewide economic development strategy, Blueprint 2.0, partnering with leaders in all 14 regions to develop locally tailored plans for economic growth. Meridith supported major workforce initiatives including sector partnerships, the expansion of the Colorado apprenticeship model, and the NGA Policy Academy. She also implemented the "Healthy Economy, Healthy Colorado" strategic plan, collaborating with public and private sector partners to grow the state's health and wellness industry.

As the state's Infrastructure and Investments Job Act (IIJA) Coordinator, she oversaw the planning and drawdown of billions of dollars of IIJA and IRA funding—working directly with the White House and federal partners to support Colorado communities.

She was recognized with the 40 Under 40 award from the International Economic Development Council, received the Denver Business Journal 40 Under 40 Award, and is a recipient of the German Marshall Memorial Fellowship.

She holds an MBA, a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a major in Economics and a minor in Neuroscience from Drake University, and a Master's degree in Couples and Family Therapy.

Anita Cameron | Director of Business Lending | Northwest Loan Fund

Anita Cameron, Director of Business Lending for the Northwest Loan Fund, grew up in a rural town of 100. An Entrepreneur Father had her sights set on Business Banking from an

early age. With a Graduate Degree in Bank Management, she held Senior positions for years in Denver banks then returned to her small town roots as a community bank president. Cameron enjoys serving the entrepreneur. She knows the risks, the long hours, and the balance with community, personal life and family that they face and is passionate about supporting them. Drawn to Northwest Loan Fund, she says the program is 'like banking used to be.' Cameron is an avid skier and trail biker who is very fond of Northwest Colorado and supporting the business community there. Since joining the Loan Fund in 2013, Anita revived the program and has made 58 loans for over \$4 million dollars creating 180 jobs.