



10 County Budget Conference

Speaker Bios



SANDIE COUTTS

Sandie Coutts is the Director of Employee Relations and Development at Jefferson County Public Library. Sandie previously worked as the Jefferson County OD & Training Specialist, held Director positions in the Head Start/non-profit community in Denver, and spent 15 years teaching in public education in the UK. Sandie immigrated to the US in 2002 and holds a BA in English Literature plus Masters in Education from the Universities of Newcastle and Teesside. Sandie is a certified Enneagram practitioner and coach, holds several OD & Training certifications and is a member of SHRM and IPMA-HR.

Session Facilitator

Economics Panel Discussion
Gallagher Amendment Panel



DON DAVIS

Colonel Don Davis, born in 1968 in Dover, New Jersey, graduated from Dover High School in June 1986. He attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, receiving a Bachelor's of Science degree in Management and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in May 1990.

From 1990 until 2017, Colonel Davis served his country in many different roles, locations and commands. He was deployed numerous times, including to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Afghanistan as the Commanding Officer for Marine Corps Logistics Command Forward. The last few years of his career in the Marines, he assumed command of the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany, Georgia for three years and then was the Chief of NORAD-NORTHCOM Theater Strategy and Campaign Plans Division.

After he retired from the military, his next adventure as county manager, serving the citizens of Jefferson County, Colorado. He joined Jeffco in May 2017, where he continues to implement his leadership philosophy of 5-4-3-2-1; five words: "All Men are Created Equal"; four words: "In the Beginning God"; three Words: "I Love You"; two words: "Commitment, Courage"; and one word: "Humility."

Colonel Davis is a graduate of the Advanced Logistics Officers Course and the Marine Corps Logistics Education Program at Penn State. He holds two Master's Degrees; one in Public Administration from Webster University, graduating with high honors in March 1996 and a second Master's Degree in Strategic Studies from the Marine Corps War College.

He and his wife, Becky have been married 27 years, and have been blessed with four children; Kaitlyn (25), Mackenzie (23), Jack (16), and Luke (14).

Conference Facilitator



BRIAN ELMS

Brian is the author of Peak Performance and the former Director of Peak Academy and Analytics for the City and County of Denver. He specializes in process improvement and has more than 15 years of experience providing political, policy, legislative and program management expertise to government agencies, elected officials, trade associations and nonprofit organizations. Brian started his career in public service after graduating from Regis University and joining the National School and Community Corps (AmeriCorps) as a team leader. He also worked for the Rendell Administration in Pennsylvania as the Policy Director for the Department of Aging. After working in Washington DC for AARP, Brian moved back to his hometown and served as the Assistant Director of Government Affairs at Denver International Airport.

Brian is a certified Lean Black Belt, a Six Sigma Green Belt and Change Management Professional. In his former role as Director of the Peak Academy, he developed curriculum, training and consulting services that focus on employee-led performance management and continuous improvement. Since its inception in 2012, Peak Academy initiatives have saved the City & County of Denver nearly \$25 million and the Academy has provided training to over 5,500 public and nonprofit professionals. Brian recently left the City and County of Denver to join the Change and Innovation Agency where he will lead the innovation practice.

Session:

How to innovate without more money, technology and people



NIJAH FUDGE

Nijah Fudge is the West Regional Director for the Alliance for Innovation – a national not for profit inspiring innovation to advance communities. Nijah is a Kansas University Alumni of the School of Public Affairs and Administration. She has 6 years of experience implementing community development programs, grant writing, and building partnerships within both public and private sectors. Her previous employer was CH2M HILL, where she worked on building and strengthening relationships with local government partners. Her Local government passion areas are Public Engagement and building internal cultures of innovation.

Session:

Six Qualities of Innovation Workshop

This workshop walks attendees through the “Six Qualities of Innovation” revealed through research from Arizona State University on the Alliance members, a burgeoning network of over 350 local government cities and counties, and whom according to the study, “82% of Alliance members are above the average rate in their adoption of innovative practices, and over half are in the very high category.” (Dr. James H. Svara, Director, Center of Urban Innovation, ASU). The qualities will challenge attendees to align the innovation qualities to their organization/department/work units.

Objectives:

- Learn about the traits most likely to cause innovative results on current projects
- Learn about innovative trends happening in local governments across the country
- Take home organizational traits that will improve your organization’s internal culture of innovation
- Discover how taking a risk is the safest thing to do



JOANN GROFF

JoAnn Groff became Colorado's Property Tax Administrator on January 1, 2006 upon her appointment by the State Board of Equalization. In that capacity, she heads the Division of Property Taxation located in the Department of Local Affairs. She directs a staff of approximately thirty-seven in four different sections: Appraisal Standards; Administrative Resources; Exemptions and State Assessed Properties. She is responsible for maintaining a professional working relationship with County Assessors, the General Assembly, Department of Local Affairs, Governor's office, other elected officials, various industry groups interested in property taxation and owners of property located in Colorado.

Prior to becoming Colorado's most recent Property Tax Administrator, JoAnn spent 13 years as the President of the Colorado Retail Council, a not-for-profit membership based trade association for retailers doing business in Colorado. She also was a member of the Colorado State Board of Equalization from 1993 through 2005, initially appointed by Governor Roy Romer and re-appointed by Governor Bill Owens. In 1982, JoAnn had the privilege to be elected to the first of four terms as the Colorado State

Representative from House District #35 in southwestern Adams County. During her legislative tenure, she was a member of and chaired the Legislative Audit Committee; was a member of House Finance, Business Affairs and Labor and Appropriations Committees.

Session:

Gallagher Amendment Panel



JIM HERMANN

Jim Hermann has been working with Colorado public entities and their benefit plans for nearly 30 years. For the last 22 years he has worked with CEBT, a non-profit pool offering employees benefits to Colorado public entities. CEBT covers 320 Colorado public entities' employees for their medical, dental, vision and life benefit plans. Jim's roles include marketing, service and IT. Currently Willis Towers Watson are the administrators for the pool and they support Jim in all consulting areas.

Session:

Colorado Employer's Benefit Trust



JEFF HOYE

Mr. Hoye has been a member of the senior leadership team at CPS HR Consulting for eight years and is the leader of the Organizational Strategy practice. Prior to joining CPS HR, he was founder and managing partner for a national consulting firm for 18 years. Mr. Hoye has a deep knowledge from experience gained in the areas of system-wide change devoted entirely to major improvements in performance, team-based HR process delivery processes, and other people-based, technologically-oriented projects both in the public sector, profit and non-profit arenas. He has served on the National Association for State Personnel Executives corporate council for five years now. He is also an active member of the corporate council for the National Association for State Chief Administrators.

Session:

Nudging the Public Sector Toward Higher Levels of Organizational Performance

This session is designed to give you a glimpse into a world where public sector organizations might use subtler approaches to influence behavior. You'll learn how to identify low-cost and unobtrusive ways of "nudging behavior" to improve performance in your County. See how, with minimal cost, the application of behavioral insights and experimental methods are leading to dramatically improved results, and get a sense of why these approaches are being adopted by government and businesses across the world.



NICK KITTLE

I am a Chief Innovation Officer for government. But that is just a title. Really, I am a Renaissance man who dabbles in the arts and the world around me. I make it my job to help great people do great things. I am a partner and resource for a brighter future and support "Sustainovation"--sustainable innovations and innovations that are sustainable. My motto is live the life you love and love the life you live.

In my professional career, I am an innovator, leader, facilitator, public speaker and trainer, experienced in working with large groups in a variety of settings to maximize the fun, effectiveness, capacity and abilities of a team of diverse professionals. I use performance measures to drive organizational behavior and am gifted in change management to speed organizational adoption of innovation. I use a balance of humor and strategy to create effective solutions. I am skilled in leading diverse teams to create effective unique solutions for "unsolvable problems."

I believe in using your strengths to minimize your weaknesses and build effective teams at any level in an organization. My top 5 Clifton Strengthsfinder strengths are Strategic, Ideation, Futuristic, Command and Competition. I have leveraged these strengths to create forward-leaning programs and first-of-their-kind ideas that have been adopted nationally by Fortune 100 companies and governments across the nation.

Session:

Flying Higher With Pilots

Tired of your ideas getting grounded before they even start? Want to hear about failing hard (and forward) from a serial civic innovator—and how to avoid it? How about what success looks like for a great pilot project? Want to hear the key lessons from over 50 great pilot ideas? Then this is the session for you!

Government Performance and Innovation Coach, Nick Kittle will cover key lessons, results and horror stories from over 50 pilot projects he's implemented (and do it all in 50 action-packed minutes). He will talk about what worked and what didn't, with a special focus on results, failing forward and how to set yourself up to succeed. This fast-paced, high-energy session will help spark ideas or help you learn how to implement your ideas better! Come for the ideas. Stay for the lessons.



JEFF MIHELICH

Having joined the City of Fort Collins, CO in April 2014, Deputy City Manager and Chief Operating Officer Jeff Mihelich holds a Master of Science degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Portland State University and more than 25 years of experience in city and county government operations.

Mr. Mihelich is responsible for day-to-day operations of the City's municipal services and staff as he works with the City's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to implement the organization's strategic plan. He also serves as Acting City Manager in the absence of the City Manager. He is a regular contributor to the Kettering Foundation, providing advice to municipalities regarding citizen engagement.

Most recently, Mr. Mihelich hailed from Surprise, Arizona where he served as Assistant City Manager since 2011. Before that he filled the role of Community and Economic Development Director for Surprise since 2008. Prior to his tenure in

Surprise, Mihelich was the Community and Economic Development Director in Illinois.

Session:

Engagement: Moving from Presentation to Collaboration

Jeff Mihelich will discuss the impact of engagement on Fort Collins – from how they run programs, to how they manage and procure revenue and resources.

- Building on Basics
- Keep FTC Great

Importance of engagement early and over time. Building trust over time. Not just a one-shot effort



GINI PINGNOT

Gini Pingnot is the Legislative Director for Colorado Counties, Incorporated (CCI). She handles tax and finance, health and human services and public lands policy issues for CCI. She has a Bachelor's in Biology from Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee and a Master's in Conservation Ecology from the University of Georgia. She has worked for CCI for more than fifteen years in different capacities. In her spare time, she and her husband referee (and occasionally parent) their 6 year old daughter and 9 year old son.

Session:
Gallagher Amendment Panel



LARSON SILBAUGH

Larson Silbaugh, Senior Economist, Colorado Legislative Council Staff. Larson has been with the Legislative Council Staff, the non-partisan research staff for the Colorado General Assembly, for the past six years. He works on a quarterly economic forecast of the state and national economies. This is used to prepare a revenue forecast presented to the Joint Budget Committee. Larson also works on fiscal notes and responds to information requests from legislators and the public. Specifically, Larson works on forecasting and analysis of property taxes, corporate income taxes, transportation revenue, severance taxes, and marijuana taxes. He has a master's degree in economics from the University of Montana in Missoula and spent four years working at the Montana Department of Revenue as an economist.

Sessions

Economics Panel Discussion
Gallagher Amendment Panel



LEO TOKAR

Leo has developed and restructured insurance operations in regulatory, indemnity and managed care organizations in both for-profit and non-profit environments and with national and local organizations. His broad financial and market expertise in health care and insurance fields has allowed him drive significant financial improvement and expansion for organizations he has worked with, and the opportunity to influence public policy, craft legislation and present testimony, and speak nationwide on varying health insurance and regulatory topics.

Leo is currently Executive Vice President and partner with Lockton Companies, an insurance consulting and brokerage firm. He oversees consulting teams for key accounts and manages employee benefits strategy for public and private organizations in a variety of industries. Lockton is the largest insurance consultancy in the Rocky Mountain region and 9th largest risk management firm in the world. He previously was the Vice President, Marketing, Sales, & Business Development for Kaiser Permanente where he was responsible for managing the financial

performance and growth of all market segments (individual, group and government programs) of a \$2.5 billion health care delivery and financing system. During his 11 years with Kaiser Permanente, Tokar held several other senior positions including overseeing their actuarial, underwriting and product development functions.

Leo has a Master of Science Degree in Marketing and a Master of Business Administration Degree from University of Colorado executive programs, and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics from the University of Kansas.

Leo is a current board member of Delta Dental of Colorado, Colorado Health Institute, Porter Adventist Hospital, Judi's House, American Cancer Society, and Regis Neighborhood Health. He is also a graduate of Leadership Denver and has won the "Forty Under 40" Award from the Denver Business Journal.

Session:

Health Care: Trends and Employer Strategies

Discussion of health care cost drivers and market trends in employee benefits. What is affecting employers the most? What are prevalent and emerging strategies to manage those areas? This will include an interactive portion to get into areas meaningful to you.



RICHARD WOBBEKIND

Richard L. Wobbekind is Executive Director of the Business Research Division and Senior Associate Dean for Academic Programs at the University of Colorado Boulder. He joined the faculty at the Leeds School of Business in 1985, and has served as Associate Dean since 2000.

As Executive Director of the Business Research Division his responsibilities include developing an annual consensus forecast of the Colorado economy and performing various economic impact assessments of the Colorado economy. Wobbekind also produces the quarterly Leeds Business Confidence Index for Colorado.

Rich is currently the president of the National Association for Business Economics. He also participates annually in the Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank Regional Economic Roundtable and is a contributor to the Western Blue Chip Economic Forecast newsletter.

He is a member of the Governor's Revenue Estimating Advisory Committee, the Denver Regional Council of Governments' Forecast 2035 Advisory Committee, the Colorado Tourism Office Education and Research Committee, the Boulder Urban Renewal Authority and the Boulder Economic Council.

For his efforts in community development and outreach, Wobbekind was awarded the 1997 University of Colorado Bank One Community Outreach Award. In 2006 he was awarded the Robert L. Stearns award for lifetime contributions in teaching, research and service.

Wobbekind teaches MBA students in macroeconomics, public policy, entrepreneurship and managerial economics. He has received three awards for teaching excellence from the students of the Leeds School. Wobbekind has lived in Colorado for more than 34 years and has spent much of his time studying the development of the Colorado and regional economies. He received a BA in economics from Bucknell University and an MA and Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Session:

Economics Panel Discussion

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