

## 2024 SBEAP Annual Training Speaker Bios

**Dr. Ronné Adkins** is the Director of the Division of Stakeholder Engagement for the TN Department of Environment and Conservation, which includes the Office of External Affairs, Office of Sustainable Practices and the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program. He has twenty plus years of experience in public service and the environmental field. Dr. Adkins earned his B.A. in Environmental Studies from Dartmouth College, an M.S. in Environmental Sciences and Policy from Johns Hopkins University and a Ph.D. in Earth Sciences from the University of Memphis, where he was also a National Science Foundation Fellow. He is a native Tennessean, husband and father of two boys and enjoys hiking, fishing, hunting, biking, coaching baseball and a wide variety of outdoor activities.

**Lisa Ashenbrenner-Hunt** has been with the Wisconsin SBEAP for 12 years. She also works on the state's Enviro-Check (compliance audit) and Green Tier (beyond compliance) programs. Lisa is the chair of the EJ Subcommittee and has previously chaired the NSC and Technical Subcommittees.

**Cris Brazil** is a pollution prevention specialist with the Kansas State University Pollution Prevention Institute (PPI). Cris leads the pollution prevention (P2) program, which includes P2 technical assistance to industries, communities, and institutions in Kansas, and the Summer Internship Program. Cris joined PPI in 2022, after finishing her Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering at K-State.

**Belinda Breidenbach** is the Environmental Assistance Coordinator for the Idaho Small Business Development Center. She assists small businesses in compliance with environmental regulations and opportunities for electric vehicle charging stations. Belinda holds a BS in Geology from the University of Florida, a Masters in Environmental Planning from Florida State University, and Master's in Technical Communication from Boise State University.

**J. Wayne Cropp** is a member of the Government Enforcement and Investigations Group in the Chattanooga office of Baker Donelson, a law firm with over 650 attorneys and public policy advisors in 23 cities. His practice is focused on a full range of environmental law across the Southeast, with extensive experience in air quality, sustainability, RCRA, brownfield redevelopment, and Superfund issues. He is recognized by Best Lawyers in America for his environmental expertise.

During his government tenure as Executive Director of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Air Pollution Control Bureau (1979 – 1990), Mr. Cropp developed the implementation strategies that brought worldwide recognition to Chattanooga's environmental initiatives. He received the Air Conservationist of the Year Award from the Tennessee Conservation League in 1986.

His many professional accomplishments include service on the national level as president of the former National Association of Local Air Pollution Control Officials (1983 – 1984), now known as the National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA).

Mr. Cropp is a member of the Air and Waste Management Association (1980 – 2024); Section of the Environmental, Energy, and Resources Committee of the American Bar Association; the Environmental Law Section of the Tennessee Bar Association (Chairman, 2004 – 2005); and the Steering Committee of the Tennessee Environmental Network.



Mr. Cropp was raised in Orlando, FL., and graduated from Bryan College, in Dayton, TN., and the Cumberland School of Law, Samford University, J.D., in Birmingham, AL.

**George Cushnie** works as a contractor for the National Center for Manufacturing Sciences and is the technical director for various NCMS-managed Compliance Assistance Centers (e.g., Healthcare, Metal Finishing, Construction) and Portals (e.g., Beneficial Use, Combustion, Hazardous Waste). He has worked for 50 years in the environmental protection field. George has advanced degrees in engineering and has written various books covering pollution prevention and control.

**Jennifer Feyerherm** has been helping small businesses and local governments navigate regulatory frameworks while finding solutions that improve their bottom line while enhancing environmental stewardship since 2018. She began her career at the Wisconsin DNR helping design cross-media tools to help businesses, DNR staff, and the public identify better ways to prevent and manage pollution. She then moved on to apply her skills as an organizer, policy analyst, and strategist for a national nonprofit organization where she worked for over a decade facilitating public involvement; developing advocacy and media strategies; building coalitions; analyzing environmental, health, and economic data; and participating in myriad regulatory processes. Now back at the DNR, she continues helping Wisconsin communities become more resilient.

**Donovan Grimwood** started with the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP) in 1999 and has stayed with that program through about 6 different division changes (currently in the new Division of Stakeholder Engagement). In 2014, he was named the Small Business Environmental Ombudsman, though he still mostly does technical work in the SBEAP. He is active in the National network of other state SBEAPs. Currently he is Chair of the National Steering Committee of the SBEAPs, part of the Website Advisory Committee of the National SBEAP network, and part of the newly formed Environmental Justice workgroup of the NSC.

Outside of the office, he is a volunteer instructor in the sport of fencing. He holds a BS in Chemistry from Tennessee Technological University.

**Jeremy Hancher** is the EMAP Program Manager located at the Widener University Small Business Development Center (SBDC). He holds over 20 years of experience in environmental compliance & technical assistance, environmental policy, and program management. He is proud to be the team lead of the award-winning EMAP program which provides free and confidential environmental assistance to the Pennsylvania small business community in fulfillment of the requirements of the Pennsylvania Air Pollution Control Act and Section 507 of the federal Clean Air Act. Jeremy is also a current member of Pennsylvania DEP's Small Business Compliance Advisory Committee and EPA's Clean Air Act Advisory Committee.

**Chad Harsh** is in the Office of Civil Enforcement (OCE) within Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA). As EPA's National Audit Policy Coordinator, Chad works with the regulated community to help understand and take advantage of EPA's Audit Policies and eDisclosure, and coordinates with Regional colleagues to promote national consistency. Chad has over 26 years of experience at EPA managing various enforcement projects and cases.

**Paula Hoag** serves as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Asbestos and Small Business Ombudsman (ASBO), located within EPA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU). Paula has worked in OSDBU since 2006 and formally accepted



the permanent role as the Ombudsman in 2020. As a staff member within OSDBU, Paula assists the public and small business community with informal regulatory guidance, serving as EPA's informational liaison and small business advocate for fair engagement within the Agency's rulemaking and compliance assistance process. She also participates and coordinates engagement activities with other federal and state assistance programs throughout the country. During her 17-year tenure at EPA, Paula has also served within EPA's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, as a Designated Federal Officer for the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC), and in EPA's Office of Policy's Regulatory Management Division, as a Regulatory Desk Officer.

**Krissy Hurley** is the Meteorologist-in-Charge at the National Weather Service Office in Nashville, Tennessee. In this position, she serves as the leader and manager of the local National Weather Service office that serves all of Middle Tennessee. Previously, she held the position of Warning Coordination Meteorologist where she was the outreach coordinator educating customers including emergency management, media, businesses, and the public to strengthen partnerships and make sure weather products and services were being met.

Originally from North Alabama, Krissy is a 2001 graduate from the University of South Alabama with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Meteorology and a 2004 graduate with a Master's of Science Degree in Geoscience from Mississippi State University. Previously, she has worked as a Meteorologist in National Weather Service Offices in Amarillo, Huntsville, Birmingham, and Memphis. During her 22 year National Weather Service career, Krissy has worked numerous significant high impact weather events including the recent March 2020 Nashville-Cookeville Tornadoes and the August 2021 Historic Waverly, TN Flooding Events.

**Dr. Chunrong Jia** is a Professor of Environmental Health at the School of Public Health, University of Memphis. His research is on air pollution and human health, healthy homes, and environmental justice. He has conducted tens of environmental studies in the Greater Memphis Area, as well as other US areas. His research is funded by federal agencies like EPA, HUD, and NIH. Dr. Jia serves on the Air Pollution Control Board for the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). He is currently directing the Tennessee Office for EPA Region 4 Environmental Justice Center.

**Larry Lamberth** has been with EPA for over 32 years, where he started as an inspector in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Program (RCRA) and has since served in management positions in multiple programs in Region 4. He currently on detail to the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) as a Senior Program Advisor. Larry's former position is the Deputy Director for the Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division in Region 4. He received a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Clemson University.

**Jacob Larson** is a specialist with the Kansas State University Pollution Prevention Institute (PPI), which houses the Kansas SBEAP and facilitates National SBEAP as the 507 program grantee. Jacob joined PPI with a background in electronics manufacturing and has been with the Institute for two years. His focus is providing assistance to small businesses on hazardous waste regulations.

**Nancy Larson** is the Director of the Pollution Prevention Institute (PPI) at Kansas State University. Nancy and the PPI team operated the KS SBEAP and the Pollution Prevention program serving hundreds of businesses and industry partners annually. PPI also hosts the NSBEAP website and provide communication support for the NSBEAP.



**Michael Liebert** is a Directing Consultant in ALL4's St. Louis, Missouri office. He has been working in the environmental compliance industry for 25 years and specializes in environmental regulatory applicability analysis, environmental compliance for manufacturing industries, preparation of emission inventories, environmental auditing, Title V operating permit applications, New Source Review (NSR) air permit applications, Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) compliance, State Construction Permitting, and Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) reporting. He has assisted in environmental permitting and compliance projects for facilities across the country including Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Ohio, Colorado, Kentucky, Arkansas, and California.

Mr. Liebert was on the Board of Directors for the St. Louis Air & Waste Management Association for over 3 years and is also a member of the Gateway Society of Hazardous Waste Material Managers.

Mr. Liebert earned a Bachelor of Civil/Environmental Engineering from the University of Kentucky and a Master of Engineering Management degree from Washington University in St. Louis. He resides in Wildwood, MO, with his wife and two kids.

**Chris Lynch** is the Director of the Nevada Business Environmental Program (BEP) in The College of Business at the University of Nevada, Reno. The program provides statewide environmental regulatory compliance and permitting assistance to businesses. Chris is a nationally recognized expert on small business environmental and energy issues and has now been affiliated with SBEAPs in two states. Prior to joining Nevada BEP in January 2011, he launched and managed a similar statewide program for 13 years at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Chris hosted the national SBEAP annual training in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in 2008 and again in Lake Tahoe, Nevada in 2023. Chris currently serves as Vice Chair of the SBEAP National Steering Committee.

**Rachael Maitland** is a Senior Policy Analyst with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's Office of Policy and Planning. In this role, Rachael supports TDEC divisions and stakeholders on environmental policy issues and coordinates nondiscrimination and environmental justice activities for TDEC. Prior to joining TDEC, Rachael worked broadly on environmental policy, conservation, community and urban planning, and project management at the Tennessee Department of Transportation, The Land Trust for Tennessee, and Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Rachael holds a Master of Science in Environmental Science and a Master of Public Affairs from Indiana University, and a bachelor's degree from Emory University.

**Janet McCabe** is the Deputy Administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. She returns to EPA after spending seven years working as Acting Assistant Administrator and Principal Deputy to the Assistant Administrator in the Office of Air and Radiation under President Barack Obama.

Prior to rejoining EPA, Janet McCabe was a Professor of Practice at the Indiana University McKinney School of Law and Director of the IU Environmental Resilience Institute, where she started as Assistant Director for Policy and Implementation in 2017. Her work at Indiana University centered on establishing innovative, research-informed, and actionable solutions to reduce environmental risks and help protect the health of communities and families.

Over the course of her career, McCabe has spent time working for state environmental agencies in Massachusetts and her long-time adopted home state of Indiana, with a focus on



implementation of the Clean Air Act and other air quality issues. Prior to joining EPA in November 2009, McCabe was Executive Director of Improving Kids' Environment, Inc., a children's environmental health advocacy organization based in Indianapolis.

McCabe knows firsthand through these experiences that programs to improve public health and protect our environment are strongest when they are informed by a diversity of perspectives, and rooted in science, transparency, and the law.

McCabe grew up in Washington, D.C. and graduated from Harvard College in 1980 and Harvard Law School in 1983. From 1983 to 1984 she clerked for Justice Neil L. Lynch of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. She and her husband have three children and three grandchildren.

**Tony Pendola** is the SBO and SBEAP for the State of North Carolina. He has worked for NC DEQ's SBEAP for the past quarter of a century. Before joining the SBEAP, he spent two and a half years in the Division of Air Quality's Permitting Section. Tony also worked in both small and large environmental consulting companies for more than six years. He and his wife run two small businesses; a wedding venue and the country's largest kid's consignment store.

Tony currently serves on the NSC and is a past chair of the group. He remains active on most of the subcommittees as well. Tony is also Past-Chair of the Research Triangle Park Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association and served on their regional SASS board in the past.

Tony has received the NSC's Karen Brown as well as a couple of SBEAP awards. The EPA has conferred on him a couple of EPA Administrator's Awards as well as a team award from the Office of Small Business Program's Director. Tony won AAPCA's Best Practice Award for developing a RegNav tool for the autobody industry. He also worked on teams that won two Environmental Council of States State Program Innovation, the NCDEQ's Secretary's Award and the Governor's Award for Excellence in the category of Efficiency & Innovation.

**Caleb Powell** is an Environmental Scientist with the Office of Sustainable Practices and currently sits on the Tennessee Recycling Coalition's Executive Board of Directors. He became interested in sustainability at a young age and has prior experience in the recycling industry, event coordination, and energy conservation. He has a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sustainability and Energy Technology from Middle Tennessee State University. He also holds his Energy Management Diploma from North Carolina State University.

**Nichole Rodgers** has served as a Brownfield Project Officer in EPA R4 since 2020 and as the Senior Brownfield Coordinator for the region since 2022. She has worked with numerous brownfield communities across the region and has served as the Land Revitalization Coordinator, the state and tribal funding lead and as the state lead for Florida. She has also served as the region's national brownfield grant competition co-lead and has helped organize the region's participation in the annual National Brownfields Conference. Before joining EPA, Nichole was a university lecturer of environmental science, Native American studies, and geology at Bowling Green State University and then a manager in RCRA enforcement and compliance with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. Nichole loves traveling, camping, cooking, reading and home renovations. She lives in metro Atlanta with her husband, Ian, her daughter, Maron, and her very furry dog, Riley.

**David Salyers P.E., P.G.**, was appointed Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation in January 2019 after serving more than 20 years as Executive





Director with the West Tennessee River Basin Authority and previous work as an engineer in the private sector. As TDEC Commissioner, he has led deployment of historic capital investment in the Tennessee State Park system and the establishment of five new state parks. He has also orchestrated more than \$1 Billion in investments in drinking and wastewater infrastructure on behalf of Governor Lee and the General Assembly. More recently, he has been focused on implementation of State Superfund site cleanups and accelerated reclamation through new programs for brownfield site cleanup and redevelopment. In August 2023 he was appointed by Governor Lee to serve as Chair for the Tennessee Nuclear Energy Advisory Council established by Executive Order 101. A results-oriented and mission driven leader, Salyers places a premium on meaningful relationships and effective partnerships as the best way for TDEC to make Tennessee an even better place to live, work, play and raise a family.

**Jarrett Vigil** is a part of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Air Pollution Control Division's Small Business Assistance Program. He received his BS in Business Management from Metropolitan State University of Denver and his MS in Energy and Sustainability from University of Denver. Jarrett has been with the State of Colorado for almost 2 years and before that was an intern with the City and County of Denver's office of Climate Action Sustainability and Resiliency. Prior to that he spent 10 years in the construction industry while attending school. In his free time, Jarrett likes to lift weights at the gym and train jiu jitsu.

**Jesse Walters** is an experienced Small Business Assistance Specialist for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment with a Bachelor's degree in Biological Aspects of Conservation from the University of Wisconsin, a Master's degree in Environmental Policy and Management from the University of Denver, and over 10 years in the environmental health and sciences field. Passionate about conservation, sustainability, and environmental compliance, Jesse's current projects include food waste reduction and permitting requirements for air curtain destructors. In her free time, Jesse enjoys reading, baking, and home improvement projects.

**Hillary Ward** is the leader of the Community and Tribal Programs Group in EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards in Research Triangle Park, NC. Prior to this position, she served for two years as the Coordinator for OAQPS' Air Toxics Strategy. Her experience also includes serving as special assistant to the director of OAQPS and working with senior managers on actions that combine regulatory, voluntary, and policy measures to address air pollution problems from diverse sectors. Ms. Ward spent a decade leading development of several stationary source regulations in NC. Prior to her transition to NC, she worked at EPA headquarters in Washington, DC. Her experience at EPA headquarters included developing water quality standards in the Office of Water, working on national program guidance and innovation programs in the Office of Policy, working on substitutes for ozone depleting substances in the Office of Atmospheric Protection, and supporting contracts in the Office of Mission Support. Ms. Ward graduated from North Carolina A&T State University with B.S. and M.S. degrees in environmental science.

**Crystal Warren** has worked with TDEC for 14 years, spending the majority of that time with the Division of Water Resources. She recently transitioned to the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program in 2021, which allows her to share the technical knowledge she gained from regulating construction, industrial, and municipal stormwater sites, with small businesses throughout the Tennessee in a non-regulatory capacity. As the daughter of small business mechanic shop owners, Crystal understands how complex and intimidating environmental regulations can be for the public. Crystal resides in the Memphis area, where the elevation does not exceed 350 ft ASL, and enjoys traveling to the eastern part of the state where she doesn't



have to ride a ferris wheel to get above 400 ft ASL. In her free time, Crystal enjoys playing trust exercises with her cats.