

# SPEAKER BIOS

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**Moderators:** Donna Bryson, Lee Anne Peck, Marilyn Saltzman and Linda Shapley are CPW members and on the conference planning committee. Bryson is CPW's 2025 COA (see pg. 15). Peck is professor emerita of journalism and media studies at University of Northern Colorado and author of a book on media ethics. Saltzman is NFPW's 2023 COA, an author, former public information officer and journalist. Shapley is a seasoned journalist who worked for several Denver area publications and recently was director of editorial and audience engagement for Colorado Community Media.



## Melanie Asmar

Melanie Asmar is Bureau Chief for Chalkbeat Colorado, a nonprofit news organization covering education. She covers Denver Public Schools, reporting on DPS policy and politics, and the experiences of students, teachers and families in schools. She has worked as a reporter for the alternative Denver weekly Westword and for a daily newspaper in New Hampshire. She joined Chalkbeat Colorado in 2015.



## Camille Bergin

Founder and CEO of Modulate Media, Camille Bergin helps space, science and tech organizations craft and implement high-impact marketing strategies. Known online as @TheGalacticGal, she is a leading industry voice who makes complex topics accessible, blending technical expertise with storytelling to drive engagement, shape public perception and strengthen support for space technology that benefits life on Earth while expanding humanity's reach into the cosmos.



## Deb Hurley Brobst

Deb Hurley Brobst has had a 44-year career in journalism, starting at newspapers in Wisconsin before becoming the chair of the journalism department at what is now Metropolitan State University of Denver. After retiring from MSU, she joined the staff of Evergreen Newspapers as managing editor and a reporter. She currently freelances for the Ouray County Plainedealer and the Colorado Trust for Local News.



## Rebecca Brooks

Rebecca Brooks founded The Brooks Group in New York City at age 25 and became known for her eye for talent and her strategic, personalized communications campaigns. Over the past 25+ years, she built it into a top PR agency, representing icons in food and travel like Guy Fieri and Samantha Brown. Through Reiki and mindfulness, she helps leaders align high-impact careers with deeper purpose.

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## **Patti Brown**

Patti Brown is editor and publisher of the Estes Valley Voice, an independent, journalist-founded, locally owned digital newsroom in Estes Park. The former executive editor of the Estes Park Trail-Gazette, she launched the Voice in 2024 in response to drastic cost-cutting at the newspaper. She has a master's in journalism from Iowa State University and a master's in social work from the University of Iowa.



## **Kyle Clark**

Kyle Clark, winner of more than 20 Emmy Awards, has been reporting for 9NEWS in Denver since 2007. He anchors 9NEWS at 9 p.m. and 10 p.m. and is anchor and managing editor of Next with Kyle Clark, Denver's most-watched newscast since 2018. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Clark created Word of Thanks, a weekly micro-giving campaign supporting small-to-mid-size non-profits in Colorado.



## **Dana Coffield**

Dana Coffield, editor and co-founder of The Colorado Sun, is a Colorado native who became a journalist because of an outsized appetite for knowledge. On the quest, she has worked as an editor and reporter at a variety of publications along the Front Range, ranging in size from the Rocky Mountain News to the Louisville Times. Prior to helping start The Sun, she was senior editor for news at The Denver Post.



## **Lee Ann Colacioppo**

Lee Ann Colacioppo is the executive editor of The Denver Post and Prairie Mountain Media, a position she has held since 2016. She joined The Post in 1999 as an assistant city editor and has held several editing positions, including city editor, investigations editor and news director. She previously worked at The Des Moines Register, Greenville (S.C.) News and Kingsport (Tenn.) Times-News. Lee Ann is a Denver native and graduate of Drake University.



## **Vicky Collins**

Vicky Collins publishes Bucket List Community Cafe, online community journalism for the Denver area powered by students and recent graduates from three universities: University of Colorado Boulder, MSU Denver and University of Denver. She is an Emmy award-winning television producer of network news, programming and sports. Her production company, Teletrends, produces for broadcast, cable, national syndication, Olympics, digital media and nonprofits.



## **Maeve Conran**

Maeve Conran is managing editor for Rocky Mountain Community Radio, a network of public radio stations in Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and New Mexico. She coordinates news collaboration and content distribution throughout the Rocky Mountain region. She's worked in public broadcasting for more than 17 years, serving as news director at KGNU in Boulder/Denver and hosting the weekly TV show and podcast Just Solutions.

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## **Lisa Cutter**

Lisa Cutter, born and raised in Colorado, is a state senator and assistant majority leader after serving as a state representative for four years. Prior to being elected, she was an award-winning public relations and media consultant for more than 25 years. The first bill she began working on in the House of Representatives was implementing media literacy into K-12 standards.



## **Tina Eichner**

Tina Eichner is owner, publisher and editor of Our Broomfield magazine and Corporate Relationships Manager and Manager of Partner Communications at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Colorado State University and has worked in publishing, journalism and communications her entire life. A native of Broomfield, Colorado, she was awarded the 2024 Heart of Broomfield LifeTime Award.



## **Stacy Feldman**

Stacy Feldman is founder and publisher of Boulder Reporting Lab, filling critical gaps in news coverage in a state where newspapers are disappearing to hedge funds. She also co-founded and was executive editor of Inside Climate News, a Pulitzer Prize-winning nonprofit newsroom covering the climate emergency. She was a 2020-21 Ted Scripps Fellow in Environmental Journalism at the CU Boulder, where she developed the concept for BRL.



## **Jolene Fisher**

Jolene Fisher, Ph.D., is associate professor of strategic communication and associate chair of undergraduate studies in the Department of Advertising, Public Relations and Design at CU Boulder. She teaches courses in campaigns, international PR and storytelling. Her research explores gender, strategic communication and new media. Before academia, she worked in nonprofit communications in the U.S. and Southeast Asia. Her work appears in several academic journals.



## **Laura Frank**

Laura Frank is the 2025 University of Denver Wolzien Visiting Professor of the Practice and executive director of the Colorado News Collaborative (COLab). She is a former investigative reporter, founding member and chair emerita of the Institute for Nonprofit News, led teams that won duPont and national Murrow awards, and was awarded media entrepreneurial fellowships at Columbia University and University of Southern California.



## **Steve Friesen**

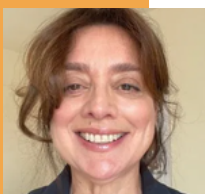
Steve Friesen, former director of Denver's Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave for 22 years, has written extensively on American history, appeared in documentaries and is contributing editor for True West magazine. His award-winning book, "Galloping Gourmet: Eating and Drinking with Buffalo Bill," is one of four he's authored on Buffalo Bill, the Lakota and the American West. Now retired, he worked for 40 years in museums.

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## Regina Griego

Regina Griego, Ph.D., is the award-winning author of “Sins of the System: Trauma, Guns, Tragedy, and the Betrayal of Our Children.” She is president of New Mexico Press Women, the Survivor Membership Lead for New Mexico Moms Demand Action Gun Sense, an International Council on Systems Engineering Fellow, and on the Board of the INCOSE Foundation. She holds a advanced degrees in electrical and computer engineering and computer science.



## Tina Griego

Tina Griego is a senior editor for local news at ProPublica, a national nonprofit newsroom focused on investigative journalism. She was a co-founder and the managing editor of COLab, a coalition of 180 local news outlets that works to strengthen local journalism. An award-winning journalist, Tina spent over a decade as a city columnist for The Denver Post and the Rocky Mountain News.



## Emily Guerra

Emily Guerra is a productivity life coach, speaker and director of operations for a communications firm in Los Angeles. She’s also the creator of Incremental NeuroBalancing, a neuroscience-backed framework designed to help professionals increase productivity without sacrificing well-being. Her coaching business, The Productivity Flow, empowers female professionals to overcome mindset blocks, build balance-supportive routines and lead with clarity and calm.



## Isabel Guzman

Isabel Guzman works as a stringer for Colorado Community Media, primarily covering the Littleton, Centennial and broader Arapahoe County communities. She graduated from MSU Denver in December 2024 with a bachelor’s degree in journalism. Writing was Isabel’s first love, and she is honored to do it for a living. When Isabel isn’t working, she enjoys memoir-reading, acrylic painting and sunbathing with her dog and tortoise.



## Kelly Jones-Wagy

Kelly Jones-Wagy is in her 20th year of teaching high school social studies. She received a BA from MSU Denver in history and an MA in political science, public policy and politics from CU Denver. A National Board-Certified teacher, Kelly is an affiliate faculty member at MSU Denver in journalism and media production. She was both the Street Law Educator of the Year and the Colorado Civic Educator of the Year in 2019.



## Angelica Kalika

Angelica Kalika, Ph.D., is an assistant teaching professor in the Department of Journalism, University of Colorado. She holds a BA in psychology from the University of California Berkeley, and MA and doctorate from CU Boulder. She specializes in alternative media, and her research delves into satire, digital journalism and local broadcasts that challenge traditional news norms. She has worked at MTV, NBC, ABC and Summit Entertainment in script development and marketing.

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## **Jacki Kelley**

Jacki Kelley, public information officer for the Jeffco Sheriff's Office, has over 30 years in law enforcement. A former SWAT crisis negotiator, she moved to public information after the Columbine High School shootings. She supported communications during the active threat at Aurora theaters, Youth with a Mission, Platte Canyon High School and Deer Creek Middle School. She is devoted to bridging the gap between law enforcement and the public, bringing transparency and professionalism.



## **Sylvia Lambe**

Sylvia Lambe's career began in post-Communist Poland at one of the first state deregulated radio stations; her adventures are detailed in "More Women Travel: The Rough Guide." She became an award-winning BBC producer of London arts and entertainment shows before relocating to Colorado, where she founded Lambe PR. She developed media campaigns for Denver's Black American West Museum and with the team at Smithsonian's Museum of African History and Culture.



## **Julia Laser**

Julia Laser is a UX designer and researcher with experience designing websites, tools and applications in the government sector. She specializes in applying human-centered design principles to make complex scientific research accessible, intuitive and engaging. She holds a BA in graphic design from Flagler College, a UX Design Certificate from UC Berkeley, a W3Cx Web Accessibility Certification, and Social and Behavioral Research Certificate from the CITI Program.



## **Cassie Lee**

Cassie Lee is chief innovation officer at the Open Geospatial Consortium. She founded several programs at the intersection of technology and impact. She served as a senior partner at Ode, specializing in AI and data to empower people and planet. She was named a Top 25 Most Powerful Women in Business by the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce and as an Honored Alumni from the University of Iowa.



## **Amy Vaughn Liles**

Amy Vaughn Liles is web enterprise manager at the National Renewable Energy Lab, where she leads content strategy and user experience for NREL.gov. With more than 25 years of experience and a journalism background, Amy specializes in making complex information accessible and engaging online. She holds UX certification from the Nielsen Norman Group and journalism degrees from the University of Missouri-Columbia.



## **Deborah Martinez Martinez**

Deborah Martinez Martinez, Ph.D., is business manager and editor of La Cucaracha News in Pueblo, Colo. She has worked for the Pueblo Chieftain, Fort Collins Collegian and USC Today (Pueblo). She began publishing books in 2010, and her books "Trade on the Taos Mountain Trail" and "Chicana Activists of Colorado" were finalists for Colorado Humanities Book Awards. She is also co-founder of Vanishing Horizons Publishing.



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## Kathi McCarty

Kathi McCarty is the founder of Meth Toxins Awareness Alliance and Home Zone Magazine, a purpose-driven digital publication dedicated to toxin-free living, safety, and advocacy. A former lending and banking executive turned educator, she transformed personal loss into a mission to protect others after discovering her home was irreparably contaminated by toxins. She bridges lived experience with public awareness, media with policy and education with prevention.



## Sydney McGarr

Sydney McGarr is a junior at Colorado College studying journalism, creative writing and Spanish. She serves as the head news editor for CC's student-run newspaper, The Catalyst. She is passionate about protecting the future of print journalism and is studying the ways we can eliminate rural news deserts in Colorado. Sydney is originally from Nashville, Tennessee, and enjoys rock climbing and running in her free time.



## Elizabeth Mehert-Ab

Elizabeth Mehert-Ab is the digital editor of Mountain Living and Colorado Homes & Lifestyles magazines. Her digital journey began after graduating from the University of Colorado Denver with a degree in public health, where she discovered a passion for content creation and editorial writing. Today, she helps guide the ever-evolving world of print media through a digital lens.



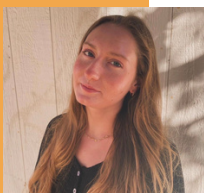
## Vanessa Otero

Vanessa Otero is the creator of the Media Bias Chart®. As the founder and CEO of Ad Fontes Media, she seeks to impact the way consumers, educators and organizations deal with today's complex media landscape. A native of San Diego, California, she currently resides in Westminster, Colo. She has a BA in English from University of California Los Angeles, a Juris Doctor from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law, and she is a licensed patent attorney.



## Dave Perry

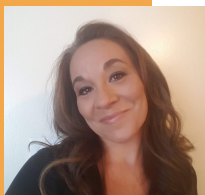
Dave Perry is editor and publisher of Sentinel Colorado, with a record of leadership and dedication to local journalism in Aurora, Colo. Under his leadership, the Sentinel has transitioned toward nonprofit community ownership. A lifelong Coloradan, he has a Bachelor's of Arts degree in journalism and English literature from MSU Denver. He has written for the Associated Press, The Denver Post, Denver Westword and local and regional magazines.



## Elizabeth Pond

Elizabeth Pond graduated with a BA in journalism from the University of Colorado Boulder in May 2025, and now works as a full-time reporter for the Durango Herald in the mountains of Southern Colorado. She considers journalism to be one of the most valuable and perspective-widening careers out there, and feels lucky every day to be able to tell people's stories for a living.

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## Kelly Scott Raisley

Kelly Scott Raisley has over 20 years of research experience. She has a doctorate in educational leadership, an MA in communication studies and undergraduate degrees in journalism, media studies and human communication. She taught at the University of Northern Colorado and now is an experience engineer at Hewlett Packard Enterprise and conducts user experience research for HPE Hybrid Cloud and Chief Technology Office.



## Helen Richardson

Helen H. Richardson, an award-winning staff photographer who worked at The Denver Post, has covered major stories locally and abroad. From documenting the 9/11 terrorist attacks to the aftermath of the 2004-05 tsunami in Asia, her work has taken her across the world. She has captured pivotal moments such as Pope John Paul II's final visit to Mexico, his death in Rome, and the impact of AIDS and water scarcity in Africa.



## Nathan Schneider

Nathan Schneider, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of Media Studies, University of Colorado, where he leads the Media Economies Design Lab. He is the author of four books, including "Governable Spaces: Democratic Design for Online Life," published in 2024. He has lectured at numerous universities and has reported for publications including Harper's, The Nation, The New Republic, The New York Times, The New Yorker, along with regular columns for America, a Catholic magazine.



## Elizabeth Skewes

Elizabeth Skewes, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Department of Journalism at CU Boulder. Her research focuses on media sociology and news practices, the media's role in electoral politics and politics in popular culture. She is working on a book about media coverage of mass shootings and victims of those events. She is author of "Message Control: How News is Made on the Presidential Campaign Trail," and has published chapters and journal articles on journalistic norms, values and practices.



## Eric Sondermann

Eric Sondermann is an independent, nonaligned political pundit, commentator and columnist. He writes a featured weekly column under the heading of "Down the Middle" for a trio of local publications –the Denver Gazette, Colorado Springs Gazette and Colorado Politics magazine. He now has his own Substack publication. He has been a regular panelist on PBS-Channel 12's Colorado Inside Out program.



## Bob Steele

Bob Steele's career spans journalism and applied ethics, academia and the military. Dr. Steele spent nearly 20 years on the faculty of The Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, Fla. He co-authored "Doing Ethics in Journalism: A Handbook with Case Studies" and authored or co-authored numerous handbooks, case studies and articles on journalism ethics. He also served as a Distinguished Professor in Journalism Ethics at his undergraduate alma mater, DePauw University in Indiana.

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## Mark Techmeyer

Mark Techmeyer is director of public affairs for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. He has 16 years of experience as a public information officer, including law enforcement and human services. He served as a PIO on the Jefferson County Incident Management Team for numerous wildfires and the 2013 Colorado Front Range flood. He leads a team of public information and digital communications pros responsible for communicating about high-profile events to the Jeffco community.



## Ryan Warner

Ryan Warner is senior host of Colorado Matters, the flagship daily interview program of Colorado Public Radio News. His voice is heard on frequencies around the state as he talks with Coloradans from all walks of life, including elected officials, politicians, scientists, artists and activists. He speaks French, geeks out on commercial aviation, adores and tolerates his tuxedo cat, Bob, and owns too many shoes.



## Bryn Webster

Bryn Webster is an account manager with Sigler Communications who specializes in content generation, project management and general communications counsel. She coordinates social media, website development, media communications, collateral development, stakeholder database management and project analytics. Her communication experience includes infrastructure, water, professional trade associations, healthcare, senior living and environmental issues.



## Chandra Thomas Whitfield

Chandra Thomas Whitfield is co-host and producer of Colorado Matters, the interview-style, daily public affairs show on Colorado Public Radio. An award-winning multimedia journalist, her work has appeared in The New York Times, The Washington Post, Essence, Ebony, NBCNews.com, NPR.org and The Huffington Post. In 2020 she completed a Leonard C. Goodman Institute for Investigative Reporting Fellowship with In These Times magazine.



## Steve Zansberg

Steve Zansberg is a founding partner of Zansberg Beylkin LLC, a law firm specializing in media, First Amendment and intellectual property law. For more 30 years, he has represented media companies, online publishers and individuals in defending claims based on content, fighting subpoenas and seeking access to government information and proceedings. He represented media outlets in connection with the federal prosecution of Elizabeth Holmes, the Kobe Bryant sexual assault case, Aurora theater shootings and Oklahoma City bombing trials.