

Speaker Bios

Natalie Bailey is an Environmental Compliance Specialist in the Recovered Materials Unit for the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. She is responsible for managing the Recycling and Waste Diversion (RWD) Grant, where she helps applicants achieve their waste diversion and recycling goals. Natalie graduated with a degree in Biology from Berry College in Rome, Georgia, and has a passion for land conservation, natural resources education, sustainability, and serving Georgia communities.

Brent Bell, Vice President WM Recycling, has been in the waste industry for over 28 years. Brent started at USA Waste in 1997 and worked at the corporate offices during the USA/Waste Management merger in the late 1990's. Brent moved to the Recycling group a few years later and helped grow the recycling business to become the largest residential recycler in North America. Brent is currently the Vice President of Recycling for WM responsible for operations of 100+ facilities and sales & marketing of 10M+ tons of recyclables, which are sold to our customers around the world by the WM export team.

Brent also serves on the Board of The Recycling Partnership since 2024.

Brent received a BBA with a degree in Accounting in 1995 from Stephen F Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas.

Dawn Brown is a passionate environmental advocate and visionary leader, serving as the Senior Manager of Stadium Tours and Education Programs at the LEED Platinum-certified Mercedes-Benz Stadium (MBS). A former U.S. Air Force member, Dawn relocated to Atlanta in 2005, where she pursued her love for education at Georgia State University.

Joining AMB Group in 2017, she was instrumental in the successful opening of Mercedes-Benz Stadium. Dawn launched Stadium Tours + STEAM Education, Sustainability Initiatives, and the MBS Urban Garden. Managing a team of 20, she transformed the stadium into a dynamic educational space, hosting over 60,000 visitors annually.

One of Dawn's proudest achievements is her stewardship of the MBS Urban Garden, blending urban agriculture with sustainability. Dawn also serves as co-chair of the Mercedes-Benz Stadium Community Fund and BFOB Green Team. Dawn is an influential figure in shaping Atlanta's sustainable future serving on the Leadership Board for the Atlanta Office of Sustainability Ambassadors, and chairs Root Local's Sustainable Buildings & Practices Committee. She also volunteers with Trees Atlanta, Food Well Alliance, and is a certified Master Gardener.

Her dedication has earned her prestigious honors, including the Southface Argon Award of Excellence and the Green Sports Alliance Innovation Award. Through her work, Dawn continues to advance Mercedes-Benz Stadium's environmental goals in collaboration with influential corporate and community partners.

Pat Brownson is a Solid Waste Engineer with over 12 years of experience in solid waste regulation, permitting, and facility design. He authored South Carolina's composting regulations, enabling the inclusion of food waste and biosolids in composting operations. Pat works nationally to design, permit, and evaluate composting facilities, bringing deep expertise in regulatory compliance and operational performance.

Currently with HDR, Pat has spent the past six years contributing to the design of composting facilities across both the East and West Coasts, handling a wide range of organic feedstocks. As a newly appointed board member of the Georgia Composting Council, he is committed to advancing Georgia's composting industry through compliant design, efficient technologies, and strategic feedstock sourcing.

Christian Bruey is the Director of Communications, Government Relations, and Marketing for PureCycle Technologies. He has more than two decades of experience in communications and journalism. Bruey also leads PureCycle's PureZero™ program, which helps businesses, sports teams, and local organizations better recycle through education and the implementation of best practices.

Bruey is an active member of the Plastics Industry Association where he serves on the Recycling Committee's Executive Board. He is also a member of the Association of Plastic Recyclers Communications & Public Affairs Committee. PureCycle is also a member of the U.S. Plastics Pact, where Bruey is engaged with the Pact's Communication/PR and Chemical/Physical Recycling workstreams.

Prior to joining PureCycle, Bruey spent 12 years as a news and sports anchor at WFTV-Channel 9 in Orlando, Florida. During that time, he was twice nominated for a regional Emmy Award and won multiple Florida AP Awards for his anchoring and reporting.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Telecommunications from the University of Florida.

Alec Cooley has worked in the waste reduction field for over three decades, starting as the recycling and solid waste reduction manager for Humboldt State University in Northern California. He subsequently worked for the National Recycling Coalition and later as a director of recycling for the national office of Keep America Beautiful. Since 2018 he has worked with the recycling and waste bin manufacturer, Busch Systems as a senior advisor and best practices expert focused on behavior change. Alec has previously served on board of directors for the California Resource Recovery Association and the Carolina Recycling Association, as well as the National Recycling Coalition. Alec is a certified TRUE Advisor. He lives near Charleston, SC.

Sarah Daschbach is senior manager, business development and commercial origination for AMP, a provider of artificial intelligence (AI)-powered sortation at scale for the waste and recycling industry. In this role, she focuses on the origination of custom facility-scale solutions to help waste companies and municipalities meet ambitious sustainability and diversion goals. Before joining AMP, she earned her master's degree in business administration from Harvard Business School. She previously held equity derivatives sales trading roles at Barclays. Daschbach also holds a bachelor's degree from Princeton University.

Joe Dunlop is Project Manager with Gershman, Brickner and Bratton. With 25 years of experience in waste reduction, recycling, and materials management initiatives in the public sector, he has a track record of optimizing waste diversion efforts through public-private partnerships, educational campaigns, and operational efficiencies.

Prior to becoming a consultant, he was the Waste Reduction Administrator and Commercial Recycling Specialist for over 12 years with Athens-Clarke County, GA. Before that, for 12 years, he served as a Program Coordinator for the state of Georgia where he developed solid waste management plans for rural and urban communities; wrote Georgia's required Solid Waste Management Annual Report; managed the state Recycling Markets Directory; built grant programs based on findings of a statewide waste characterization study; and approved local government plans. He was also a trainer for multiple solid waste planning workshops, empowering local governments to craft their own successful plans.

Suki Janssen is the Director of the Athens-Clarke County (ACC) Solid Waste Department and has been with ACC for nearly eighteen years. Biggest accomplishment to-date was bringing a Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM) to Georgia. Prior to her position in ACC, she was a Program Coordinator for the Keep Georgia Beautiful program within the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Office of Environmental Management. She is past Georgia Recycling Coalition President and board member and current Northeast Georgia Regional Solid Waste Management Authority board member and Solid

Waste Association of North America Georgia (SWANA) Chapter past president and current International Advisory Board Delegate. She is a SWANA certified Landfill Operator and Class Instructor since 2005 and SWANA Recycling Systems Manager certified since 2007 and Composting Programs Manager certified. She completed the Institute for Georgia Environmental Leaders (IGEL) program as is part of the Class of 20–21. She is a Georgia Master Gardener, Master Composter and Master Naturalist. She published a children's book about nature's best recycler, the vulture. She is married and lives with three dogs and two snakes.

Sarah Knapp is the manager of the Recovered Materials Unit for the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. She administers the multimillion-dollar Solid Waste Trust Fund Grant Program, manages contracts for state-wide scrap tire abatement and abandoned landfill closure, and regulates material recovery and composting facilities. She graduated from the University of Central Florida with a bachelor's degree in environmental science and minor in Public Administration, and is a LEED Accredited Professional (LEED AP BD+C) and an Envision Sustainability Professional (ENV SP). Sarah is passionate about saving the environment, reducing waste, and educating and inspiring others.

Susan Lewis is the Reverse Procurement Program Manager at Interface, a global leader in sustainable flooring. She has been with the company for 40 years. Since 2002, she had led the company's ReEntry program which reclaims used carpet tile and diverts millions of pounds of material from the landfill through recycling and reuse. Based in LaGrange, GA, Susan is married with two adult children and three grandchildren.

Trina Matta is Executive Director of Policy at The Recycling Partnership, a mission-driven NGO committed to advancing a circular economy by building a better recycling system. Trina leads a team that works both on advocating for policies that support the recycling system as well as on the successful implementation of EPR laws in the United States. Trina has worked in the field of recycling and sustainability for 14 years in roles with The Recycling Partnership, the Sustainable Packaging Coalition, RRS, and the State of North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. Trina holds a Master in Public Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She lives in Atlanta, GA where she enjoys reading mysteries and cooking food her children refuse to eat.

Lynn E. McCray, Executive Director of Eco Sneakers Foundation, Inc. and passionate sustainability and community wellness advocate, has led the repurposing of over 800,000 pairs of sneakers, keeping them out of landfills and into the hands of those in need. Eco Sneakers was recently named Cobb County's 2025 Recycling Partner of the Year and featured on Nasdaq for its Step Towards Your Destiny Financial Literacy initiative, which continues in her daily work with student interns. Lynn's leadership has extended from Super Bowl LIII sneaker giveaways (in collaboration with the Ludacris Foundation, NFLPA, and Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms) to youth coaching, modeling for awareness causes, and empowering women through her work with PFPMA. Formerly Public & Mental Health Chair for Cobb County's Commissioner Cabinet, Lynn blends wellness, recycling, and community development into a powerful model for social impact.

Chaz Miller worked in recycling and waste at the US EPA, the Glass Packaging Institute, and the National Waste and Recycling Association. He an ex officio member of the Board of the Northeast Recycling Council and a member of the Maryland Recycling Coalition Board. Chaz chaired the Montgomery County, MD, Aiming for Zero Waste Task Force. He is a recipient of the National Recycling Coalition's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Happily "semi-retired", he writes a blog for Waste360, prepares a monthly analysis of curbside recycling markets as chair of the NERC Recycling Markets Committee, and speaks at conferences about markets and recycling.

Abbey Mullaney Patterson is the President of AMP Consulting, LLC and a representative of NAIMA (North American Insulation Manufacturer's Association). For over a decade Abbey managed municipal contracts as Market Development Manager for the second largest waste and recycling company in the U.S. In that position she became the intermediary between locally elected officials and the waste company, allowing her to better understand the political and economic drivers associated with waste and recycling collection services. Abbey has also been involved in recycling and sustainable practices for sporting arenas and events. She designed and implemented recycling and waste management infrastructures for three Olympic Organizing Committees – Atlanta in 1996, Sydney, Australia in 2000 and Salt Lake City in 2002. Abbey draws from her 25 years of experience in the industry to provide zero waste solutions for both the public and private sectors. She is a 2023 member of the Institute for Georgia Environmental Leadership (IGEL) and past board member of the Georgia Recycling Coalition and Live Thrive.

Denise Young is the Interim Waste Reduction Administrator for the Athens–Clarke County SolidWaste Department, where she leads education, outreach, and marketing initiatives aimed at reducing waste and promoting sustainability. She oversees public engagement efforts across social media, school and community programs, and facility tours—helping residents, businesses, and organizations better understand and participate in waste reduction practices. With over two decades of experience spanning the nonprofit, private, and public sectors, Denise brings a strong foundation in marketing, service, and leadership. Her ability to connect with diverse audiences makes her an effective communicator and advocate for change. A TRUE Advisor certified by Green Business Certification, Inc., Denise is committed to advancing zero waste principles in her community and beyond. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Georgia Recycling Coalition and is an active member of SWANA, the U.S. Composting Council, USGBC, and is a certified Master Composter. Denise holds a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry from the University of Georgia and believes that the key to meaningful change is a combination of community engagement, continuous learning, and creative problem-solving.

Mason Towe is the Waste Reduction Manager in the University of Georgia Office of Sustainability. He supervises the Waste Reduction Services team, which provides waste, recycling, and compost collection services on campus, as well as strategic planning for campus-wide Waste Reduction goals, policies, infrastructure, and education. Prior to UGA, Mason worked for the Athens–Clarke County Recycling Division as an expert in recycling, compost, and other waste reduction education and outreach. UGA Office of Sustainability is currently diving into the concept of "Campus As A Living Laboratory," starting with waste reduction as an operational function that can serve as a learning model for students, faculty, and staff, as well as a research and education opportunity to enhance on-campus facilities and services. Mason also currently serves as President on the Georgia Recycling Coalition Board of Directors. Mason graduated from UGA in 2016 with degrees in Economics and Sociology, minor in Environmental Law, and certificates in sustainability and environmental ethics.

Kimberly White is the Chief Sustainability Officer for Cobb County, GA. She is a graduate of the Universidad de Oviedo, Spain Study–Abroad Program, a graduate with a degree in Political Science from Agnes Scott College and received her Master of Public Administration degree.

Kimberly served as the 2023 Board President on the Georgia Recycling Coalition Board of Directors. Kimberly was named the 2018 Keep Georgia Beautiful Executive Director of the Year and received the prestigious 2023 Keep America Beautiful National Sue Smith Professional Leadership Award.

Kimberly began her career in the sustainability field as a fellow in the Office of Sustainability at Agnes Scott College. She has also worked in county governments as an environmental programs' coordinator, recycling manager, and sustainability division manager. In her current role as CSO, Kimberly works diligently on environmental initiatives, county-wide sustainability efforts including implementation of a county-wide strategic sustainability plan, leading the Atlanta Regional Commission Green

Communities certification team for Cobb County and achieving platinum status for the first time in the history of the program in Cobb County. Kimberly secured one of only two grants in the United States to bring the innovative, plastics recovery, Hefty ReNew Program to Cobb County, GA and assisted in the regional and national expansion of the program. Kimberly is currently working on improving and expanding recycling options for the residents of Cobb County by establishing the first CHaRM (Center for Hard to Recycle Material) facility in Cobb County, Georgia.