



2024 RASCL Summit

# Leading the Charge

Empowering Our Communities for a Sustainable Delaware

Event Program

January 17, 2024

[www.derascl.org](http://www.derascl.org)

# SUMMIT SCHEDULE



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024

**10:00AM**

## **OPENING REMARKS**

- Danielle Swallow, Coastal Hazards Specialist, Delaware Sea Grant, University of Delaware

**10:15AM**

## **WELCOME ADDRESS**

- Stefen Samarripas, Senior Policy Manager, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy

**10:30AM**

## **RASCL CHAMPIONS AWARD PRESENTATION**

- Danielle Swallow, Coastal Hazards Specialist, Delaware Sea Grant, University of Delaware

**10:45AM**

## **RENEWABLE REALITIES: SHARING INSIGHTS AND DISPELLING MYTHS**

- Drew Slater, Executive Director, Energize Delaware
- Jeremy Firestone, Professor, School of Marine Science & Policy, University of Delaware
- Nicole Rodi, Clean Transportation Specialist, ICF
- Moderator: Emily Knearl, Delaware Director of Government Relations and External Affairs, The Nature Conservancy

**12:00PM**

## **BREAK**

- Lunch

**1:15PM**

## **RENEWABLE ROADMAP: EXAMPLES AND TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS**

- Rachael Griffiths, Sustainability Director, Chester County Planning Commission
- Robert McBride, Chief, Bike Newark
- Moderator: Danielle Swallow, Coastal Hazards Specialist, Delaware Sea Grant, University of Delaware

**2:15PM**

## **RASCL RESOURCES**

- Michelle Koenig, Director of Conservation, Center for the Inland Bays
- Beth Krumrine, Planner, Division of Climate, Coastal and Energy, DNREC
- Moderator: Lynn Pusey, Coastal Training Coordinator, Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve

**3:30PM**

## **NETWORKING**

# SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

## **RENEWABLE REALITIES: SHARING INSIGHTS AND DISPELLING MYTHS**

**10:45 AM-12:00 PM**

This session provides a comprehensive understanding of the current state, challenges, and future of solar, wind, and electric vehicle technologies. This session aims to shed light on the latest developments and dispel common misconceptions.

## **RENEWABLE ROADMAP: EXAMPLES AND TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS**

**1:15-2:15 PM**

This session shares concrete examples of where impactful work has been accomplished, offering a roadmap for others to follow. Our speakers will share their experiences, providing attendees with tools and strategies to implement renewable solutions in their own communities.

## **RASCL RESOURCES**

**2:15-3:30 PM**

Learn what RASCL does to increase capacity and provide resources for renewable energy and other sustainability-related initiatives. This session includes an interactive discussion on what you would like to see more of from RASCL in 2024.



# PRESENTER BIOS

*[presented in alphabetical order]*



## **JEREMY FIRESTONE**

*Professor, University of Delaware School of Marine Science and Policy*

Jeremy Firestone is a Professor in the University of Delaware School of Marine Science and Policy. He employs quantitative and qualitative social science research methods to shed light on social acceptance and energy justice regarding offshore wind power development and evaluates spatial planning to reduce conflicts. His teaching includes a course on offshore wind power and another on ocean and coastal law. He serves on the National Academy of Science Standing Committee on Offshore Science and Assessment and on the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Ecosystems and Ocean Planning Advisory Panel. He previously served on the Delaware Governor's Offshore Wind Power Working Group, as North American Wind Energy Academy 2022 Social Science Track Lead, and as Director of UD's Center for Research in Wind (CReW) from 2011-2022. During winter 2023, he was a Fulbright Specialist at the University of Iceland teaching a wind power course and working on Icelandic wind power policy.



## **RACHAEL GRIFFITH**

*Sustainability Director, Chester County Planning Commission*

Rachael Griffith is the Sustainability Director at the Chester County Planning Commission. She leads the Planning Commission's Sustainability Division which leads the implementation of the county's Climate Action Plan. She provides leadership and coordination between county departments, municipalities and a host of regional and community partners to collaborate on initiatives to leverage funding, resources, and talent to advance sustainability within the county. Additionally, Rachael leads planning efforts related to Chester County's award-winning open space preservation program and provides resources and guidance to municipalities. Rachael is a PA-registered landscape architect and certified planner. She holds a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Pennsylvania and a B.S. in Landscape Architecture from Temple University.



## **EMILY KNEARL**

*Delaware Director of Government Relations and External Affairs,  
The Nature Conservancy*

Emily Knearl has worked in Delaware public policy, community building, and convening partners on strategic planning for over 25 years. She has wide ranging experience in public health, clean water and stormwater policy, climate change, disaster planning, and environmental diversity, inclusion, equity and justice issues. She specializes in identifying and bringing together partners to develop policies using a science-based approach.

# PRESENTER BIOS

*[presented in alphabetical order]*



## **MICHELLE KOENIG**

Director of Conservation and Watershed Planning, Climate and Sustainability Section, Delaware Center for Inland Bays

Michelle Koenig joined the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays as the Director of Conservation and Watershed Planning in 2017. Her primary responsibility is facilitating the implementation of the 2021 Inland Bays Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan by engaging with partners and the community, identifying coastal resilience and pollution reduction projects, leveraging funding to support implementation, and through policy initiatives. Michelle holds a B.S. in Environmental Studies and Physical Geography from Salisbury University and a Master of Natural Resources degree from Virginia Tech. Prior to working at the Center, Michelle worked for the American Forest Foundation and the USDA Farm Service Agency.



## **ROBERT MCBRIDE**

Chair, BikeNewark, Secreatry, The Newark Partnership

Robert McBride was elected Chair of Bike Newark for a second two-year term in November 2020. Before becoming Chair he also served as Treasurer. He grew up in Wilmington and lived in Newark for 8 years during his UD Education (BS and MS). At one point in his career, he worked in New Castle County Head Start Early Childhood Development programs before moving to Virginia to run a Head Start Program in Roanoke. He later moved to Pennsylvania where he worked in education for 35 years. Bob and his wife both retired back to Newark after long careers at George School, a Quaker High School in Pennsylvania. He was a founding member of the White Clay Bicycle Club, and works with the City of Newark and WILMAPCO doing transportation planning. A charter member of The Newark Partnership he is an avid recreational bicyclist, a volunteer urban planner, and a really enthusiastic bird-watcher.



## **LYNNE PUSEY**

Coastal Training Coordinator, Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve

Lynne Pusey is the Coastal Training Program Coordinator with the Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve (DNERR). Prior to joining the reserve this past September, she spent the past 18 years working for DNREC in the Division of Parks and Recreation and Division of Fish and Wildlife in varying field and educational roles, most recently as manager of the DuPont Nature Center. In her new role with DNERR and the Division of Climate, Coastal and Energy, Lynne is working to provide meaningful learning opportunities and information for community leaders, natural resource managers and conservation partners.

# PRESENTER BIOS

*[presented in alphabetical order]*



## **NICOLE RODI**

*Clean Transportation Specialist, ICF*

Nicole Rodi is an experienced Planner with a demonstrated history of working in the renewables and environmental industry. Prior to working at ICF, Nicole worked in a variety of roles at the Coastal Society, DNREC and the National Park Service. Nicole holds a B.S. in Environmental Science from Allegheny College and a Master of Professional Science focused in Coastal Zone Management from the University of Miami.



## **STEFEN SAMARRIPAS**

*Senior Policy Manager, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy*

Stefen Samarripas conducts research, analysis, and outreach on policies and programs that encourage energy efficiency in local communities. His work currently focuses on supporting local-government-led clean energy initiatives and scaling up energy efficiency investments in affordable housing. Prior to joining ACEEE in 2016, Stefen worked with community development and housing organizations in the Atlanta, Georgia, metro area. Stefen worked with Cobb County's Community Development Agency, and he worked with Georgia Advancing Communities Together, conducting research on policies affecting Georgia's housing and community development organizations. Stefen holds a Master of City and Regional Planning from Georgia Tech and a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.



## **DREW SLATER**

*Executive Director, Energize Delaware*

Drew Slater is the Executive Director of the nonprofit organization, Energize Delaware. Prior to this position he was appointed by Governor Carney as Delaware Public Advocate. He also worked for Congressman Carney. Drew holds a Bachelor's degree from Washington College and a Master's degree from Wilmington University.



## **DANIELLE SWALLOW**

*Coastal Hazards Specialist, Delaware Sea Grant*

Danielle Swallow is a Coastal Hazards Specialist with Delaware Sea Grant, where she provides technical assistance and outreach to communities on emergency preparedness and building resilience to weather and climate hazards. She is a co-founder of the Resilient and Sustainable Communities League (RASCL) and is active in advising communities about resilient land use practices, hazard mitigation strategies, and capacity building. Danielle is the 2022 recipient of the Mid-Atlantic Sea Grant Award for Outstanding Outreach and the University of Delaware College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment's Community Engagement Award. She has over 20 years of experience in planning, policy, and science communications.



# 2024 SUMMIT SPONSORS

MANY THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF RASCL AND THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL SUMMIT!

---

## Silver Sponsor



## Bronze Sponsor



ENVIRONMENTAL  
FINANCE CENTER

## Green Sponsor



# SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2024 SUMMIT PLANNING COMMITTEE

*[presented in alphabetical order]*



## **DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL**

- Jordana Cutajar
- Michael Tholstrup
- Lynne Pusey

## **DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

- Stephanie Johnson
- James Pappas
- Kelly Valencik

## **DELAWARE DIVISION OF LIBRARIES**

- Sarena Deglin

## **DELAWARE SEA GRANT**

- Danielle Swallow

## **OFFICE OF STATE PLANNING COORDINATION**

- Tricia Arndt

## **PARTNERSHIP FOR THE DELAWARE ESTUARY**

- Jana Savini
- John Harrod

## **UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY**

- Chris Williams

## **UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING & ANALYSIS**

- Tina Callahan

## **UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE WATER RESOURCES CENTER**

- Martha Narvaez



Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Inc. received financial support from the EPA under an Assistance Agreement funded by the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to support this work.