

## FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES

*The Land Trust Alliance gratefully thanks the 2018 New York Symposium faculty who spend hours developing the content of their sessions, compiling their materials and travelling to Albany to share their knowledge and expertise. The Alliance could not offer such a variety of quality sessions without their dedication to the conservation community. Please take time to thank them for their contribution.*

**Judy Anderson** of Community Consultants has worked in the land trust sector for over 25 years. Judy currently assists nonprofit organizations and land trusts across the country on practical strategic conservation initiatives incorporating local communities, climate change, governance, communications and community-based fundraising strategies. She also coaches land trusts on inclusive conservation, easement drafting and stewardship and building greater community relevance to ensure their work withstands the test of time. She is a regular presenter at national and regional land trust conferences and trainings and holds an undergraduate degree in ecology and agriculture and a master's degree in landscape architecture with an emphasis on rural and community planning. [judy@community-consultants.com](mailto:judy@community-consultants.com) (D01)

**Andy Bicking** is director of public policy for Scenic Hudson, where he oversees the formation of the organization's public policy goals and implementation of advocacy initiatives. He has been instrumental securing hundreds of millions of dollars in funding for conservation projects in the Hudson River Valley region from county, state and federal budgets, advocating for new laws and regulations to protect the Hudson River and its surrounding landscapes and guiding coalitions and citizen advisory committees. He has more than 20 years of experience in environmental policy and advocacy, and, early in his career, in outdoor education and volunteer management. [abicking@scenichudson.org](mailto:abicking@scenichudson.org) (C01)

**Kali Bird** is the associate director for the Catskill Center. In her role, Kali serves as the program manager for the Streamside Acquisition Program. Prior to that she worked as a program coordinator, educator and land manager with several Hudson Valley regional non-profit organizations and is the founder of Hike New York, an outdoor adventure company. Kali earned her master's studying the microbial ecology of aquatic ecosystems at Michigan State University's Kellogg Biological Station. [kbird@catskillcenter.org](mailto:kbird@catskillcenter.org) (C02)

**Shelli Bischoff's** passion and pleasure is nonprofit organizational success and the people in land trusts. As founder and president of Conservation Impact, she has served 100+ land trusts and 500 conservation organizations across the country. Shelli's dynamic, truth-telling style challenges organizations to be as great as they must be. Her business plan blueprint approach has been called "provocative, an excellent tool, transformed the way to think of (land trust) work". To facilitate her own learning, she has been an adjunct faculty of graduate level nonprofit management for 20 years. [shelli@conservationimpact.com](mailto:shelli@conservationimpact.com) (D02)

**Andrew Bowman** is president of the Land Trust Alliance, a national land conservation organization that works to save the places people need and love by strengthening land conservation across America. Based in Washington, D.C., the Alliance represents more than 1,100 member land trusts supported by more than 100,000 volunteers and 5 million members nationwide. Before joining the Alliance in February 2016, Andrew served as the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's program director for the environment. In that capacity, he oversaw all environmental grant-making for the foundation. During his 11 years at the foundation, Andrew developed and obtained approval of more than \$100 million in grants and program-related investments. He also served as director of the foundation's Climate Change

Initiative, a five-year grants program focused on climate change mitigation. Prior to his work at the foundation, Andrew practiced law in Oregon for Defenders of Wildlife and at the law firm Perkins Coie LLP. He remains an active member of the Oregon State Bar. In 1995, Andrew earned a master's degree in city and regional planning from the University of California at Berkeley as well as a Juris Doctor from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, in San Francisco. In 2003, he received a Master of Law in environmental and natural resources law from the Northwestern School of Law of Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. His undergraduate education was at the University of California at Berkeley, where he was a Truman Scholar. (General Session)

**Karen Buck** is vice president of consulting for Conservation Impact which works to radically impact how organizations fulfill their missions and achieve results. Karen works with land trusts and other nonprofits to create business, fundraising and succession plans. She is currently facilitating *Be a Nonprofit CEO*, a 14-week online course designed to develop with the *skills, mindset* and *confidence* individuals need to succeed in a nonprofit leadership and management positions; and authored "Ready, Set, Go, A Succession Toolkit. [karen@conservationimpact.com](mailto:karen@conservationimpact.com) (B01)

**Charles Burgess** has worked as a land steward for the Open Space Institute since 2011, where he is currently developing a database to track property statistics, transaction documents, fieldwork and metrics of success. He holds a master's in archaeology from Cornell University, an anthropology bachelor's from SUNY Albany, and an associate of science degree in wilderness recreation leadership from Northcountry Community College. He is proficient with GIS mapping and spatial modelling with Arcmap, volunteers for way too many community organizations, and likes a well-organized spreadsheet as well as the next guy. He is new to database design. [cburgess@osiny.org](mailto:cburgess@osiny.org) (B01)

**Michele Byers** is executive director of New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF). Previously, she served as assistant director and spearheaded NJCF's work in the Pine Barrens, helping found the Pinelands Preservation Alliance and Whitesbog Preservation Trust. In 1995 Michele was appointed to the State Planning Commission and was named as vice chair in 1998. She is currently vice chair of the New Jersey Highlands Coalition and vice chair of the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters, Michele has a bachelor's in biology from Western State College. [michele@njconservation.org](mailto:michele@njconservation.org) (D01)

**Mikael Cejtin** is a naturalist, conservationist and scientist. He holds a bachelor's in wildlife biology from University of Vermont and a master's in environmental science from Yale. His work focuses on habitat connectivity, citizen science, large carnivore conservation, and strategies for human-wildlife coexistence. Mikael has worked for Olympic National Park, for TNC in Mongolia and now for Lake Placid Land Conservancy as Wildlife Monitoring Technician and for Paul Smith's College as an adjunct professor of wildlife monitoring techniques. [mikael@lakeplacidlandconservancy.org](mailto:mikael@lakeplacidlandconservancy.org) (A02)

**Elisa Chae** is the source water specialist for the Hudson River Estuary Program at the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, in partnership with the Water Resources Institute at Cornell University. Elisa has worked for the US Army Corps of Engineers, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the New York City Council. She has a bachelor's degree in earth science from Cornell University and a law degree from Brooklyn Law School. Elisa's work involves looking at connections between drinking water and watersheds to help improve source water management and protection. [Elisa.Chae@dec.ny.gov](mailto:Elisa.Chae@dec.ny.gov) (C02)

**David Church** is the commissioner of planning in Orange County, NY. Dave heads the Orange County Planning Department and Water Authority. He was appointed in 2002, with oversight responsibility for

many areas of county planning. This includes oversight for County Planning Board, Water Authority, Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, Tourism Department, Grants Unit and Transportation Council. Recently, the Orange County Water Authority was awarded a NYS Source Water Protection grant for the water supply of the City of Newburgh. [DChurch@co.orange.ny.us](mailto:DChurch@co.orange.ny.us) (C02)

**Audrey Friedrichsen** is the land use and environmental advocacy attorney at Scenic Hudson, Inc. Audrey has been at Scenic Hudson for four years, where she is a member of the environmental advocacy team, which works to safeguard the environmental and economic resources of the Hudson River Valley. She also provides legal support to other teams, as well as the Scenic Hudson Land Trust. She holds a juris doctorate and master's of law degrees from Pace University School of Law and a bachelor of science degree from Cornell University. Prior to joining Scenic Hudson, she practiced municipal, land use, and environmental law at a private firm. [afriedrichsen@scenichudson.org](mailto:afriedrichsen@scenichudson.org) (D01)

**Tom Gilbert** is campaign director of energy, climate and natural resources for the New Jersey Conservation Foundation which he joined in 2015. Previously he was senior conservation finance director with The Trust for Public Land and served as chairman of the NJ Keep It Green Coalition. Tom also co-directed national field efforts of the Land & Water Conservation Fund Coalition in 2010 which secured House passage of comprehensive LWCF legislation. Tom served as director of Eastern forest conservation for the Wilderness Society and as executive director of the NY/NJ/PA/CT Highlands Coalition, where he led successful efforts to pass both federal and state legislation to protect critical lands and waters in the Highlands region. Tom was also a founding board member of the NJ League of Conservation Voters. Tom earned his master's in natural resources planning from the University of Vermont. [tom@njconservation.org](mailto:tom@njconservation.org) (D01)

**Tony Grasso** is co-president of Genesis Associates II, LLC. Mr. Grasso has worked in all levels of leadership positions: direct supervisor, middle manager, program director, community organizer, executive director and agency board member. He was the executive director of a non-profit agency from 1981 through 1992. The organization served 23,000 clients a year through the efforts of 1,800 volunteers and 50 staff. Since 1992 he and his wife, Ann, have provided training and consultation in a variety of areas. [annandtonygrasso@gmail.com](mailto:annandtonygrasso@gmail.com) (B02)

**Emily Hague** joined land protection staff at Scenic Hudson in 2017 with 12 years of stewardship experience. Most recently, Emily was director of land protection and stewardship for the Mohonk Preserve, specializing in capital projects, land management, fee land monitoring, and acquisition. Previously, Emily served as stewardship director for the Monadnock Conservancy for 10 years. Emily holds a bachelor's from Oberlin College and a master's in resource management and administration from Antioch University New England. [ehague@scenichudson.org](mailto:ehague@scenichudson.org) (A02)

**Jeff Jones** is an Albany-based consultant and lobbyist for conservation, environmental and clean energy groups. Jeff Jones has worked with the Land Trust Alliance for nearly 20 years, first as a board member of the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy and, since 2006, as a policy strategist and lobbyist representing the Alliance and affiliated land trusts in New York State. Based in Albany, Jeff has also represented the Finger Lakes Land Trust, American Farmland Trust, the Alliance for Clean Energy New York, Healthy Schools Network and the Center for Creative Land Recycling as a lobbyist, strategic consultant or communications specialist. In addition, he serves on the boards of the Harlem-based WeAct for Environmental Justice, the NY League of Conservation Voters Capital Region Chapter. [jeffjones23@gmail.com](mailto:jeffjones23@gmail.com) (C01)

**David Kay** is a senior extension associate and economist with the Community & Regional Development Institute (CaRDI) in Cornell's Department of Development Sociology. David provides leadership in the areas of energy, land use planning, conflict management and community development. His work involves research, outreach and training efforts that attempt to help communities make informed decisions involving these topics. He has increasingly focused on the community and economic development implications of energy transitions. David has served on many city, town, county and New York State not-for-profit or government boards of organizations concerned with sustainability and municipal land use planning. [dlk2@cornell.edu](mailto:dlk2@cornell.edu) (D01)

**Venetia Lannon** is deputy secretary for the environment. In this capacity, she serves as environmental policy advisor to Governor Cuomo and oversees the operations of the state's environmental agencies, including the Department of Environmental Conservation, the Office of Parks Recreation & Historic Preservation, the Environmental Facilities Corporation and the Adirondack Park Agency. Prior to working in the Governor's office, Venetia served as Regional Director for the Department of Environmental Conservation, overseeing 200 staff and all aspects of DEC's work in New York City. Previously, Venetia held several positions working for the City of New York, as a Senior Vice President of the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and as Deputy Director of the Recycling Bureau at the New York City Department of Sanitation, where she ran the composting program. At EDC, she ran the Maritime division, with responsibilities for developing the City's waterfront assets and policies designed to substitute vehicle traffic with marine, ferry and rail transport. Projects include the East River Ferry service and the barge and rail-served municipal recycling facility in Brooklyn. She was an active contributor to Mayor Bloomberg's Solid Waste Management Plan and an early advocate for sustainability and environmental justice. Venetia graduated from Vassar College with departmental honors and holds a master's in public administration, focusing on environmental policy from Columbia University. (General Session)

**Maureen Leddy** is a project manager in the Large Scale Renewables program at the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). Maureen's role involves developing strategies for smart siting of large scale renewable energy projects, supporting the development and implementation of New York's Clean Energy Standard, and program administration of the New York Generation Attribute Tracking System. She has prior experience in program design and policy development for distributed scale solar under NYSERDA's NY-Sun Program. Maureen also has worked in carbon finance, quantifying the greenhouse gas reduction potential for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Maureen has many years of experience in environmental consulting, working on contaminated site remediation, environmental permitting, and regulatory compliance projects. Maureen holds a master's in natural resource management and environmental planning from Simon Fraser University in British Columbia. [Maureen.Leddy@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:Maureen.Leddy@nyserda.ny.gov) (D01)

**Amanda Lefton** is a deputy policy director for The Nature Conservancy in New York. On behalf of the Conservancy in New York, Amanda has advanced policy and secured public funding to further the organization's goals. Ms. Lefton's advocacy at the State level has focused on energy and climate policy, as well as conservation funding, including having helped deliver critical investments in clean water and policies to help communities prepare for climate change. Ms. Lefton came to The Nature Conservancy with a background in policy and politics, having worked directly for the legislature and other organizations involved in New York State government. [alefton@TNC.ORG](mailto:alefton@TNC.ORG) (D01)

**Jeff LeJava** is vice president and associate general counsel for the Open Space Institute where his work focuses on the preservation of natural landscapes to provide public enjoyment, conserve habitat and

sustain working lands. Prior to joining OSI in 2015, Jeff held a variety of legal positions in academia, government and private practice. [jlejava@osiny.org](mailto:jlejava@osiny.org) (A01)

**Seth McKee** is land conservation director for Scenic Hudson, where he has overseen the conservation of thousands of acres of land to safeguard natural, scenic and agricultural resources, often through partnerships with other land trusts. In the several hundred real estate transactions that Seth has overseen, he and his team have had to address a myriad of environmental conditions and concerns. Seth has a master's degree in regional planning from the University of North Carolina/Chapel Hill and is a member of the Land Trust Alliance's New York Advisory Board. [smckee@scenichudson.org](mailto:smckee@scenichudson.org) (A01)

**Jim Morris**'s career spans 30 years in the human resources and organizational development field. He spent his early career in senior-level human resources positions with several private sector companies, including seven years leading mergers for a large public utility. Jim launched a regional consulting firm in 1991, the MBL Group, which he led for over 18 years. He joined Solid Ground Consulting in 2010 to manage the Sustainable Leadership practice focusing on leadership development, succession planning and executive transitions in the nonprofit sector nationwide. He brings deep knowledge of organizational culture and team effectiveness. Additionally, Jim leads the Solid Ground practice focused on durable collaboration. [jim@solidgroundconsulting.com](mailto:jim@solidgroundconsulting.com) (B02)

**Althea Mullarkey** provides analysis and research support for the Scenic Hudson's advocacy campaigns. She coordinates efforts with multiple partner organizations throughout the Hudson Valley and serves as Scenic Hudson's representative on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Community Advisory Group, which helps oversee the PCB cleanup of the Hudson River. Previously, Ms. Mullarkey was the confidential assistant to the supervisor of Montgomery, one of Orange County's fastest-growing towns, and held several positions at the State University of New York at New Paltz. She studied at Monterey Peninsula College in California and Pace University in Westchester County. [amullarkey@scenichudson.org](mailto:amullarkey@scenichudson.org) (C01)

**Phillip Oswald** is a litigation attorney in private practice with Rupp, Baase, Pfalzgraf, Cunningham, LLC, who has represented land trusts and other clients in title disputes, easement enforcement, insurance disputes, clean-water disputes and other matters before courts across New York State. Phillip serves on the Legislation, Land Use and Environmental, and Title and Transfer Committees for the NYS Bar Association. Phillip is a veteran of the US Marine Corps. [oswald@ruppbaase.com](mailto:oswald@ruppbaase.com) (A01)

**Jessica Ottney Mahar** is the policy director for The Nature Conservancy in New York. In this capacity, Jessica has led efforts in support of the enactment of laws and regulations to protect and restore natural resources and secure billions in public funding for environmental conservation. Jessica also oversees the Conservancy's involvement in partnerships in New York that support national policy priorities. She has more than fifteen years of environmental and conservation policy and advocacy experience. [jottney@tnc.org](mailto:jottney@tnc.org) (C01)

**Mark Pennington** is a lawyer with his own practice, representing land trusts in the Hudson Valley in conservation transactions, easement drafting, amendments, easement administration and enforcement. In addition to land trust work, he has practiced environmental law for over 30 years, with a focus on hazardous substance remediation, business transactions, and brownfield redevelopment. [mark@penningtonllc.com](mailto:mark@penningtonllc.com) (A01)

**Shelby Perry** is the stewardship director at Northeast Wilderness Trust. In addition to her current role coordinating the stewardship of NWT's preserves, she has worked with a variety of tech, including as a water resources assistant at the California Tahoe Conservancy and as a wilderness inventory specialist at Biodiversity Conservation Alliance. She has a master's degree from the University of Vermont's Field Naturalist program, and a bachelor's in environmental engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. [shelby@newildernesstrust.org](mailto:shelby@newildernesstrust.org) (A02)

**Kate Plourd Johnson** is New England Clean Energy Council's senior director of communications & public relations, overseeing communications strategy, media relations and events. NECEC works in a 7-state region, including NY, to build a world class clean energy hub. Kate's work revolves around business development, policy and innovation for clean energy. Kate spearheaded the development and implementation NECEC's business plan blueprint. Before joining NECEC, Kate served as a senior account executive at a national strategic communications firm, communications manager for the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and the assistant press secretary for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. [kjohnson@necec.org](mailto:kjohnson@necec.org) (D02)

**Dan Shapley** is the water quality program director for Riverkeeper. Dan coordinates the largest community science water quality sampling project of its kind, sampling hundreds of locations throughout the Hudson River Watershed, primarily to show when and where water is safe for swimming. The data gathered is the basis for advocacy to stop water pollution, by catalyzing needed investments in water infrastructure and watershed management. The Water Quality Program is also focused on drinking source water protection, including Riverkeeper's response to the drinking water contamination crisis in Newburgh and use of the Source Water Protection Scorecard to help communities protect public drinking water supplies. [DShapley@riverkeeper.org](mailto:DShapley@riverkeeper.org) (C02)

**Michelle Smith** is the executive director of Hudson Highlands Land Trust (HHLT). Michelle has been the Executive Director of HHLT since June 2016. Prior to this, she was on the board of directors, while working in her previous career in investment banking. Since starting at HHLT, the Land Trust has focused increasingly on partnering with municipalities of the Hudson Highlands on open space planning and protecting their water supplies. Michelle also serves on the Advisory Board of the Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries, the Hudson River Greenway Communities Council and the Members Committee of the TerraFirma Risk Retention Group. [michelle.smith@hhlt.org](mailto:michelle.smith@hhlt.org) (C02)

**David Tobias** is the director of the land acquisition program for the NYC Department of Environmental Protection. Dave is responsible for oversight of a \$705 million Land Acquisition Program (LAP) and a team of real estate professionals that operate throughout NYC's 2,000-square-mile upstate watershed, part of a comprehensive long-term suite of initiatives to protect drinking water and public health for over 9 million people. Success to date has allowed NYC to avoid the multi-billion-dollar cost of constructing a filtration plant. As of early 2018, LAP has secured nearly 150,000 acres at a throughput of almost two purchase contracts every week since 1997. Dave previously worked for seven years with The Nature Conservancy. [DTobias@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:DTobias@dep.nyc.gov) (C02)

**Lisa Wachtel** joined the Catskill Center in 2016 as the real estate closing manager for the Streamside Acquisition Program. She brings over twenty-five years of experience in the legal, title insurance and land services industries to her role. She coordinates title research and manages the later stages of the property acquisition process for the Streamside Acquisition Program. Lisa is a lifetime resident of New York, and holds an associate's degree from Ulster County Community College. [lwachtel@catskillcenter.org](mailto:lwachtel@catskillcenter.org) (A01)



**Ethan Winter** is the New York senior program manager for the Land Trust Alliance, which he joined in 2005. Ethan directs the Alliance's program in New York, overseeing the annual conference program, the Alliance's state-level advocacy & government relations program and the NYS Conservation Partnership Program, a state-funded initiative that has leveraged \$30 million in state and local funding to strengthen land trusts around the state. Ethan previously worked with The Nature Conservancy of California, the National Park Service and Jackson Hole Land Trust. He serves on the board of the Adirondack Council and on the Saratoga Greenbelt Trail advisory committee. He holds a bachelor's from Bowdoin College and a master of forestry from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. [ewinter@lta.org](mailto:ewinter@lta.org) (D01)

**Nicole Wooten** joined the Hudson Highlands Land Trust as stewardship manager in 2016. Previously, she led land stewardship efforts in the mid-Atlantic region of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). She also served as an environmental education volunteer in the Peace Corps in El Salvador, and holds a master's of environmental management from the Yale School of Forestry and bachelor's from the University of North Carolina. She's currently a board member of the Society for Wilderness Stewardship, as well as the ATC Stewardship Council. [nicole.wooten@hhlt.org](mailto:nicole.wooten@hhlt.org) (A02)

**Andrew Zepp** is the executive director of the Finger Lakes Land Trust (FLLT). FLLT works within the 12 counties of the Finger Lakes Region and has secured 20,000+ acres of pristine lakeshore, rugged gorges, majestic forest and scenic farmland. Andy has worked in the conservation field for more than 20 years, including service as associate director for The Nature Conservancy's Central & Western NY Chapter and as vice president for programs for the Land Trust Alliance in Washington, DC. He has also served on a number of planning, conservation and grant making boards in the public sector. FLLT was awarded two NYS Source Water Protection grants for water sources in the Finger Lakes region. [andrewzepp@fllt.org](mailto:andrewzepp@fllt.org) (C02)