



KC Metro Session #4

Kansas City, KS & Kansas City, MO

Speaker Bios



Karrie Klinkenbeard, LK '15 | Armstrong Teasdale
Local Program Chair

Karrie Clinkinbeard is a litigation attorney with Armstrong Teasdale LLP and has been practicing law for nearly 25 years. She's a life-long Kansan, born and raised in Overland Park and a graduate from Washburn University and the University of Kansas School of Law.

Her practice focuses on fire, explosion and electrocution litigation, toxic torts and catastrophic incidents, product liability, contract disputes, personal injury and life, health and disability matters. She has tried numerous jury cases to verdict in state and federal courts and also achieves successful outcomes for her clients early in litigation through aggressive, targeted pretrial practice.

Karrie is a Certified Fire and Explosion Investigator and provides training to fire investigators across the country. Karrie takes an active mentoring role in the firm and is very involved in the Greater Kansas City community. She has served on the firm's Executive Committee, Compensation Committee and previously led the Kansas City office as the Managing Attorney.



Jill McCarthy | KCADC

With more than 30 years' experience, Jill leads a high-achieving business recruitment team for KCADC – driving new business, talent attraction and capital investment to KC's 18 county, 50+ city, bi-state

region. Jill works with companies and national site location consultants considering the Greater Kansas City metropolitan area for expansion or relocation, offering urban, suburban, and rural options.

Jill works across multiple disciplines including IT, cybersecurity, data centers, mission critical, headquarters, finance, insurance, shared and customer service operations, and industrial projects. A few notable successes include A Place for Mom, ChowNow, DataBank, Littler, Magna Intl, Meta, OptumRx, Thryv, Torch.AI, TTEC, U.S. Bank, USDA, and the U.S. Marine Corps MCEITS.

Twice-awarded North America's Top 50 Economic Developer, Jill is a 2018 honoree of the KCBJ Women Who Mean Business and is on the Urban Land Institute (ULI) KC Advisory Board and the KC Tech Council Industry Leadership Council. A former president of CREW KC, Jill mentors in the international CREW Network Leadership Program. Married 37 years, Jill is a dog lover, theatre geek, sports fan & Army supporter!

K-12 Education Panel



MODERATOR

Edgar Palacios | Latinx Education Collaborative

Edgar J. Palacios is the Founder of the Latinx Education Collaborative (LEC) and Revolucion Educativa (RevED), nonprofits cohesively working together to increase the representation of Latinos in education. Edgar is an MBA graduate of Rockhurst University. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He also earned a certificate in nonprofit management from Georgetown University.

Edgar recently participated in Cohort 5 of the Deeper Learning and Equity Fellowship and Cohort 3 of the City Leadership Fellowship. Additionally, he was a 2020 LeanLab Education Fellow, a 2019 Surge

Institute Academy Fellow, and a 2017 Visiting Fellow with Education Pioneers.

Passionate about his community, Edgar has served as president of both Young Latino Professionals (YLP) of Greater Kansas City and the Kansas City chapter of the National Society of Hispanic MBAs. He currently serves as a proud Board President of Scuola Vita Nuova Charter School, one of the highest-performing charter schools in Kansas City, Missouri. Edgar sits on the national Latino Educator Advisory Council through Latinos for Education. Edgar is a trained community organizer through the Gamaliel National Leadership Training program.

Meaningful Awards and recognition include Kauffman Scholars' 2015 Volunteer of the Year; Guadalupe Centers' 2014 I. Pat Rios Award for 'outstanding contribution by an individual to the Latino community of Kansas City; and 2014's KC Chamber's Ace Award. Edgar most recently received an Urban Hero award from the Downtown Council of Kansas City. Edgar shares his life with his wife, Laura, and their three children, JoJo, Ella, and Isabel, in Kansas City, Missouri.



Panelist

Dr. Anna Stubblefield | Kansas City Kansas Public Schools

Dr. Anna Stubblefield took the helm of leadership as Superintendent of Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (USD 500) on July 1, 2021. Prior to being named Superintendent, Dr. Stubblefield spent 13 years with Lawrence Public Schools in the roles of Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Human Resources, and Middle School Principal. Anna also served as an Assistant Principal in the Blue Valley School District. She began her 25 year career in education as a teacher and coach in Center School District.

Dr. Stubblefield and her husband, David, have been married 22 years and have 3 sons, Nate, Desmon, and Grant.



Panelist

Jennifer Bauer | BV CAPS

Jennifer Bauer came to CAPS in August 2014. She holds a Bachelor in Science in Business from Drake University and a MBA from the JL Kellogg School at Northwestern University. As the CAPS Business Development Specialist, Jennifer supports CAPS staff, students and alumni on an on-going basis and is primarily responsible for business development, which includes acquiring, retaining, growing and coordinating business partnerships that result in increased project mentor and internship opportunities, guest speakers and instructors and expert curriculum developers.



Panelist

Ryan Flurry | Shawnee Mission School District

Dr. Ryan Flurry serves as the principal of career education and career & technical education coordinator for the Shawnee Mission School District, overseeing 16 career pathways offered at 13 sites. Dr. Flurry previously served for 11 years as a high school associate principal, overseeing curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Women In Business Panel



MODERATOR

Stacie Prosser | Kansas City Business Journal

In her role as Market President and Publisher, Stacie Prosser leads the Kansas City Business Journal team to execute on the mission of providing local business intelligence that helps local executives and entrepreneurs grow their businesses, advance their careers and simplify their professional lives. She has been with the KCBJ for 27 years and served in both sales and management roles prior to being named to her current position in 2014.

Prosser also serves as the steward for the KCBJ's women's initiatives including Mentoring Monday, Women Who Mean Business and the

annual Women's Leadership Summit. Stacie is engaged in civic boards including the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce (Executive Committee), Kansas City Area Development Council and the KU Advancement Board. Her philanthropic boards include Ronald McDonald House Corporation of Kansas City (current board chair) and JDRF Kansas City/St.Louis (Executive Committee). She and her husband have 3 college aged children and live in Shawnee.



Panelist

Thalia Cherry | Cherry Co.

CHERRY, Inc., headquartered in Kansas City is a national licensed sports brand. Established in 2012, Cherry, Inc. designs and distributes licensed products, inclusive of customized apparel and accessories for Major League Baseball, Negro League Baseball, National Football League, Sporting Kansas City, Kansas City Current and twenty-two colleges and growing. Cherry, Inc is also a joint venture partner of Kansas City International airport.

As CEO and Founder of Cherry, Thalia Cherry instituted the Cherry Foundation in 2012, upon which 10% of the annual revenue supports education, entrepreneurship and sport initiatives.

Cherry is the recipient of the following awards: Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce: Top 10 Small Business Award(2020); Diverse Business of the Year(2020) Scale Up Kansas City (2016) 25 Under 25 Award(2017); Goldman Sachs Small Business(2018).

Thalia is a recipient of the Women Who Mean Business Award (2019), Ebony Power 100 Award(2020) and Trailblazer of the Year(2022).

For more information, visit www.cherrysportsgear.com



Panelist

Kristin Tyson | CrossFirst Bank Kansas City

Kristin Tyson serves as the CrossFirst Bank Kansas City Bank Managing Director of Private and Relationship Banking. She brings thirty-eight years of banking experience in Market Leadership, Business Banking, Private Banking, and Consumer Banking that spans a wide variety of industries and transaction types and structures. Ms. Tyson began her banking career in 1982, while in college, attending Washburn University, where she earned both a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree in Finance and a Master's Degree in Business Administration.

She returned to her hometown of Kansas City in 1990 where she has spent the remainder of her career. Ms. Tyson is actively engaged in the Kansas City community, serving on boards for the Salvation Army of Kansas and Western Missouri, the Boys and Girls Club, and HNC Living Foundation. She has been actively involved in fundraising and held long term board positions at MOCSA (Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault) and Golfology Fore Cardiology. She is passionate about representing the CrossFirst Brand in the Kansas City community.

Kristin is the proud mom to 4 adult children and eleven grandchildren. She loves golfing, traveling, cooking, and spending time with family and friends.



Panelist

Courtney Kounkel | Monarch

Courtney Kounkel is a construction industry executive and entrepreneur who has founded, grown, and successfully sold several companies. Currently, she is the Founder + Owner of Monarch Build, a commercial construction company in the Greater Kansas City area.

Looking Forward Panel



PANELIST

Dan Lolli | Sporting Kansas City

Dan Lolli is entering his 15th season working in Major League Soccer and currently oversees business operations for Sporting Kansas City including finance, facilities, event operations, IT, and hospitality. Lolli is in his second stint with the organization, serving as Vice President of Operations from 2016 to 2020. In 2020, Lolli moved back to his hometown in Cincinnati, Ohio to lead stadium construction on TQL Stadium as Stadium GM of FC Cincinnati until 2022. Prior to 2016, Lolli spent 8 seasons with the Columbus Crew in multiple roles with sponsorship, marketing, and stadium operations.



Panelist

Michael Zeller | Island Bridge Project

Michael Zeller first had the idea of treating the unused Rock Island Bridge like it was land while on an afternoon boating trip with his family. He has since refined the concept and led the way on the business model, partnerships, designs, and the securing of the funds needed to build it. The original notion that afternoon was to place a simple restaurant over the water and call it Chicken Ona Bridge. Some say that moment of inspiration arrived while holding a potato gun that he and his sons had built--but we don't mention that to investors.

Before becoming a bridge guy, Michael served as chief development officer for Kansas City PBS. He led the team charged with developing the stations' events, many of its TV programs, and the fundraising. During his tenure, KCPBS acquired 90.9 The Bridge, launched a digital journalism center, completed a major capital campaign and developed an array of Emmy Award-winning programs and documentaries.

Michael earned a master's degree in Economic Geography from the University of Missouri. He's lived and worked in Taipei, Prague and then Munich where he consulted with management at BMW's headquarters. Recently he served 13 years on the Academy Lafayette Charter School Board, where as Vice President he helped lead the purchase, renovation, and expansion of the Cherry Street School in Hyde Park. He presently serves on the Historic West Bottoms association's board of directors.



Panelist

Pat Warren | Kansas Speedway

Pat is the president of the Kansas Speedway. He previously worked in the KU Athletics Program following law school where he earned his Juris Doctorate, and later, his MBA. He received Fort Riley's highest honor for private citizens, the Distinguished Trooper Award, in 2015 in recognition of his work with soldiers at the base.



Panelist

Jen Laird | NetWork Kansas

Jen Laird is the Manager, Rural Entrepreneurship for the Eastern Region for NetWork Kansas.

In her role, Laird supports the following Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities in the eastern region of Kansas: Allen County, Altamont, Anderson County, Atchison, Bourbon County, Cherokee County, Chautauqua County, Douglas County, Girard, Kansas City Urban, Lawrence Urban, Leavenworth County, Linn County, Miami County, Montgomery County, Neosho County, and Shawnee County.

Laird, a Cottonwood Falls resident who is a Kansas native and rural by choice advocate, has served as the Chase County E-Community point person for six years. Familiar with NetWork Kansas entrepreneurship support programs, Laird is a certified facilitator of Ice House and Destination Boot Camp- Destination Creation. She organized and facilitated the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC) in Chase County overseeing the educational support courses as well as the event competitions.

Beyond her experience with NetWork Kansas, Laird is the owner of Authenticity Inspired, a community development consulting agency. She served as the first Chase County economic development director where she was instrumental in helping to secure funding for a countywide 1GB broadband infrastructure build out and was directly involved in the CARES Act Funding allocations and COVID-Relief grants in Chase County.

Panasonic Reboot Panel



MODERATOR

Kevin Honomichl | BHC

Kevin Honomichl, P.E., P.S. is President of BHC, a civil engineering and surveying firm headquartered in Overland Park, Kansas that he co-founded in 1992. He received his Bachelor Degree in Civil Engineering from Kansas State University in 1986 and received a Master of Civil Engineering from the University of Kansas.

Kevin is a graduate of the 2011 class of Leadership Kansas. He served on the Board of Directors of American Council of Engineering Companies - Kansas including a term as National Director and 6 years as the ACEC National Political Action Committee Chair for Kansas. He is active in several economic development organizations in Kansas City including KCADC, a past Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Wyandotte County Economic Development Corporation, and the Advisory Committee of the De Soto EDC. Kevin served 13 years on the De Soto, Kansas Planning Commission including three years as Chairman. In 2017, Kevin was elected as a Council Member to the City of De Soto and re-elected in 2021.

He currently serves on the K-State College of Engineering Advisory Council and is a member of the Board of Trustees of the KSU Foundation. Kevin also serves in the Johnson County Community College Foundation Board.

Kevin resides in De Soto with his wife Dianne. They have a son Mikolas who is going to be a Junior at Kansas State University.



Panelist

Chris Gutierrez | Kansas City SmartPort, Inc.

Chris Gutierrez is the President of Kansas City SmartPort, Inc., a non-profit economic development organization that works to attract freight-based companies, such as manufacturing, distribution and warehouses, to the 18 county, bi-state Kansas City region. SmartPort is an affiliated group of the Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC).

Chris has been active in logistics and international business for more than thirty years. He has worked in the public and private sector in economic development, international business and logistics.

Chris' community involvement includes his positions as a board member of the following organizations: Board of Advisors of the University of Kansas Supply Chain Management Program, CSCMP, Mid-America District Export Council, Kansas State MBA Program, and World Trade Center – Kansas City. He is also alumni of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Centurions.



Panelist

Devin Horne | Panasonic Corporation

Devin Horne is a Manager for Battery Public Policy at Panasonic Corporation of North America, where he supports Panasonic Energy's public policy priorities. He previously served at the U.S. Department of Commerce, where he helped develop the Federal Consortium for Advanced Batteries' National Blueprint for Lithium Batteries, the White House's report on battery supply chains, and led Department-wide efforts to promote U.S. clean tech companies. Devin also worked in consulting, advising Japanese public and private sector clients on U.S. energy policy developments.

Devin holds a master's degree from Georgetown University and completed his undergraduate degree at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. He is a Midwestern transplant from Wisconsin, living in northern Virginia with his wife and three boys.



Panelist

Rich Walker | City of De Soto

Mayor Rick Walker is an accomplished engineer and public servant with a remarkable career spanning nearly 40 years. With a specialization in transportation engineering, Rick has dedicated over 38 years to this field, becoming a seasoned expert in the planning, design, and management of various transportation projects. Rick has experience in both the design and construction fields. He leveraged his extensive engineering experience as a construction project manager for a prominent local concrete subcontractor.

In addition to his engineering expertise, Rick is an active public servant with more than 24 years of service. He has served two terms on the Local School Board, contributed two years to the City Planning Commission, and completed two terms as a City Council member. Currently, Rick is in his second term as Mayor, leading his community with dedication and a commitment to progress.

Rick has been a pivotal figure in fostering economic development within the City of De Soto. For the past twelve years, he has represented the City as a member of the De Soto Economic Development Corporation (EDC). His deep involvement in economic development activities, both as Mayor and as a member of the City Council, has showcased his leadership and passion for his community.



Panelist

Andy Heitmann | Turner Construction

Andy Heitmann currently serves as VP/Construction Executive for the Industrial+Advanced Manufacturing Building division of Turner Construction, and is currently serving as VP, Construction Site Manager on the Project Kansas for TY (Turner/Yates Joint Venture), Electric Vehicle Battery Manufacturing Facility in DeSoto, KS.

Andy earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Construction Science and Management from Kansas State University and has spent his entire 32-year career with Turner Construction in St. Louis, Los Angeles and in Kansas City since 1996. During his career, Andy has led the construction of such iconic projects as Children's Mercy Park and the Kansas Speedway in Kansas City, Kansas, the renovations to Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Missouri, the Garmin International Headquarters in Olathe, Kansas, and a Confidential Data Center project in Altoona, Iowa and Omaha, Nebraska. Andy's diverse career path has prepared him to handle all client demands & project challenges, from the launch of the project through commissioning and closeout.