



Institute for  
**Policy Integrity**

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

## **SPEAKER BIOS**

### **Accelerating the Energy Transition – September 19, 2023**

#### **Introduction**



#### **Burçin Ünel** **Executive Director, Institute for Policy Integrity**

Dr. Ünel is an expert in utility regulation and environmental and energy policy who has authored over 100 papers and other publications on these topics. Prior to her current role, Dr. Ünel had been Policy Integrity's Energy Policy Director, leading the institute's stakeholder involvement both at the federal and state level in front of regulatory agencies such as public utility commissions and FERC. Her policy work in New York and California led to state utility commissions adopting more robust frameworks for valuing emissions, helping achieve the respective states' goals of increasing clean energy and distributed energy resource deployment. She also served as a Senior Fellow in the Department of Energy's Office of Policy, where she worked on domestic energy and climate policy issues, focusing on federal clean energy legislation, clean energy deployment, and infrastructure planning.

## **Springboards to Emission Reductions: Recent Legislation and Regulation**



### **Tomás Carbonell**

#### **Deputy Assistant Administrator for Stationary Sources, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Air and Radiation**

Tomás Carbonell is Deputy Assistant Administrator for Stationary Sources in EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. From 2012 until January 2021, was an attorney in the U.S. Clean Air Program at the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), where he also served as Senior Counsel and Director of Regulatory Policy. His work included litigation, regulatory advocacy, and policy advocacy on a range of climate and clean air issues, including carbon dioxide regulations for power plants; methane regulations for the oil and gas sector; hazardous air pollution from industrial sources; and climate legislation. Prior to arriving at EDF, Carbonell was an Associate at Van Ness Feldman, LLP, where he counseled diverse clients on federal legal matters related to climate change, clean energy, and environmental and electricity regulation. He has a J.D. from Yale University, degrees in Environmental Change and Management and Development Economics from the University of Oxford, and bachelors' degrees from North Carolina State University.



### **Kate Larsen**

#### **Partner, Rhodium Group**

Kate Larsen is a Partner at Rhodium Group and leads the firm's international energy and climate research and ClimateDeck data service. Larsen specializes in analysis of the impacts of climate and clean energy policies on global greenhouse gas emissions and strategies for deep decarbonization. Prior to joining Rhodium, Larsen was the Deputy Director for Energy and Climate Change at the White House Council on Environmental Quality where she helped

develop President Obama's Climate Action Plan. From 2007 to 2013, Larsen was a Foreign Affairs Officer at the US Department of State, serving as a lead US negotiator in the United Nations climate negotiations. Larsen has also worked at the International Energy Agency in Paris, the World Resources Institute in Washington, and the Environmental Defense Fund in California. She received a Bachelor's degree from Stanford University and a Master's degree from the University of Texas at Austin.



**Alejandra Nunez**

**Deputy Assistant Administrator for Mobile Sources, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Air and Radiation**

Alejandra Nunez is the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Mobile Sources in EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. Her work at EPA focuses on reducing pollution from the transportation sector, including overseeing the development of emissions standards for light- and heavy-duty vehicles, implementation of EPA transportation funding programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, and the integration of environmental justice in climate policy. Prior to being appointed to her current position at the EPA, she served as a senior attorney at the Sierra Club's Environmental Law Program, where her work focused on litigation and regulatory advocacy on federal climate regulations. Nunez holds Doctor of Juridical Science (S.J.D.) and Masters of Law (LL.M.) degrees from Harvard Law School, and a law degree (LL.B.) from the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México.



**Kevin Poloncarz**

**Partner, Covington & Burling LLP**

Kevin Poloncarz is a partner with Covington & Burling LLP and co-chairs the firm's Environmental and Energy Practice Group, Energy Industry Group and ESG Practice. Kevin is ranked by Chambers USA among the nation's leading climate change attorneys and California's leading environmental lawyers and by Chambers Global among the top climate change lawyers. Kevin convenes the Energy Strategy Coalition, a group of major electric utilities and power producers focused on federal climate policy, and also represents advanced energy interests in litigation defending strong climate and environmental standards for power plants and light-duty vehicles under the Clean Air Act. On behalf of a coalition of major power companies, he argued the key statutory point upon which the D.C. Circuit struck down the Trump Administration's repeal of the Clean Power Plan, and then second-chaired his Supreme Court partner's argument alongside the Solicitor General in *West Virginia v. EPA*. He is on the board of directors of the Center for Applied Environmental Law and Policy; a fellow and regent of the American College of Environmental Lawyers; and on the advisory board of the Harvard Law School Environmental and Energy Law Program, NYU Institute for Policy Integrity and the State Energy and Environmental Law Center. He teaches Climate Law and Policy at Stanford Law School.



**Jack Lienke (Moderator)**

**Regulatory Policy Director, Institute for Policy Integrity**

Jack Lienke's work focuses on federal environmental and administrative law. He has participated in dozens of regulatory proceedings before a wide range of federal agencies and filed amicus briefs supporting environmental, health, and consumer protections before numerous federal courts. Lienke also serves as an adjunct professor at both NYU Law, where he co-teaches the Regulatory Policy Clinic, and Brooklyn Law School, where he teaches Environmental Law. With Richard Revesz, Lienke wrote the book *Struggling for Air: Power Plants and the "War on Coal"*.

## **The Chicken and the Egg: Policy, Markets, and Emerging Technologies**



### **Anne Finken**

#### **Assistant General Counsel for Clean Energy Demonstrations, U.S. Department of Energy**

Anne Finken currently serves as Assistant General Counsel for Clean Energy Demonstrations at the US Department of Energy. Prior to working at DOE, she was an associate at Beveridge & Diamond in Washington, D.C. and served as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Irma S. Raker of the Maryland Court of Appeals. She also holds a position as a Professorial Lecturer in Law at the George Washington University School of Law. Finken received her BA in chemistry from Goucher College, her MS in Natural Resources and Environment from the University of Michigan, and her JD from the University of Michigan Law School.



### **Joanna Klitzke**

#### **Strategy & Operations, Frontier**

Joanna Klitzke leads procurement and ecosystem strategy at Frontier, the first advanced market commitment for carbon removal. She manages the team's carbon removal procurement process and furthers initiatives to address ecosystem gaps like shaping Frontier's approach to measurement and verification or supporting projects on project development. Prior to joining Frontier, Klitzke worked across supply chain decarbonization with Nike's Global Sustainability team, climate innovation with early-stage startups, and strategy with BCG. She received her BS from Washington University in St. Louis and her MBA and MS in Environment and Resources from Stanford.



**Pat Sapinsley**

**Managing Director of Cleantech Initiatives, Urban Future Lab**

Pat Sapinsley is the Managing Director of Cleantech Initiatives for the Urban Future Lab at NYU Tandon School of Engineering. A LEED AP architect, Sapinsley holds a Master's in Architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design and has served on their Alumni Council. She is past Co-Chair of the Committee on the Environment of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a member of the Board of Building Energy Exchange, a frequent lecturer and industry panelist, and an active member of the U.S. Green Building Council and Urban Green. Prior to joining UFL/ACRE, Sapinsley worked in venture capital at Good Energies and consulted with startups in the building energy efficiency space. She was CEO of Watt Not, an LED lighting consultancy, and Build Efficiently, LLC. As a Visiting Scholar at Harvard's Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering, she assisted in translating biologically-inspired technologies into commercial products. She brings 15+ years of experience in the industry, connecting startups to sources of funding, customers, and business mentors.



**Natalia Sharova**

**Climate Policy Manager, Air Company**



Natalia Sharova is the Climate Policy Manager at AIR COMPANY, where she leads international, federal, and state policy work, including policy and regulatory analysis, government engagement, and policy advocacy. Prior to joining AIR COMPANY, Natalia worked at the American Petroleum Institute (API), a trade association representing nearly 600 energy companies, where she led work on corporate sustainability, climate technology innovation, and voluntary carbon markets. While at API, Natalia worked with member companies to develop industry-wide GHG reporting guidance, develop policy positions on ESG policy, and convene stakeholder roundtables to collaborate on climate and technology policy and advocacy. Natalia started her career in Washington, DC where she worked on climate and energy policy, strategic communications, and advocacy on issues ranging from carbon capture to international energy trade across multiple roles. Natalia holds a MA in International Affairs from the University of Wyoming with a focus on climate change policymaking.



**Derek Sylvan (Moderator)**  
**Strategy Director, Institute for Policy Integrity**

Derek Sylvan is the strategy director at the Institute for Policy Integrity and an adjunct professor of environmental studies at NYU. His research and writing focuses on issues including sustainable infrastructure and decarbonization strategies. He previously worked as a senior consultant with Context Group, advising multinational companies on sustainability issues. Additionally, Sylvan has more than eight years of experience in media and documentary film. His writing has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Politico*, *The Hill*, and other outlets. Sylvan has a master's degree in public policy from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs as well as a bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University.

## **Courts, Regulation, and the Future of Climate Policy**



### **Jalonne White-Newsome**

#### **Senior Director for Environmental Justice, White House Council on Environmental Quality**

Dr. White-Newsome has tackled environmental challenges from a wide range of positions and perspectives, including in the grassroots environmental justice movement, philanthropy, state government, private industry, and academia. Before joining CEQ, Dr. White-Newsome founded and led Empowering a Green Environment and Economy, LLC, a strategic consulting firm. Previously, she was a Senior Program Officer at the Kresge Foundation and created the Climate Resilience and Equitable Water Systems Initiative. She also served as the first Director of Federal Policy for WE ACT for Environmental Justice, and provided leadership for the Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change, a national coalition of environmental justice leaders. A native of Detroit, Michigan, Dr. White-Newsome's passion for public health and environmental justice advocacy started when she was in high school, and her connection and love for community continues to drive her work forward.



### **Conrad Bolston**

#### **Senior Counsel for Environmental Justice and Equity, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**



Conrad Bolston is Senior Counsel for Environmental Justice and Equity at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. In this role, he serves as the Chairman's primary advisor on helping the Commission further the goals of its Equity Action Plan and ensuring that the Commission's policies and processes are consistent with environmental justice principles. Before his time at FERC, Bolston practiced law as counsel at Vinson & Elkins where his practice focused on environmental enforcement and litigation, compliance counseling, white-collar defense, and environmental justice matters. He also clerked for the Honorable James R. Spencer at the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia after receiving his BS from the University of Maryland and JD from the Georgetown University Law Center.



**Al Huang (Moderator)**

**Environmental Justice Director, Institute for Policy Integrity**

Al Huang's legal work focuses on providing legal and technical assistance, when invited, to grassroots groups in low-income communities and communities of color facing disproportionate burdens, such as toxic pollution. The foundation of his work is deeply rooted in the Principles of Environmental Justice and Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing, where social change comes from the ground up. Prior to coming to IPI, Huang directed the environmental justice work and served as a Senior Attorney at Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) for 17 years. He has taught environmental justice law and practice as an adjunct professor at Fordham Law School and NYU Law School. He currently serves on the Environmental Justice committee of the American Bar Association and is also an appointed member of the New York City Environmental Justice Advisory Board.