



Speaker Biographies

[Kathy Ahlmark, NIEHS WTP](#)

Kathy Ahlmark is a health specialist in the Worker Education and Training Program (WETP) of the Division of Extramural Research and Training (DERT) at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). As a health specialist, Ahlmark is primarily responsible for administering and analyzing grants and contracts related to the extramural training program and serves as a program administrator of the WETP Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) Program. She serves as the contracting officer technical representative for the management and operation of the National Clearinghouse for Worker Safety and Health Training, a technical resource contract of the WTP. Ahlmark holds bachelor's degrees in microbiology and zoology from North Carolina State University.

[Charles Austin, IBT](#)

Charles Austin has over 30 years of progressive experience working with labor unions within the industrial, transportation, and construction industries. He has conducted workplace assessments, research, worker exposure assessments, and training, has recommended control measures, converged information technology with safety and health information, and has grant writing experience. Austin is involved in exposure assessment analysis, e-learning, data analytics, communication, developing and enhancing safety and health training, and providing access to information via various digital media platforms. He is responsible for technical and regulatory support, quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC), compliance with federal regulations and consensus standards, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training, Job Hazard Analyses (JHA's), audits, policy, metrics, wellness, project management, and database and website development for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT). He earned a master's degree in environmental and occupational health sciences from Hunter School of Health Sciences.

[Benjamin \(Ben\) Artz, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh](#)

Benjamin Artz is a professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Artz is a renowned scholar in the fields of industrial relations and labor economics and has been published in many academic journals such as *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society*, *Industrial and Labor*

Relations Review, Journal of Population Economics, Labour Economics, Economica and Education Finance and Policy. Artz's work has been cited in over 300 local and international media outlets and he has earned a nomination as a finalist for the international Kanter Award for Excellence in work-family research. His current research focuses on various topics in industrial relations and in particular on studies of subjective well-being and gender gaps in labor market outcomes. Artz graduated with a doctorate degree in economics from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee in 2008.

[Cesar Bandera, Ph.D., Cell Podium, LLC](#)

Cesar Bandera is a founding partner of Cell Podium, a developer of mobile tools for responder training. Its most recent technology, SensorSim, is used at Rutgers School of Public Health and Ivy Tech to improve the realism and richness of field exercises in HAZMAT training. NIEHS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and United States Public Health Service (USPHS) have used Cell Podium's Cellular Multimedia System in domestic and foreign incidents including the cholera, Ebola, chikungunya, and novel coronavirus epidemics. He is recipient of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Space Act award, New Jersey's first Small Business Success Story designation by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), two Small Business of the Year nominations from the United States Department of Defense, and four patents. He holds the Leir Endowed Chair for Entrepreneurship at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, is National Science Foundation Innovation Corps instructor, associate editor of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) *Journal of Translational Engineering in Health and Medicine*, member of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business Entrepreneurship and Innovation Steering Committee, senior member of IEEE, New Jersey Institute of Technology teacher, and served on the board of the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship and as director of the Academy of the International Council for Small Business. Bandera received his doctorate degree in electrical and computer engineering from the University at Buffalo, New York, with a specialization in biomimetics and computer vision.

[Sharon D. Beard, NIEHS WTP](#)

Sharon D. Beard is the director of the NIEHS Worker Training Program (WTP). An industrial hygienist, Beard has worked with the program for over 25 years. She first became involved with responsibilities to coordinate, evaluate, and improve initiatives surrounding the Environmental Career Worker Training Program (ECWTP), formerly known as the Minority Worker Training Program. Beard holds a master's degree in environmental science and management from Tufts University in Massachusetts where she received the prestigious Environmental Science and Management Fellowship from the National Urban Fellows, Inc. She also holds bachelor's degree in biology with a minor in business from Western Carolina University in North Carolina.

[James Burgess, IAFF](#)

James "Jamie" Burgess serves as the deputy director of the training department at the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). The IAFF trains over 7,000 firefighters annually throughout the United States and Canada across various fire service disciplines. Burgess has 17 years of experience in public safety and emergency services. Prior to coming to the IAFF, he served on the Greensboro Fire Department as a senior firefighter and hazardous materials technician. He was also assigned to the North Carolina Hazardous Materials Regional Response Team housed under the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management. Burgess has extensive experience in hazardous materials, emergency response, and risk management consulting and training in both the private and public sector. He has

conducted hazardous materials training for large corporations including Fortune 500 companies as well as at the state and local levels training and certifying emergency responders. Burgess serves as the principal labor representative on the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1990 “Standard for Protective Ensembles for Hazardous Materials and CBRN Operations” technical committee. As an active member of both the Professional Firefighters of Greensboro – Local 947 and the Professional Firefighters and Paramedics of North Carolina, Burgess continues his work to advance the interests of IAFF members in North Carolina. He served on General President Edward A. Kelly’s senior leadership team as a communications advisor to the transition team. He is also a graduate of the IAFF Political Training Academy. Burgess previously served as the North Carolina state director for the Firefighter Cancer Support Network. He earned his bachelor’s degree in fire and emergency services administration from Fayetteville State University and an associate’s degree in fire protection.

[Chris Cain, CPWR—The Center for Construction Research and Training](#)

Chris Cain is the Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR)’s executive director and leads its construction research, training, and service programs funded by federal agreements, grants, and contracts. She also serves as the director of safety and health for North America’s Building Trades Unions (NABTU) which is comprised of 14 national and international unions representing over three million workers. Cain is also the principal investigator for CPWR’s NIEHS training cooperative agreements.

[Domiana Carter, Green Door Initiative](#)

Domiana Carter is a passionate and experienced environmental professional with over 17 years of experience in the field. Carter began her environmental career as a youth environmental community organizer, and after two years she became the workforce director at the Green Door Initiative. She has overseen all aspects of the organization's workforce programs and worked to expand its reach and impact. Her dedication and commitment to this cause has helped to make a difference in the lives of the people she served. Currently, Carter serves as chief operating officer at the Green Door Initiative. In this role, she was responsible for overseeing all operational aspects of the organization and worked closely with the CEO and other leaders to achieve their goals. Her strong leadership skills and experience in environmental organizations helped to drive the organization forward and make a positive impact in the communities they serve. She holds a bachelor’s degree in environmental science from Michigan State University, which she received in 2006.

[Trish Davies, OAI, Inc.](#)

Trish Davies is a nonprofit leader, educator, and coalition-builder who has spent more than 15 years focused on creating opportunities and strengthening communities. She currently serves as the director of business and worker training at OAI, Inc. in Chicago where she oversees a team that includes a network of more than 50 instructors nationwide to deliver industry-accredited training in safe work practices and hazard prevention to those whose duties put them at risk from environmental, chemical, or physical danger.

[Marina Jabsky, M.P.H., NYCOSH Young Worker Program](#)

Marina Jabsky, M.P.H., is the industrial hygienist at the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH). She has been practicing industrial hygiene since 2014 and has extensive experience in the evaluation and mitigation of workplace hazards. Jabsky has had the opportunity to assess facilities in a variety of different settings, including construction sites, manufacturing facilities, hospitals, schools, and office buildings. In addition to on-site assessments, she also provides technical assistance, support,

and training, to help workers gain the skills they need to address the health and safety issues in their workplaces. Her articles on the evaluation of exposure data and the implementation of real-time detection systems have been published in *The Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene* and *The Synergist*. Jabsky holds a master's degree in environmental and occupational health and safety from the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Public Health and Health Policy.

[Gary Johnson, NIEHS WTP](#)

Gary Johnson Jr. is an industrial hygienist within the NIEHS WTP. Prior to joining the NIH, Johnson worked as an industrial hygienist with the Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Borders Protection, Occupational Safety and Health Division. Gary earned his master's degree in public administration from Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights, Kentucky. He also earned his bachelor's degree in environmental health with a focus in industrial hygiene from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana.

[Eric Persaud, Dr.P.H., NIEHS WTP](#)

Eric Persaud, Dr.P.H., is a health specialist for WTP. As a health specialist, Persaud is primarily responsible for supporting evaluation efforts, fostering communication of the program, serving as an editor and writer in major documents and reports, and administering and analyzing grants and contracts related to the extramural training program. Prior to joining NIEHS, Persaud evaluated multiple initiatives as a contractor to NIEHS, starting with the NIEHS WTP Opioids and the Workplace training program in 2019. He responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing expertise in evaluation and contributed to analysis regarding environmental justice activities. Persaud received his doctorate degree in public health from the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, State University of New York (SUNY) Downstate Health Sciences University, his master's degree in environmental assessment from North Carolina State University, and his bachelor's degree in earth and atmospheric sciences from City College of New York.

[Pete Raynor, Ph.D., Midwest Consortium](#)

Pete Raynor, Ph.D., is a professor in the Division of Environmental Health Sciences at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. His research and teaching interests revolve around the assessment and control of environmental exposures, especially exposures to airborne particles occurring in workplace environments. Raynor directs the University of Minnesota occupational hygiene academic program and serves as principal investigator for the Midwest Consortium for Hazardous Waste Worker Training. He is a fellow of the American Industrial Hygiene Association. He holds a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Cornell University and master's and doctorate degrees in environmental sciences and engineering from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

[Jim Remington, NIEHS WTP](#)

Jim Remington is currently a program analyst for public health preparedness training with NIEHS WTP. Jim oversees the programmatic functioning of the Hazardous Materials Disaster Preparedness Training Program. In addition, he functions as the field lead for the deployment of health and safety trainers under the National Response Framework's Worker Safety and Health Support Annex, the National Disaster Recovery Framework, and the National Contingency Plan. Deployments have included Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Sandy, Irma, and Maria, California wildfires, and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. He is also a program administrator for grants funded by the Department of Energy to develop and administer model health and safety training programs for hazardous materials or waste workers within

nuclear weapons complexes. Remington is a practicing critical care nurse and has served as a volunteer firefighter with his local fire department. He retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force after 28 years, where he specialized in command, control, and communications. As program analyst, Remington is responsible for the oversight of federal partner collaborations as it relates to disaster response and preparedness training in the WTP. He serves on several committees with the National Response Team, National Biodefense Strategy and Implementation Plan, Office of National Drug Control Policy's Recovery Research Interagency Work Group and is working on projects with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Department of Health Human Services. He holds bachelor's degrees from the University of New Hampshire and the University of Massachusetts. Remington has completed the University of North Carolina's Certificate program on Community Preparedness and Disaster Management and is a master prepared in public health in leadership and occupational health nursing.

[Kevin Riley, Ph.D., Western Region Universities Consortium, UCLA LOSH](#)

Kevin Riley, Ph.D., is the director at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Labor Occupational Safety and Health (LOSH) Program, where he oversees the center's broad portfolio of worker training, participatory research, and capacity building initiatives. He serves as principal investigator for the NIEHS-funded Western Region Universities Consortium (WRUC). Riley has nearly two decades of experience leading worker-engaged training and research initiatives to build the capacity of workers and organizations around various safety and health topics. He has spearheaded initiatives within LOSH to examine the injury and illness experiences of workers in low-wage and informal labor markets; train healthcare workers on aerosol transmissible disease (ATD) hazards and protections under the Cal/OSHA ATD Standard; support engagement between worker organizations and government agencies to confront violations of occupational health and safety and other labor laws; and promote resilience for migrant workers responding to climate-related disasters in California. Riley teaches a course on worker health within the Fielding School of Public Health and the UCLA Labor Studies Program. He has served on advisory committees for the California Department of Industrial Relations, the National Occupational Research Agenda, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, the National Clearinghouse for Worker Safety and Health Training, and the Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics. He holds a doctorate degree in sociology and a master's degree in public health, both from UCLA.

[Bernadette Oliveira-Rivera, LIUNA Training and Education Fund](#)

Bernadette Oliveira-Rivera is the assistant director of the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA) Training and Education Fund and has been an administrator of LIUNA Training since 2003. She is the labor co-chair for the Department of Labor's Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship. Rivera received her bachelor's degree from Universidad Interamericana, Puerto Rico where she studied liberal arts and sciences. She continued her education at Southern New Hampshire University where she got her master's degree in community economic development.

[Rania Sabty, Western Region Universities Consortium, UCLA LOSH](#)

Rania A. Sabty is the program manager/educator for WRUC, a four-university partnership, led by the UCLA LOSH Program. Sabty joined LOSH last year, and her role includes working closely with NIEHS, university-based partners, worker and community-based organizations, environmental and public health departments, worker health departments, occupational safety and health professionals, and state and

local government representatives. She is interested in environmental justice, policy initiatives, as well as occupational health and safety in underserved and underrepresented worker groups. Her interests also include climate resilience, adaptation, and action. Sabty has more than 20 years of experience in academia. Prior to joining LOSH, she was an assistant professor at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) where she developed and taught environmental and occupational health curricula at both graduate and undergraduate levels. She has experience in program assessment and accreditation processes. She has been a member of the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council for many years. She has research experience in the workplace, laboratory, and community settings. Her previous research topics include evaluating the exposure of outdoor day laborers to heat stress and workplace hazards, reducing children's exposure to near-roadway air pollutants, evaluating the effectiveness of high efficiency air filtration systems on indoor air quality, and characterization of worker exposures to chromium-based paint aerosols in the aerospace industry. She has served on the advisory committee for the California Department of Toxic Substances and the Exide Technologies clean-up site, for the past seven years. She holds a doctorate degree in environmental health sciences and a master's degree in industrial hygiene, both from UCLA. She is also a registered environmental health specialist.

[Peter Schmitt, Ph.D., Cell Podium, LLC](#)

Peter Schmitt, Ph.D., is the founding partner of Cell Podium, a developer of mobile tools for responder training. He has been involved in numerous research projects, particularly in the field of high energy physics at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, Switzerland, supported by Harvard University. A distinguished expert in both engineering and computer programming, Schmitt oversaw the development of the first generation of digital car phones at AEG Mobile Communication in Ulm, Germany, and was head of the Development Group for Consumer Products at BASF's North American Headquarters. In 2001, Schmitt went on to found Schmitt & Associates LLC; a company specializing in innovative technology solutions, including application and e-learning development. Schmitt received his doctorate degree in physics from the University of Würzburg, Germany.

[Darius Sivin, Ph.D., UAW](#)

Darius Sivin, Ph.D., is the principal investigator for the United Auto Workers (UAW)'s NIEHS WTP grant and has worked at the UAW for more than two decades. UAW represents over one million active and retired workers in a wide variety of industries. For 19 years he served on the Chemical Substances Threshold Limit Value Committee of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists, and he has served as a governing counselor of the American Public Health Association. Sivin has testified before Congress regarding the safety of chemical facilities. He has negotiated health and safety language with electric vehicle battery plants and auto manufacturers, including negotiating the elimination of carcinogens from a plastic injection molding facility. He holds a doctorate degree in public health from Johns Hopkins University and a master's degree in environmental studies from Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington.

[David Walko, Federal Trade Commission, Division of Privacy and Identity Protection](#)

David Walko is a staff attorney in the Federal Trade Commission's Division of Privacy and Identity Protection. Walko's practice covers various areas related to privacy and data security, including automated worker surveillance and management, health privacy, and issues related to location and other sensitive consumer data.