



Vermont Council on Rural Development

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## List of Speakers, Presenters, and Facilitators

**Samantha Becker**, Principal Research Scientist, Univ. of Washington Information School, U.S. Impact Study

Samantha Becker is the Principal Research Scientist for the U.S. IMPACT Study, a research group at the University of Washington Information School focused on digital inclusion programs and policies. She was co-author of the 2009 research report Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries and the 2011 Building Digital Communities framework, and has been lead investigator for numerous evaluation projects. Ms. Becker has a background in public policy evaluation and was a public librarian in Central Vermont before taking a slight detour into the world of library research. Her current work focuses on public access technology and evaluation of public library services. She is particularly interested in how new adult users gain the skills necessary to use information and communication technology. She holds master's degrees in Library and Information Science and Public Administration from the University of Washington.

**Kathryn Blume**, Co-Founder, Vermontivate

Kathryn is a speaker, writer, environmental activist, and award-winning solo performer who has toured her original work to over 50 cities in the US, Canada, and Europe. She founded Earth on the Air, a nationally-syndicated, award-winning environmental and social justice radio program, co-founded the Lysistrata Project, the first worldwide theatrical event for peace, and is co-founder and Executive Director of the community sustainability game Vermontivate! She received her BA from Yale with a self-designed degree in environmental studies and theater, serves as board chair for 350VT, and lives in Charlotte with her husband Mark and their highly interactive cats.

**David S. Brown**, President & CEO, Manufacturing Information Systems, Inc.

Dave is President and CEO of Manufacturing Information Systems, Inc., makers of business management systems for small- to medium-sized manufacturing companies ([www.misysinc.com](http://www.misysinc.com) [1]). Since leaving the central Massachusetts computer industry in the 1980's, Dave moved his family and business to Woodstock VT where he now employs 25 software developers, sales, support, and customer service professionals.

**Paul Budnitz**, Founder & CEO, Budnitz Bicycles

Paul Budnitz is a lifetime cyclist, an artist, author, filmmaker, product designer and entrepreneur. Besides founding Budnitz Bicycles, Paul is well known as the founder of Kidrobot, the world's premiere creator of art toys. He has designed hundreds of products, created apparel lines and

retails stores, and collaborated with many of the world's top artists and designers. He is the author of several books for adults and children, is an award winning filmmaker, and is often recognized for his innovative use of technology in art and business.

**Steve Butcher**, Co-Founder, VickeryHill.com

Raised on a farm in central Michigan, educated in Boston and now living full-time in Vermont, Steve has been elbow-deep in technology since grade school. He co-founded network integration firm everyNetwork in 1996, which found him traversing the continent building Local and Wide-Area Networks in Boston, New York City, San Francisco, Atlanta, and even across the pond in London. In 2000, Steve took off on the almost-famous SmartBeetle concept journey to kick-start web development company VickeryHill, which he co-founded with his partner Ilse Sigmund. He currently lives in Warren, VT, walks 150 feet to work, and spends time with his wife Carrie, dog Sadie, as well as driving around Vermont's mountains. Steve spends most days conceptualizing how to put the visitor first and how best to capture then use data more productively. He is a board member of the Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce.

**Betsy Calhoun** [2], M. ED, Teacher, Lake Region Union High School

Betsy is from Coventry, Vermont, and has a unique educational path, both as a student and a teacher. She graduated early from North Country UHS in 1979, obtained an A.S. in Microcomputer Applications from Community College of Vermont in 1994, completed a B.S. in Human Services at the Springfield College of Human Services (St. Johnsbury campus) in 2003, and earned her M.S. Ed '100% online' through the University of Scranton in 2006. She currently teaches business application courses at Lake Region UHS, the Community College of Vermont, and occasionally at the North Country Career Center. Betsy continues her involvement with the Tech Savvy Girls(tm) by holding annual Tech Savvy Girls(tm) Middle School Summer Camps and will again serve as the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) 2014-15 State Advisor.

**Kristin Carlson**, Director of Media, Green Mountain Power

Kristin Carlson is the Director of Media at Green Mountain Power (GMP) and a former journalist, who worked at WCAX-TV for over 14 years, during which time she won a number of awards for her reporting. As the Director of Media at GMP, she will work with customers and the media to communicate the work GMP is doing in Vermont. GMP is a leader in Vermont, regionally, and nationally on finding innovative ways to use renewable energy and new technology to power our lives as a way to address climate change. A native Vermonter, Kristin grew up in Worcester and graduated from U-32 High School. She studied journalism at Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, graduating in 1999.

**Susan Clark**, Author

Susan Clark is a writer, facilitator and educator focusing on community sustainability and engagement. She is coauthor of *Slow Democracy: Rediscovering Community, Bringing Decision Making Back Home* (Chelsea Green, 2012) and of *All Those In Favor*, a book about Vermont town meetings (with Frank Bryan). Susan works regularly with municipal leaders and local activists to enhance civic participation. She serves as town meeting moderator in Middlesex, Vermont.

**Andrea Cohen**, Executive Director, VT Businesses for Social Responsibility

Andrea became the Executive Director of Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR)

in the fall of 2010. VBSR is a statewide business association whose members are committed to the "multiple bottom line" approach to business practice. Andrea originally joined VBSR in 2006 as the Public Policy Program Manager. Previous to VBSR, she worked for 16 years at the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources in a variety of management positions involving pollution prevention, resource conservation, and solid waste management. Andrea holds her M.A. in Environmental Science from Antioch University and her B.A. in Psychology and Economics from Vassar College. Andrea lives in Montpelier, VT with her husband and 12 year old son.

**Sharon Combes-Farr**, Project Director, VCRD's VT Digital Economy Project

Sharon is from Ludlow, Vermont, graduated from the George Washington University, and completed her graduate studies at the University of Michigan. Since 2000, she has been a marketing professional in the U.S. telecommunications industry. Sharon and her husband were highly impacted by Tropical Storm Irene, leading her to seek out her current role, Vermont Digital Economy Project Director. The Project is made possible by a disaster relief grant from the Economic Development Administration and is delivering services to dozens of Vermont's flood-impacted communities.

**Stuart Comstock-Gay**, President & CEO, The Vermont Community Foundation

Stu is President & CEO of the Vermont Community Foundation, where he works with charitably-minded Vermonters to support organizations and issues across the state. His career has revolved around issues of civic engagement, encompassing voting rights, civil rights and liberties, and foundation work. He has written and spoken widely on a wide range of topics surrounding community betterment. Stuart holds an MPA from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and a B.A. in Political Science from Bucknell University. He and his wife have three daughters, and live in New Haven, Vermont.

**Dr. Daniel Connolly**, Senior Associate Dean, University of Denver's Daniels College of Business

Dr. Daniel Connolly is an assistant professor of information technology and electronic commerce at the University of Denver's Daniels College of Business with a dual appointment in the School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management and in the Department of Information Technology and Electronic Commerce. Dr. Connolly's teaching, research, and consulting focus is on the strategic application of information technology and electronic commerce. Prior to joining academia, Dr. Connolly spent nearly eight years working at Marriott International's corporate headquarters in the area information systems. In addition, he has consulted with numerous organizations in the hospitality, healthcare and technology sectors. Before joining the faculty at the University of Denver, Dr. Connolly served on the faculties of Cornell University, Michigan State University, Virginia Tech, and Concord College. He resides with his wife Sarah and three children in Littleton, Colorado.

**Steve Cook**, Deputy Commissioner, VT Department of Tourism and Marketing

Steven Cook a resident of Montpelier was appointed Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Tourism & Marketing in September 2006. Since then Cook was also assigned as Publisher of the State of Vermont's official magazine, Vermont Life for a three year term. Cook has served the State of Vermont for 10 years, previously under the Department of Buildings and General Services, as the Marketing and Information Technology manager. Cook has also worked in Vermont's ski industry holding sales and promotional positions for both Smugglers' Notch and Jay Peak ski resorts. Steven also bartends wedding events throughout the year for the Inn at

Round Barn Farm.

**Paul Costello**, Executive Director, Vermont Council on Rural Development

Paul joined VCRD as Executive Director in 2000. Paul is a UVM alumni and holds a PhD in intellectual history from McGill University. In addition to his work at VCRD, Paul is a member of the Housing Vermont Board of Directors and President Emeritus of the national Partners for Rural America organization.

**Jeff Couture**, Executive Director, Vermont Technology Alliance

Jeff Couture is the executive director of the Vermont Technology Alliance. The vtTA is a non-profit business association with a mission to support, promote, celebrate and grow technology businesses and technology jobs in Vermont. The Alliance has nearly 200 members from across Vermont's technology business sector, ranging from large companies to individual entrepreneurs. Jeff believes that tech businesses represent an economic growth opportunity for Vermont. Previously, Jeff held several management and professional communications positions with IBM. His recent responsibilities include communications and analyst relations for IBM's Microelectronics Division, which has major locations in Vermont, New York and Canada.

**Elizabeth Craib**, Director, Woodstock Job Bank

Elizabeth grew up in Mendon, Vermont and is a graduate of the University of Vermont. For the past four years she has been the director of the Woodstock Area Job Bank - a community-centered referral service that connects job seekers with area employers. She has also been an active member of the Woodstock Area Nonprofit Network which formed shortly after Hurricane Irene. Elizabeth lives with her husband and son in Hartland, Vermont.

**Lauren-Glenn Davitian**, Executive Director, CCTV Center for Media & Democracy

Ms. Davitian is founder and executive director of CCTV's Center for Media and Democracy in Burlington, Vermont and oversees Channel 17/Town Meeting Television (a regional government access TV channel), CCTV Productions (a nonprofit media production and distribution unit) and Common Good Vermont (the state's nonprofit capacity building project). Lauren-Glenn is a founding member of Vermont Access Network (a trade group of 27 public access tv centers in Vermont). She has served the Alliance for Community Media in various capacities. Ms. Davitian was named one of Vermont's "25 most influential people" in the mid 1990's. Lauren-Glenn is an Emeritus NTEN Board member. She is a graduate of the University of Vermont (B.A. in Anthropology, Phi Beta Kappa, 1982).

**John Dawson** <sup>[3]</sup>, Director of Instructional Innovation, Bennington-Rutland Supervisory Union

John, or ?JD?, is the Director of Instructional Innovation at the Bennington-Rutland Supervisory Union. Previously, he served ten years with the Champlain Valley Union High School as their Information Systems Manager. He graduated from the Applied Actuarial Mathematics Program at Bryant College (now Bryant University) in Smithfield, Rhode Island. A lifelong learner, he holds certificates of expertise in a variety of disciplines in the world of information technology. His passion is harnessing technology to personalize education for every student and their personal support network of teachers, parents, counselors and friends -- to make learning special for each student.

**Mary Kay Dreher**, Coordinator of Academic Services, Community College of Vermont

Mary Kay completed undergraduate work at the University of Vermont, and holds a Masters of

Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) degree from Skidmore College. She has been back in her home state of Vermont for over ten years, raising her children, and teaching History and Anthropology at Community College of Vermont (CCV), Johnson State College and Vermont Technical College. More recently she began working full time for CCV as a Coordinator of Academic Services at the Montpelier Academic Center. It is in the context of her coordinator role that she developed a curriculum for digital literacy and has been facilitating workshops statewide, training trainers in the art of teaching basic digital literacy skills to Vermonters new to both the experience and necessity of working with computers.

**Peter Drescher**, Education Technology Coordinator, Vermont Department of Education  
Peter serves as the Education Technology Coordinator for the Vermont Agency of Education. In that role, Peter works on assisting schools in their use and acquisition of technology to support learning. This involves policy discussions and guidance, advocating for increased access to broadband resources and the continual development of new opportunities to virtual and blended learning. Peter also serves as the Board Chair for the State Education Technology Directors Association (SETDA), a national organization working to support sound education technology policy and practice in all states.

**Matt Dunne**, Head of Community Affairs, Google

Matt Dunne has focused his life's work on bringing together the worlds of entrepreneurship, service and politics. Elected to the Vermont House at the age of 22, he served 7 years before joining the Clinton administration as the Director of AmeriCorps VISTA overseeing 6000 full-time people working in the fight against poverty. In 2002 he returned home to Vermont and was elected to two terms in the Vermont Senate. Outside of the legislature, he worked in high-tech marketing and before joining Google was the Associate Director of the Rockefeller Center at Dartmouth College. Now the Head of Community Affairs at Google, Matt supports all aspects of the company's local corporate social responsibility activities in communities where Google has an office or data center as well as helping guide larger corporate partnerships with the nonprofit and public sector. Matt currently lives on the small farm where he grew up in Hartland, VT with his wife, Sarah Taylor, and his sons, Judson and Abraham, and daughter, Cora.

**Mary Evslyn**, The Evslyn Family Foundation

Mary Evslyn is a co-founder and VP of Marketing for NG Advantage, a newly formed natural gas provider bringing CNG to companies not on a pipeline. She is currently on the boards of Champlain College, the Vermont and NH Upper Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross. Mary was the first Chair of the Board of the Vermont Telecommunications Authority, on the board of the Princeton, NJ Chapter of the American Red Cross and past president of the Montpelier, VT Chapter of the American Red Cross. Mary has been a Red Cross Disaster volunteer for 20 years. She was a founder and VP of Marketing and Customer Success at ITXC, a global wholesale telephone company sending calls over the Internet. Prior to that she worked at Attachmate Software in Seattle, and even earlier served at VP of Marketing at Solutions Inc, a Vermont company and a PC and Mac software developer and retailer. Earlier in her career she worked in the Vermont Office of then Congressman James Jeffords and of the nonprofit Vermont Dental Care.

**Rob Fish** [4], Nonprofit Advisor and Community Organizer, VCRD's VT Digital Economy Project  
Rob is a connector, an advocate, and a translator of big ideas into accessible and digestible

conversations. In his current position as Non Profit Advisor for the Vermont Digital Economy Project, Rob works one-on-one with small and medium size organizations of all types methodically evaluating their current use of technology and strategizing how various online tools can assist the organization in becoming more effective, efficient, sustainable, and resilient to natural or man-made disasters. Rob's work with nonprofits is informed by over fifteen years of community outreach and project management experience with community development and advocacy projects in Maine, Vermont, and Ghana.

**Dan French**, Superintendent, Bennington Rutland Supervisory Union

Dan French has been the Superintendent of the Bennington-Rutland Supervisory Union in Sunderland, Vermont since 2007. He is the past President of the Vermont Superintendents Association and was Vermont's Superintendent of the Year in 2009. He is a frequent presenter at state, regional, and national conferences on technology and its impact on education.

**Joe Fusco**, Vice President, Casella Waste Systems

Joe is an advisor to the chairman and chief executive officer of Casella Waste Systems, Inc. He is an adjunct instructor and member of the Board of Advisors of the University of Vermont's MBA program in Sustainable Entrepreneurship (SEMBA). For the past year, he has served as chair of the steering committee in the development of Vermont's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Joe and his wife Renae live in Chittenden, Vt. and are the parents of five children.

**Jamie Gage**, General Manager, Vermont Information Consortium

Jamie is a Vermonter and UVM graduate who has lived in 17 Vermont towns and villages including Randolph where he settled with his family in 2005. He has worked in a variety of industries, including tourism & marketing, snowsports, freelance writing, and digital asset management, and since 2009 has been the General Manager of Vermont Information Consortium (VIC), which hosts and maintains [www.Vermont.gov](http://www.Vermont.gov) [5] - winner of two Best of the Web awards in 2009 & 2010. Through Vermont.gov and the over 150 other eGovernment web services that VIC has developed with the State, Jamie has collaborated with hundreds of state and municipal employees to help create innovative web solutions which provide convenience to residents and visitors to Vermont.

**Dimitri Garder**, Executive VP, Global-Z International, Inc.

Dimitri is a co-founder and Executive VP of Global-Z International, Inc., an IT company providing global data quality improvement services and technology to global enterprises. Dimitri has developed and implemented complex global data quality assessment and improvement technologies and solutions for many Global-Z clients, ranging from small companies to Fortune 100s. Dimitri's 25 years of experience with complex international data makes him one of the leading experts in his industry. His approach to data quality is pragmatic, statistically focused, and metrics driven, and believes in solving complex problems through simple, clear, analytical thinking. Dimitri holds a BA in Music Theory from the University of Vermont, and an MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

**Tess Gauthier**, Project Manager, Snelling Center for Government

Tess is an AmeriCorps Alumni, Johnson State College graduate and Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, who grew up in the Lake Champlain Islands. She joined The Snelling Center for Government from the private sector, where she worked on broadband infrastructure development

and pioneered the largest digital literacy/broadband adoption program in the state of Vermont. She brings her background as a Community Strategist and Project Manager to coordinate the Vermont Digital Economy Project, at the Snelling Center for Government.

**Steve Gold**, Montpelier

Steve Gold retired from more than 30 years service in Vermont State Government in 2007. During his last eight years working for the State, he was Gov. Howard Dean's Commissioner of Labor (4 years), and Gov. Jim Douglas's Commissioner of Corrections (2 years), Deputy Secretary of Administration (1 year) and Deputy Secretary of Human Services (1 1/2 years). After his retirement, he consulted with the Legislative Joint Fiscal Office for 3 years. During the 2011-2012 academic year, he was Interim President of Lyndon State College. Steve is a Board member of Vermont Works for Women, the Kellogg Hubbard Library in Montpelier, the Public Assets Institute, and the E-911 Board. He has been active with the Vermont Council on Rural Development, serving on its Council on the Future of Vermont, and with the Snelling Center for Government's Vermont Leadership Institute. He is a Member of the Vermont Community Foundation. Steve lives with his wife, Irina Markova, in Montpelier.

**Adam Grinold**, Executive Director, Wilmington Works

Adam grew up a family business, and after college served as the general manager of the 25 room inn and 95 seat restaurant for 12 years until its sale. His career began in the first days of mainstream internet. His early adoption of "1997 internet marketing" allowed the inn to dominate both local and state-wide listings and was a very real boost to business. His passion for keeping current on internet marketing and all things digital has allowed him to ensure he and his wife's current restaurant is ahead of the digital curve! Currently serving as the executive director for the Wilmington's Downtown program, Wilmington Works, he has helped design and implement the organization's digital media strategy.

**Lisa Groeneveld**, COO, Logic Supply

Lisa Groeneveld started her career as a sales professional in the IT Industry after graduating from Northeastern University. Working with Fortune 500 companies as a WorldCom Global Sales and Account Manager in the US and Europe, Lisa strongly believes that openness, accountability and transparency are crucial to long term success. After living in The Netherlands, Lisa relocated to Boston where she successfully launched Logic Supply. As a Vermont native, Lisa wanted to return home confident that Logic Supply could thrive and grow in Vermont. At Logic Supply as Chief Operating Officer, Lisa oversees all aspects of purchasing, computer assembly, warehousing, fulfillment and ongoing customer service. Lisa has over 10 years? experience with LEAN Manufacturing and continuous improvement. You can find out more about Logic Supply at [www.logicsupply.com](http://www.logicsupply.com) [6]

**Holly Groschner**, General Counsel, Vermont Telecommunications Authority

A pioneer in deployment of wireless communications, Groschner works to build public consensus around the deployment of infrastructure for the future. In her career as a lawyer and manager in emerging communications networks, Groschner helped to build a \$10 billion infrastructure enterprise and led clients through the transition of technology convergence. Her most recent accomplishments include working with the VTA to find solutions for Vermont's "signal-free" zones.

**Lars Hasselblad Torres**, Director, Vermont's Office of the Creative Economy

Lars serves as the Director of Vermont's Office of the Creative Economy within the Agency of Commerce. The Office exists to connect Vermont's innovators and entrepreneurs, measure and promote a healthy creative ecosystem, and mobilize resources across Vermont's creative sectors. Prior to joining the Agency Lars served as Innovation Prize Advisor to the Office of Science and Technology at the U.S. Agency for International Development; before that he led the design and development of the MIT IDEAS Global Challenge (<http://globalchallenge.mit.edu> [7]).

**Nate Herzog**, Principal, Storyhack Media

Nate Herzog is the creator of StoryHackVT, using multi-platform storytelling to create fun, engaging events and sometimes forecast the future. StoryHackVT's next 24 hour hackathon contest is September 27th and 28th in Burlington, Vermont. He lives with his wife and family in Burlington.

**Mark Heyman**, Human Resources Director, Logic Supply

Mark earned his BA in Political Science from the University of Vermont, including six months studying access to legal aid within the European Union in London, England through Boston University. Mark earned his Juris Doctor from Suffolk University Law School and is a member of the Society for Human Resource Management. He has significant labor and employment law and human resources management experience as former Deputy Legal Counsel for the Vermont State Employees Association and as the Owner of Cope Human Resources, Inc., an HR Consulting firm. Mark is currently the HR Director of Logic Supply, Inc., a technology company in South Burlington providing custom small form factor computer solutions for industrial embedded applications.

**Tanja Hinterstoisser**, Director of Career Services, Champlain College

Tanja is currently the Director of Career Services at Champlain College. In her role, she is leading the career development and employer relations initiatives aimed at continuing the successes for post graduation employment for Champlain students. Tanja has a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Denver where she specialized in industrial and organizational psychology, a graduate degree from Rollins College and an undergraduate degree from Southeastern University. Most recently, she has focused her attention to the study and evaluation of workforce behaviors. In the past, she worked with national and international teams on work performance improvements addressing talent development matters. As a dual national from Austria and Argentina, Tanja is fluent in both German and Spanish.

**Suzy Hodgson**, Co-Founder, YourFarmStand.com

Suzy Hodgson, manages a small family farm with her husband. She has worked in the sustainable economy field for over 20 years as a teacher, writer, and consultant in the UK and USA including working at Carbon Clear and the Center for Environmental Strategy, University of Surrey. She launched yourfarmstand in 2010 and also works on local food access and sustainable agriculture projects at the UVM Extension's Center for Sustainable Agriculture and on local energy issues as chair, Charlotte's Energy Committee and Board member, Acorn Energy Co-op.

**Kate Jellema**, Chair, MS in Managing Mission-Driven Organizations, Marlboro College

Kate Jellema lives in Brattleboro, where she leads the Program in Nonprofit Management at the Marlboro College Graduate School and acts as the degree chair for Marlboro's MS in Managing

Mission-Driven Organizations. Since 2011, Kate has been a leader of Benchmarks for a Better Vermont, the statewide initiative focused on the social impact of nonprofit work. Kate received her MA from Johns Hopkins and her PhD from the University of Michigan, and has been awarded grants from the MacArthur Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the National Science Foundation and the Woodrow Wilson Foundation to support her research. She holds a Certificate in Nonprofit Management, is a 2012 graduate of the Vermont Leadership Institute, and currently serves on the board of Hilltop Montessori School.

**Julie Lenzer Kirk** <sup>[8]</sup>, Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Economic Development Administration

Julie Lenzer Kirk was recently appointed <sup>[9]</sup> by U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker to lead the Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (OIE), an office within the Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration (EDA). In her capacity as Director of the OIE, she is charged with driving programs and policies that support innovative economic development such as innovation-based entrepreneurship and regional innovation clusters. Her passion is infusing innovation and entrepreneurial mindset coupled with action into individuals, communities, and regions to act as a catalyst for economic growth. See full bio here <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Lucy Leriche**, Deputy Secretary, Vermont's Agency of Commerce & Community Development  
Lucy is Deputy Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, appointed to that position by Governor Peter Shumlin in January 2013. She served 8 years in the Vermont House of Representatives, four of them in leadership positions including Assistant Majority Leader and Majority Leader. Lucy holds a MA degree in Interdisciplinary Humanities from Arizona State University, and has a background in community development and affordable housing development. Lucy grew up in Wolcott Vermont and currently resides in Hardwick.

**Amanda Levinson** <sup>[10]</sup>, Principal, ThirdSpace

Amanda Levinson is Principal at ThirdSpace, where she works with nonprofit organizations and the communities they serve to design tech-enabled solutions to make world a better place. She is also Senior Strategist at Stagecoach Digital, where she leads digital content and campaign strategy for projects for some of the nation's largest nonprofit organizations. She is the founder and volunteer chapter leader of Burlington NetSquared, organizing events that bring together people from a variety of sectors who are passionate about using technology for social change in Vermont and beyond.

**Caitlin Lovegrove**, Communications & Outreach Coordinator, VCRD's VT Digital Economy Project

A graduate of Brown University, Caitlin has spent the last five years working in both the nonprofit and for-profit worlds. She worked for nonprofits in London and New York, and ran the online marketing department for a small company in Manhattan before returning to Vermont to work for Lake Champlain Chocolates, and later, for the Vermont Council on Rural Development's Vermont Digital Economy Project, where she coordinated the installation of 26 Wi-Fi zones and hotspots, in addition to editing and publishing the "Vermont Connected" e-newsletter. Caitlin is currently a prospective MBA student at the University of Vermont's new Sustainable Entrepreneurship MBA program.

**Erika Lowe** <sup>[10]</sup>, Co-Founder, Today Box Co.

Erika Lowe is a tech-oriented teacherpreneur with 12 years of experience in education. She's an educator, writer and consultant who utilizes collaboration and creativity to design and support best practices in education and community engagement. Erika is Co-Founder of Today Box Co., a website designed for curious kids. She's an educator with the Burlington School District and former Community Based Learning Fellow for the Partnership for Change, an organization dedicated to school transformation and community building. Erika has led numerous workshops on design thinking and human centered design, as well as equity and education technology nation-wide.

**Linda McSweeney**, Teacher Librarian, Stowe Middle / High School

Linda is the librarian at Stowe Middle High School. A graduate of Dickinson College and Rutgers University, her passion is sharing digital age learning with students and educators. In addition to teaching graduate courses on virtual library design and digital learning tools for teachers, she is the current President of the Vermont School Library Association.

**Sarah Waterman Manning**, Creator, VTResponse.com

Sarah grew up in East Montpelier. She graduated summa cum laude from the University at Albany with a degree in public policy, which she immediately put to use as a spontaneous volunteer after Hurricane Katrina. She continued her research in disaster preparedness and public health at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill as a Weiss Fellow. When Tropical Storm Irene slammed into Vermont in August of 2011, causing the worst flooding and damage since the 1921 floods, Waterman Manning built and launched VTResponse.com, a social media based approach towards immediate flood response and recovery.

**Pat Moulton Powden**, Secretary, Vermont's Agency of Commerce & Community Development

Pat was appointed to the Deputy Secretary post by Governor Shumlin in November 2010. Prior to her appointment, Pat served for a short time as the Vice President of Public Affairs at the Vermont Chamber of Commerce. She has also served as the Executive Director of the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) . Just prior to joining the Vermont Chamber, Pat served as Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Labor for four years. Prior to her position as Commissioner, Governor Douglas appointed Ms. Powden to serve as the full-time Chair of the Vermont Natural Resources Board and its predecessor, the Vermont Environmental Board. Before her environmental regulation and policy work, Pat spent 22 years in the practice of economic development on the local, regional, and state levels. In 1990, she was appointed Deputy Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Economic Development by Governor Snelling and subsequently appointed Commissioner of Economic Development by Governor Dean. Pat also ran her own economic development consulting company for several years.

**Steven Pappas**, Editor, Times-Argus

Steven Pappas of Plainfield is the editor of the Barre-Montpelier Times Argus. Steve is an award-winning journalist (writing, editing and design), who has worked at newspapers around Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. In recent years he has managed the newspaper's bold transitions to various online and mobile platforms. He hosts a public access news show, City Room, in collaboration with CVTV in Barre.

**Emily Piper**, Co-Founder, Launch VT

Emily Piper is the Executive Director for Burlington Young Professionals and LaunchVT for the

Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce in Burlington, VT. Her primary focus is to help young professionals and entrepreneurs in the State of Vermont, find career opportunities. Both organizations are State-wide programs to assist in economic development for Vermont.

**Martha Reid** <sup>[11]</sup>, State Librarian, Vermont Department of Libraries

Martha (Marty) Reid was appointed State Librarian at the Vermont Department of Libraries (VTLIB) in 2008 after working for more than 30 years in public libraries in Virginia, Connecticut, Colorado and Vermont. Her work for the State of Vermont includes a focus on library technology and broadband, digital and information literacy for Vermont citizens and technology training for Vermont public librarians. VTLIB has been an active partner in both the e-Vermont Community Broadband Project and the Vermont Digital Economy Project. Reid has an MA in Library Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and lives in South Burlington, Vermont.

**Jeff Renard**, Director, Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative

Jeff is a long-time educator, technologist and lifelong learner. As a teacher, he has instructed courses at the secondary through graduate level in a variety of technical and instructional methodology courses. Jeff holds several educational and technical certifications and degrees in Educational Technology, Electronics, and Educational Philosophy as well as advanced Graduate certificates in Educational Administration, Web Design and Online Teaching. Jeff's current position is as Founder and Director of the Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC) which serves thousands of students throughout Vermont to provide greater availability of courses, greater accessibility to courses due to scheduling conflicts, and more flexibility for learning at times that help students to be more successful.

**Cathy Resmer**, Associate Publisher, Online Editor, Seven Days

Cathy Resmer is an associate publisher at Burlington-based newsweekly Seven Days, where her responsibilities include running the monthly parenting magazine Kids VT and organizing the Vermont Tech Jam, the state's largest tech job fair and expo. The 2014 Jam is coming up on Friday and Saturday, October 24 and 25, at Memorial Auditorium in Burlington. The Tech Jam has recently expanded its website to include a blog and a year-round calendar of tech events. Find it at [techjamvt.com](http://techjamvt.com) <sup>[12]</sup>.

**Patrick Ripley**, eCommerce Director, VT Small Business Development Center

Patrick spent many years writing, editing and managing various traditional media outlets before following industry trends and turning his focus to modern media in the mid-2000's. Since then, he has written, edited and managed thousands of pieces of online content and oversaw the development, creation, design and management of multiple websites and social media campaigns, among other things. Most recently, Patrick oversaw digital strategies for two Hearst Television stations that showed pageview growth in the millions during his time there. Patrick now advises business owners on digital strategies on behalf of the Vermont Small Business Development Center.

**Ben Rose**, Recovery & Mitigation Section Chief, VT DPS, Emergency Management & Homeland Security

Ben Rose joined the Irene Recovery Office in February 2012, and has served as Recovery and Mitigation Section Chief for the Vermont Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security since May 2013. His previous experience includes twelve years as Executive Director of

The Green Mountain Club, four years as a state legislator and clerk of the House Natural Resources and Energy Committee, and six years as Executive Director of the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District. He received a B.A. from Yale University and a M.S. from the University of Vermont in Natural Resource Planning. A former Chair of the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council, Rose co-founded the Catamount Trail Association in 1984 and served as its first executive director.

**Linda Rossi**, State Director, VT Small Business Development Center

Linda is the State Director of the Vermont Small Business Development Center and leads a dynamic statewide team of advisors who support and strengthen business owners as they start and grow through one-on-one, no-cost, confidential advising services. She has lived in Vermont for 18 years and been with VtSBDC since 2005. Prior to joining VtSBDC, her professional experience has included being a national project manager, teaching business courses at a local college, and owning and managing small businesses. Linda was recognized with a special disaster recovery award for her leadership, and mobilization of the advisors, as they assisted hundreds of small businesses that sustained physical damage and economic losses after Tropical Storm Irene.

**Carl Russell**, Earthwise Farm & Forest

Carl B. Russell is a horse-logger, forestry consultant, and timberland owner from Bethel, Vermont. He has operated Russell Forestry Services since 1986, specializing in ecological forestry and low-impact timber harvest with draft animals. Carl and his wife Lisa McCrory own and operate Earthwise Farm & Forest, a 150 acre diversified enterprise, where they raise organic vegetables and grass fed livestock, and use draft animals for logging and field work. Since 2013, with assistance from Vermont Digital Economy Project, he has expanded his use of digital tools, and online resources. Through the use of hand-held devices and digital connectivity, he is providing detailed information and guidance in his consulting services to landowner clients, streamlining data collection and management in his personal operations, and enhancing the management and development of a regional network of professional animal powered forestry practitioners.

**Shane Scranton**, Co-founder at IrisVR, Inc.

Shane Scranton graduated Middlebury College in 2013 and is the co-founder of IrisVR, a Burlington-based company creating cutting-edge software that allows architects and designers to view their existing digital floorplans in Virtual Reality (VR). Shane recognized the value of using VR technology beyond its gaming and entertainment applications and formed a company that has been gaining recognition around the world as a first-mover in the space. With a wave of accessible consumer Virtual Reality right around the corner, Shane and IrisVR are positioned to be leaders in this exciting new industry. Find out more at <http://www.irisvr.com> [13].

**Janette Shaffer**, Remote Town Meeting Participation Coordinator, Town of Middlesex  
Janette Shaffer is the Middlesex Remote Town Meeting Participation Coordinator ? a role that draws upon her career-long interest in using technology to provide services and create cohesion among geographically dispersed students and staff in higher education institutions. Janette is the Director of Marketing and Communications at the Community College of Vermont and holds a Master?s Degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois. She lives in Middlesex with her husband and dog

**Steve Sharp**, Director of Enterprise Service, VT Center for Geographic Information  
Steve is a certified Geographic Information Systems Professional (GISP) with nearly 20 years of experience in the GIS industry. Mr. Sharp is currently Director of Enterprise GIS Services at the Vermont Center for Geographic Information (VCGI). Mr. Sharp provides supervisory, technical, and consultative work in the development and oversight of State's Enterprise GIS, and manages a wide range of projects and initiatives for the State.

**Peter Shumlin**, Governor, State of Vermont  
Gov. Peter Shumlin is a small business owner, public servant and father of two from Putney, Vermont. A committed entrepreneur, Gov. Shumlin was the longtime co-director, along with his brother, of Putney Student Travel and National Geographic Student Expeditions, a company that sends students on educational programs and service projects across the globe. He is also a partner in several real estate companies that provide housing and commercial space in southeast Vermont. As governor, he is determined to get tough things done. Since his inauguration, he has been working hard to create jobs for those who need them and raise incomes for those who have jobs, control skyrocketing healthcare costs, expand broadband and cell service to every corner of the state, reduce recidivism, invest in quality education opportunities, and rebuild our roads and bridges. Taken together, these and other key goals represent an ambitious agenda to create a brighter economic future for Vermonters. Gov. Shumlin is the 81st governor of Vermont.

**Mark Snelling**, President, Snelling Center for Government  
Mark is the volunteer president of the Snelling Center. He is also president of Greenleaf Metals, a distributor of copper and brass wire products. He has owned and operated a number of businesses in the ski, bike and hardware industries. Mark served as chair of the Vermont Governor?s Council of Environmental Advisors, and chaired the Governor?s Commission on Downtowns and Growth Centers. He has previously served on the boards of Key Bank Vermont, the Vermont Land Trust, Medical Center Hospital of Vermont, and as Chair of Housing Vermont and the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. Mark resides in Starksboro, VT with his wife Linda.

**Alexandra Tursi**, Social Media Strategist, Fletcher Allen Health Care  
Alexandra is from Essex Junction, Vermont. She graduated from Cornell University and is currently a PhD student at the University of Vermont. Since 2005, she has been a social media strategist in the health, sustainability, and public sector realms. She recently spoke at the Stanford Medicine X conference and the Mayo Clinic Social Media Summit and also has a regular technology segment on WCAX-TV. She is dedicated to using social media, mobile, and digital tools to help people live healthier lives. Follow her online at [Facebook.com/AlexandraTursiOfficial](https://www.facebook.com/AlexandraTursiOfficial) or [twitter.com/tursita](https://twitter.com/tursita).

**Miro Weinberger**, Mayor of the City of Burlington Vermont

Mayor Miro Weinberger was elected on March 6, 2012 and, during his two and a half years as Mayor, has focused on getting the City's finances in order, getting stuck and stalled projects moving again, making Burlington more affordable, and rebuilding trust in City Hall. Under Mayor Weinberger's leadership, the City has made considerable progress. Highlights of his first term include securing 72% passage of the \$9 million Fiscal Stability Bond, making significant improvements to the Burlington Bike Path, prioritizing renovations and upgrades of parks around the City, creating the Public Investment Action Plan which led to successful passage of ballot initiatives for waterfront investments and measures to increase downtown housing opportunities. The Mayor also announced a settlement agreement in the Burlington Telecom litigation in February 2014, putting the City on a path to resolving the financial troubles related to the municipally owned telecommunications company which have plagued the City since 2009. Now in the final year of his three-year term, the Mayor continues his focus on housing, economic growth, quality-of-life improvements, and anti-poverty efforts. Mayor Weinberger, the son of a schoolteacher and an architect, was born and raised in Hartland, Vermont.

**Rebecca Wood Holcombe**, Secretary, Vermont Department of Education

Rebecca Holcombe joined the Agency of Education in January 2014. Prior to joining the Agency, Rebecca taught at the middle school, high school and university levels. She taught social studies and science before becoming the principal at the Fairlee School, where she helped lead the district through the formation of the Rivendell Interstate School District. Rebecca holds a BA in History from Brown University, a MBA from the Simmons School of Management and a M.Ed. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She is currently working on her Doctorate. Rebecca also completed coursework for her principal certification at Lyndon State College and received her preparation as a teacher at the Upper Valley Educators Institute. After a decade away from Vermont, Rebecca was thrilled to move back and place her two children in Vermont schools a few years ago. She appreciates the high levels of public involvement and debate about how to improve education for our children that characterize Vermont schools.

**Michael Wood-Lewis** <sup>[14]</sup>, Co-Founder & CEO, FrontPorchForum.com

Michael and his wife Valerie founded Front Porch Forum in their Burlington neighborhood in 2006. FPF hosts a statewide network of online neighborhood forums in Vermont, and nearly 85,000 households subscribe. Previously, Michael led an innovative trade association of New England utilities, and before that developed environmental technologies in Washington, DC for municipalities. Michael serves many roles locally with youth sports, civic committees, charities, and church. He earned an MS in engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, as well as an MBA.

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**Source URL:** <http://www.vtrural.org/programs/digital-economy/conference/speakers>

**Links:**

- [1] <http://www.misysinc.com>
- [2] <http://www.vtrural.org/programs/digital-economy/conference/betsy-calhoun>
- [3] <http://vtrural.org/programs/digital-economy/updates/digital-tools-in-bennington-rutland>
- [4] <http://www.vtrural.org/programs/digital-economy/conference/nonprofit-advising>
- [5] <http://www.Vermont.gov>
- [6] <http://www.logicsupply.com>
- [7] <http://globalchallenge.mit.edu/>
- [8] <http://vtrural.org/programs/digital-economy/conference/julie-lenzer-kirk-bio>

- [9] <http://www.commerce.gov/news/press-releases/2014/05/01/us-secretary-commerce-penny-pritzker-announces-new-director-office-in>
- [10] <http://www.vtrural.org/programs/digital-economy/conference/human-centered-design>
- [11] <http://www.vtrural.org/programs/digital-economy/conference/internet-interns>
- [12] <http://techjamvt.com/>
- [13] <http://www.irisvr.com>
- [14] <http://www.vtrural.org/programs/digital-economy/conference/fpf>