

## Research Symposium Speaker Bios

### [Jen Becker, Managing Director, NJEDA](#)

Jen Becker is the Managing Director of the Wind Institute at NJEDA where she leads NJ's efforts on OSW workforce training, education, research, and innovation. She has 25 years of experience crafting programs to advance sustainable development, particularly around issues of green jobs, clean energy, ports, and manufacturing. Prior to joining the NJEDA, Jen consulted for the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey and Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind. She previously served as the Chief Sustainability Manager at the New York Power Authority and as VP of Clean Energy and Sustainability at the NYC Economic Development Corporation.

### [Julia Kortrey, Manager, NJEDA](#)

Julia Kortrey is a Manager at NJEDA where she helps lead NJ's efforts on OSW workforce development and innovation. Julia collaborates with OSW industry stakeholders, including public and social sector partners, to create new OSW initiatives and opportunities in NJ. Prior to NJEDA, Julia worked on various social policy issues in Washington, D.C., including women's economic security and domestic food security. She was an Emerson National Hunger Fellow at the Congressional Hunger Center with placements at the Texas Hunger Initiative and Congressional Research Service.

### [Tim Sullivan, CEO, NJEDA](#)

Tim Sullivan is the Chief Executive Officer of the NJEDA. Under his leadership, the NJEDA has led the development and implementation of more than 15 programs created under the Economic Recovery Act of 2020, provided more than \$700 million in COVID-19 relief to small businesses impacted by the pandemic, facilitated the construction of the NJ Wind Port and growth of a robust offshore wind industry in New Jersey, collaborated with partners in the private sector to grow New Jersey's innovation ecosystem, and helped municipalities revitalize brownfields and other underused spaces into valuable community assets. Tim's previous experiences include positions as Deputy Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, and Chief of Staff to the New York City Deputy Mayor for Economic Development. Prior to joining government, Tim worked at Barclays Capital as Chief of Staff to the Head of Global Investment Banking, and as an investment banker at Lehman Brothers. Tim is a graduate of Georgetown University.

### [Dr. Brian Bridges, NJ Secretary of Higher Education](#)

Dr. Brian Bridges currently serves as Secretary of Higher Education for the state of New Jersey. Secretary Dr. Bridges is responsible for policy development and coordination of higher education activities for the state. He also coordinates initiatives to improve college affordability in New Jersey through the State Plan for Higher Education and enhance postsecondary opportunities while promoting equity and access for all through programs such as the state's Community College Opportunity Grant. Dr. Bridges previously served as Vice President of Research and Member Engagement at the United Negro College Fund in Washington, DC. Dr. Bridges also served in various leadership roles both on- and off-campus, including Vice Provost for Diversity, Access, and Equity at Ohio University; Associate Director of the Center for Advancement of Racial and Ethnic Equity at the American Council on Education; and Associate Director at the National Survey of Student Engagement. Dr. Bridges holds a Doctorate in Higher Education Administration from Indiana University–Bloomington, a Master of Public

Administration degree from the University of North Carolina–Charlotte, and a Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature from Francis Marion University.

### [Lyndie Hice-Dunton, Executive Director, National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium](#)

Lyndie Hice-Dunton is the Executive Director of the National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium (Consortium). The Consortium, established in 2018, is a not-for-profit public-private partnership focused on advancing offshore wind technology in the United States through high impact research projects and cost-effective and responsible development to maximize economic benefits. Prior to joining the Consortium in 2023, Lyndie served as the Executive Director of the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance, which works to enhance scientific understanding necessary to support the coexistence of wind energy development and sustainable fisheries. Dr. Hice-Dunton is a marine scientist with a multidisciplinary background in marine ecology, environmental policy, and offshore development. Lyndie's offshore wind efforts have allowed her to work closely with state and federal regulatory agencies, researchers, offshore wind developers and fishing industry representatives to identify the best science-based approaches that improve our understanding of the effects of wind energy development on ocean ecosystems and support research and technology innovation. She holds a doctorate in Marine and Atmospheric Sciences from Stony Brook University.

### [Dr. Jie Li, Associate Professor, Rowan University](#)

Dr. Jie Li is an Associate Professor in the Electrical and Computer Engineering department at Rowan University. She received her PhD degree in Electrical Engineering from Illinois Institute of Technology. Dr. Li has over twenty years of experience in power and energy system planning, operation, control, security, reliability, and resiliency, and published extensively in these areas. She has extensive industry experience including those with GE's energy management and IBM's Global research lab. Since she joined academia from industry, first with Clarkson University, and now with Rowan University, she has successfully led and completed many projects sponsored by utility companies, independent system operators (ISOs), and federal and state governments including the Department of Energy (DoE) and the National Science Foundation (NSF). She is now working on a project sponsored by NJEDA to investigate the optimal system integration and wholesale market participation strategies for offshore wind farms.

### [Dr. Pankaj Lal, Director & Professor, Montclair State University](#)

Dr. Pankaj Lal is Founding Director of Clean Energy and Sustainability Analytics Center and Professor of Energy, Economics, and Sustainability at Montclair State University. He leads energy and sustainability research, education, and workforce development initiatives, including offshore wind initiatives, at the university. He undertakes integrative, interdisciplinary research that explores interconnections among society and the environment. His ongoing research involve energy, water, natural resources, and economies that collectively impact communities. He received his PhD in natural resource economics and conservation from the University of Florida. Prior to his terminal degree, he worked with Winrock International India as a program officer and Pricewaterhouse Coopers in the government reforms and infrastructure development practice. Pankaj was awarded Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers by President Obama and National Science Foundation's CAREER award. He also acted as a reviewer for the Fourth National Climate Assessment under the U.S. Global Change Research Program. He has longstanding research support and engagement in practice with multilateral institutions such as Inter-American Development Bank and World Bank, and international NGOs like World Wildlife Fund

and Wildlife Conservation Society, and received more than \$21 million in grants and contracts for his research, including funding from the National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Conservation Society, NJ Board of Public Utilities, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Rockefeller Foundation, PSEG Foundation, Orsted, German Development Agency GIZ, amongst many others. Pankaj has published more than 100 scholarly articles in peer-reviewed journals, technical reports and book chapters and made more than 170 professional presentations relating to energy and sustainability issues.

#### [Dr. Philip Pong, Associate Professor, New Jersey Institute of Technology](#)

Philip Pong received his PhD in engineering at the University of Cambridge. He was a postdoctoral researcher at the Magnetic Materials Group at the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Currently he is an Associate Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT). His research interest focuses on the fault detection, predictive maintenance, and anomaly detection of power grid. He is the Founding Director of the Green Technology Research and Training Laboratory and the Sensor Research Laboratory, leading the research and education activities of offshore wind energy at NJIT. Philip Pong is a Fellow of the Institution of Engineering and Technology, a Fellow of the Institute of Physics, a Fellow of the Energy Institute, a Fellow of the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, and a Fellow of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers. He serves on the editorial boards for multiple IEEE and SCI journals.

#### [Dr. Peggy Brennan, Executive Director, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey](#)

Peggy is administrator in charge of the Food Innovation Center, Executive Director, Economic Development and Innovation at Rutgers University, and Associate Director of New Jersey Agricultural Education Station. As a founder of the center, she developed the concept, initial programming, and strategic direction for the Food Innovation Center based on her work in examining the status and condition of the New Jersey Food Industry in the late 1990's. Peggy established the center's first office in Bridgeton and played a significant role in securing funding for construction and operations of the center facility. She continues to provide oversight and guidance for this internationally recognized business incubation program. Peggy is also a founder of FoodBIN, a global association for advancing best practices in food business incubation, and identifying programs, services, funding sources, and partnerships that can maximize impacts to food and agribusinesses within regional economies. She received a B.S. in Economics, M.S. in Agricultural Economics, and a PhD in Public Policy all from Rutgers.

#### [Dr. René Reilly, Research Scientist, NJ Department of Environmental Protection](#)

Dr. René Reilly is a research scientist at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. She is part of the team that is developing and implementing the Offshore Wind Research and Monitoring Initiative (RMI) along with partners at the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities. Dr. Reilly completed her Bachelor of Science in Environmental Resource Management at the Pennsylvania State University, and Master's and Doctoral degrees in Oceanography at Old Dominion University. She is interested in the interactions between offshore wind development and our marine and coastal resources.

#### [Dr. Kira Lawrence, Senior Scientist, NJ Board of Public Utilities](#)

Dr. Kira Lawrence is a senior scientist with the Clean Energy Division at the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU), serving as the environmental lead for the BPU's Offshore Wind Program. Her duties include serving as BPU's point person on the Offshore Wind Research and Monitoring Initiative (RMI) as well as a member of the RMI Steering Committee. Dr. Lawrence is an earth and environmental scientist

with expertise in climate and ocean sciences. She holds an undergraduate degree from Dartmouth College, master's degrees from the University of California Santa Cruz and Brown University and a PhD from Brown University. Prior to her work with the BPU, Dr. Lawrence spent more than a decade in academia as a Professor at Lafayette College serving as both co-chair of the Environmental Programs and as chair of the Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences.

### [Kori Groenveld, Senior Program Manager, National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium](#)

Kori is a Senior Program Manager at National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium (Consortium) and based in New York, NY. She previously worked at the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center on their technology development programs. In addition to helping accelerate the development of early-stage renewable energy technologies, Kori gained experience in technical communication and energy industry regulations. Kori currently leads the Consortium's work in managing competitive solicitations, marketing, the Offshore Wind Innovation Hub, and Joint Industry Project (JIP) formation.

### [Terence Kelly, Head of External Affairs, Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind](#)

Terence is Head of External Affairs at Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind, a 50:50 joint venture partnership between Shell New Energies US LLC and EDF-RE Offshore Development, LLC. Terence joined Atlantic Shores in 2022 after serving as Corporate Affairs Manager for Government, Regional and Community Affairs at Con Edison where he led stakeholder engagement for clean energy infrastructure investments across the service territory, including the \$1b Brooklyn Clean Energy Hub offshore wind interconnection and the \$800m Reliable Clean City Projects transmission upgrade program. Prior to Con Edison, Terence worked in real estate development and helped open Barclays Center in Brooklyn, serving as owner's rep for the arena and community affairs lead for BSE Global, parent company of the Brooklyn Nets and all affiliate teams/venues. Terence received his BA in Politics from NYU and is an MPA candidate at the CUNY Baruch College Marxe School of Public & International Affairs. He serves on the board of IMPACCT Brooklyn, the Brooklyn Book Festival, and the St. Nicks Alliance Workforce Development Advisory Committee.

### [Davon McCurry, Deputy Head of Market & Government Affairs, Ørsted](#)

Davon is the Deputy Head of Market & Government Affairs, New Jersey for Ørsted. Davon is responsible for understanding the multi-dimensional landscape of people and policies that shape the offshore wind industry, as well as each project. Prior to joining Ørsted, McCurry was Director of Legislative Affairs at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), where he served on the commissioner's senior leadership team managing the department's intergovernmental relations with the state legislature and the congressional delegation. Before working at NJDEP, McCurry served as an aide in the Office of Appointments and the Office of Constituent Relations within the Murphy Administration. McCurry is a graduate of Rutgers University.

### [Mahako Etta, Program Manager, New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation, and Technology](#)

Mahako Etta is a Program Manager within the New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation, and Technology (CSIT). In this role, Mahako supports the planning and implementation of CSIT's research and development grant products that help early-stage NJ-based companies grow their technology from ideation to commercialization. Mahako has 15 years of work experience in higher education research,

administration, and workforce development. She previously served as the Project Lead for the City of Newark's S.T.E.A.M. Coalition, a public-private network comprised of government, higher education, high schools, and foundations focused on building science, technology, engineering, and mathematics pathways from high school to career for Newark students. Prior to that, Mahako worked as a Senior Research Associate at the Joseph C. Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies at Rutgers University – Newark. Mahako earned both her Master's degree in Public Affairs and Administration and her Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism with a Political Science minor from Rutgers University.

#### [Susan Schofer, Chief Science Officer, HAX](#)

Susan Schofer is a Partner at SOSV global venture capital firm and serves as Chief Science Officer at HAX, the world's premier venture program accelerating early-stage hard tech startups. She works with new startups via early-stage investment, defining key milestones and go-to-market strategies, and is responsible for scientific oversight and building capabilities to support portfolio companies. Susan was an NSF Postdoctoral Fellow at Stockholm and Uppsala Universities, where she worked to develop catalyst systems for artificial photosynthesis. Prior to joining HAX, Susan served as SVP Business Development for Modern Meadow and a member of the executive leadership team for over 7 years, developing new sustainable materials inspired by leather without any animals, where she led product, partnership, and go-to-market strategy and execution from early ideation through to commercialization. Before that, Susan spent 10 years in Silicon Valley working in roles spanning R&D, product development, product management, and business development for Amyris, a pioneer in synthetic biology, and Symyx Technologies, utilizing proprietary high-throughput robotic workflows to accelerate polymer and material discovery and development. She holds a PhD in chemistry from Caltech and an Sc.B. in chemistry from Brown.

#### [Sahil Jain, Director, Newlab](#)

Sahil Jain is a chemical engineer who has spent a significant portion of his career over the last 10 years at the intersection of corporate innovation and technology development within the energy sector. He started his career at LanzaTech and Shell, across different market sectors including LNG (for heavy duty transportation applications), Gas-to-Liquids, and Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF). After working across these new markets and technology spaces at Shell, he helped build the corporate innovation practice at a major FMCG company, called Reckitt, to co-develop novel consumer products in the public health category (for brands like Lysol and Mucinex, to name a few) with early-stage technology companies. Most recently, Sahil joined Newlab, a system for applied innovation that combines community building, programmatic innovation, and direct investment to accelerate the development of critical technologies required to decarbonize the global economy and improve societal outcomes. At Newlab, Sahil leads efforts to discover, collaborate with, and de-risk startup technologies across various growth stages in sectors such as offshore wind, hydrogen, metals and minerals mining, maritime & shipping, and aviation.

#### [Alissa Peterson, Executive Director, SeaAhead](#)

Alissa co-founded and leads SeaAhead, a venture studio platform for startups with technologies that enhance ocean health or sustainable ocean industries. From offshore renewable energy to sustainable seafood and a decarbonized maritime industry, cutting-edge ventures in the blue economy come to SeaAhead for investment, resources, and community. Prior to SeaAhead, Alissa was in leadership roles at two venture-backed startups, NanoSteel, an advanced materials company creating solutions for

vehicle lightweighting and 3D printing, and Primus Power, a grid-scale energy storage company. Through her work, she has managed business development, strategic planning, product marketing, communications, government relations and M&A. Prior to her startup experience, Alissa was a consultant in McKinsey's Global Sustainability & Resource Productivity Practice where she served clients on cleantech growth strategy. Alissa holds a Master's in Mechanical Engineering from MIT and a BS in Civil Engineering from Duke University.