

# NOTABLE

## LEADERS IN SUSTAINABILITY

With concern mounting about climbing global temperatures, companies are devoting considerable resources to the “E”—environmental—of ESG. These executives across the Chicago area lead their organizations’ efforts to keep climate change in check, including planning and implementing actions as well as recording and reporting data to stakeholders of all kinds. Among their strategies: diverting tons of material from landfills; establishing neighborhood-level power grids that integrate renewable energy; assessing the climate risk of real estate portfolios; creating green investment funds; working toward decarbonization through the construction of all-electric multifamily housing or reducing the embodied carbon in concrete; and countering the environmental impact of factory farming. Their work—fingers crossed—will help make Earth a livable place for generations to come. *By Lisa Bertagnoli*

**METHODOLOGY:** The individuals featured did not pay to be included. Their profiles were written from the nomination materials submitted. This list is not comprehensive. It includes only individuals for whom nominations were submitted and accepted after a review by editors. To qualify for the list, a nominee must be an executive serving in a senior leadership role or leading sustainability initiatives at a large organization. Business founders and owners and independent consultants are also eligible. Their work must have made or be making a measurable environmental impact. Nominees must make significant contributions within their industry and community and assume leadership roles outside their organizations.

### MIKE ABT

Co-president (along with his three brothers)  
Abt Electronics

Mike Abt oversees all financial decisions and sustainability efforts at Abt Electronics. In 2020, he facilitated the expansion of its



recycling center, which is open for public use and enables his company to recycle over 95% of its own waste. In 2021, he initiated the installation

of solar panels on its warehouse and led green initiatives that saved 2.2 million pounds of cardboard and paper from going to local dumps, and more than 350,000 pounds of plastic foam, 13 million pounds of appliances and 1.4 million pounds of electronics from going to landfills. Abt fuels delivery trucks and equipment with biodiesel and collects rainwater for irrigation.

### CORRYN ANTONIZIO

Sustainability and CSR champion  
RTC Industries

Corryn Antonizio works cross-functionally with the retail fixture and display manufacturer’s global locations to implement sustainability measures throughout



the organization as well as working with the supply chain to employ people from disadvantaged populations, utilize diverse-owned business suppliers,

promote social inclusion and source from fair-trade suppliers. She assisted in RTC’s first EcoVadis sustainability assessment, preparing the documentation that earned RTC a bronze medal, and then completed a reassessment the following year, earning a place in the top 25th percentile among peers. Antonizio created a cross-functional Green Team that reviews energy and water consumption and recycling processes.

### JESSICA BAILEY

Co-founder, president and CEO  
Nuveen Green Capital

Jessica Bailey is one of the leaders of Nuveen Green Capital, formerly known as Greenworks Lending, which offers a suite of accretive commercial real estate financing



products for borrowers who invest in energy and water efficiency. She led the design and management of the Commercial Property Assessed Clean

Energy program and is focused on its expansion as an asset class. Her firm provides 100% upfront financing for clean energy upgrades to commercial real estate using Commercial PACE financing. An industry pioneer, she was named a Champion of Change by the White House for solar deployment in 2014. She sits on the boards of PACENow and the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters.

### ERIK BIRKERTS

CEO  
Evergreen Climate Innovations

Erik Birkerts leads Evergreen Climate Innovations (formerly Clean Energy Trust) in its mission of providing catalytic investment and support to high-potential



startups working on solutions for clean energy, decarbonization and environmental sustainability. After a decade of organizational growth and evolution,

Birkerts led the organization’s strategic rebranding, which reflects a commitment to a revolving, “evergreen” investment fund that creates compounding impact from philanthropic contributions. Recently he’s secured significant philanthropic commitments, leading to a three-times year-over-year revenue growth coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### MICHELLE BLAISE

Senior vice president  
ComEd

Michelle Blaise is responsible for engineering, project management and “Smart Grid and Technology” at ComEd, ensuring grid reliability and system performance today



while overseeing the planning for a greener grid in the future. She also has executive responsibility for constructing Bronzeville’s Community

Microgrid, the country’s first utility-operated microgrid cluster. It can connect to the main grid or operate independently, integrating renewable energy—solar and wind—and battery storage to provide higher levels of resilience and sustainability. She also leads ComEd’s implementation of Illinois’ Clean Energy & Jobs Act and is helping lead the EV Readiness Program, ensuring grid performance as the EV-charging infrastructure expands.

### JASON BLUMBERG

Co-founder and managing director  
Energy Foundry

Jason Blumberg leads Energy Foundry, a leading early-stage sustainability-focused venture-capital fund that has championed



companies like NanoGraf, Volexion, Intellihot and Azumo. By 2030, Energy Foundry’s portfolio is estimated to abate up to 2.6 gigatons of carbon dioxide

equivalent and recycle millions of pounds of waste annually. Blumberg also runs ISEIF, which supports an inclusive energy transition through equitable energy-engagement programs such as E(ART)H Chicago, co-chaired by the governor, the mayor and the county board president, which focuses on senior and low-income populations as well as on STEM. He’s also developed a class at the University of Chicago designed to teach future leaders who can scale the next generation of sustainable technologies.

### PATRICK BOYLE

Director, corporate sustainability  
Sloan Valve

Patrick Boyle develops and executes Sloan’s sustainability strategy, identifying environmental impact-reduction strategies,



managing product life-cycle assessments as well as environmental and health product declarations, and advocating for clean-tech design. In August

2021, he led the Alliance for Water Stewardship certification effort at Sloan’s Franklin Park manufacturing operation, engaging critical stakeholders to incorporate the impacts of the entire water basin—making Sloan the first heavy manufacturer in the world to certify to this standard. Boyle also leads the efforts to implement Sloan’s corporate greenhouse gas emissions reduction program across the global enterprise, implementing a data-tracking system.

### JILL BROSIG

Managing director and chief impact officer  
Harrison Street

Jill Brosig oversees the measurement, management, reporting and enhancement of Harrison Street’s



environmental, social and governance initiatives. A physicist with several patents, having previously worked at Motorola, Argonne National Labora-

tory and KMS Fusion, she applies her scientific background to the real estate industry, collecting data, measuring ESG value and identifying ways to improve the impact of Harrison Street’s assets on the environment. She oversees company-wide implementation of a three-pillar initiative to reduce portfolio-wide carbon emissions by 70% by 2025, assess and address properties’ climate risk and resiliency, and ensure that indoor environments promote resident health. Brosig is a board member at digital-health firm Winterlight Labs.

### KEVIN BURNS

Mayor; caucus environment committee and energy subcommittee chairman  
City of Geneva; Metropolitan Mayors Caucus

Kevin Burns serves as executive



board secretary for the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, an organization of 275 municipal members from the seven-county Chicago area. He leads the Environ-

ment, Energy and EV Readiness Advisory committees, sharing best practices such as sustainable salting and community solar. Burns led in creating the Climate Action Plan for the Chicago Region, one of the nation’s first regional plans, and helped launch the caucus’s EV Readiness Program to prepare municipalities for transportation electrification. He’s fought for NREL-identified building energy codes, arguing they are the most impactful way to meet Paris Accord greenhouse gas-reduction targets.

### MICHELLE CARR

Illinois state director  
The Nature Conservancy

Michelle Carr leads TNC’s strategic efforts in Illinois and throughout the Midwest region. In 2021, the Illinois chapter released a



first-of-its-kind statewide climate assessment that brought together the expertise of more than 40 scientists to explain how climate change is

expected to affect Illinois. She led a new partnership with Rivian, testing emission-free vehicles and charging infrastructure for stewardship use on TNC preserves across the country. Recently, she moderated a webinar with Illinois’ first-ever “Women in Fire” crew members, whose work makes the field of prescribed fire more inclusive and diverse. Carr serves on the boards of the Cook County Land Bank and the Institute for Sustainability & Energy at Northwestern University.

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**HEIDI MOORMAN COUDAL**

Owner and culinary director  
Big Delicious Planet

Heidi Moorman Coudal oversees the daily operation and vision of Big Delicious Planet, a Chicago catering company with its own urban farm. In 2013, BDP became the nation's first caterer to earn 4-Star Certified Green Restaurant status and being recognized as "The Greenest Caterer in America." The company operates inside a geothermal building; maintains an on-site urban farm; composts all food scraps; donates all used cooking oil to a biodiesel service that fuels Loyola University Chicago's shuttle buses and makes the hand soap used on campus; and annually harvests hundreds of pounds of honey from three beehives. Coudal also educates students from all grade levels about sustainable business practices and urban farming.



**LAUREN DENSHAM**

Head of ESG and impact  
Energize Ventures

Lauren Densham is responsible for leading environmental, social and governance initiatives at the global, alternative-investment manager, which focuses on clean energy and sustainability transition through software innovation. She has aligned Energize with key groups supporting the development of ESG approaches for venture capital, including VentureESG and the UN PRI VC collaboration, and works with other portfolio companies—including TWAICE, Sourcemap and NCX—that are spearheading innovation across sectors. Before joining Energize Ventures, Densham spent 13 years at KPMG, serving in multiple roles across the firm's offices in London, Barcelona, Spain and Chicago. In 2021, she was nominated for the Chicago Council for Global Affairs' Emerging Leaders Program.



**CHRIS DILLION**

President  
Campbell Coyle

As president of real estate developer Campbell Coyle, Chris Dillion's projects, including "missing middle" housing typologies, adaptive reuse and campus/district-scale public-private partnerships, are considered design forward, transit connected and deep green. With past work that includes the development of 2.75 million square feet of retail, residential and mixed-use real estate, Dillion was an early adopter of the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED rating system and has prioritized work with the American Institute of Architects' 2030 Commitment signatory firms since 2018. He is advancing a series of all-electric multifamily projects, a key decarbonization strategy. His work also includes a recently completed project on track to achieve net zero energy and operational carbon leveraging solar and geothermal.



**LIAM DONNELLY**

Founder and CEO  
WasteNot Compost

While working at a cafe on Chicago's North Side 10 years ago, Liam Donnelly began WasteNot Compost, creating the city's leading compost collection provider, becoming the largest electric fleet owner in Illinois and earning a ranking as the No. 1 compost collection service in the United States for the past two years. The Clark Street Composts pilot program, launched in mid-September 2021 and serviced by WasteNot, enables more than 20 businesses to divert food scraps, hair, paper products and other compostable waste from landfills. An alum of Loyola University Chicago's School of Environmental Sustainability, Donnelly is a Composting Council member and is active in Chicago's 47th Ward and Cook County events.



**ANA GARCIA DOYLE**

Co-founder and executive director  
One Earth Collective

Ana Garcia Doyle oversees One Earth Collective's three program areas: the national One Earth Film Festival (considered the Midwest's premier environmental film festival); Chicago-based youth programs that provide mentorship in arts and sustainability; and local sustainability programs in specific communities such as Austin and Oak Park. Over the years, the One Earth Film Festival has equipped more than 40,000 attendees to take action through post-film discussions with "action partners"—scientific and community organizations across the United States. Doyle mentors teens from Urban Alliance and the One Earth Youth Advisory Council, co-leads Austin Grown (a collaboration between One Earth and BUILD Chicago), and is active in Austin Eats, a community-based, 22-member-organization food justice group.



**GREEN TALENT IN THE WORKFORCE IS RISING**

Source: LinkedIn

The share of green talent increased from 9.6% in 2015 to 13.3% in 2021, a growth rate of 38.5%.



In the last five years, the number of renewable and environment jobs in the U.S. has increased by 237%.



Job postings requiring green skills grew 8% annually over the past five years. Green talent has grown at roughly 6% annually in the same period.



**CHRISTOPHER DREW**

Director of sustainability  
Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture

Christopher Drew sets the sustainable design goals for AS+GG projects, working with the urban planning and architecture teams to develop targets and performance-monitoring approaches. He leads multi-organizational research projects to reduce the embodied carbon of concrete, a subject area he has lectured on globally. The challenge is to develop very low GWP, zero GWP and even carbon-negative (planet positive) concrete mixes.



AS+GG ARCHITECTURE

He has championed the firm's environmental, social and governance approach by developing a comprehensive SDG-focused AS+GG 2025 plan; AS+GG is the only U.S. architecture firm that reports on performance to the United Nations Global Compact. Prior to joining AS+GG, Drew was department manager for sustainability at Masdar, a development near Abu Dhabi.

**JOHN EDELMAN**

Managing director, global engagement and corporate responsibility  
Edelman

John Edelman has led Edelman's Global Citizenship function since its inception in 2010, overseeing pro bono and volunteerism, supplier diversity, partnership engagement and corporate social responsibility reporting. He advanced Edelman's sustainability practices by committing to the Science Based Targets Network Business Ambition for 1.5° C and submitting the company's near-term target for validation. Edelman is



the first communications firm to join the CDP Supply Chain program, sources renewable energy credits for all electricity use, has achieved Carbon Trust Standard certification, and completed its seventh CDP disclosure in 2021 and received a B rating in 2020 and 2022. Edelman also verified and assured all of its Scope 1 and 2 and select Scope 3 emissions for the entire company for the first time.

**DAVID EDSEY**

Vice president, climate director  
Zurich North America

David Edsey is responsible for finding opportunities in insurance products and services that help clients be more resilient to increased climate-change risk. Recently, Edsey designed the Zurich Construction Weather Parametric Policy, an alternative risk-transfer solution that pays for an agreed daily value of business-income loss when certain weather indexes are surpassed. He is part of the Zurich team building out capacity to underwrite carbon capture and sequestration operations; initiated the Zurich employee Climate Interest Group; testified at the U.S. House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis; and developed the business case to create Carbon Advisory Services that help clients address their greenhouse gas emissions.



**ANTHONY ELISEUSON**

Litigation program director  
Animal Legal Defense Fund

Anthony Eliseuson leads nearly two dozen attorneys and professional staff in ALDF's Litigation Program, filing strategic, high-impact lawsuits that enforce and expand protections for animals under the law, which also includes significant environmental work aimed at factory-farming operations. This includes leading a coalition to strike down unconstitutional "ag-gag" laws in Kansas, Iowa and North Carolina, which was named one of Law360's Biggest Environmental Law Decisions of 2021. Eliseuson's team also defeated a motion to dismiss a lawsuit challenging Foster Farms' excessive use of water (60% of a nearby city's volume) in its chicken slaughter operations in California and challenged the animal agriculture industry's attempts to monetize manure methane (aka "biogas") and other pollutants.



**KEARA FANNING**

Senior director, ESG  
Link Logistics Real Estate

At Link, which has achieved the most Energy Star certifications of any owner of industrial real estate, Keara Fanning oversees key environmental, social and governance programs, including greenhouse gas inventory management and reduction programs, investor and annual reporting, and sustainable development programs. She helped champion Link's ambitious environmental sustainability goals, including carbon-neutral operations by 2025, by delivering efficiency programs throughout the portfolio of more than 3,000 assets. Fanning, who has degrees in integrative biology and bioenergy from the University of Illinois, completed the firm's inaugural ESG report aligned to GRI, SASB and TCFD standards and launched the firm's social-impact program. She's a board member of the Illinois Green Alliance.



Congratulations, Jennifer McIntyre!  
Senior Vice President,  
Chief People & Culture Officer

# At Univar Solutions, people make the difference.

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**DOUGLAS FARR**

Firm principal  
Farr Associates

Douglas Farr's firm, named by The New York Times as the "greenest architecture practice in Chicago," has designed many of the next generation of Chicago-sustainability milestone buildings, all in communities of color: Broadway Lofts, the region's first all-electric, net-zero multi-family project; Galleria 89, the first all-electric PHIUS-certified building in the Invest South/West program; and the Academy for Global Citizenship, Chicago's first Living Building Challenge project. Farr, who holds FAIA, LEED AP and CNU-A credentials, also started Carbon-Free Chicago, a 30-year campaign for the equitable transition to a carbon-free economy. He also co-curated the "Energy Revolution" exhibit and incorporated as a B-Corp, legally committing the firm to pursue quality of life, diversity and sustainability goals and to publicly report progress annually.



**LARRY FERNANDES**

Senior vice president, chief commercial and sustainability officer  
Ingredion

Larry Fernandes is responsible for the functions of corporate sustainability, global key accounts, global marketing, sales excellence and customer experience. He has repositioned Ingredion's corporate sustainability program as part of the commercial strategy and, in 2020, helped launch its All Life sustainability plan. Recent accomplishments include Joining the Ceres-WWF AgWater Challenge to help reduce water use with Ingredion farmer suppliers; submitting the application to the Science-Based Target initiative to validate carbon-reduction targets; and establishing an environmental, social and governance executive advisory committee to provide comprehensive, timely guidance regarding sustainability strategies. Fernandes, who holds a degree in chemical engineering from McGill University, is a member of the Carol Sanford Institute working with MISTA member companies.



**STEPHEN FILYO**

President  
BlueEarth Deconstruction

Stephen Filyo is in charge of the operational management of BlueEarth Deconstruction as well as its core mission of diverting the maximum amount of reusable building materials from the waste stream. (The demolition industry creates approximately one-third of all landfill waste.) Filyo has doubled the scale of BlueEarth Deconstruction activities to 100 projects per year, diverting more than 2,500 trees' worth of reclaimed lumber and 100 tons of building materials from landfills, thereby reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Filyo is a member of the Employer Advisory Committee at Revolution Workshop—deconstruction creates seven times as many jobs as traditional demolition—and his company partners with Habitat for Humanity's ReStore, Reuse Depot and Rebuilding Exchange.



**CLAUDIA FREED**

President and CEO  
EALgreen

Claudia Freed is responsible for strategic planning and implementation, driving EALgreen's growth of nearly 400% during her tenure. Using the principles of the circular economy, EALgreen reduces waste by transforming excess and obsolete business inventory, materials and supplies into scholarships, giving businesses an alternative to the landfill. EALgreen's revenue is 100% derived from this sustainable business model. In the last 18 months, EALgreen awarded a record 1,132 scholarships to students with financial need; implemented a transportation solution designed to minimize carbon emissions and converted the forklift fleet to electric units; and as a member of the field of reverse logistics, earned that industry's highest honor for its leadership in sustainability practices.



**MARGARET FRISBIE**

Executive director  
Friends of the Chicago River

Margaret Frisbie is lead strategist on policy and planning, spokesperson, liaison with Friends' board of directors and manager of Friends' finances. Frisbie, appointed in 2005, has recently launched multiple initiatives to better incorporate community engagement and environmental justice into sustainability practices. These efforts include a podcast that highlights river-edge public lands and a yearlong community-based conversation about Chicago's sewage and the river that was documented in a report giving voice to public needs. Frisbie has also helped the Chicago-Calumet River Watershed Council, a collaborative of 19 public, private and nonprofit members, begin the Natural Solutions Tool development, adapted from The Trust for Public Lands' Climate Smart Cities to prioritize natural community improvements.



**WHAT EXECUTIVES BELIEVE ABOUT CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY . . .**

Source: Harvard Business School

**NEARLY 90%** believe a strong sense of collective purpose within their organization drives employee satisfaction.

**46%** say their organization currently operates with a strong sense of purpose.

**58%** of organizations with a strong sense of purpose experienced 10% more growth in the last three years.

**NEARLY 99%** of CSR professionals indicate COVID-19 has had an impact on their CSR efforts and initiatives.

**BRETT GARDNER**

Project director  
IA Interior Architects

In the last 18 months Brett Gardner has helped launch and co-chair Ecos Studio, a strategic partnership between IA and Brightworks Sustainability that focuses on people-centric design, uniting end-user needs, technological innovation and the built environment for a more sustainable planet. After completing degrees in environmental health and design, he became a LEED AP in 2004 and was an early integrator for sustainable design practices on more than 50 LEED-certified projects, representing 18 million square feet. Gardner also became a certified sustainability practitioner in 2013 to expand his focus into the area of corporate social responsibility. He also serves on IA's sustainable/well committee.



**DELMAR GILLUS JR.**

Chief operating officer  
Elevate

Delmar Gillus is responsible for implementing operational, workforce development and project management processes to support Elevate's portfolio of energy efficiency, clean energy, environmental health and water projects. He represents Elevate as part of the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition, served as a lead negotiator for environmental and community organizations to help pass the Climate & Equitable Jobs Act, and oversaw the implementation of four new clean-energy contractor development programs in Peoria, Portland, Kansas City and Dane County, Wis. Gillus is board treasurer for the Illinois Environmental Council and is active with the Illinois Future of Work Task Force, the Building Performance Association and the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition.



**CHRIS HARBOURT**

Chief strategy officer  
Indigo Ag

Chris Harbourt is CSO at Indigo Ag, a global ag-tech startup, where he guides the company's research, external affairs and strategic partnerships to advance farmer-first sustainability programs that act on agriculture's potential as a climate solution. He developed the industry's largest verified and scalable carbon farming program, helping farmers translate the impact of climate-smart practices such as cover cropping into a new revenue stream: carbon credits. Harbourt also founded ag-tech company Agrible, which utilizes predictive analytics to ensure farmers make the best decisions for their farms by implementing sustainable practices. He is an adjunct assistant professor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, a position held since 2009.



**ROBERT HAYWARD**

Partner  
Kirkland & Ellis

Bob Hayward is a leader in the field of environmental, social and governance investing, representing issuers in public and private offerings of debt and equity securities, including sustainability bonds for several major companies. He advised John Deere Capital on its first sustainability-linked bond offering of \$600 million in seven-year senior notes; Kellogg on its 300 million euro (\$321 million) eight-year inaugural "Sustainability Bond," a framework that facilitates the company's use of capital markets to finance or refinance projects within renewable energy and energy efficiency, and builds on Kellogg's commitment to help create "Better Days" for 3 billion people by 2030; and Whirlpool on the completion of its \$300 million 10-year inaugural "Sustainability Bond."



**SUSAN HEINKING**

Vice president of high performance and sustainable construction  
Pepper Construction

Susan Heinking oversees environmental, social and governance and sustainability initiatives, assists clients with their corporate-environmental compliance during construction, and puts existing buildings on a path to high performance and, ultimately, being net zero. Her solution to add concrete to drawdown strategies and create a partnership to incorporate Carbon-Cure on projects when appropriate enabled Pepper to keep 167,953 tons of carbon dioxide from being emitted into the atmosphere and save 21,632,040 gallons of water



and 17,555,230 kilo-British thermal units of natural gas and electricity. She also conceived of and led the Net Zero Jobsite Trailer through design and construction. Heinking has served as a leader in the American Institute of Architects Chicago's 2030 Working Group and participated on the Illinois Green Alliance board since 2013.

EDELMAN CONGRATULATES

# JOHN EDELMAN

MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT, CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

and all of the **Crain's 2022 Notable Leaders in Sustainability** for their continued commitment to advancing corporate social responsibility efforts within their local communities.



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**CASEY HERMAN**

U.S. ESG leader  
PricewaterhouseCoopers

Casey Herman leads a firmwide, cross-functional team that assists hundreds of companies in environmental, social and governance matters, such as accurately reporting data to designing sustainable business strategies. He is responsible for the go-to-market strategy for the entire ESG practice, covering



both audit/assurance and consulting specialists. He also works closely with PwC's team leading its own efforts to meet its science-based goal of net zero emissions before 2030. He also worked closely with the Edison Electric Institute as it developed a best-in-class ESG reporting template that's been widely adopted by various industries. Herman currently serves as board president of Lakeview Pantry (now known as Nourishing Hope), one of Chicago's largest and longest-operating food pantries, and is a trustee of the Berkshire School in Sheffield, Mass.

**KORIE HICKEL**

Director, ESG, community & government relations  
Coeur Mining

Korie Hickel leads Coeur Mining's environmental, social and governance strategy and implementation, including corporate



ESG disclosures, cross-site alignment and stakeholder communications. She steers Coeur's Climate Working Group, which established the company's climate analysis and long-term strategy to mitigate risks and opportunities. A recent public goal is to increase the company's greenhouse gas emissions target to a 35% reduction in net intensity by the end of 2024. She sits on the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board's sector advisory group, and in 2021 was appointed to the Global Reporting Initiative's Mining Sector Standard Working Group. Hickel is a member of the International Society of Sustainability Professionals and has recently started an ESG peer networking group.

**IAN HUGHES**

Sustainability manager  
Rush University Medical Center

Ian Hughes is responsible for Rush's two-year-old sustainability program, leading a team that is measuring, managing and minimizing the 10,000-employee



medical center's environmental footprint. He's helped to establish an effective green team, a vice president-level steering committee and a utilities subcommittee that identifies energy-efficiency projects across the campus. He helped bring Rush into the Healthcare Anchor Network's impact-purchasing commitment, in which he is leading the sustainability core metrics. He is also helping to leverage Rush's spending power to reduce chemicals in furniture and medical products, increase renewable energy procurement to 25% and grow sustainable food purchases. Hughes is also an adjunct instructor in health systems management at Rush University.

**PAUL HUNTER**

Responsible business lead  
Kin + Carta

Paul Hunter was responsible for collaborating on the creation of Kin + Carta's global sustainability strategy, is accountable for its implementation in the Americas region, and helped make the firm the first certified B Corporation on the London Stock Exchange. He helped create the measurement process that



saved Kin + Carta's clients one million tons of carbon dioxide and formalized how the company brings sustainability to market through all service line offerings. In one year, the firm's goal of revenue from positive impact work has increased by 1,200%. Hunter also is involved in the Prosocial Design Network and All Tech Is Human, communities he collaborates within on socially responsible tech.

**BRIAN IMUS**

Executive director  
Illinois Green Alliance

At Illinois Green Alliance, which works with building industry stakeholders to advance the latest trends and technologies, Brian Imus manages operations, expand partnerships with private- and public-sector leaders, and develops overall strategy. Among recent activities, he helped launch



the inaugural Net Zero Honor Roll, highlighting all projects in Illinois that are certified or working towards zero; is a steering committee member of the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition; secured 15 Neighborhood Power Project building pilots throughout Chicago neighborhoods; and oversaw the expansion of the Illinois Green Schools Project to 30 schools and more than 50 professional mentors. Imus is a member of the city of Chicago's Building Decarbonization task force, developing policy recommendations.

Sponsored content

**NOTABLE Q&A** David Mendelson

## Transforming Byproducts Makes the World a Greener Place



*Byproducts are big business at Donco Recycling Solutions. The Chicago-based group of four recycling companies—Donco Paper Supply Company, Ohio Pulp Mills, Inc., Poly Recyclers, Inc. and Ramblin Corp—creates unique markets for manufacturing byproducts to generate revenue and reduce costs for its clients. That process creates its own byproduct: a greener world. David Mendelson is president at Donco, a fourth-generation family-owned business that traces its roots back to the early 1900s. He's been with the company for 34 years and leads a unique team of dedicated professionals in the world of recycling. In addition to creating new markets for waste products previously sent to landfills, the firm designs, installs and finances recycling systems for small regional firms, as well as the "alphabet soup" of international business.*

**CRAIN'S: What is unique about Donco?**

**David Mendelson:** My great-grandfather came to this country penniless and, without a word of English, started in the scrap industry. Along with his sons, he ended up building the first paper mill in the United States that manufactured new newsprint out of old newspapers—100% recycled newsprint made for the famous Chicago Daily News...right here in downtown Chicago. The company was built on the idea of recycling as an economic proposition. They created a better and cheaper "mousetrap", paper from paper, rather than from trees. These are economics that are still the driving force of our business.

**CRAIN'S: Who are your clients?**

**Mendelson:** Virtually all manufacturing/distributing companies that generate byproducts. A manufacturer could make something as ubiquitous as a corrugated box or a very specialized

product, such as artificial skin for burn victims—a material that generates a byproduct all its own! We are active in all 50 states and about a third of our business is overseas.

**CRAIN'S: What's an example?**

**Mendelson:** Scrap from paper plate manufacturers are used as a percentage of the raw material for the paper wrap at fast food restaurants. A toothpaste carton is composed of recycled corrugated boxes, newspapers and other types of paper. And the office chair padding manufacturing generates scrap polyurethane foam, which is used in carpet padding. We creatively turn byproducts into economic value.

**CRAIN'S: How much revenue can scrap recycling generate?**

**Mendelson:** Every company and manufacturing process is unique. We do not only create revenue, but eliminate costs too. Whether it is the sale of a newly

identified byproduct, the elimination of landfill costs or the streamlining of material handling within the process, all of our work falls to the bottom line of our clients. We are not consultants that charge for our time. We walk manufacturing/distribution center floors with a unique set of eyes. If we identify opportunities, we do business. If not, we at least know each other, and someday opportunities will knock.

**CRAIN'S: What is your proudest accomplishment?**

**Mendelson:** As proud as I am of our family business, I am much prouder of our business family. The average tenure of our team is 17 years. We have a concept called the "Donco Threshold"; when someone has been part of our team LONGER than they were alive BEFORE joining our team, we have a celebration. In one month, we had four cross the threshold in Cincinnati. And, in our 60-year history, we've only had three treasurers.

**CRAIN'S: Any advice for manufacturers?**

**Mendelson:** Look at byproducts not just as a headache, but as an opportunity too. When we tour a plant, we see opportunities. Perhaps it's a byproduct of not being recycled efficiently, or not having the right kind of equipment to process a byproduct. You never know where an opportunity might be hiding. My advice: Think differently.

**CRAIN'S: Any other comments?**

**Mendelson:** We are a company that fights to stay small. We have a unique team that really works together, thinks creatively and "builds bridges as we cross them." It is the nature of what we do.



**SARAH ELIZABETH IPPEL**

Founder & executive director Academy for Global Citizenship  
 In 2005, Sarah Elizabeth Ippel founded the AGC, a kindergarten-through-8th-grade public school rooted in environmental education that serves 96% minority students on Chicago's underserved Southwest Side. She also leads the Cultivate community hub, a six-acre development on Chicago Housing Authority land designed as a national showcase for renewable energy, climate resiliency, sustainable architecture, green jobs and environmental justice. This project broke ground in April and is expected to be completed in August 2023. She also launched a new nonprofit, Cultivate Collective, as the umbrella organization to oversee sustainability programming, green job training, regenerative agriculture and solar energy learning labs. The innovation hub is entirely free of fossil fuels and climate-resilient and will achieve net-positive energy generation and net-positive water reuse.



**THOMAS JONAS**

Co-founder and CEO Nature's Fynd  
 Thomas Jonas is responsible for running Nature's Fynd's business, which is the manufacture of consumer meat and dairy alternative foods using Fy, a nutritional fungi protein that undergoes a special fermentation process. A recent grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will enable Fynd to create a modular facility that enables communities to produce protein in a variety of environments in low- and middle-income countries such as India, Kenya and Nigeria. Fy requires 99% less land, emits 94% less greenhouse gasses and uses 99% less water than beef at scale. Jonas is a member of the American Sustainable Business Network, working toward more equitable economic models.



**STEPHANIE KATSAROS**

Founder & president Bright Beat International  
 Stephanie Katsaros leads Bright Beat, which provides strategic project management of customized sustainability programs. One major recent accomplishment involves the CompostAble Chicago Waste Characterization & Correlation Study, a project driven by Chicago Sustainability Task Force members who sought greater transparency and critical improvement in communication along the organics value chain. Her organization is also involved in a multiyear Natural Resources Defense Council initiative with the city of Chicago to reduce food waste through community-led action-oriented solutions. Katsaros is a board member of the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition and active with the Chicago Sustainability Task Force, the Wasted Food Action Alliance, the Plant Chicago Circular Economy Advisory Committee and the iHeart Media Local Advisory Board.



**HELEN KESSLER**

President/principal HJKessler Associates and Up Front Regenerative Design  
 Helen Kessler works with clients and project teams to develop sustainability strategies. She recently led the process to have several buildings certified at the LEED Platinum level, including two at Northwestern University and a charter school in North Lawndale. She currently co-leads sustainability and regenerative design efforts for the Discovery Partners Institute at the 78 and leads sustainability efforts for a major hospital addition at Advocate Aurora Health's Illinois Masonic campus. She is an adjunct professor who teaches three sustainability courses in two different programs at Northwestern University. Kessler is also a longtime member of Illinois Green Alliance (formerly the Chicago chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council) and co-chaired its education committee for many years.



**NATHAN KIPNIS**

Principal Kipnis Architecture + Planning  
 Nathan is principal at Kipnis Architecture + Planning, designing homes that are "high design/low carbon" based on the local and anticipated future climate, the local and/or low embodied carbon materials available and the region's cultural influences. He is the founder of NextHaus Alliance, a premium design/build group focused on providing sustainable and healthy homes in a collaborative format. Kipnis also currently serves on the American Institute of Architects' national Committee on Climate Action & Design Excellence, supporting the transformation of architectural practice to achieve a zero-carbon, equitable, resilient and healthy built environment. Kipnis is a Fellow of the AIA, was a founding board member of Citizens' Greener Evanston and authored Evanston's first green building code.



**Congratulations to Kim Marotta**

Beam Suntory's Vice President – Global Environmental Sustainability, for being named among Crain's Chicago Business' 2022 Notable Leaders in Sustainability.

Kim leads Beam Suntory's Nature Positive strategy as part of the company's Proof Positive sustainability strategy, which includes an ambition to achieve net-zero carbon emissions, reduce water use by 50% and reach 100% watershed replenishment.  
 Cheers!



## NOTABLE 2022 LEADERS IN SUSTAINABILITY

**CYNTHIA KLEIN-BANAI**

Assistant vice chancellor and director of sustainability  
University of Illinois Chicago

Cynthia Klein-Banai leads UIC's implementation of its climate commitments, advises campus leadership on how to monitor



performance and develops programs across its core functions of operations. Among recent achievements: She helped institute SMART

Metrics for 42 Solutions in the UIC Climate Action Implementation Plan, which will lead to the school being a carbon neutral, zero waste, net zero water and biodiverse campus; instituted a \$1 million green revolving fund for energy efficiency; developed landfill waste diversion and energy conservation policies that were approved at campus level; led campuswide efforts to achieve a 50% landfill waste diversion rate and expand food scrap collection and food recovery; and developed a Climate Justice Partnership with Urban Growers Collective.

**LUKE LEUNG**

Firmwide sustainable engineering principal & practice leader  
Skidmore Owings & Merrill

A firmwide leader in SOM's interdisciplinary Sustainable Design Studio, Luke Leung oversees high-performance engineering



design globally. He's also an educator and was one of five authors, endorsed by 800 professionals from more than 50 countries, who petitioned

the United Nations regarding COVID-19 guidelines, and was instrumental in the World Health Organization issuing a COVID-19 ventilation roadmap to save lives in 2021. He also co-authored the "Build Back Better" letter and led 130 U.S. building industry firms advocating for a carbon-neutral agenda and resulting in a 2021 presidential executive order reflecting many of the items. One of six elected reviewers for the city of Chicago's Building Decarbonization Working Group, Leung leads a firmwide global decarbonization project.

**PATTY LLOYD**

Director of sustainability  
Leopardo

Patty Lloyd leads Leopardo's sustainability practices at both the corporate leadership and project levels, advising the executive team and spearheading a cor-



porate environmental, social and governance program to be launched Fiscal Year 2023. Her focus ranges from tracking waste, coordinating

energy efficiency and diverting usable materials to facilitating the achievement of third-party ratings. She has contributed to more than 3 million square feet of healthy/high-performing space, including Leopardo's dual-certified LEED and WELL downtown office. In the past 18 months, she received the LEED Fellow designation from the U.S. Green Building Council (a designation held by fewer than 270 people globally) and was also awarded the inaugural Heart of Illinois Green Award from the Illinois Green Alliance for volunteer service.

**ERIC MADDIX**

Partner  
Chicago Capital

Eric Maddix leads his firm's efforts in sustainable investment, helping clients incorporate their preferences and objectives into their portfolios. He monitors compa-



nies that score highly on sustainability and governance goals and makes recommendations for clients who are concerned about such issues

as the impact of carbon emissions by large corporations, the treatment of employees in manufacturing and distribution facilities, and data collection practices. A graduate of the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, Maddix is co-founder of Chicago Capital, which has assets under management of more than \$3.1 billion. He is also a member of the Springboard Foundation, a nonprofit primarily supporting after-school education programs in Chicago.

**EDITH MAKRA**

Director of environmental initiatives  
Metropolitan Mayors Caucus

Edith Makra directs sustainability initiatives on behalf of the 275 municipal members of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus. Her work is aimed at achieving Greenest



Region Compact and Climate Action Plan goals. She manages the Environment Committee and Energy Sub Committee, which convenes

elected officials, staff and volunteer commissioners from 60 communities who share ideas to build local government capacity for addressing sustainability issues. Makra also led the creation of the Climate Action Plan for the Chicago region, one of the first regional-scale plans in the United States. Makra has served in voluntary roles with the Chicago River Watershed Council and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association.

Sponsored content

**NOTABLE Q&A** Christopher Drew

## Why Sustainability Matters



Solid scientific research underpins all successful sustainability efforts. As such, **Christopher Drew, PhD**, is unique in his position as director of sustainability at the Chicago-based firm of Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture (AS+GG). Drew is a respected international environmental scientist and thought leader on sustainability. He brings an understanding of the relationships between the built and natural environments, and urban ecosystems through almost 25 years of experience as an ecologist and sustainability manager.

A major contributor to each AS+GG project, Drew works closely with the architecture team. He helps to develop strategies for energy efficiency, energy generation, reduction of carbon emissions, waste management, water conservation, selection of sustainable materials and other key performance indicators. His research focuses on carbon emissions generated during all stages of a building's life.

Drew's most important civic work is the ongoing development of ultra-low lifecycle carbon single-family homes for Habitat for Humanity.

**CRAINS: How do you define sustainability?**

**Christopher Drew:** In 1987, a United Nations commission defined sustainability as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. But the definition has evolved. As a forward-thinking firm, AS+GG reports to the United Nations Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative. It expands the definition to include universal environmental principles, human rights, and other social measures.

**CRAINS: Why is sustainability important?**

Average temperatures now have a roughly fifty-fifty chance of rising above 1.5 degrees Celsius within five years, according to a recent report from the World Meteorological Organization. If this happens, climate change will impact the ability not only for future

generations to survive but for us to survive. It's an important warning. We have a commitment to design buildings to the American Institute of Architects set of standards to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

**CRAINS: What is your role in the design process?**

**Drew:** I work with the design group to establish a vision for the project and run the environmental simulation team to make sure the building will meet our sustainability performance standards. Taking a broader view, I also establish our company's sustainability goals to meet our measures on environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors.

**CRAINS: What is your proudest accomplishment?**

**Drew:** There've been many things I'm proud of. Most recently, on the research side, I led a multi-disciplinary team research project to improve the

sustainability of concrete by reducing the carbon needed to produce concrete mixes. The concrete industry is responsible for 7% of global carbon emissions and tall buildings use a lot of it. Through a combination of different processes and technologies, we have produced a concrete mix that is carbon negative. It's currently being tested and it's a game changer.

On the design side, our AI Wasl Plaza Trellis and five buildings for the Dubai World Expo held in 2021/2022 was a tremendous accomplishment. The three offices achieved LEED platinum and the two hotels achieved LEED Gold status. The Trellis and Public Realm achieved the highest CEEQUAL score, an internationally recognized sustainability assessment, for any project outside of the UK.

**CRAINS: What's the future of sustainability?**

**Drew:** Part of my job is keeping an

eye on where we are headed. We must make sure our buildings, which may last 100 years, are relevant to ever changing sustainability trends, consumer behavior, and new technologies. More issues are emerging around food and water security, and social equity. We have to start by making zero carbon buildings.

**CRAIN'S: Any advice for business owners?**

**Drew:** Include common sense sustainability thinking in your everyday business practices. Think about how you can reduce your carbon footprint. It's not rocket science. If you're building a new project, the design should produce less waste. Try to use fewer materials and space more efficiently. Find ways to reduce energy usage. We have the solutions. We just need to use them.

**A | S** ADRIAN SMITH + GORDON GILL  
**G | G** ARCHITECTURE

**KIM MAROTTA**

Vice president, global head of environmental sustainability  
Beam Suntory

Kim Marotta oversees the company's long-term environmental commitments, which are anchored in reducing its water, climate, forest, biodiversity and packaging footprints while establishing a positive societal impact. Key goals include surpassing net zero emissions across the entire value chain, 100% watershed replenishment, working only with suppliers that use sustainable practices and using 60% recycled materials



by weight across the packaging portfolio. In partnership with Suntory Holdings, Marotta's team has developed carbon emission reduction targets that align with the Paris Climate Accord and have been verified against the 1.5°C pathway set forth by the Science Based Targets initiative. The company is also implementing regenerative agriculture practices with Kentucky corn growers, European barley farmers and Tequila agave growers.



**BRIAN MAVRAGANES**

Partner  
Green Scope Solutions

At Green Scope Solutions, which helps businesses reduce energy consumption by retrofitting with greener products, Brian Mavraganes specializes in hotels, one of the largest sectors with the most inefficient users. He audits the facilities and then handles the spec/engineering, design and installation of improvements, works with local utilities for any rebates to offset project costs and recycles all old materials on every project. In recent years Green Scope retrofitted 25 hotels in 19 states with high-efficiency lighting and thermostats for one hotel ownership, saving more than 7.8 million kilowatt-hours on the lighting side and 113,000 therms on the thermostat project. Mavraganes is also vice president-operations at sister company Option One Energy.



**JENNY MCCOLLOCH**

Chief sustainability officer  
McDonald's

Jenny McColloch guides McDonald's on its environmental, social and governance ambitions, leveraging the brand's scale and presence in nearly 40,000 communities globally while elevating its ESG reporting to emphasize transparency, setting a standard for the sector. Under her leadership, McDonald's has made progress on its ambition to achieve net zero emissions globally by 2050 (one of the first global restaurants to do so); to have every toy in a Happy Meal be made using more materials from renewable, recycled or certified sources by the end of 2025; achieve McDonald's 2020 Responsible Sourcing goals; and release the company's first-ever Climate Risk & Resiliency Summary aligned to the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosure.



**CHRISTINE MONTENEGRO MCGRATH**

Senior vice president and chief impact and sustainability officer  
Mondelez International

Christine Montenegro McGrath leads the global impact agenda including a broad sustainability scope, integrated into a long-term business growth strategy that spans climate action, environmental impact, packaging and sustainable ingredients. She oversees the company's proprietary sustainable ingredient sourcing program, Cocoa Life, and is working to scale it to 100% sourcing for Mondelez chocolate brands by 2025. The only company collecting impact data, Mondelez has measurable proof it is curbing deforestation and improving farmer yields; McGrath is extending the program to three new countries and reducing net carbon contribution by 7%. She's also working on a wheat sustainable sourcing program and accelerating Mondelez's efforts to address plastic packaging waste.



**JENNIFER MCINTYRE**

Senior vice president, chief people & culture officer and ESG lead  
Univar Solutions

Jennifer McIntyre serves as executive lead for Univar's environmental, social and governance efforts. Univar exceeded its 2021 ESG targets, set ambitious ESG goals to 2025 with key emissions goals stretching to 2030, and has a long-term commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Newsweek named it one of "America's Most Responsible Companies" in 2022 for delivering on these commitments. McIntyre has initiated employee sustainability training



and awards, partnered with One Tree Planted to plant one tree in the eastern Brazilian rainforest for each employee, and in 2021 oversaw an award-winning campaign and digital hub. The company also is introducing solar panels in facilities, pursuing alternative-fuel vehicles and replacing halogen lighting with LED throughout its warehouses.

**LEAD.**

**EDUCATE.**

**IMPACT.**

Congratulations to NGE Chief Operating Officer Sonia Menon on her well-deserved recognition as one of Crain's 2022 Notable Leaders in Sustainability.

As a values-driven business, we prioritize making the world a better place. Under Sonia's leadership, Neal Gerber Eisenberg has moved the needle on sustainability from awareness to action. Sonia leads the firm's efforts to achieve ambitious and quantifiable goals while raising awareness and championing tactics to reduce impact. Sonia is a guiding light of corporate stewardship and environmental responsibility.

Learn more about the NGE's sustainability efforts:  
[nge.com/sustainability](https://nge.com/sustainability)

**NEAL  
GERBER  
EISENBERG**

## NOTABLE 2022 LEADERS IN SUSTAINABILITY

**MARY MCLAUGHLIN**

Co-founder, chair and president  
Trees That Feed Foundation

Mary McLaughlin, her husband, Mike, and brother Paul Virtue established this nonprofit to provide a million fruit trees to farmers in countries across the Caribbean,



Central America and Africa. Trees That Feed's mission is to feed people, create jobs and benefit the environment with tree crops that require less

labor, agrochemicals, fertilizers and space than field crops. The organization also teaches children about the importance of trees; trains farmers on tree propagation, planting patterns, watering and reaping; and briefs cooks on recipes that use fresh or preserved fruit. Before starting the nonprofit in 2008, McLaughlin, a trained geologist, worked with the Jamaica Geological Survey and later, oil companies in Texas. She founded McLaughlin Glazeware, a maker of high-end gifts of enamel and bone china, in 1996.

**MIKE MCLAUGHLIN**

Co-founder and secretary-treasurer  
Trees That Feed Foundation

Mike McLaughlin, his wife, Mary, and brother-in-law Paul Virtue established this nonprofit in 2008; it now operates in more than 18 countries across the Caribbean,



Central America and Africa. The model, which provides fruit trees to farmers, started in Jamaica, the birthplace of both of the McLaughlins. Before

co-founding Trees That Feed, McLaughlin was an actuary, serving as consulting partner with Ernst & Young and Deloitte Consulting, as well as executive vice president and chief actuary at AXA Financial in New York. While president of the Society of Actuaries in 2009, McLaughlin led the initiative to create the Actuaries Climate Index, the idea being an objective index measure as a public service to quantify how much and how quickly the environment was changing. He is currently on a committee to produce a similar index for the Caribbean region. McLaughlin joined the Trees That Feed Foundation as a full-time volunteer in 2012 after retiring from consulting.

**DAVID MENDELSON**

President  
Donco Recycling Solutions

David Mendelson oversees all operations at Donco, which offers green solutions for manufacturers by creating markets for secondary raw materials in specialty manu-



facturing processes. Among recent achievements, the company installed and financed more than \$1 million in recycling equipment at manu-

facturer sites; developed multiple long-term commitments for the recycling of scrap with various manufacturers; and established



new markets for various waste products previously sent to landfills in sectors ranging from paper, plastic, metals, rubbers and starches to gummy bears (scrap candy can be used in animal feed and bear bait). Mendelson has assembled a global think tank of people who are experts in the recycling of unique byproducts.

**SONIA MENON**

Chief operating officer  
Neal Gerber Eisenberg

As leader of the firm's sustainability committee, Sonia Menon saw 2020's transition to remote-work environments as an opportunity to reimagine office operations,



creating a fully digital, virtual working environment with energy performance improvements. The firm began the transition to green power

sources, including 100% wind-renewable energy credits. NGE also joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Green



Power Partnership; it is one of only three law firms nationally that have committed to using 100% renewable energy. Other key actions include moving to a more virtualized server infrastructure, reducing energy consumption by 40%, installing plumbing fixtures that reduce water consumption by 50% and moving to all-compostable food paper products, diverting 75,000 items from landfills.

**MOLLY MEYER**

Founder and CEO  
Omni Ecosystems

Molly Meyer leads Omni Ecosystems, which designs, installs and maintains green roof systems, living walls and working landscapes, in its mission to find



scalable solutions to complex ecological challenges in the built environment. She has championed sustainability through the development of

Omni Terrain, a new method for treating brownfields, providing site remediation, greening and stormwater management without grey infrastructure, relying instead on its own soil called Omni Infinity. Omni has also been awarded a patent for its wastewater cleaning technology. Recent accomplishments include \$2.25 million in grants to complete the adaptive reuse at 4131 S. State St. and a Green Roof & Wall Award of Excellence for its living wall at Hatch 41.

**WHAT CUSTOMERS BELIEVE ABOUT CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ...**

Source: Harvard Business School

**70%** of Americans believe it's somewhat or very important for companies to make the world a better place.

**77%** of consumers are motivated to purchase from companies committed to making the world a better place.

**41%** of millennial investors put a significant amount of effort into understanding a company's CSR practices.

**25%** of consumers cite a zero tolerance policy toward companies that embrace questionable ethical practices.

**ABIGAIL NEARY**

Head of sustainability  
Aon

Abigail Neary leads Aon's global sustainability efforts and chairs its net-zero steering committee. Her current responsibilities include preparing Aon's submission for Science Based Targets, where Aon



has been recently approved and formally committed to this initiative. She is now responsible for driving efforts to achieve Aon's commitment to

net zero by 2030. Early in her career, Neary held internships with the Environmental Protection Agency, working on documenting Superfund hazard sites, and with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, pioneering their probabilistic water quality survey. She is a certified Sustainability Excellence Associate with the International Society of Sustainability Professionals and also holds certifications as a Master Naturalist and Master Recycler.

**JENNIFER NELSON**

Program director  
Seven Generations Ahead

Jennifer Nelson's responsibilities include guiding municipal, business and community decision-makers on sustainability planning and implementation. Her work with the Illinois Food



Scrap Coalition (advancing food-scrap composting infrastructure and policy in Illinois) and Wasted Food Action Alliance (working to reduce

wasted food in Illinois through prevention, rescue and recycling) brought together organizations, institutions, businesses, community organizers and government leaders for greater collective impact by connecting resources throughout the food chain. A major accomplishment was leveraging existing partners and joining with new ones to connect assets in the regional foodshed and use this information to introduce food donors to community-led food rescue efforts, working to get healthy food to feed people.

**VANESSA PERKINS**

Founder  
Community Charging

Vanessa Perkins manages Community Charging's activities, which are focused on building Level 2 electric vehicle chargers at sites—small businesses, churches and nonprofits—in neighbor-



hoods considered charging deserts. Leveraging grants and community partnerships, the organization empowers charging-station hosts to provide

EV charging as an amenity in underserved areas, especially those with high numbers of multiunit dwellings, which benefit most from the air-pollution alleviating benefits of transportation electrification. Recent achievements include installing five community EV charging stations, partnering with neighborhood hosts St. John's and St. Paul's Episcopal churches, Plant Chicago and Meeting Tomorrow, as well as with W Terry Electric, AMB Renewables and EVmatch, with funds from the Keeling Curve grant.

**JOANNE RODRIGUEZ**

Founder and CEO  
Mycocycle

Joanne Rodriguez oversees every aspect of Mycocycle operations, establishing research goals in concert with scientists. Mycocycle offers mycoremediation of toxin-containing materials through the



use of fungi, a patent-pending technology that removes carcinogens and chemicals from materials containing asphalt (bitumen)

and petrochemical derivatives. Mycocycle is one of just 17 companies worldwide selected for The Circulars Accelerator '22, backed by Accenture and the World Economic Forum, and one of just six companies selected for Cohort 6 of Chain Reaction Innovations through the Argonne National Laboratory. Mycocycle, which operates within a regenerative economic model, won a 2021 Chicago Innovation Award and an 1871 Momentum Award. Rodriguez was named as a 2021 Environmental+Energy Leader Top 100 Honoree.

**CAROL ROSS BARNEY**

Founder and design principal  
Ross Barney Architects

Carol Ross Barney and her fellow architects are committed to pairing environmental stewardship and energy performance with design excellence. The firm's approach focuses on integrating



natural systems, preserving the natural environment and creating decarbonized infrastructures. Projects of note include the Jewish Recon-

structionist Congregation synagogue and the UMD Swenson Civil Engineering Building, which received American Institute of Architects' Committee on the Environment Top Ten Awards; designs for two McDonald's restaurants, including the LEED Platinum Certified Chicago Flagship restaurant and a net-zero energy-designed flagship restaurant at Walt Disney World Resort; and 13 other LEED Platinum, Gold and Silver projects. Fast Company named Ross Barney Architects one of 2022's Most Innovative Companies.

**LOIS VITT SALE**

Chief sustainability officer and senior vice president  
Wight

Under Lois Vitt Sale's leadership, Wight has assisted clients that have earned both the first and third verified Net Zero Energy



Building status in Illinois. Wight has signed onto the SE 2050 Commitment to measure embodied carbon and reported its first project for embodied carbon

in this year's Architecture 2030 numbers. Sale, a LEED Fellow (earned in the inaugural year of the program), lists among her accomplishments one of the first projects to earn LEED certification anywhere (2000) and more than 100 others that have earned the International Living Future Institute's net zero energy certification, WELL or Phius+ certification. She is serving her third term as a trustee with The Conservation Foundation.

**CHARLOTTE SAUER**

Associate  
CannonDesign

As sustainability lead for the structural engineering department, Charlotte Sauer championed CannonDesign's signing of the SE 2050 commitment and



laid a plan for decarbonization strategies that the structural engineering team can follow for decades to come. This plan includes

goals to decarbonize concrete through mix design optimization and incorporate lower-carbon biogenic structural materials into designs. Sauer also introduced life cycle assessment modeling to the structural department to measure structure's embodied carbon. Recently, she implemented the use of carbon dioxide mineralization on a four-story parking garage on Chicago's North Side and performed multiple life-cycle assessments of structural systems to quantify the embodied carbon of different projects.

**WILLIAM SCHLEIZER**

CEO  
Delta Institute

Bill Schleizer oversees all operations at Delta Institute, which offers a spectrum of sustainability services ranging from site planning, carbon footprinting and



greenhouse gas reporting to data quantification and water planning. A recent initiative is the 2021 City of Chicago Waste Strategy, which identified

63 strategies to address waste and materials management, with 12 identified as achievable in the short term. Recommendations being implemented range from a citywide push for composting to additional staffing at Streets & Sanitation to undertake consumer waste education outreach. Another project involves research into the barriers that inhibit Midwestern municipalities from implementing green infrastructure to address flooding, water quality and equity.

**KELLY SHELTON**

President  
Shelton Solutions

Kelly Shelton is president of Shelton Solutions which, along with its 2020 acquisition Quercus Consulting, provides energy, waste management and sustain-



ability consulting services to clients that include the city of Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Transit Authority and Cook County. Recent accom-

plishments include helping to develop the Lake County Net Zero Emissions Policy and the University of Chicago's 2022-2030 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan. Shelton also provided oversight of the annual greenhouse gas emissions calculations for the city of Highland Park and meets regularly with the Sustainability Advisory Group to provide information and direction regarding various sustainability initiatives. She also leads the Environmental Justice Self-Designation committee for the Illinois Solar for All program.

**ANDY SHIFRIN**

Founder  
North American Mattress Upcycling

Twenty-five years ago, Andy Shifrin began divesting retail-generated used bedding from landfills, developing processes for dismantling and classifying



post-consumer bedding components and upcycling the parts. He also developed data generating sustainability measures for di-

verted waste, work that has kept more than 4 million mattresses and box springs from going into landfills. Today, Shifrin manages strategy and new business development at North American Mattress Upcycling, partnering with community-based organizations to provide financially stressed families with access to quality mattresses and box springs at affordable prices. His integrated system reduces waste by 90%, with another 8% being sold to other businesses such as the makers of foam rug pads.



**Leading by example to see tomorrow transformed.**

Thank you for inspiring our industry to explore the potential that tomorrow holds, and congratulations on being named one of Crain's 2022 Notable Leaders in Sustainability!

**Susan Heinking, Vice President**  
High Performance and Sustainable Construction

**Pepper Construction**  
Tomorrow Transformed

NOTABLE 2022 LEADERS IN SUSTAINABILITY

**ERIC SIMON**

Chairperson, sustainability commission  
Village of River Forest

Eric Simon is chairperson of the village's seven-member Sustainability Commission, which makes recommendations to the village board of trustees. During Simon's tenure as chair, the village has endorsed a community solar program and is exploring an opt-in single-use plastic ordinance. It also has implemented recommendations regarding the village's waste hauling contract, which led to the creation of multiple composting options for residents, as well as household hazardous waste and e-waste pickup. During his tenure as a member, the commission committed to a green electric aggregation program, which will bring in \$72,000 in revenue for the village. It also implemented recommendations from the commission's Bicycle Task Force and installed its first electric vehicle charging station.



**DEBORAH STONE**

Director, Department of Environment & Sustainability  
Cook County Government

As chief sustainability officer, Deborah Stone coordinates multiple Cook County departments in Sustainable Communities, one of the six pillars of County Board President Toni Preckwinkle's strategic plan, the Policy Roadmap. Her department regulates 9,000 businesses in suburban Cook County, solid waste and recycling facilities, and asbestos removal and demolitions, as well as creates programs to clean up contaminated brownfields. The department also helps lower costs for residents to install solar panels as well as provides access to low-cost financing for businesses to make renewable energy, energy and water efficiency and resiliency investments. Under her leadership, in the latest year, water use was down 5.3% and greenhouse gas emissions from county facilities fell 7.9%.



**MICHAEL WASIELEWSKI**

Executive director; Clare Hamilton Hall Endowed Chair of Chemistry Institute for Sustainability & Energy at Northwestern University

Michael Wasielewski leads ISEN, which is holistically addressing global sustainability and energy challenges. He leads interdisciplinary research and education for the institute's work in climate and energy transition, positioning Northwestern as a leader in these fields. ISEN opened doors for Northwestern delegates to attend COP26; graduated its first cohort of Master of Science in Energy and Sustainability students; launched LED testing technology in a state-of-the-art laboratory to further solar energy research; grew Northwestern's Program on Plastics, Ecosystems & Public Health; and pursued new approaches to quantum information science. ISEN's research addressing the connection between air quality and electric vehicle adoption was included in the most recent Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change report.



**MEGAN ZACK**

Associate partner, director of sustainability  
Hartshorne Plunkard Architecture

Megan Zack leads both Hartshorne Plunkard Architecture's Sustainability Group, which develops firmwide best practices and protocols, as well as project teams, including design staff, sub-consultants and contractors, from the entitlement phase through to construction administration. Notable recent activities include moderating two sessions at the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat's International Conference and the Steel-Timber Hybrid Buildings Conference; leading the Liv Seattle project, a 22-story, 263,000-square-foot residential tower that is targeting LEED Gold, as it is anticipated it will perform 23% more efficiently than the baseline energy model; and serving as sustainability adviser on 1045 W. Fulton, a 160,000-square-foot Class A office building under construction that also is targeting LEED Gold and WELL certifications.



**ELISE ZELECHOWSKI**

Global head of diversity, equity, inclusion, sustainability and social change  
Thoughtworks

Elise Zelechowski drives social impact and responsible tech across the Thoughtworks organization. She has championed the development of an open-source cloud carbon footprint tool that can measure, monitor and reduce cloud carbon emissions. She also is a founding member of the Green Software Foundation (alongside Accenture and Microsoft) and is involved with its community working group, which is focused on defining a software carbon intensity specification to calculate the rate of carbon emissions for software systems. As first deputy director of policy with the mayor's office for the city of Chicago, she served on the governing board of the Chicago chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council.



CRAIN'S CHICAGO BUSINESS 2022  
**NOTABLE**  
LEADERS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Crain's 2022 Notable Leaders in Community Development will recognize leaders who have made a difference in improving underserved and underinvested communities in Chicago through community development.

**NOMINATE NOW!**  
Deadline is Friday, July 1

Nominate at  
[ChicagoBusiness.com/NotableCommDev](https://ChicagoBusiness.com/NotableCommDev)