

## **Amy Loyd, Assistant Secretary, Office of Career and Technical Education, Department of Education**



Amy Loyd, Ed.L.D., has an extensive background in education and the nonprofit sector and has designed and led programs across the U.S. that improve education and workforce outcomes for people and strengthen communities. Most recently, Dr. Loyd was a Vice President at Jobs for the Future, where she led the organization's programs in career pathways that span K-12 and postsecondary education and training into the world of work; in workforce development with a lens on economic advancement; in policy that creates lasting, systemic improvements; and in diversity, equity, and inclusion. Dr. Loyd holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy and mathematics from St. John's College and a doctorate in education leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where she has taught a policy and management class on using career pathways to increase opportunity and equity.

## **Angela Farley, COO/CFO, Dallas Regional Chamber**



Angela Farley is the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer at the Dallas Regional Chamber (DRC), which has been recognized as National Chamber of the Year.

Ms. Farley leads the financial and operational efforts across the DRC's strategic focus areas of prosperity and economic development, education, talent and workforce, and diversity, inclusion and community engagement, as well as the pro-growth public policy agenda that supports these areas.

Prior to being named COO & CFO in January 2018, Ms. Farley was the DRC's Senior Vice President of Education and Workforce for five years, where she led efforts to grow and develop the region's existing talent and workforce. In this role, she was responsible for connecting business members with education programs, legislative efforts, and partnerships to support regional educational improvements and workforce readiness from pre-K through higher education.

Before joining the DRC in 2012, Ms. Farley was the CFO of Command and Control Environments in Grapevine, Texas. Earlier in her career, she worked as a Certified Management Accountant and consulted for several national firms, including Haynes and Boone LLP, serving clients in highly regulated industries with a specialty focus on government contracts and accounting investigations.

# SPEAKER BIOS

In 2018, Ms. Farley was chosen by Governor Abbott to represent the state of Texas at The White House Summit on State-Federal STEM Education, led by The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. She has also served on a number of boards and councils, including as Governor Abbott's appointee to the Pathways to Technology Advisory Council, the Dallas County Workforce Board, the Texas Student Success Council, and the Board of Directors for the American Chamber of Commerce of Executives (ACCE). She currently serves on The EducateDallas PAC Board, the Junior League of Dallas' Advisory Board, the Broadway Dallas Board, The Commit Partnership Board, and the Board and Executive Committee of the DRC. She is also a member of the DRC's Executive Women's Roundtable.

Ms. Farley and her husband, Travis, live in Dallas and have two grown children.

## **Ashlee Davidson, Vice President of Communications, Lockheed Martin**



Ashlee V. Davidson is vice president of Communications for Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control. She is a highly driven, corporate communications leader, utilizing her skills and experience to drive strategic business results, communicate key executive messaging, effectively foster employee engagement, and increase overall performance for the company's profile.

In this role, Davidson oversees all aspects of communications for the organization, while leading a team of approximately 120 communicators in support of programs and products that protect and keep the U.S. safe. Her proudest moment of 2022 was leading a cross-functional team in support of President Biden's VVIP visit to Lockheed Martin. She also serves as co-chair on Missiles and Fire Control's Culture Optimization team and leads the Communications and Invitations Committee for the annual Women's Impact Network Leadership Forum.

Davidson began her career at Lockheed Martin, first serving as the Integrated Communications Director for Lockheed Martin, leading strategic communications efforts on behalf of six corporate functions, along with management of employee-oriented communications channels. Prior to joining Lockheed Martin, Davidson led Internal and Executive Communications for L3Harris Corporation, where she was responsible for overseeing all aspects of employee communications and led major customer events and interactions.

Davidson began her career at United Technologies (Sikorsky Aircraft) as an INROADS intern. Upon college graduation, she started a full-time position at Sikorsky as an Internal Communications Associate and has held roles of increasing responsibility.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Mass Communications from Virginia Commonwealth University, a Master of Science degree in Business Communications from Quinnipiac University, and a Master of Science degree in Organizational Leadership from Capella University. She is also a graduate of the UTC Emerging Leaders Program, at the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia. Ashlee is a member of the Public Relations Society of America and the National Association of Black Journalists. She also serves her community through leadership positions within the Links Incorporated, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Jack and Jill of America, as well as the United Way.

She's a proud wife and mother of two children, currently residing in Dallas, Texas.

### **Brian Newby, Managing Partner, Cantey Hanger LLP**



Vice Chair for the Fort Worth Chamber Board of Directors, Brian Newby, is head of Public/Regulatory practice at Cantey Hanger LLP. He has extensive experience in commercial litigation as well as regulatory matters. With over 30 years of courtroom and state administrative law experience, he specializes in assisting clients in resolving high-profile, complex issues. He counsels large and small businesses, as well as state and local governmental entities, on a wide variety of administrative law and legislative initiatives impacting their day-to-day business operations. His client base includes leaders in the fields of education, water, transportation, and health care.

A courtroom advocate, Mr. Newby has taken to trial, arbitration, and mediation hundreds of cases involving commercial business disputes, construction defects, public and private contract claims, personal injury, and employment agreements. In addition, his practice includes representing clients before state and federal administrative hearing boards. A seasoned litigator, he has tried cases in state and federal courts throughout the state of Texas.

Experienced in state and local government, Mr. Newby served as the Chief of Staff and as the General Counsel to the Governor of Texas. He co-chaired the State of Texas' hurricane recovery efforts following Hurricane Ike. He also has an extensive background in conducting independent investigations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, professional responsibility, violation of management standards/policies, and violations of national, state and local codes of professional

conduct. For a number of years, Mr. Newby served as the outside general counsel to the Houston General Insurance Company.

Mr. Newby began his legal career as an Air Forces lawyer, where he served as a felony court-martial prosecutor, a defense attorney and conducted numerous commander-directed investigations. Following active duty, he joined Cantey Hanger where he has been a partner in both the Fort Worth and Austin (Austin is by appointment only) offices. He now holds the position of Counsel in the Fort Worth office. He was named to Extraordinary Minorities in Texas Law (2010) by Texas Lawyer Magazine and to Power Attorneys (2012) by Fort Worth Business Press. A committed military officer and proven leader, he formerly managed over 450 military lawyers and paralegals nationwide in a reserve component of the U.S. Air Force. He retired at the rank of Major General.

### **Chris Nielsen, Executive Vice President & Chief Quality Officer, Toyota Motor North America**



Chris Nielsen is Executive Vice President of product support and Chief Quality Officer for Toyota Motor North America and also served as the 2019 Chair of the Dallas Regional Chamber Board of Directors.

In his role, Nielsen oversees a number of functions including purchasing and supplier development, quality, supply chain management, logistics, after sales service and accessories, and the Toyota Production System development groups.

Previously, Nielsen served as Senior Vice President of human resources, corporate strategy, and purchasing for Toyota Engineering & Manufacturing North America, Inc. located in Erlanger, Kentucky. During his tenure, Nielsen's leadership was pivotal in the "One Toyota" Headquarters initiative resulting in a successful merger of two Toyota affiliates with distinct cultures that operated separately for over 30 years. Prior to that assignment, Nielsen was president of Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Texas, Inc. (TMMTX) located in San Antonio, Texas. From 2003 to 2006, Nielsen served as project leader responsible for the overall design and construction of TMMTX, a \$1.2 billion project.

Nielsen joined Toyota in 1987 as a buyer at its Georgetown, Kentucky plant and progressed through a series of positions including Vice President of purchasing where he was responsible for overseeing over \$30 billion in parts and materials procurement.

He was the first American to participate in the management expatriation program, a year-long management development assignment with Toyota Motor Corporation in Japan in 1999.

# SPEAKER BIOS

Nielsen holds a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering from Kettering University (formerly General Motors Institute), and an Executive Education Certificate from The Wharton School of Business. He is a member of the Mazda Toyota Manufacturing U.S. Board of Directors and serves as Chair of the Toyota Motor North America Audit Committee.

Nielsen is also a member of the National Association of Manufacturers Board of Directors (Executive Committee), Manufacturing Institute Board of Directors, Dallas Regional Chamber, Board of Directors (Executive Committee, 2019 Chair – Largest Regional Chamber in the United States), Dallas Citizens Council Board of Directors, and Texas 2036 Donor Advisory Council. Married to Nicole, Nielsen has three sons and lives in Southlake, Texas.

## **Danny Carlson, Chief of Staff, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education**



Danny Carlson most recently served as Associate Executive Director, Policy & Advocacy at the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). Prior to joining NAESP, Danny worked in the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices—Education Division, helping guide governors' offices on policies to address educator recruitment, preparation, working conditions, shortages, and diversifying the profession. Danny previously served as an education advisor to Senator Amy Klobuchar and was responsible for advancing her K–12 education agenda.

## **Commissioner Elizabeth Albro, National Center for Education Research, Department of Education**



Dr. Elizabeth Albro, Commissioner of Education Research at the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education, is committed to building bridges between the basic sciences of learning and education practice. Trained in the behavioral and social sciences, cognition, and communication, she received her Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Chicago. Since joining IES in 2002, she has served as a program officer for multiple research portfolios and as Associate Commissioner of Teaching and Learning. She has participated on multiple interagency committees focused on open science and the federal research investment in language and communication. She has edited several books in the area of reading comprehension, and has published articles in *Discourse Processes*, *Scientific Studies of Reading*, and *Educational Psychology Review*. Prior to joining IES, Dr. Albro was a faculty member, first at

Whittier College and subsequently at Wheaton College (Norton, MA). All of her research is grounded in her own experience as a preschool teacher in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

## **The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison, Former NATO Ambassador**



Ambassador Kay Bailey Hutchison stepped down from her term as U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO in Brussels, Belgium, in 2021. During her 3.5 years as Permanent Representative, she focused on the importance of U.S. leadership in the alliance and strengthening the transatlantic bond that provides the security umbrella for Europe and North America. From 1993-2013, she represented Texas in the U.S. Senate. There, she was elected by her peers to chair the Republican Policy Committee, the fourth-highest leadership position. She was Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and Chair of the Military Construction Subcommittee on the Senate Committee on Appropriations. She served two terms as Chair of the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Significant legislation included the reauthorization and reform of NASA with Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) and the Hutchison-Mikulski legislation establishing a new retirement vehicle, the Kay Bailey Hutchison Spousal IRA. As Texas State Treasurer, 1991-1993, she proposed limits on state debt the state legislature adopted and lead the successful defeat of a state income tax. Ambassador Hutchison is the author of three books, including the bestseller *American Heroines* (William Morrow, 2004). The Dallas City Council named the city's convention center in her honor in 2013. She earned a B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin, and a J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law.

## **Kelbi Culwell, Senior Manager of State and Local Government Operations, Boeing**



# SPEAKER BIOS



Kelbi Culwell Hauman is senior manager, State and Local Government Operations for The Boeing Company, responsible for state and local government relations initiatives across Boeing sites in Houston and North Texas.

Before returning to her home state of Texas, Kelbi was the government relations specialist for Strategy and Advocacy at The Boeing Company, where she engaged in a variety of outreach and liaison activities with think tanks and national trade associations.

Prior to joining Boeing, Kelbi served under President Trump as a political appointee at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). During her four years at DHS, she served in a variety of roles in the Office of the Secretary, with her last post being associate director of the Office of Partnership and Engagement's (OPE) private sector office. In this role, she helped develop and implement public-private partnerships, provided policy and regulatory guidance, and identified the impact of DHS operations on the private sector.

Before her time in public service, Kelbi was research coordinator for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation at their headquarters in New York City, and was responsible in assisting the metabolic control and artificial pancreas portfolio.

She earned her bachelor's degree in political science from Louisiana State University and currently resides in North Texas with her husband, RJ.

## **The Honorable Margaret Spellings, President and CEO, Bipartisan Policy Center**



A nationally recognized leader in public policy, Margaret Spellings serves as President and CEO of the Bipartisan Policy Center.

Spellings most recently served as President and CEO of Texas 2036, a bipartisan think tank. Her extensive leadership experience in state and federal government includes service as U.S. Secretary of Education, White House Chief Domestic Policy Advisor, Senior Policy Advisor to then-Governor George W. Bush, President of the George W. Bush Presidential Center, and President of the 17-institution University of North Carolina System.

## **Matt Garcia, Senior Vice President of Public Policy, Dallas Regional Chamber**



Matt Garcia is Senior Vice President of Public Policy at the Dallas Regional Chamber (DRC), which has been recognized as the National Chamber of the Year.

Garcia leads the policy efforts for business priorities through issue advocacy, member education, and collaboration with our regional and statewide partners.

Garcia's career also includes service as Chief of Staff for Texas to U.S. Congressman Pete Sessions, Managing Advisor of Government Affairs for Sunwest Communications, Director of External Affairs for Leon Capital Group, as well as various senior financial roles for two publicly traded companies.

Garcia is a graduate of Leadership Dallas and is currently a Director for the Texas Lyceum. Garcia is active in his community and serves as a member on numerous boards, including the Chairman's Task Force for the State Fair of Texas, Reading Partners of North Texas, and the Advisory Board for the McCombs School of Business.

Garcia is a proud graduate of the University of Texas at Austin. He and his wife, Jennifer, live in Dallas with their two children.

## **Dr. Nasser Paydar, Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education**



Dr. Nasser H. Paydar joined the U.S. Department of Education as Assistant Secretary in the Office of Post-Secondary Education after most recently serving as chancellor of Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) and executive vice president of Indiana University (IU). An IU faculty member for more than 36 years, he has held various administrative and executive leadership positions at the university. Paydar joined IUPUI in 1985 as an assistant professor of mechanical engineering. From 1989 to 2003, he held a number of positions in the school, including Chair of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, Associate Dean for graduate programs, Associate Dean for academic programs, and Executive Associate Dean. From 2004 to 2007, he served as Vice Chancellor and Dean of Indiana University–Purdue University Columbus. Paydar was appointed chancellor of Indiana University East in 2007, serving in that role until he



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returned to IUPUI in 2012, when he was named the campus's Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer. He became IUPUI's fifth chancellor in 2015. As an IUPUI faculty member, he has served as principal and co-principal investigator on research grants from federal and state agencies and private companies, including Cummins Electronics, DePuy, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Army, and the U.S. Naval Air Warfare Center. His research in the area of solid mechanics, with applications in biomechanics and electronic packaging, has been published widely in scientific journals. Paydar earned his bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in mechanical engineering from Syracuse University.

## **Saif Khan, Senior Advisor for Critical and Emerging Technologies, Department of Commerce**



Saif M. Khan is a Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Commerce for Critical and Emerging Technologies. He is also a Visiting Professor of Practice at the University of Maryland Applied Research Lab for Intelligence and Security. He was previously a Director for Technology and National Security at the National Council and a Research Fellow at the Center for Security and Emerging Technology. Before that, he was an intellectual property and technology lawyer in the technology industry.

## **Sara Armstrong, Vice President of Federal Relations and Grassroots Advocacy, U.S. Chamber of Commerce**



Sara Armstrong is Vice President of Federation Relations and Grassroots Advocacy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. She directs outreach efforts to the grassroots and the federation of trade associations and chambers across the country.

Previously, Armstrong served as Chief of Staff at the Republican National Committee after leading the 58th Presidential Inaugural Committee as Chief Executive Officer. Before that, she was Vice President of the 2016 Republican National Convention in Cleveland. Armstrong served at the RNC as Chief Operating Officer for the 2014 election cycle and as Deputy Chief of Staff during the 2012 presidential election cycle. She is also a former RNC Director of member services. Armstrong was a Special Assistant to President George W. Bush and Deputy Chief of Staff to first lady Laura Bush and served in the Bush administration as Director of the White House Visitors Office.

# SPEAKER BIOS

Armstrong resides in Alexandria, Virginia, with her husband, David. She was raised in Texas and South Carolina and received both her B.S. and M.B.A. degrees from the University of South Carolina.

## **Sean Mason, Director, Texas Office of State-Federal Relations**



Sean Mason is the Deputy Director for the Texas Office of State-Federal Relations. Sean previously served as a Legislative Staffer to Representative Beth Van Duyne (TX-24) and the Committee for House Administration. Before working in Washington, D.C., Sean was a Legislative Director in the Texas House of Representatives. Sean was born and raised in Austin, Texas and received his master's degree from the University of Texas at Austin and bachelor's degree from Appalachian State University, where he was a member of the baseball team.

## **Spencer Thibodeau, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Intergovernmental Affairs, Department of Energy**



Spencer Thibodeau is an attorney and public servant, practicing law in the real estate practice group of the Portland, Maine based law firm of Verrill Dana, LLP for eight years.

In addition to his legal practice, Spencer served as a Portland, Maine City Councilor for nearly six years, where he chaired the Housing And Economic Development Committee (2021) and Sustainability and Transportation Committee (2017-2020). In the summer of 2020, Spencer was selected to be the Maine Senior Advisor to the Biden-Harris Presidential campaign. Spencer has served on a number of boards and committees, including the United Way of Greater Portland and the Equity Subcommittee of the Maine Climate Council. Spencer also served as a member of Maine Governor Janet T. Mills' transition team in 2019.

Spencer is a proud graduate of Fairfield University and Northeastern University School of Law and when Spencer is not in the office, he can be found running, enjoying the Maine outdoors, or visiting one of Portland, Maine's many restaurants.

## **Steve Kean, President & CEO, Greater Houston Partnership**



Steve Kean is President and CEO of the Greater Houston Partnership, the Houston region's principal business organization. The Partnership focuses on attracting investment and trade to Houston, building a strong workforce, advocating for sound public policy, and convening a diverse set of Houstonians when major issues arise.

Prior to joining the Partnership in 2023, Steve was Chief Executive Officer of Kinder Morgan, one of the largest energy infrastructure companies in North America.

Steve has worked in the energy industry since 1985 in various commercial, operational, and legal positions, primarily in the wholesale energy and energy transportation and storage sectors.

Steve is Chairman of the Board of the Saint Constantine School, a classical Christian school in Houston. Steve also serves on the Advisory Board of the Collaborative for Children. Steve has been an active supporter of the Saint Constantine School, Cristo Rey Jesuit College Preparatory School, KIPP Houston, the Collaborative for Children, and the Houston Area Urban League. Steve holds a bachelor's degree from Iowa State University and a law degree from the University of Iowa.

Steve is married to Melissa Kean. Melissa, the retired Centennial Historian for Rice University, earned her Ph.D. in history from Rice University. She is the author of *Desegregating Private Higher Education in the South: Duke, Emory, Rice, Tulane, and Vanderbilt*. They have two daughters and five grandchildren.

## **Steve Montgomery, President & CEO, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce**



Steve Montgomery is President and CEO of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce. In this role, he leads the Chamber in its mission to drive business growth, support economic development, and advocate for the Fort Worth business community. He brings more than 30 years of public and private sector experience in the areas of executive leadership, public affairs, and strategic communications.

Steve thrives on engagement in the local business, community, and government conversation and enjoys connecting people across a spectrum of disciplines to ensure the sum is always greater than the parts.

# SPEAKER BIOS

Steve has worked on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., and in the state capitol in Austin. He helped build and lead a successful healthcare information technology firm and spent much of his career as a policy advocate in the healthcare, energy, transportation, and economic development sectors.

Steve received his BA in Government from the University of Texas at Austin and his MBA from the University of Texas at Arlington. He and his wife Rebecca live in Fort Worth.

## **Susan Harper, Consul General of Canada in Dallas**



In November 2022, Susan became Consul General in Dallas, the senior representative of the Government in Canada, responsible for Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Her office, the Consulate General, covers economic, political, and public affairs and provides consular and commercial services. The Consulate of Canada in Houston, which focuses on commercial issues, also reports to her office. In addition, these offices coordinate with several other key federal government departments, which focus on a range of issues including energy, environment, security, and defense, as well as with Canadian provinces who are active in the territory.

Previously, Susan was Consul General in Miami (2016 to 2022), Canada's Senior Arctic Official (2013 to 2016), and Director General in the trade policy area, covering policy, negotiations, and regulatory issues (2009 to 2013). She was at the Embassy of Canada in Washington, D.C. (2004 to 2009), where she became the Minister (Economic Affairs). In 2001 to 2004, she was Canada's Ambassador in Montevideo, Uruguay. She previously held trade positions in Yaoundé, Paris, and Buenos Aires.

Prior to joining the Government of Canada, Susan taught at both Cambrian College in Sudbury and George Brown College in Toronto. She holds an MBA from the Ivey School of Business at Western University and an Honours BA in Math and English from Queen's University.

Ms. Harper has 2 children, who keep her diplomatic, financial, and cross-border travel skills honed.

## **Travis Reynolds, Vice President of Public Policy, Dallas Regional Chamber**



Travis Reynolds serves as Vice President of Public Policy for the Dallas Regional Chamber (DRC), which has been recognized as the National Chamber of the Year.

Travis joined the Public Policy team in 2024 and is responsible for an issues portfolio that covers local, state, and federal issues, with a special emphasis on budgets and public finance.

Prior to joining the Chamber, Travis held a number of political and policy positions, including managing local, state and federal campaigns; leadership roles in a United States Congressional office; and, most recently, leading all advocacy initiatives for The Real Estate Council in Dallas.

Travis is a proud graduate of Texas Tech University, and lives in Grapevine with his wife, Elizabeth, their son Wyatt, and their two dogs, Otto and Marley.

*\*As of April 25, 2024*