

Resilient America Roundtable

Committee

Jessica Dandridge-Smith

Co-Chair

As the Executive Director of The Water Collaborative of Greater New Orleans (TWC), Jessica Dandridge has dedicated her life to community advocacy and campaign development for organizations seeking to be socially, economically, and culturally inclusive. As the Executive Director of TWC, she focuses on community-led adaptation and mitigation as the core of water justice and climate resiliency strategies. To be resilient, Jessica believes communities need redundant, rapidly distributed resources. To achieve this, Jessica has led a movement around water management as a tool for social and economic liberation that should be transformational to our most vulnerable communities. Today TWC focuses on water management, hazard mitigation, water justice through access, affordability, and quality, and equitable community transformation through blue/green jobs and the renewable economy. Ms. Dandridge received her B.A. at Xavier University of Louisiana in Political Science and her M.A. in International Affairs with a concentration in conflict and security at The New School for Public Engagement in New York City. Since starting her career as a youth organizer in 2005, she has worked for, or in collaboration with over two dozen organizations in Greater New Orleans and nationally. Before starting at the TWC, Ms. Jessica was the Louisiana State Director of the Campaign Election Engagement Project and a Program Director for the Rural Electric Cooperative Democracy Project for the Rockefeller Family Fund. Ms. Dandridge is a trained facilitator from YPQI, has a certificate in Leadership, Activism, and Civil Rights from Brown University, and a certificate in Kingian Nonviolence Strategies from the Selma Center of Nonviolence. In her current work, Jessica sits on 9 water and climate committees and coalitions across the state of Louisiana and Federally. She is currently working on a book chapter for a national review discussing just transition work in Louisiana and how water is a source of both trauma and liberation.

Sarah Slaughter

Co-Chair

Dr. E. Sarah Slaughter (NAE) is the founder, chief executive officer, and president of the Built Environment Coalition, a research and education nonprofit [501(c)(3)]. Dr. Slaughter is currently a member of the National Academy of Construction. She currently serves on the Green Building Advisory Committee (GBAC) to advise the U.S. General Services Administration and the Federal Government on the transformation of the federal portfolio of built facilities. She is a subject-matter expert on community and infrastructure resilience for several research projects, and currently advises several federal agencies on strategies for improving resilience. In 2015, Dr. Slaughter was a visiting lecturer at the MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning focusing on resilient communities. Before founding the Built Environment Coalition, she was the Associate Director for Buildings and Infrastructure at the MIT Energy Initiative (MITEI) and was co-founder and faculty head of the Sustainability Initiative at the MIT Sloan School of Management. From 1999 through 2005, Dr. Slaughter was the founder and CEO of MOCA Systems, Inc., a software-enabled construction program management company utilizing the construction simulation software system Dr. Slaughter developed in her MIT research. Before founding MOCA, she was an MIT professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and earlier, was a professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Lehigh University and conducted research in the NSF Center for Advanced Technology for Large Structural Systems (ATLSS).

Divya Chandrasekhar

Member

Dr. Divya Chandrasekhar is an Associate Professor in the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning at the University of Utah with expertise in community recovery from disasters. Her research has examined post-disaster community participation and capacity building, networking and coordination among recovery institutions, and disaster recovery policy in South and Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, and the United States. She is a member of the Utah Seismic Safety Commission, the Utah State Hazard Mitigation Team, and an affiliate of the Global Change and Sustainability Center at the University of Utah. Dr. Chandrasekhar holds a Ph.D. and Master's in urban and regional planning from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a Bachelor's degree in physical planning from the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi.

Judson Freed

Member

Judson Freed has nearly 40 years of experience in emergency management, homeland security, risk, resilience, and continuity. He has worked in the academic, private, and public sectors and created and expanded innovative and successful emergency management programs in local government, academia, and as a private consultant. For the past 23 years, Judd served as the Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security for Ramsey County, Minnesota, one of the nation's most densely populated, large urban counties. Prior to that he was the Emergency Management Director for the University of Minnesota. Judd is a FEMA Vanguard Fellow and a frequent presenter and lecturer on issues surrounding emergency management, homeland security, public sector risk, and ethics in an age of terrorism. He is also an adjunct professor of homeland security and emergency management at Millersville University and at Idaho State University, as well as a lecturer on community risk at the University of Minnesota. Judd is very active in government affairs issues pertaining to the structure of homeland security and the emergency management enterprise and the implications to and impact on local communities and local government. He has provided expert testimony before the United States Congress on several occasions, and to federal commissions as well as the Minnesota State Legislature. Judd served on the Subcommittee on Homeland Security and Emergency Management at the National Association of Counties (NACo) (Chair of the Subcommittees as well as Vice Chair for much of the past two decades), and as a member of NACo's Large Urban Counties Caucus and the Resilient Counties Advisory Board. Judd also sat on the NACo Board of Directors. He is a past President of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), and of Minnesota's Association of Emergency Managers. He remains a member of the IAEM Global Board of Directors, and a member of the IAEM Government Affairs Committee. In addition, Judd was a Commissioner on the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) Board of Directors. A Certified Emergency Manager through IAEM, Judd holds a Master of Arts in Security Studies (Homeland Defense and Security) from the Naval Postgraduate School, a BA in US History from the University of Minnesota, and a Management Certificate from the Carlson School of Management. He is a graduate of the Joint Forces Staff College Homeland Security Planner program and the DeBecker Advanced Threat Assessment and Management Academy. He has authored several articles on topics ranging from anti-research terrorism to catastrophic spinal injuries in collegiate athletics and has authored curricula for undergraduate emergency management courses at various institutions. A book chapter on Applying Management and Organizational Theory to Create Effective Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agencies was published in 2017.

Judd and his wife live in Minnesota.

Kristen Averyt Hinton

Member

Dr. Kristen Averyt Hinton is the Executive Vice President of Science at AGU. She previously served as the White House Director for Drought and Western Resilience in the Executive Office of the President, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). She was also a Research Professor at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. Before her position at the CEQ, Dr. Hinton served as a Senior Climate Advisor to the former Governor Sisolak in Nevada and held positions including President of the Desert Research Institute and at the University of Colorado Boulder as the Associate Director for Science at CIRES (Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences). Dr. Hinton has a long record of connecting climate science with public policy and decision-making. She was one of many scientists who shared in the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and served as an author on several US National Climate Assessments. In 2005, she worked in the US Senate as a NOAA Knauss Fellow and prior to that, at the National Academies of Science as a Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Fellow. Dr. Hinton is a Fellow of the American Meteorological Society (AMS), a past member of the AMS Council, and engages in several other service activities. Her research portfolio includes characterizing risks at the energy-water nexus, as well as understanding linkages between climate and western water. She holds a Ph.D. in Geological and Environmental Sciences from Stanford University, where she was named the 2024 Doerr School of Sustainability Mid-Career Alumni of the Year. She earned an M.S. in Chemistry as a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Otago, New Zealand. She has B.S. degrees in Chemistry and Marine Science from the University of Miami.

Maria Honeycutt

Member

Dr. Maria Honeycutt, CFM, is the National Director for All-Hazards Resilience, and Resilience Global Practice Leader for AtkinsRéalis. From within Atkins' Community and Intermodal Infrastructure Business Unit, Dr. Honeycutt works across the firm to mainstream outcome-focused resilience principles and best practices into the range of planning, risk assessment, design, and construction projects that Atkins delivers to governmental and private-sector clients worldwide.

Prior to joining Atkins, Dr. Honeycutt served for 14 years as a Coastal Hazards Specialist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) Office for Coastal Management, where she applied her expertise in coastal geoscience and hazard mitigation towards developing national policy and tools that build community resilience to flooding. From 2019-2022, she was detailed to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, serving across two Presidential Administrations as Assistant Director for Resilience Science and Technology (S&T). She coordinated research on natural hazards and other threats across White House components and co-chaired the National Science and Technology Council's Subcommittee on Resilience S&T. Under the National Climate Task Force, she led the interagency in capturing the state of the science for identifying future flood hazards and in developing decision-support tools for Federal Flood Risk Management Standard implementation.

Before joining NOAA, Dr. Honeycutt served as a Congressional Science Fellow for U.S. Senator Bill Nelson (FL) (AAAS S&T Policy Fellows Program; sponsored by U.S. Geological Survey and Geological Society of America). She spent the preceding seven years as an engineering consultant leading post-hurricane recovery mapping projects along the Gulf Coast for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). She began her career in all-hazards policy, and risk reduction by serving as a Knauss Sea Grant Marine Policy Fellow in FEMA's building sciences program.

Dr. Honeycutt earned a B.A. in geology from Smith College, an M.S. and Ph.D. in oceanography from the University of Delaware, and is professionally registered as a Certified Floodplain Manager.

Devyani Kar

Member

Dr. Devyani Kar is the Principal Resilience Scientist at Jacobs. Prior to coming to Jacobs, Devyani worked with Stantec, where she was a Senior Climate Resilience Scientist. Devyani has over 20 years of experience working on climate-change mitigation and adaptation to build resilience for coastal communities nationwide. She has led numerous multi-million-dollar coastal restoration and risk reduction projects that incorporate natural and nature-based features to mitigate risks and provide multiple co-benefits. She is a member of the Gulf Environmental Protection and Stewardship Board (GEPS), under the Gulf Research Program at the National Academies of Sciences. Devyani has a Doctorate in Oceanography from Louisiana State University and a Master of Environmental Management (MEM) with a coastal focus from Duke University. She is a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) and a Project Management Professional (PMP).

Rajul Pandya

Member

In January 2024, Dr. Raj Pandya joined Arizona State University as the Fulton Presidential Professor of Practice at Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College and Executive Director of the Global Futures Education Lab, associated with the Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory. Before that, he served as the Vice-President of Community Science and founding Director of the Thriving Earth Exchange at the American Geophysical Union.

Raj invites everyone—especially people from communities who have been historically excluded —to help build sustainable futures where people and nature thrive together. His work focuses on how the sciences can be more participatory, how community participation contributes to scientific innovation and societal relevance, and how the sciences and universities can be allies in building shared sustainable futures.

Raj served on or is serving on advisory boards for the Anthropocene Alliance, Citizen Science Association (now Association for Advancing the Participatory Sciences), Community and College Partners Program, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Denver Institute for Science and Policy, ISET International, and Public Lab. He is a member of the Scientific Advisory Council of the American Red Cross, chaired the National Academies committee on “Designing Citizen Science to Support Science Learning,” and is a member of the National Academies Standing Committee on Science Communication and the Resilient America Roundtable. He is an editor for the journal Community Science. He started his career as an atmospheric scientist, exploring how large thunderstorms grow and persist, and taught Meteorology and Astronomy at West Chester University of Pennsylvania.

Edwin A. Schmitt

Member

Dr. Edwin Schmitt is currently an Advisor to Commissioner Christine Harada. Before joining the Commissioner's team, Edwin was a senior analyst at the California Public Utilities Commission focused on helping the Commission consider ways that risk assessment could incorporate an environmental justice approach. While participating in the Resilient America Roundtable he is not representing the CPUC. Previously, Edwin was a postdoctoral researcher in the Re-engineered Lab at Arizona State University where he managed the NSF Germination-funded Project Confluence. Project Confluence is helping to create a movement of community groups, engineers, scientists, academics, and other professionals to address unmet challenges related to environmental injustice in the United States.

Edwin received his MA in Applied Anthropology from Oregon State University, where he participated in the interdisciplinary IDAM Project that explored the socioeconomic, biophysical, and geopolitical impacts of hydropower development and the resilience of communities affected by forced resettlement. For his doctoral research at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Edwin conducted ethnographic and survey-based research on rising environmental consciousness in the city of Chengdu.

After the 2008 Wenchuan Earthquake in Western China, Edwin volunteered with Chinese organizations to provide material assistance to communities affected by the disaster. He then spent the next 18 months working with multiple domestic and foreign NGOs to help those communities rebuild their homes and economic livelihoods.

Kyle Whyte

Member

Dr. Kyle Whyte is a faculty member at the University of Michigan, where he is George Willis Pack Professor in the School for Environment and Sustainability, University Diversity and Social Transformation Professor, and Professor of Philosophy in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. Kyle teaches in the SEAS environmental justice specialization. He is the founding Faculty Director of the Tishman Center for Social Justice and the Environment, Principal Investigator of the Energy Equity Project, co-Principal Investigator of SEAS' Global Center for Understanding Climate Change Impacts on Transboundary Waters, Faculty Associate of Native American Studies, and Senior Fellow in the Michigan Society of Fellows. His research addresses environmental justice, focusing on moral and political issues concerning climate policy and Indigenous peoples, the ethics of cooperative relationships between Indigenous peoples and science organizations, and problems of Indigenous justice in public and academic discussions of food sovereignty, environmental justice, and the anthropocene. He is an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. The National Science Foundation has been a major supporter of Dr. Whyte's research and educational projects for nearly a decade. Supporters also include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Mellon Foundation, Swedish Research Council for Sustainable Development, Sustainable Michigan Endowed Program, Spencer Foundation, Marsden Fund, and Health Research Council of New Zealand. Dr. Whyte's publications appear in journals such as Climatic Change, Weather, Climate & Society, WIREs Climate Change, Environment & Planning E, Daedalus, Synthese, and Sustainability Science.

Dr. Whyte is involved with a number of organizations that advance Indigenous research and education methodologies, including the Climate and Traditional Knowledges Workgroup, the Sustainable Development Institute of the College of Menominee Nation, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, and Nga Pae o te Maramatanga New Zealand's Maori Centre of Research Excellence. He is a certificate holder of the Training Programme to Enhance the Conflict Prevention and Peacemaking Capacities of Indigenous Peoples' Representatives, from the United Nations Institute of Training and Research.

He has received the Community Engagement Scholarship Award and Distinguished Partnership Award for Community Engaged Research from Michigan State University, the Bunyan Bryant Award for Academic Excellence from Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice, and the Forty Under 40 Alumni Award and Don Ihde Distinguished Alumni Award from Stony Brook University. Dr. Whyte has been the Austin J. Fagothey Distinguished Visiting Professor at Santa Clara University, the Rudrick Distinguished Visiting Scholar at the University of Waterloo, and the Timnick Chair in the Humanities at Michigan State University.