



## PROGRAM

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) &  
The Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA)

### 2023 Washington Conference

March 12-15, 2023

The Crystal Gateway Marriott | 1700 Richmond Highway, Arlington Virginia

#### Sunday, March 12, 2023

*NOTE: NADO and DDAA board members and advisory committee members are asked to participate in pre-conference meetings throughout the day on Sunday March 12. All conference attendees are encouraged to attend the Opening Reception on Sunday evening beginning at 5:30 p.m. ET. DDAA members are invited to attend the DDAA Dinner Banquet that follows at 6:30 p.m. ET.*

**10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.**

Registration – All attendees

Arlington Foyer

**10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

NADO Research Foundation Advisory Committee Meeting – NADO Research Foundation Advisory Committee members

Mt. Vernon

**1:00-3:00 p.m.**

DDAA Board of Directors Meeting – DDAA Board of Directors

Alexandria

**1:00-3:00 p.m.**

NADO Executive Committee Meeting – NADO Executive Committee members

Mt. Vernon

**3:30-5:30 p.m.**

NADO Board of Directors Meeting – NADO Board of Directors

Salons 5-6

**5:30-6:30 p.m.**

Opening Reception – All attendees

Salons 3-4

**6:30-8:00 p.m.**

DDAA Dinner Banquet – DDAA members

Salons 1-2

\*Agenda is subject to change

# Monday, March 13, 2023

*NOTE: Concurrent breakout sessions on Monday are open to all participants, including both NADO and DDAA members. The "NADO track," "DDAA track," and "Joint track" labels denote which attendees may find the session content most relevant, but all attendees are welcome.*

**7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.**

*Arlington Foyer*

**Registration – All attendees**

**7:45-9:00 a.m.**

*Salons 1-2*

**DDAA Breakfast and Annual Business Meeting – DDAA members**

**Speakers:**

- **Brandon McBride**, Executive Director, Appalachian Regional Commission
- **Guy Land**, Congressional Liaison Specialist, Appalachian Regional Commission
- **Jim Hyland**, States' Washington Representative, Appalachian Regional Commission

**Moderator:**

- **Jeffrey Box**, President and CEO, Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance

**9:15-10:30 a.m.**

*Salons 3-4*

**Opening Plenary Session - All attendees**

**Charting the Course Ahead: Landmark Federal Funding and the Path Forward**

During this session, hear from leadership from a variety of federal agencies who have played important roles in implementing federal economic recovery efforts over the past two years. This panel of experts will share status updates on how federal funding within the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Fiscal Year 2023 Omnibus and Disaster Supplemental, and other recent landmark legislation are impacting communities. Additionally, the panelists will share information about new programs and initiatives, evolving federal priorities, and their goals and visions for the year ahead.

**Opening Remarks:**

- **Jeffrey Box**, President and CEO, Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance; DDAA President
- **Chris Fetzer**, Executive Director, Northern Arizona Council of Governments; NADO President

**Panel Discussion Speakers:**

- **Farah Ahmad**, Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development
- **Alejandra Castillo**, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration
- **Claudette Fernandez**, General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Moderator:**

- **Joe McKinney**, Executive Director, National Association of Development Organizations

**10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

**Concurrent Breakout Sessions (A, B, C, D):**

*\*Agenda is subject to change*

**Breakout A: NADO track**

*Salon 1*

**EDA and EDDs: Partners in Strengthening Regional Economic Development**

Since the 1960's, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the national network of EDA-designated Economic Development Districts (EDDs) have closely collaborated to support regional economic development efforts across the country. As this partnership moves through its fifth decade and EDDs continue to support regional resilience and recovery, there has never been a better time to reflect on the impact EDDs make in local communities every day. During this session, you'll hear from EDA staff about their collaborative work with EDDs, the latest updates on CEDS guidelines, and how EDDs can effectively engage with an array of federal partners and programs. The session will also include best practices from two EDDs as well as more information about the newly-formed Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP).

**Speakers:**

- **Nancy Gilbert**, Economic Development Integrator, U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration
- **David Ives**, Deputy Director, Performance, Research, and National Technical Assistance Division, U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration
- **Michelle Jordan**, Executive Director, Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments
- **Bonnie Prigge**, Executive Director, Meramec Regional Planning Commission

**Moderator:**

- **Brett Schwartz**, Associate Director, NADO Research Foundation

**Breakout B: NADO track**

*Salon 2*

**Climate Smart Municipalities: How Your Organization Can Become a Grassroots Catalyst for Global Partnerships**

For over a decade, the Region Nine Development Commission (RNDC) has been leading conversations around the clean energy economy in South Central Minnesota. What began with educating community members on the benefits of upgrading lights has now evolved into a network of international partnerships. During this session, RNDC will share their experience of a cross-cultural learning exchange to the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia on the topic of sustainable communities and the clean energy economy and the role a development organization can play.

**Speakers:**

- **Andrea Boettger**, New Ulm Council President; Region Nine Development Commission Vice Chair
- **Paola Ferrario**, Community Development Planner, Region Nine Development Commission
- **Nicole Griensewic**, Executive Director, Region Nine Development Commission
- **Mike Laven**, Mankato City Council President; Region Nine Development Commission Board Chair

**Moderator:**

- **Jamie McCormick**, Legislative Associate, NADO

**Breakout C: DDAA track**

*Salon 5*

**Pathways and Partnerships: Changing the Employer Mindset**

Short-term apprenticeships are promising strategies to address labor market needs, but they require successful partnerships with engaged employers to fulfill their potential. This session will review novel approaches and will include the perspectives of both employers and workforce training providers.

**Speakers:**

- **Whitney Blair**, Director, WorkSource Georgia Mountains, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

**Moderator:**

- **Allison Forbes**, Vice President of Research, Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness

**Breakout D: Joint track**

*Salon 6*

**How Landmark Investments in Infrastructure, Transportation, Broadband, and Energy are Impacting Communities**

As a result of the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) – otherwise known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – landmark funding has become available to help communities upgrade their transportation infrastructure and broadband infrastructure. Additionally, the BIL provides funding for investments to support cutting-edge technology to support electric vehicles. During this session, hear from experts from other national associations as they discuss how they are helping their members take advantage of new infrastructure funding and resources.

**Speakers:**

- **Seamus Dowdall**, Associate Legislative Director of Telecommunications & Technology, National Association of Counties
- **Susan Howard**, Director of Policy and Government Relations, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
- **Hill Thomas**, Vice President, Legislative Affairs, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

**Moderator:**

- **Hal Hiemstra**, Partner, Summit Strategies

**12:15-1:30 p.m.**

*Salons 3-4*

**Plenary Luncheon – All attendees**

**Innovative Solutions to Rural Challenges**

During this session, hear from Matt Dunne, the Founder and Executive Director of the Center on Rural Innovation (CORI), which helps rural communities across the country build inclusive tech economies from the ground up. CORI's data-driven work in rural America includes strategies for creating tech accelerators, co-work spaces, tech talent development, and securing the funding to make these initiatives come to life. CORI's Rural Innovation Network is a community of practice for the small towns that are making progress on that journey, and its seed fund, the CORI Innovation Fund provides capital directly to early-stage tech startups located in rural areas. The organization also engages in research into rural economic trends and data that builds a better understanding of rural America.

**Speaker:**

- **Matt Dunne**, Founder and Executive Director, Center on Rural Innovation

**Moderator:**

- **Tom Kennedy**, Director of Community Development, Mount Ascutney Regional Commission

**1:45-3:00 p.m.**

**Concurrent Breakout Sessions (A, B, C, D):**

***Breakout A: NADO track***

*Salon 1*

**Promoting Equity in Underserved Communities: Research and Best Practices**

Advancing equity within underserved communities is a key priority for the Biden Administration, and soon will be a required component of EDA's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs). Come to this session to learn about ongoing research and examples of how to prioritize this essential work. Join speakers and practitioners as they discuss themes from the New Growth Innovation Network's (NGIN) forthcoming guide and toolkit focused on inclusive economic development, and best practice examples from around the country.

**Speakers:**

- **Charlie Baker**, Executive Director, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
- **Bernadette Grafton**, Program Analyst and University Center Coordinator, U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration
- **Natalie Evans Harris**, Executive Director, Black Wealth Data Center
- **Betsy Suchanic**, Inclusive Economic Development Advisor, New Growth Innovation Network

**Moderator:**

- **Martha Shickle**, Executive Director, PlanRVA

***Breakout B: NADO track***

*Salon 2*

**Practice and Policy to Support Thriving Rural Places**

Significant amounts of federal funding have become available to communities and regions in recent legislation. However, funding by itself typically cannot create lasting change that benefits whole communities. During this session, hear about the Thrive Rural Framework for local and systems-level change that builds upon existing assets to grow regional economies. Panelists will make concrete connections to Regional Development Organizations' work and federal policy priorities of importance to NADO and DDAA members.

**Speakers:**

- **Chris Estes**, Co-Executive Director, The Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group
- **Doug O'Brien**, President and CEO, National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International

**Moderator:**

- **Erica Anderson**, Director of Economic and Community Development, Land of Sky Regional Council

***Breakout C: DDAA track***

*Salon 5*

**Project Development Roundtable**

With so many new funding programs in the community and economic development realm, there is an immense opportunity across Appalachia to develop new projects. Join this session to talk with peers about developing projects in a variety of areas such as workforce, broadband, and

transportation, or join table discussions to explore opportunities to build projects spanning across multiple regions.

**Facilitators:**

- **Sarah Arney**, Program Analyst, Critical Infrastructure, Appalachian Regional Commission
- **Kurt Bauman**, Vice President Community & Economic Development Services Division, Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance
- **Heather Feldman**, Executive Director, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
- **Curtis Hansen**, Program Manager, Critical Infrastructure, Appalachian Regional Commission
- **Erik Pages**, President, EntreWorks Consulting
- **Brad Roebke**, Program Analyst, Critical Infrastructure, Appalachian Regional Commission

**Breakout D: Joint track**

*Salon 6*

**Regional Commissions: Creating Better Outcomes for Economically Distressed Communities**

During this session, hear perspectives from leadership from the various Regional Commissions that were created by Congress to serve specific geographic areas of the country. Learn how they are leveraging their resources and their unique federal-state partnership structures to create better outcomes in economically distressed geographic regions of the country.

**Speakers:**

- **Garrett Boyle**, Federal Co-Chair, Denali Commission
- **Jennifer Clyburn Reed**, Federal Co-chair, Southeast Crescent Regional Commission
- **Gayle Manchin**, Federal Co-Chair, Appalachian Regional Commission
- **Juan Sanchez**, Federal Co-Chair, Southwest Border Regional Commission
- **Chris Saunders**, Federal Co-chair, Northern Border Regional Commission
- **Corey Wiggins**, Federal Co-Chair, Delta Regional Authority

**Moderator:**

- **Matthew Dolge**, Executive Director, Piedmont Triad Regional Council

**3:30-4:30 p.m.**

**Regional Chapter Meetings - NADO and DDAA members**

Central Meeting: *Salon 1*

East Meeting: *Salon 2*

Midwest Meeting: *Salon 5*

Southeast Meeting: *Roslyn I & II*

Southwest Meeting: *Salon 6*

West Meeting: *Alexandria*

**4:30-6:00 p.m.**

*Salons 3-4*

**Federal Stakeholders Networking Reception – All attendees**

This reception provides an opportunity for federal agency staff and leadership and other national stakeholder organizations to interact with NADO and DDAA members.

## **Tuesday, March 14, 2023**

*NOTE: NADO attendees are encouraged to participate in meetings on Capitol Hill on Tuesday, March 14. For those attendees who do not plan to attend Hill meetings, additional conference content is offered at the conference venue throughout the day.*

**7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.**

*Arlington Foyer*

**Registration – All attendees**

**7:45-9:00 a.m.**

*Salons 1-2*

**DDAA Breakfast: ARC Leadership Update – DDAA members**

**Speaker:**

- **Gayle Manchin**, Federal Co-chair, Appalachian Regional Commission

**Moderator:**

- **Jeffrey Box**, President and CEO, Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance

**9:15-10:15 a.m.**

*Salons 3-4*

**Plenary Session – All attendees**

**Politics with a Punch: Insider Insights on Today's Top News**

Before you depart for meetings on Capitol Hill, hear from DC insider Jake Sherman, the co-founder of Punchbowl News and the former co-author of POLITICO Playbook. Sherman is among the most widely respected voices in the political press; he is known for providing up-to-the-minute insights about what's happening on Capitol Hill, for his expertise on current policy issues, and for his knowledge of the players and personalities driving politics today.

**Speaker:**

- **Jake Sherman**, Co-founder, Punchbowl News

**Moderator:**

- **Chris Brown**, Executive Director, Ark-Tex Council of Governments; NADO First Vice President

**10:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.**

**Capitol Hill Meetings (on your own) - NADO track**

*NOTE: Attendees are encouraged to spend this open block of time on Capitol Hill educating your members of Congress about your work. Hill meetings are self-directed. If you need help securing contact information for Hill staffers and schedulers, please contact Jamie McCormick at [jmccormick@nado.org](mailto:jmccormick@nado.org). Please note that only the Senate will be in session during the week of March 13, 2023, but this window of time still lends a valuable opportunity to meet with Hill staffers in both Senate and House offices. To view the 2023 Congressional Calendar, [click here](#).*

**10:30-11:45 a.m.**

**Concurrent Breakout Sessions (A and B):**

**Breakout A: DDAA track**

*Salon 5*

**Leveraging Technology to Improve Regional Mapping**

Accurate mapping is crucial to planning and development, agriculture, infrastructure, water/sewer, and a variety of other applications. This session will review the use of LiDAR data or digital elevation data and how it can benefit your region.

*\*Agenda is subject to change*

**Speakers:**

- **Faith Bryan**, Director of Information Services, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
- **Toby Sanford**, GIS Director, Golden Triangle Planning and Development District (Starkville, Mississippi)

**Moderator:**

- **Heather Feldman**, Executive Director, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

**Breakout B: DDAA track**

*Salon 6*

**Successful Approaches to Supporting the Recovery-To-Work Ecosystem**

This session will showcase a New York Local Development District's approaches and successes in supporting the local Recovery-to-Work ecosystem. By developing a plan, building partnerships, reducing stigma, and tracking successes, supporting a recovery-to-work ecosystem can empower individuals in treatment for substance use disorder while also addressing local workforce needs.

**Speakers:**

- **Tom Kowalik**, President, Kowalik & Associates LLC
- **Dr. Julie Dostal**, Executive Director, LEAF Council on Alcoholism & Addictions

**Moderator:**

- **Jen Gregory**, Executive Director, Southern Tier 8 Regional Board

**11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m.**

Lunch on your own

**1:30-2:45 p.m.**

**Concurrent Breakout Sessions (A and B):**

**Breakout A: DDAA track**

*Salon 5*

**Leveraging Small Business Development Center, University, and Entrepreneur Center Partnerships to Promote Economic Development**

In Spring 2020 the Upper Cumberland Development District took over the management of the local Small Business Development Center. The technical services provided through the SBDC have been magnified through the community reach of the Development District, leading to the creation of a collaborative effort to provide seamless delivery of technical assistance, a full range of capital opportunities from micro loans to angel investors, and an innovative new approach to internships that is able to provide project-based work to multiple businesses.

**Speakers:**

- **Mark Farley**, Executive Director, Upper Cumberland Development District
- **Tyler Asher**, Small Business Development Center Director, Upper Cumberland Development District
- **Jodi Pitts**, Small Business Specialist, Upper Cumberland Development District, Small Business Development Center

**Moderator:**

- **Jen Simon**, Program Manager, Business and Workforce Investments, Appalachian Regional Commission



**Breakout B: DDAA track**

Salon 6

**Pivoting to Tourism**

The pandemic offered opportunities to think creatively about how to support local economies through tourism, which is an important pathway toward regional rejuvenation in Appalachia. As we look beyond the impacts of the pandemic toward the future, what are some new approaches that will define the “new normal” and have a lasting impact?

**Speakers:**

- **Hannah Carroll**, Tourism Recovery Coordinator, Upper Cumberland Development District
- **Tommy Lee**, Deputy Director, Upper Cumberland Development District
- **Judy McKinney Cherry**, Executive Director, Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development
- **Kristin Van Horn**, Director of Planning for Schuyler County
- **Jill Foys**, Executive Director, Northwest Commission

**3:00-4:15 p.m.**

**Concurrent Breakout Sessions (A and B):**

**Breakout A: DDAA track**

Salon 5

**Stuck in the Middle with You: Partnering to Build, Fund and Maintain an Open Access Middle Mile Network**

Reliable broadband is both essential to modern economic development and faces a variety of continuing challenges despite the introduction of new funding opportunities. This session will explore one region’s approach, design, investments and how they have overcome challenges by partnering with unlikely suspects.

**Speaker:**

- **Jeff Gasper**, Chief Executive Officer, Southern Tier Network, Inc.

**Moderator:**

- **Chelsea Robertson**, Executive Director, Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board

**Breakout B: DDAA track**

Salon 6

**Rural Entrepreneurship Education: An Economic Development Model**

A rural entrepreneurship education program in South Carolina has allowed residents of small towns to reclaim the vibrance of their communities. The entrepreneurship program is having wide-ranging impacts: it is bringing people together; building connections between small towns that had never collaborated before; providing a catalyst for young adults to see themselves as conduits of progress; and providing hundreds of individuals with relevant instruction about business creation, retention, and expansion.

**Speaker:**

- **Wilder Ferreira**, Rural Development Master Extension Associate, Clemson University

**Moderator:**

- **Steve Pelissier**, Executive Director, Appalachian Council of Governments

**4:30-6:00 p.m.**

Skyview

**Reception – All attendees**

\*Agenda is subject to change

# Wednesday, March 15, 2023

*NOTE: Conference content for the NADO & DDAA joint conference concludes at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 15. Following the conference, there is a special post-conference training for the Economic Development District (EDD) Community of Practice (CoP). This post-conference training session is free, but separate registration is required.*

**8:00-10:00 a.m.**

*Arlington Foyer*

**Registration** – *All attendees*

**8:30-9:45 a.m.**

*Salons 5-6*

**Plenary Breakfast** – *All attendees*

## **The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Local and Regional Impacts**

The passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) – set the stage for historic levels of investment in all modes of transportation and traditional forms of infrastructure, as well as broadband, electric vehicles, and more. During this session, hear updates from leadership from the U.S. Department of Transportation, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture on how they are working to ensure that the BIL's impact will be felt locally and regionally for decades to come.

### **Speakers:**

- **Christopher Coes**, Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, U.S. Department of Transportation
- **Andrew Berke**, Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development
- **Michael Berube**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Sustainable Transportation, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, U.S. Department of Energy

### **Moderator:**

- **Chris Fetzer**, Executive Director, Northern Arizona Council of Governments; NADO President

**10:00-11:00 a.m.**

*Salon 4*

**Closing Plenary Session** – *All attendees*

## **Workforce Development: Current Issues and Trends**

The future of work is changing rapidly, and labor market challenges are being felt across the country. As expectations and approaches surrounding the nature of work continue to evolve, the manner in which workers are trained to participate in the workforce must evolve also. During this session, hear from a panel of experts who will discuss developing trends, changing policies, and training models designed to meet current challenges.

### **Speakers:**

- **Joe Kane**, Fellow, The Brookings Institution
- **Nicole Smith**, Research Professor and Chief Economist, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
- **Kim Vitelli**, Administrator, Office of Workforce Investment, U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration

*\*Agenda is subject to change*

**Moderator:**

- **Ken Poole**, Executive Director, Development District Association of Appalachia