



StratComm: H2O Virtual Event

SPEAKER PROFILES

National Association of Clean Water Agencies

June 14 - 15, 2021



Sara Aminzadeh
Vice President of Partnerships
US Water Alliance
San Francisco, CA

Sara Aminzadeh is the Vice President of Partnerships at the US Water Alliance, a national nonprofit organization advancing policies and programs that build a sustainable water future for all. She oversees fundraising, strategic communications and partnerships, and supports the Chief Executive Officer to grow the One Water movement.

Ms. Aminzadeh is an attorney and advocate with more than 15 years of experience working at the intersection of law, policy, communications, and grassroots organizing in service of environmental justice. Prior to joining the US Water Alliance, she led the Water Program at the Pisces Foundation, supporting equitable and sustainable water solutions in cities across the country. She also authored one of the first papers to explore the linkages between human rights and climate change, later writing the chapter, *Rising to the Challenge: California Climate Change Adaptation* in the 2014 Oxford University textbook, *Climate Change Impacts on Ocean and Coastal Law*.

Previously, Ms. Aminzadeh was the Executive Director at California Coastkeeper Alliance, a grassroots network dedicated to achieving swimmable, fishable, and drinkable waters in CA. She worked to build political power for policy and legislative reforms for clean water, including by recruiting and launching the business network Blue Business Council.

Ms. Aminzadeh currently serves as an appointed, volunteer member of the California Coastal Commission and was recognized for her coastal protection work by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors as a Visionary Woman.

Ms. Aminzadeh holds a JD from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, and a BA with honors from University of California Santa Barbara in political science and environmental studies. In her spare time, she enjoys stand-up paddling, hiking, running, and spending time with her mischievous toddler son.



Blake Androff
Executive Vice President
Signal Outdoors
Washington, DC

Blake Androff is an expert legislative and communications strategist who brings over 15 years of experience at the intersection of press, policy, and politics. He has provided strategic guidance for the Speaker of the House, two Cabinet Secretaries and two Congressional Committees. He helps clients navigate Washington, DC's ever-changing political landscape while delivering results using innovative and evolving solutions. He is adept at moving the needle with policymakers and brand reputation management in DC's unforgiving political and media climate.

Prior to joining Signal, Mr. Androff served in the Office of the Speaker as the Executive Director of the House Democratic Policy & Communications Committee (DPCC). He was responsible for crafting the successful messaging and legislative strategy that resulted in Democrats taking back control of the US House of Representatives in 2018 for the first time in nearly a decade. He has vast experience working with Members, Leadership and Committee staff, national reporters, and advocacy associations on pressing legislative issues at the forefront of the current debate in the Capitol.

Appointed by President Barack Obama, Mr. Androff directed large communications teams for two Secretaries of the US Department of the Interior. He led high-profile, crisis communications national incidents at a cabinet agency with 77,000 employees and oversaw the multi-million-dollar branding campaign of the National Park Service’s centennial celebration. His team was routinely recognized as having the most engaging digital presence of all federal agencies.

Mr. Androff previously supported the top Democrat on the US House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and the US House Natural Resources Committee.



Brooke Givens
 Communications and Outreach Manager
 KC Water
 Kansas City, MO

Brooke Givens is the Communications and Outreach Manager for KC Water in Kansas City, MO. Ms. Givens and her team support KC Water’s water, wastewater, and stormwater divisions with a variety of communication services including newsletters, bill inserts, graphics, events, and social media. She has received two National Association of Clean Water Agencies’ *National Environmental Achievement Awards* for short videos highlighting the problem with flushable wipes and the message behind “Imagine a Day Without Water,” a national day of awareness.

Ms. Givens joined KC Water as the Media Relations Coordinator in 2015 before moving into her current role. Before that she spent more than 20 years in television news.



Kellie Lunney
 Senior Congressional Reporter
 Bloomberg Industry Group
 Washington, DC

Kellie Lunney is a Senior Reporter covering energy and environment on Capitol Hill for Bloomberg Government. She’s covered government, politics, lobbying, and policy at E&E News, National Journal, and Government Executive. A graduate of Colgate University, she has more than two decades of journalism experience in Washington, DC.

Ms. Lunney also teaches an Intro to News Writing and Reporting class at George Washington University. Before she began her journalism career, she worked at the Housing and Urban Development Department.



Bess McCoy

Co-Vice Chair, NACWA Communications and Public Affairs Committee
 Public Affairs Specialist
 Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District
 St. Louis, MO

Bess McCoy is a Public Affairs Specialist with the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD), serving on a team of four in the district's Public Affairs Division.

Driven by her passion for public engagement and government transparency, Ms. McCoy leads MSD's employee communication and municipal communication efforts. She is responsible for engaging more than 1,000 employees and 88 municipalities in MSD's efforts to

protect the public health and water environment. Ms. McCoy also serves as an official spokesperson for MSD. The "positive face" of the district, she is the primary representative for MSD's proactive media engagement including their educational campaigns and stories highlighting their preventative activities.

MSD is two utilities in one; it is a wastewater utility and a stormwater utility. With over 9,000 miles of sewer lines and seven wastewater treatment plants, MSD is the fourth largest sewer system in the US. MSD serves more than 1.3 million customers in a 520 square-mile service area that includes all of St. Louis City and 90% of St. Louis County.

Prior to joining MSD, Ms. McCoy served as the Public Information Officer for the City of Creve Coeur, a municipality in St. Louis County. She also spent four years working in the advertising industry where she specialized in online marketing and strategic research. A lifelong St. Louis area resident, Ms. McCoy earned a BA in Communication from Saint Louis University.

Ms. McCoy is currently the Co-Vice Chair of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies' Communications and Public Affairs Committee.



Clare McGough
 Senior Manager
 BBDO Worldwide
 New York, NY

Clare McGough is a strategic thinker, a content lover, and an idea person. Her multi-faceted skill set has allowed her to serve a hybrid role at her current and past agencies while working across the strategy and client-relations departments.

Ms. McGough truly enjoys collaborating with passionate people to find the most creative ways to solve a brand's business problems.



Sapna Mulki
Senior Consultant, Strategic Communications
Raftelis
Austin, TX

Sapna Mulki (pronounced sup-na mool-kee) has over 10 years of experience in the water and environmental sector working on a wide range of issues including communications and marketing, policy analysis, and social science research.

Prior to joining Raftelis, Ms. Mulki founded Water Savvy Solutions an independent consulting practice where she worked with water utilities and non-profits to develop and implement communications plans. Her practice also focused on advising clients on how to implement justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) strategies into their organizational design.

Some of Ms. Mulki’s past experiences include serving as the director for water services at Hahn Public Communications in Austin, TX; as a business development and communications manager for Abengoa Water in Austin, TX; and as a program and research coordinator at the World Resources Institute in Washington DC.

Ms. Mulki holds a BA in environmental studies and international relations from Eckerd College in FL and an MA in sustainable international development from Brandeis University in MA.

Ms. Mulki is a second-generation Kenyan Indian. She currently resides in Columbus, OH with her husband and dog. She enjoys cooking, hiking, bird watching and podcasting – she is the host of an environmental podcast – Breaking Green Ceilings.



James Nord
Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Fohr
New York, NY

Through his experiences building a following early in the social space, **James Nord** realized there needed to be a platform that helped brands and influencers connect, understand themselves, and understand each other better. In 2013, Fohr launched the first influencer marketing platform in the world and has worked to improve the ways in which brands and influencers work together for eight years.

This year Fohr has transitioned into an ambassador marketing company and continues to evolve as it navigates and leads in an ever-changing influencer space.



Jean Smith

Co-Vice Chair, NACWA Communications and Public Affairs Committee
 Senior Manager
 Northeast Ohio Sewer Regional District
 Cleveland, OH

Jean Smith joined the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (Cleveland, OH) in 2006 as a Public Information Specialist. She currently serves as Manager of Community and Media Relations and is responsible for public outreach and education as well as media relations. She serves at the Co- Chair of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies' Communications and Public Affairs Committee.

Prior to the Sewer District, Ms. Smith worked for the American Red Cross Northern Ohio Blood Services Region handling communications and media relations for 19 counties. She worked for Clear Channel Communications, including as Promotions Director for 96.5 Kiss FM and Mix 106.5.

A native of Columbus, OH, she holds a Bachelor's degree from Baldwin Wallace University and an MPA Degree from Cleveland State University (CSU). Currently, she's working on her MBA Degree from CSU.



Lexie Vean

Chief Communications Officer
 Water Research Foundation
 Denver, CO

Lexie Vean is the Chief Communications Officer at The Water Research Foundation (WRF), the world's leading research organization advancing the science of all water to meet the evolving needs of its subscribers and the water sector. Ms. Vean leads the communications and marketing team who develops and directs proactive, impact-driven communications and public outreach efforts.

Ms. Vean has been a communications and marketing professional for more than 20 years and thrives on helping organizations stay true their mission. Previously, she was the Vice President of Marketing at Special Olympics Colorado as well as a digital marketing leader at one of CO's largest not-for-profit credit unions.

Ms. Vean holds Master's and Bachelor's degrees with honors in organization leadership and business administration. She is a "retired" college basketball player and three sport athlete. She enjoys hiking and swimming in her beautiful home state of CO, and watching her two very tall children learn, grow, and prosper.