

WOMEN *in* ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM



SOFITEL CHICAGO MAGNIFICENT MILE

OCTOBER 8-10, 2025

organized by **AREADEVELOPMENT**

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Rachel Donaldson, Interim Senior Vice President, Market Growth & Business Attraction

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Susan Proctor, Senior Site Selector Engagement Director

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Jo-Elsa Jordan, Business Manager

**SPEAKER TRAVEL BAGS –
BE NKY GROWTH PARTNERSHIP (KENTUCKY)**

Angela Mulberry, Director, Business Retention

Kimberly Rossetti, Vice President, Economic Development

**CONFERENCE WI-FI SERVICE –
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Kimberlyn Daniel, Project Manager

Katherine Mitchell, Project Manager

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Monica Conners, President

**SPEAKER CHARGING STATIONS –
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(KENTUCKY)**

Beth Sarkar, Director, Business Retention & Expansion

**SPEAKER WATER SERVICE –
LOUISVILLE WATER COMPANY (KENTUCKY)**

Kelley Dearing-Smith, Vice President, Strategic Communications & Marketing

WOMEN IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Sofitel Chicago Magnificent Mile, October 8-10, 2025

Area Development would like to acknowledge this year's Host Sponsor:



MICHIGAN ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

OPENING — WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8

5:30 – 8:30 pm **Registration**
Grand Ballroom Foyer (3rd Floor)

6:00 – 7:00 pm **Speaker and Sponsor Private Reception**
Bordeaux Room (3rd Floor)

Sponsor:



7:00 – 9:00 pm **Welcome Reception and Dinner**
Grand Ballroom (3rd Floor)

Reception Sponsor:



Dinner Sponsor:



DAY ONE — THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

7:15 – 8:15 am **Opening Breakfast**
Ballroom Foyer

Sponsor:



8:30 – 8:45 am **Opening Remarks**
Grand Ballroom

Amy Gerber (Moderator)
Executive Managing Director, Business Incentives Practice
Cushman & Wakefield

Susan Proctor
Senior Site Selector Engagement Director
Michigan Economic Development Corporation

8:50 – 9:20 am **The Economic Developers Bill of Rights**
In this session, we will explore the rights that economic developers should hold in working with both site selectors and end-users to bring opportunities to the local level. We will discuss what economic developers are owed, what they owe, what they are not owed, and what they owe themselves in the process. This review will aid economic developers in positioning optimally for industrial development success.

Speaker:

Courtney Dunbar
Director, Site Selection
Burns & McDonnell

9:25 – 9:55 am **Inside the Capital: Innovative Ideas for the Future of Business, Labor, and Redevelopment**
In this unique fireside chat, we will explore the future of the office sector, the evolving labor market, and the role of redevelopment in shaping communities. The conversation will offer practical insights into how cities can position themselves for investment and navigate the shifting dynamics of economic development.

Speakers:

Nina Albert
Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development
District of Columbia

Olivia Byrne
Partner
K&L Gates LLP

10:00 – 10:20 am **Networking Refreshment Break**
Ballroom Foyer

Sponsor:



**SOUTH CAROLINA
I-77ALLIANCE**

10:25 – 10:50 am **Beyond the Plan: How Economic Development Organizations Can Stay Strategic Amid Uncertainty**
Traditional strategic plans often struggle to keep pace with today's rapidly shifting realities. This session will focus on how economic developers can remain truly strategic even when certainty is elusive. The speaker will explore practical methods to identify and prioritize community needs, engage stakeholders in meaningful ways, and implement initiatives that create real impact.

Speaker:

Jennifer Vernon
Strategic Consultant
Fortif Advisors

10:55 – 11:25 am **Your Questions, Answered... Site Selectors Take the Hot Seat**
Bring your most pressing economic development thoughts to the experts. In this interactive session, the panel will field audience-submitted questions on today's shifting economic landscape and evolving site selection factors. Get candid insights you can take back to your staff, leadership, and community partners.

Panelists:

Amy Gerber
Executive Managing Director, Business Incentives Process
Cushman & Wakefield

Kathy Mussio
Managing Partner
Atlas Insight

Paulina San Millan (Moderator)
Senior Vice President, Business Development
Illinois Economic Development Corporation

11:30 am – 12:05 pm **Site Readiness in an Era of Speed-to-Market**
Speed-to-market is reshaping corporate location decisions, making site readiness more critical than ever. Our consultants will share what today's companies expect, how the definition of "ready" is evolving, and what economic development professionals can do to accelerate timelines and win projects.

Panelists:

Angela Carrier
Executive Vice President, Location Economics
JLL

Dianne Jones
Managing Director, Business & Economic Incentives
JLL

Carrie Zethmayr
Managing Director, Location Advisory, Global Strategy
Newmark

12:15 – 1:15 pm **Networking Lunch**
Ballroom Foyer

Sponsor:



1:30 –
2:05 pm

**Economic Development Feud –
The Fan Favorite Returns!**

Back by popular demand, this high-energy, interactive session brings the thrill of Family Feud to economic development. Compete with your peers, guess the top survey answers, and discover practical strategies, best practices, and collaboration tips all while having a blast. Don't miss the session everyone's been asking for fun, insight, and friendly competition rolled into one!

Hosts:

Ann Harts

Senior Vice President, Site Selection & Incentives
Cresa

Alicia Janesko Hutchings

Director, Site Selection & Incentives
Cresa

2:10 –
2:45 pm

What the Incentives Toolbox is Currently Missing

Incentives remain one of the most discussed—and scrutinized—tools in economic development, but are they truly aligned with what companies need today? In this session, our panelists will examine the gaps in the current incentives landscape and highlight what's missing from the traditional toolbox. The conversation will equip economic development professionals with a clearer view of how to adapt, refine, and re-imagine their incentives strategies to stay competitive in the next wave of corporate investment.

Panelists:

Beth Buckner

Member, Taxation, Economic Development & Incentives
Moore & Van Allen PLLC

Rose Davidson

Senior Vice President, Location Economics
JLL

Shannon O'Hare

Executive Managing Director, Business Incentives Practice
Cushman & Wakefield

Brooklin Salemi

Senior Managing Director, Economic Incentives Advisory
Newmark

2:50 –
3:10 pm

Networking Break

Ballroom Foyer

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

Grand Ballroom & Foyer

3:15 – 4:30 pm

The Roundtables are meant for casual discussion and to provide an additional platform for speakers and attendees to connect. Please refer to the back of your badge for your assigned table numbers (left to right). Be ready to introduce yourself and help drive the conversation!

ATTENDEE "ON THE TOWN" DINING

Attendees can plan an evening out to enjoy the many restaurant choices both near the hotel or in the surrounding neighborhoods.

SPONSOR AND SPEAKER
PRIVATE DINNER

The
BELLEVUE

CHICAGO - GOLD COAST

6:00 – 8:00 pm

1031 N Rush Street

(five minute walk or shuttle service provided)

Sponsors

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Please wear your badge!

DAY TWO — FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

NETWORKING BREAKFAST 7:15 AM

Memento Sponsor



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BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 8:30-9:10 AM

CHICAGO SALON

Propelling Growth: How to Position Your Region for Aerospace & Defense Success

Learn how to strategically position your region to attract and retain aerospace and defense companies by leveraging key economic development tools. This session will highlight best practices in site readiness, incentive structuring, workforce alignment, and stakeholder collaboration to drive sustainable industry growth. Gain insights into what makes a location competitive in today's evolving aerospace and defense landscape.

Speaker:

Julie Miller
Senior Managing Director
Vista Site Selection

PARIS SALON

Where the Packaging Industry is Headed — and Why It Matters for Your Region

Sustainability, automation, e-commerce, and regionalization are reshaping the packaging industry and driving new location priorities. The session will explore what these trends mean for communities and how economic development organizations can position themselves to compete for investment.

Speaker:

Ramya Gowda
Managing Director, Location Advisory, Global Strategy
Newmark

DAY TWO — FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

CLOSING BREAK 11:00 AM

Travel Bag Sponsor



Water Service Sponsor



Charging Station Sponsor



BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 9:20-10:00 AM

CHICAGO SALON

Driving Prosperity: Data-Driven Solutions for Local Growth

Communities of all sizes are navigating complex challenges in housing, workforce development, infrastructure planning, and economic opportunity. This session highlights six key issues—ranging from housing market imbalances to infrastructure risk and technological disruption—and offers practical, data-driven strategies for municipalities, economic development organizations, site selectors, and planners to strengthen local economies and support long-term community resilience.

Speaker:

Jolena Presti
Managing Director & Practice Leader,
Development and Community Advisory Consulting
Baker Tilly Advisory Group, LP

PARIS SALON

Inside the Office Occupier Mindset

When companies make office and portfolio decisions, there's rarely a single "right" answer. Some organizations need a strong downtown presence to compete for top talent, while others lean on suburban hubs to reduce commutes and support back-office functions. In this session, our speaker will share an insider's view into the trade-offs companies are navigating, offering insights that can help economic development leaders better understand occupier decision-making.

Speaker:

Marissa Huber
Consulting Director, Total Workplace
Cushman & Wakefield

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 10:10-10:50 AM

CHICAGO SALON

Why Project Aftercare Needs to be Incorporated Into Your Economic Development Strategy Now

Economic developers are trained to close site selection deals, but are these same teams focused on how to assist new investors in standing up their project on-time and on-budget? As speed-to-market is a critical project driver, projects are not only selecting sites at deal pace, but have aggressive start-of-production goals that must be met. Topics covered in this session will range from project governance structures, utility deployment, permitting, and construction labor.

Speakers:

Haley Samson, Manager, Infrastructure & Projects Advisory
KPMG
Leah Scott, Director, Site Selection & Project Development
KPMG

PARIS SALON

Workforce Dynamics in Site Selection: Trends and Implications for Communities

Delve into the latest labor insights and gain an understanding of the evolving landscape of the U.S.'s industrial workforce. Explore the current trends and challenges, including demographic shifts, skills gaps, technological impacts and the future of work in the industrial sector.

Speaker:

Nicole McBride
Senior Director, Americas Consulting
CBRE



NINA ALBERT

Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
District of Columbia

Nina Albert is the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development for the District of Columbia under Mayor Muriel Bowser. In this role, she is responsible for seven District agencies and coordinates with seven independent agencies to grow DC's tax base, increase economic opportunity and mobility for DC residents, ensure an affordable quality of life for DC residents, and strengthen Washington, DC's vibrancy and role as

the Nation's capital.

Albert has more than 20 years of experience in public real estate, economic revitalization, and sustainable urban development. A leader with a proven track record, she prioritizes collaboration, fosters a diverse culture of high performers and encourages a growth mindset.

Albert served as the Commissioner of the Public Buildings Service at the U.S. General Services Administration in the Biden Administration, was the Vice President of Real Estate at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, was responsible for Walmart's store openings in greater Washington region and has worked as a real estate advisor and consultant. Albert is a U.S. Army veteran. She has an MBA and a Master of City and Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Tufts University.



ELIZABETH "BETH" A. BUCKNER

Member, Taxation, Economic Development and Incentives

Moore & Van Allen PLLC

Beth Buckner has over a decade of experience executing and managing economic development tax incentive packages for major corporate relocations and expansions at the state and local levels throughout the country. She is a resource to clients in all stages of the process, whether at the beginning during the site selection phase or after incentives are awarded to negotiate incentive contracts. Clients benefit from her long-standing relationships with key economic development leaders enabling her to secure benefits and contribute to proposed special legislation that positively and effectively impact business operations. In addition to modeling and negotiating potential incentive award packages, Beth manages the ongoing monitoring and reporting associated with incentive packages to support client compliance efforts and has effectively modified incentive awards as needed when client changes in circumstances occur.

As a tax attorney, Beth understands, evaluates and explains the often tax based economic incentives and tax regimes of states and localities and suggests ways to structure the receipt of economic incentives in a tax efficient manner. Her experience covers a range of industries and project types including regional, national and international headquarters, offices, data centers, distribution centers, speculative real estate developments, technology centers, manufacturing facilities of various types and sizes, research and development facilities, and special use professional sports teams and events.

In addition, Beth has experience advising corporations, partnerships, limited liability companies and public service companies on a broad range of state and local taxation matters including assisting these clients with planning, compliance, controversy and policy matters. Beth advises clients on matters involving a broad range of tax types including corporate income, franchise, sales and use, occupancy, license, gross receipts and property taxes.

Beth has been recognized in Best Lawyers in America, Business North Carolina, and North Carolina Super Lawyers. She holds a Masters of Law from the University of Florida, a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Tennessee.

Beth can be contacted at: **bethbuckner@mvalaw.com**



OLIVIA BYRNE

Partner

K&L Gates LLP

Olivia Byrne is a partner at K&L Gates LLP in the Washington, D.C. office and lead of the firm's site Global Location Strategies practice, along with the real estate and public finance practices in the Washington, D.C. office. Her practice involves site selection for many different industries, namely EV battery and materials manufacturing, OEM auto parts and components, wood-based products and biofuels, technology, broadcasting, distribution centers, fulfillment centers, data centers, professional sports stadiums and arenas, food processing, as well as financial services, entertainment facilities, and hotels.

Olivia and her team represent companies inbound from abroad including Asia, Europe, and Canada, as well as U.S. companies relocating or deciding to remain in place and expand. The team provides assistance at all levels of a project including site selection, economic incentives, corporate mergers and acquisitions, legal review of contracts, real estate, due diligence, permitting, and many other services.

Olivia has successfully obtained significant economic incentives for clients on a national basis and has extensive experience drafting legislation for economic incentives and tax-related issues. Her proven track record demonstrates proposals to certain corporations such as manufacturing and technology in excess of US \$1 billion in economic incentives. She regularly meets with many Economic Development corporations and authorities on behalf of clients nationally. Olivia is a frequent speaker on site selection and economic incentives.

Olivia can be contacted at: olivia.byrne@klgates.com



ANGELA CARRIER

Executive Vice President, Location Economics

JLL

Angela Carrier, as Executive Vice President of JLL's Location Economics Practice, leads complex incentive negotiations and procurement strategies across diverse industry sectors and jurisdictions in North America. Her expertise drives value for clients through strategic location decisions and economic optimization.

Angela is a recognized expert in conducting comprehensive incentives research and analysis, resulting in a profound understanding and proficiency in implementing complex incentive programs as part of the site selection process. She skillfully guides core client project teams through the intricate incentives process, leveraging her extensive knowledge and experience to optimize their incentive strategies and achieve superior outcomes in their business initiatives.

EXPERIENCE

Angela brings over 20 years of expertise in business and economic incentives and site selection, delivering exceptional results across diverse industry sectors and company sizes. Her strategic efforts and collaborative approach have consistently secured substantial incentives awards, maximizing benefits per project and employee. Her comprehensive financial models and expert counsel enable clients to make informed, confident location decisions that drive business success.

EDUCATION AND AFFILIATIONS

Angela is a graduate of Texas A&M University's Mays School of Business with a BBA in Finance, cum laude and was a collegiate equestrian athlete. Angela speaks frequently to economic development professionals regarding incentive strategy in business site location.

Angela can be contacted at: angela.carrier@jll.com



ROSE DAVIDSON

Senior Vice President, Location Economics
JLL

Rose is a Senior Vice President of JLL's Location Economics Practice where she specializes in identifying, negotiating, and securing impactful business incentives for all industry sectors. Rose has secured financial business incentives for large and small clients, in multiple industry sectors, including manufacturing, distribution, professional/financial services, healthcare, and retail. Rose has extensive knowledge and experience with both statutory and discretionary incentives programs in the Southeast as well as across the nation. Rose is a leading industry expert on tax credits and their applicability to a corporation's tax liability and the ability to monetize credits resulting in a cash equivalent incentive benefit.

Prior to joining JLL, Rose served as Director of Credits and Incentives with Corporate Tax Incentives ("CTI") where she directed the company's Southeast Division and serviced clients nationally. She was also a lead member of Ernst & Young's Southeast Credits and Incentives Practice based in Atlanta, GA where she led key incentive account projects for both new and long-term clients.

Rose leads JLL's Location Economics Practice tax credit advisory team where she analyzes client tax and project profiles for matching with state and local tax credits. This team is responsible for reducing a client's corporate, sales, property, and payroll taxes when making job and/or capital investments within a new or existing business portfolio.

EDUCATION AND AFFILIATIONS

Rose has earned a B.S. in Political Science at Kennesaw State University and a M.S. in Urban Policy Studies/Economic Development at Georgia State University. Rose has presented on numerous webcasts and training conferences and is a designated Certified Credits and Incentives Professional (CCIP) by the Institute for Professionals in Taxation. Rose has also earned a Certificate in Negotiation Mastery from Harvard Business School Online.

Rose can be contacted at: rose.davidson@jll.com



COURTNEY DUNBAR, CECD, EDFP, AICP

Director of Site Selection

Burns & McDonnell

Courtney Dunbar has 27 years of combined career experience in site selection, economic development, community planning, and project funding. In her current role, she serves as the Director of Site Selection for Burns & McDonnell.

Courtney's goal is to align Burns & McDonnell industrial, advanced manufacturing, mission critical, food and consumer products, and aerospace clientele with optimal site and facility options for growth. In addition, her team actively develops site plans for industrial development. She has written many community plans focused on developing vital, innovative communities that entice economic growth. Her career has centered on industrial and allied primary development.

She is a member of the Site Selectors Guild and serves as a contributing writer and speaker for Area Development, with articles centered on site selection and site preparedness for economic development opportunities. She is a sought-after speaker nationally on topics related to site selection and industrial site preparedness.

Courtney serves as the Dean of the University of Oklahoma's Economic Development Institute (OU-EDI) and instructor of real estate and infrastructure development curriculum for both the OU-EDI and the Heartland Basic Economic Development Course. Her comprehensive expertise in site selection, economic planning, development analysis, industrial infrastructure planning, and project finance uniquely positions her as a qualified industrial site selection and site development partner.

Courtney can be contacted at: cmdunbar@burnsmcd.com



AMY GERBER

Executive Managing Director, Business Incentives Practice

Cushman & Wakefield

Amy Gerber brings over 20 years of industry experience and is an executive managing director in the Business Incentives Practice at Cushman & Wakefield. The practice helps companies negotiate with state and local governments to mitigate both up-front costs and ongoing taxes and expenses. Amy specializes in state incentive and tax negotiation and implementation. She utilizes her state and local tax background when working with economic development teams to interpret and amend tax statutes that generate significant operating and tax savings for her clients.

Amy has led and managed numerous multistate incentive negotiation engagements for both office and industrial projects for clients and has also led the efforts to modify state incentive legislation on behalf of her clients. She came to Cushman & Wakefield from Jones Lang LaSalle. Prior to joining Jones Lang LaSalle, she worked at KPMG, LLP with the State and Local Tax Practice/Strategic Relocation and Expansion Services division.

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Amy Gerber holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Montana State University. She is a board member with the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and was a member of Leadership Georgia class of 2016. She is also a member of the Georgia Association of Manufacturers.

Amy can be contacted at: **Amy.Gerber@cushwake.com**



RAMYA GOWDA

Managing Director, Location Advisory, Global Strategy
Newmark

Ramya Gowda joined Newmark in 2014 and is currently a Managing Director of Location Advisory within the Global Strategy Consulting practice. With a strong foundation in engineering and project management, she brings a diverse and data-driven perspective to help clients navigate complex real estate decisions. Ramya specializes in market research and trend analysis, labor market demand–supply assessments, multi-criteria decision modeling, financial modeling, and real estate investment analysis. She advises clients on global portfolio optimization, location strategy and end-to-end supply chain strategies across diverse industries. Prior to joining Newmark, she led industrial engineering initiatives at Bosch in India.

Ramya holds a Master's in Project Management from Illinois State University and a Master's in Manufacturing Management from Birla Institute of Technology, India

PARTIAL CLIENT LIST:

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Ramya can be contacted at: ramya.sannananjegowda@nmrk.com



ANN HARTS

Senior Vice President, Site Selection and Incentives
Cresa

Ann Harts specializes in assisting companies with their real estate strategy and where to locate headquarters, manufacturing, logistics, and back office facilities globally for optimal success. These capital investment projects include and involve new location investments, relocations, and real estate portfolio optimization, with a focus on real-time labor analytics and incentive negotiations. Ann is a highly skilled and collaborative negotiator, who has successfully secured and facilitated the administration of incentives such as cash grants, tax abatements, PILOT agreements, sales tax exemption agreements, employer training grants, payroll rebates, sales and use tax refunds and utility benefits, among other economic incentives that have a direct impact on the client's bottom line. She works diligently to improve her clients' return on investment, while ensuring any benefits will be fully utilized.

Ann has conducted site location advisory in more than 20 countries, with a goal of matching companies and communities for mutual success. She recently completed projects in the U.S., Brazil, Honduras, Nicaragua, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, India, Philippines, and Mauritius. Ann has led the real estate and facilities organization for a publicly traded \$2 billion annual revenue global company with a real estate portfolio of 150+ locations in 35 countries. She is also an advisor to Latin American, Caribbean, and African governments regarding foreign direct investment and industry diversification.

AFFILIATIONS

Ann is a contributing writer for numerous publications and an award-winning and frequently requested guest speaker on the topic of site selection and economic development for conferences, radio shows, and digital broadcasts. She has had recent speeches at foreign investment conferences throughout the U.S., Latin America, and Mauritius. Ann has also been named one of Nearshore America's Top 50 Power Ranking and Most Influential Executives and Outstanding New Developer of the Year by the International Economic Development Council. She has served on the boards of numerous professional organizations including IAMC (Industrial Asset Management Council) and Nearshore Executive Alliance, which she co-founded, and sits on the board of two privately held technology companies. She is a member of the CoreNet San Francisco and Kansas City chapters and a former Marketing Co-Chair for IAMC.

EXPERTISE

- Site Selection & Incentives
- Government
- Global Portfolio Solutions
- Technology

EDUCATION

Kansas State University and The University of Oklahoma's Economic Development Institute

Ann can be contacted at: aharts@cresa.com



MARISSA HUBER,
Consulting Director, Total Workplace
Cushman & Wakefield

Marissa Huber is a Consulting Director at Cushman & Wakefield, where she advises clients on workplace strategy, change management, and portfolio strategy. Since joining the firm in 2021, she has partnered with organizations across the U.S., including Berlin Packaging, the American Medical Association, Givaudan, the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati, the National Football League, Carnival Cruise Lines, Raymond James, and Allianz. She is known for bringing a thoughtful, creative, and practical approach to real estate decision-making.

With over 20 years of experience, Marissa has led large-scale strategic and occupancy planning efforts for complex portfolios. She spent 12 years fully dedicated onsite at GlaxoSmithKline in Philadelphia (via Johnson Controls), supporting 5 million square feet of space and headcount planning for 60,000 employees. She then spent 6 years onsite with Univision in Miami (via JLL), managing planning for 1.2 million square feet across headquarters and U.S. sites.

Known for connecting the dots across disciplines, Marissa draws on expertise in workplace strategy, change management, employee engagement, location strategy, and portfolio planning to deliver integrated solutions that address both immediate needs and long-term goals.

Originally from South Florida, Marissa now lives in Bloomington, Indiana, where she attended Indiana University and was a varsity water polo goalie during the program's inaugural season. Outside of consulting, she is an artist and published author who enjoys exploring the outdoors with her husband, two children, and chocolate lab.

CLIENTS SERVED

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- Kaseya
- Allianz
- Dine Brands
- Givaudan
- Kobre & Kim
- Carnival
- Raymond James
- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management
- Bulgari

EDUCATION

Indiana University Bloomington, B.S. Interior Design with minors in Psychology and Sociology

Marissa can be contacted at: marissa.huber@cushwake.com



ALICIA JANESKO HUTCHINGS

Director, Site Selection and Incentives

Cresa

In her role as Director of Site Selection and Incentives at Cresa, Alicia partners with clients to navigate complex location and incentive decisions. She brings extensive economic development experience and a collaborative approach to identifying the right sites for headquarters, manufacturing, logistics, and back-office facilities across both domestic and international markets. Known for her strong negotiation skills, Alicia has secured and managed incentive packages that maximize client ROI and ensure full value realization.

Throughout her career, Alicia has driven projects that facilitated multi-billion-dollar investments and generated more than 40,000 jobs through corporate expansions and relocations. Her client portfolio includes global brands such as Amazon, Hostess Brands, Merck Animal Health, The Coleman Company, Honeywell, Dairy Farmers of America, and Garmin International.

Before joining Cresa, Alicia held senior economic development roles in both Kansas and Texas. In Kansas, she directed the state's business recruitment team, guiding it to multiple national recognitions, including back-to-back Area Development Gold Shovel Awards and the state's first Site Selection Magazine Governor's Cup. She also spearheaded the development of project tracking platforms, marketing strategies, and incentive program reforms that improved state competitiveness. Notably, she played a pivotal role in drafting legislation that positioned Kansas to secure Panasonic's \$4 billion, 4,000-job EV battery plant.

A respected leader in her field, Alicia was recognized by Consultant Connect as one of the Top 50 Economic Developers in the U.S. in both 2016 and 2020.

EXPERTISE:

- Site Selection & Incentives
- Corporate Expansions & Relocations
- Economic Development
- Incentive Program Development
- Data & Project Management

EDUCATION:

University of Kansas, The University of Oklahoma's Economic Development Institute

Alicia can be contacted at ahutchings@cresa.com



DIANNE JONES

Managing Director, Business Location and Economic Incentives
JLL

Dianne Jones serves as a Managing Director under the Business Location and Economic Incentives practice in the Carolinas. Based in Charlotte, North Carolina, she specializes in assisting clients with full-service site selection and incentives negotiations across the Southeast.

Dianne is responsible for the oversight of site selection and incentives negotiations services to both privately held and publicly traded companies. Her expertise in the site selection industry over the last 10 years has allowed her to assist in several industrial expansions, national site selection projects and corporate relocation projects ranging in size from \$3 million to over \$1 billion in multiple states. These projects resulted in the securing of hundreds of millions of dollars of incentives for her clients. In addition to the negotiations of incentives, she has a heavy focus on operational analysis and labor analytics in the location decision making process. Her continued focus on site selection and incentives negotiations allows her to maintain valuable relationships across the economic development landscape which translate to better outcomes for her clients.

Prior to her career in site selection, Dianne worked as a Senior Paralegal at The Hutchens Law Firm, with a focus in creditor rights and real estate. Dianne received a B.A. in Business Administration from Methodist University.

Dianne is a Charlotte native and an active member of CREW (Commercial Real Estate Women) and serves on their student outreach committee. She also sits on the board of directors for Legal Studies at her alma mater, Methodist University, as well as the board of directors at East Mecklenburg High School where she graduated. In 2020, Dianne won the Member-to-Member Impact award from CREW on both the local and national level. The Mecklenburg Times named Dianne as one of the 50 Most Influential Women in 2021. In that same year, Dianne was a speaker at the SelectUSA Investment Summit on the topic of Site Selection. She has also been a speaker for NAIOP, GACC South, NCEDA, Area Development, IPT and several local EDOs across the United States.

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NICOLE MCBRIDE

Senior Director, Americas Consulting
CBRE

Nicole McBride is a Senior Director in CBRE's Americas Consulting Location Strategy practice based in Chicago. In her role, Nicole leads client engagements for Fortune 500 companies with a focus on labor analytics and site selection to develop uniquely sophisticated strategies that optimize talent, cost and organizational objectives while effectively reducing risk. Nicole has been an advisor on projects that span a variety of industries and asset classes and has extensive experience with other real estate advisory practices including portfolio optimization, workplace strategy and change management.

Throughout her career Nicole has developed an expertise in helping companies identify markets that are aligned with both their current and long-term organizational and growth objectives. She leverages an analytically rigorous approach to location strategy that incorporates both CBRE's proprietary knowledge base of domestic and global labor market data as well as local market intelligence.

Prior to joining CBRE, Nicole spent five years as a Senior Consultant with Cushman and Wakefield's Strategic Consulting group where she served clients in a variety of capacities related to corporate real estate strategy. Prior to Cushman and Wakefield, Nicole was an associate within RSM's Management Consulting practice focused on developing transformative solutions by optimizing and automating business processes.

CLIENTS REPRESENTED

- Clients Represented
- Citigroup
- J.P. Morgan Chase
- NewsCorp
- Pfizer
- Abbott
- Geico
- Mars Inc.
- PACCAR
- Sephora

AFFILIATIONS/ACCREDITATIONS

- CBRE Rising Professionals Organization
- CBRE Cares Chicago Chapter

EDUCATION

Boston College – Carroll School of Management, Bachelor of Science, Finance and Marketing

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JULIE MILLER

Managing Director
Vista Site Selection

Julie Miller is the managing director and head of the incentive compliance practice at Vista Site Selection. Her focus is on the implementation of complex incentive programs nationwide. Additionally, she manages site selection and incentive negotiations for projects across various industries.

With nearly 20 years of experience, Julie has demonstrated success in delivering a comprehensive range of tax credits and incentives consulting services. Her expertise includes multiple headquarters relocations, advanced manufacturing and distribution, aerospace, financial services, renewable energy, and regional office operations. Throughout her career, Julie has successfully managed over \$600 million in incentive packages, simplifying the compliance process for her clients and ensuring the realization of incentives awarded by state and local jurisdictions. Julie excels in managing multiple incentive programs simultaneously and collaborates effectively with critical client departments, including C-suite, tax, legal, human resources, real estate, and operations.

Before joining Vista Site Selection, Julie held leadership roles in the location & incentive strategies practice at Altus Group and the location economics practice at Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL).

Julie holds a Bachelor of Arts & Sciences degree from Dallas Baptist University. She has achieved the Certified Credits & Incentives Professional (CCIP) designation from the Institute for Professionals in Taxation (IPT) and holds a Texas real estate salesperson license.

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KATHY MUSSIO

Managing Partner

Atlas Insight

Kathy Mussio is a co-founder and managing partner of Atlas Insight. With over 25 years of combined experience as a management, incentive, and site selection consultant, she is widely considered an industry expert in the site selection and incentive negotiation business. Kathy provides location strategy for both industrial and commercial clients, with a focus on Atlas' manufacturing clients.

Kathy has conducted successful negotiations for some of the world's largest corporations. She brings her years of incentive negotiation and management experience to ensure that incentive packages negotiated for Atlas' clients can also be realized at their maximum value. For clients' site selection needs, Kathy works with companies to provide data, analysis, and the guidance to help the decision of where to locate, expand, or consolidate. While many of Atlas' clients are large corporations in the Fortune 500®, Kathy also works with small to mid-sized companies, and with project sizes large and small.

In the early part of her career, Kathy focused on real estate development and the associated zoning and land use entitlements that are typically required. This also entailed working with development-related tax credits, such as New Markets Tax Credits and Brownfield Tax Credits.

Kathy is a reliable opinion source for the trade publications and national newspapers, including *The Wall Street Journal*. She has also written numerous expert articles for regional and national publications. She has been a frequent guest of state, regional, and local governments to assist with development of strategic plans to attract business investment. Before co-founding Atlas Insight, Kathy was a regional practice leader in the Business Location Incentive and Site Selection group at BDO.

EDUCATION:

- Master of Science in Real Estate, New York University
- Bachelor of Fine Arts, New York University

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SHANNON O'HARE

Executive Managing Director, Business Incentives Practice
Cushman & Wakefield

Shannon O'Hare is an executive managing director in Cushman & Wakefield's Business Incentives Practice and has over 20 years of experience in economic development and financial incentive negotiation.

Shannon creates financial benefits for clients in distribution, manufacturing, back office/customer service operations, research, and headquarters facilities. She represents clients across a wide range of industries, including automotive, energy, hospitality, healthcare, technology, consumer products, and retail. Shannon also successfully negotiates incentives for real estate development projects across the country. She has extensive experience in negotiation of public-private partnerships involving various economic development incentive tools.

She prides herself on her longstanding client relationships, adding value to client deals throughout the U.S. She remains involved with clients and projects long after incentives are negotiated, ensuring clients can fully monetize benefits.

Prior to her current position, Shannon was director for NexGen Advisors, a boutique development finance and incentive consulting firm, and held previous positions at Deloitte and Arthur Andersen, LLP.

EDUCATION:

Shannon has a BS in Accountancy from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She is a frequent speaker on and contributor to economic development topics and publications. She is also a member of several economic development and real estate organizations.

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JOLENA PRESTI

Managing Director & Practice Leader, Development and Community Advisory Consulting
Baker Tilly Advisory Group, LP

Jolena has more than 25 years of experience in developing and advancing innovative strategies in housing, redevelopment and economic and community solutions for clients nationwide. As a development advisory team leader, Jolena provides strategic advisory services to a diverse range of clients, including municipalities, private developers, economic development organizations, impact investors and not-for-profit organizations. She has a proven track record of driving team strategy and providing leadership in cross-functional collaboration and client initiatives.

SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE

Leads strategic and innovative planning initiatives for housing, economic development, redevelopment, public-private partnerships (P3) and long term planning, ensuring successful implementation and growth.

Guides municipalities and developers through urban planning, master planning and redevelopment stages, maximizing economic growth and real estate transformation.

Conducts comprehensive market and financial feasibility analyses, providing gap analysis and funding strategies to advance project success.

Performs in-depth financial analysis of economic development strategies, P3s and development initiatives, optimizing available project financing options.

Advises on complex project implementation strategies across various land uses, including mixed-use districts, housing, manufacturing and downtown areas, often engaging in P3 and multi-partner initiatives.

Develops and implements multi-layered funding strategies, including incentives, grants, tax programs and private funding, to support project financing.

INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT

- Harbor District, Inc. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, board member
- MidAmerica Economic Development Council (MAEDC)
- Certified Urban Planner (AICP), American Institute of Certified Planners
- Fox Point Bayside Educational Foundation, board member
- Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA)
- American Planning Association (APA), National and Wisconsin Chapters
- Industrial Asset Management Council (IAMC)

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BROOKLIN SALEMI

Senior Managing Director, Economic Incentives Advisory
Newmark

Brooklin Salemi is a Senior Managing Director in Newmark's Economic Incentives Advisory Practice. She has over ten years of experience providing major U.S. and international clients with location advisory and incentive services. Brooklin has served a variety of clients across all industries including life sciences, professional services, manufacturing, data centers, and tech. Collectively, she has provided support on projects resulting in over \$1.7 billion investment, 10,000 jobs, and \$388 million in total benefits for her clients.

Prior to joining Newmark, Brooklin worked at BDO USA, LLP, a public accounting firm, and previously as a consultant with Cushman & Wakefield's Business Incentives Practice.

Brooklin has been published in the Journal of Multistate Taxation and Incentives and participates in IPT and other industry events. Brooklin speaks at economic development conferences and events offering guidance to state and local economic developers on site selection trends, best practices, strategic planning, and the role of credits and incentives.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Institute of Professionals in Taxation (2019 – 2022, 2024 - Present)
- Tax Executives Institute (2019–2022)
- Council on State Taxation (2019–2022)

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Business in Economics, Western Illinois University

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HALEY SAMSON

Manager, Infrastructure and Projects Advisory
KPMG

Haley Samson is a manager with KPMG's Infrastructure and Projects Advisory team with 5+ years of construction management and project controls experience. She has supported on a wide range of capital projects from planning through execution, including labor market research, cost forecasting, risk analysis, and performance tracking. In recent years, Haley has supported large-scale utility providers and renewable energy developers in obtaining tax credits through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), including labor market research and planning, monetization strategies, and compliance tracking.

Prior to joining KPMG, Haley worked for Kiewit Infrastructure where she oversaw large-scale projects in the heavy civil and transportation sectors. This experience equipped her with a solid foundation in the construction industry, enabling her to transfer knowledge and best practices to KPMG's clients embarking on significant capital investments.

Haley graduated from the University of Missouri with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Civil Engineer with a minor in Construction Management. She currently resides in Washington, DC.

Haley can be contacted at: **hsamson@kpmg.com**



LEAH SCOTT

Director, Site Selection and Project Development
KPMG

Leah Scott is a director with KPMG's Site Selection and Project Development team with 5+ years of site selection and economic development experience. She has a strong background in location analysis, site selection, and incentive negotiation and assisting communities in strategizing and implementing product development initiatives.

Leah has spent considerable time working with both domestic and international large-scale industrial manufacturers including automotive, automotive supply, food and beverage, and consumer products.

Leah has an undergraduate degree in Chemistry from Carlow University and master's degree in Public Policy and Management from the Heinz College at Carnegie Mellon University. She is a native of Pittsburgh, where she lives with her husband, Stephen, and two dogs, Nora and Remy.

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JENNIFER VERNON

Strategic Advisor
Fortif Advisors, LLC

Jennifer leverages nearly 20 years of experience in economic development, operations, marketing and research to help energize communities and organizations about their future. She specializes in guiding organizations on paths toward excellence.

Over the course of her consulting career, Jennifer has developed comprehensive community and economic development strategies for cities, counties, and regions. She has assessed and developed organizational strategies, ecosystem alignments, recovery strategies, marketing plans, investment guidelines, and talent alignment initiatives to serve a variety of clients. She has worked nationwide to include communities in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.

The majority of Jennifer's career was spent in investor-based economic development organizations. Through that perspective, she has the keen ability to intuit client needs and then leverage resources and develop strategies to best satisfy those needs. In her previous role, Jennifer and her team led the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) in developing its transformative new strategy.

Her former experience includes serving as a senior manager at EY where she and team were charged with scaling up a national practice for economic development. Prior to EY, she was a senior consultant at Avalanche Consulting and led global marketing, strategy, and operations for the Upstate SC Alliance, a 10-county regional economic development organization representing the Greenville-Spartanburg area. She also worked to promote international trade resources in her home state of Mississippi.

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CARRIE ZETHMAYR

Managing Director, Location Advisory, Global Strategy
Newmark

Carrie Zethmayr joined Newmark in 2021 and currently serves as a Managing Director of Location Advisory within the Global Strategy Team, a division of the firm's Occupier Solutions service line. With a background in economic development, incentive negotiation and real-estate brokerage, Zethmayr specializes in multi-market location advisory and real-estate evaluation. She has a diverse background with a broad range of economic development and incentives experience, notably in foreign trade zone (FTZ) implementation. During her career, Zethmayr has managed projects that have increased committed investments of more than \$1 billion in the United States, created over 3,000 new jobs, and secured over \$123 million in incentives for her clients.

Before joining the private sector, she led economic development initiatives for the State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) in the Northern Stateline region, managing incentives negotiations with some of Illinois' largest manufacturing companies. Prior to working for the State of Illinois, Zethmayr managed foreign direct investment strategy for the Rockford Area Economic Development Council, spearheading efforts to attract investment from China and Western European aerospace companies.

Zethmayr has a Global Master's in Business Administration (MBA) from Thunderbird School of Global Management and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Modern Languages and Asian Studies from Beloit College in Wisconsin. Zethmayr also received a certificate in Chinese Language study after completing a year-long immersive language program at Shandong University in Jinan, China.

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FALL CONSULTANTS FORUM

Fort Lauderdale



Marriott Harbor Beach Resort
December 15-17, 2025



THE WORKSHOP FORUM

Charlotte



JW Marriott Charlotte
March 16-18, 2026



SPRING CONSULTANTS FORUM

New Orleans



The Ritz-Carlton, New Orleans
June 1-3, 2026

