

# OUR ENERGY HORIZON



## Clean Energy Business Council



**DOROTHY BARNETT, Host**  
**Executive Director**  
**Climate + Energy Project**  
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As Executive Director of the [Climate + Energy Project](#), Dorothy Barnett is leading the effort to address the Heartland's energy future. Grounded in an approach based on common ground solutions, Barnett has been successful in convening diverse voices in a conservative region of the country. Barnett has coordinated winning campaigns to protect the Kansas Renewable Portfolio Standard from special interest groups attacks during four legislative sessions, allowing the wind industry to grow to 40% of the state's power generation in just a decade. Prior to her position as Executive Director, Barnett served for 4 years as CEP's Director of Energy and Transmission. This work put Dorothy on the ground in energy policy work at the local, state and regional level. Under Barnett's leadership, CEP continues to innovate and reach new audiences with projects like WEALTH: Water, Energy, Air, Land, Transportation and Health, Climate + Energy Voters Take Action, the Kansas Environmental Leadership project and the Clean Energy Business Council, a multi sector business group focused on the advanced energy economy.

## Kansas Power Alliance



**KIMBERLY GENCUR SVATY, Host**  
**Founder & CEO**  
**Gencur Svaty Public Affairs**  
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Kimberly's love of good public policy and considerable experience navigating and influencing the political process drives her. Principal Kimberly Gencur Svaty's Kansas-based public relations firm, [Gencur Svaty Public Affairs](#), has successfully implemented government relations, public affairs and community outreach strategies for clients ranging from Fortune 5 to Fortune 500 companies, non-profit organizations, and cause groups for two decades. After staffing the Chairman of the United States House Ways and Means Committee in Congress, she honed her skills while completing a Master of Arts in the International Political Economy while serving at the Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas. Founder and CEO of Gencur Svaty Public Affairs, Kimberly has directed governmental affairs divisions across multi-state regions, managed state and federal political

action committees and recruitment and led Public Affairs departments turning her expertise into a leading Public Affairs firm in the Midwest. Kimberly is a sought-out policy expert and national speaker on energy and water policy as well as agriculture related issues particularly with focus on food insecurity issues. Having served on the Board of Directors of Harvesters for eight years, Kimberly is in her last year as the Board Chair for Harvesters, Community Food Network. Kimberly and her husband Josh, are the proud owners and operators of Free State Farms, a fully-diversified crop and livestock operation, in Ellsworth County.

## **Panel 1 HOW UTILITY-SCALE SOLAR & BATTERY STORAGE TECHNOLOGIES WORK**



**MARK WALTER, Moderator**  
**Director of Legislative & Regulatory Affairs**  
**Savion Energy**  
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Mark Walter is the Director of Legislative & Regulatory Affairs for Savion, a utility-scale solar and energy storage development company based in Kansas City. Mark has spent the past decade in the solar industry, starting as a rooftop solar installer in the Pacific Northwest, and has been advocating for clean energy policy for the past seven years. Over that time, he has been the Deputy Director of Renew Missouri, Director of Business Development for Sun Solar, and the Director of Legislative & Regulatory Affairs for Tradewind Energy. Mark has been the President of the Missouri Solar Energy Industry Association, the President of the Southern Renewable Energy Association, President and Co-Founder of the Utility Scale Solar Energy Coalition of Ohio, Vice President of the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition, and has been board members of many other industry associations across the country. He currently lives in Kansas City with his two dogs, Daisy and Banjo, and spends his free time hiking, playing music, and running.



**ROBERT WRIGHT, Speaker**  
**Renewable Energy Development Manager**  
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Mr. Wright is the Renewable Energy Development Manager for the technical development and implementation of new renewable generation for Burns & McDonnell's Energy Division. His duties include technology comparisons, cost estimating, performance optimization, economic analysis, conceptual design, siting studies, and project coordination. Additionally, Mr. Wright helps clients determine overarching project strategies to go from conception through regulatory approval focusing on competitive and winning approaches. Mr. Wright incorporates current market conditions, policies, and tax benefits into his analyses. He has his professional engineering license in mechanical engineering as well as a master's degree in Engineering Management and a bachelor's degree in Engineering Physics, both from the Colorado School of Mines.



**FRANK JAKOB, Speaker**  
**Energy Storage Technology Manager**  
**Black & Veatch**

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Mr. Frank Jakob, P.E., PMP, is the Energy Storage Technology Manager at Black & Veatch. He leads the design of energy storage systems that improve and enhance renewable and conventional electricity generation. He has over 30 years of experience with developing new applications for products. Now his focus is on electrochemical devices (batteries and fuel cells) and bulk storage technology (pumped hydro, compressed air, and sensible & latent thermal heat storage technologies) in short- and mid- and long-term energy storage applications for renewable energy (solar photovoltaic and wind turbine systems) and for conventional generation (turbines, engines; hydroelectric generation, and thermal power plants). Frank adds energy storage to improve operations, extend life, increase responsiveness, and decrease emissions -- including carbon footprints and greenhouse gasses. Most recently Frank has been growing Black & Veatch's energy storage EPC practice and Owners' Engineering services.

## **Panel 2 ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF SOLAR & STORAGE**



**JESSICA LUCAS, Moderator**  
**Consultant**  
**Clean Energy Business Council**

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Jessica Lucas is a business communications graduate of the School of Journalism at Kansas University and melds her public relations acumen with government affairs. In advocating for policy changes, Jessica understands it involves more than just knowing how things work under the dome. Today's government affairs work demands the use of earned media, grassroots engagement, and digital advocacy, and these are tools she effectively employs to meet our clients' objectives. Recognizing the importance of a trained workforce, she successfully executed a campaign in her rural hometown to build a community college geared toward technical education degrees in aviation manufacturing, information technology, and agricultural studies. She's represented Fortune 500 companies in crisis communications work, served as spokesperson on statewide policy initiatives, and established herself as a trusted, hardworking lobbyist. Outside of work, she commits her time as a member of the Topeka Capital-Journal Editorial Advisory Board and serves as President of the Friends of Cedar Crest Association, the 501(c)3 organization that supports the Kansas governor's mansion.



**JEREMY HILL, Speaker**  
**Director, Center for Economic Development & Business Research**  
**Wichita State University**

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Jeremy Hill is the director of the Center for Economic Development and Business Research. He came to Wichita State University from Georgia Southern University, where he was the director of the Coastal Rivers Water Planning and Policy Center. Hill has over twenty years of experience of applied business and economic research, and is often quoted by local and state media across Kansas. In 2014, Jeremy was recognized by the Wichita Business Journal with the honor of “40 under 40”, and in 2016 was named as one of “50 Kansans You Should Know” by Ingram’s, a Kansas City’s business magazine. Hill has served in a number of leadership capacities, including past director and past-president of the Association for University Business and Economic Research, a national professional organization of regional centers across the United States. Jeremy leads the CEDBR in its mission to provide accurate, reliable information and analysis to inform decision-making in the public and private sectors. The center provides market research, fiscal and impact analyses, and employment forecasts for the regional and state economies. Jeremy has also contributed to innovative research, analysis and planning in collaborative ventures across Kansas. His research focus has been on business analysis, community development, as well as workforce, tourism and retirement dynamics.



**MICHELLE MILBURN, Speaker**  
**Clean Energy Product Manager**  
**Stanion Wholesale Electric Co.**

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Michelle Milburn serves as Stanion’s Clean Energy Product Manager and leads Stanion’s Clean Energy Team. Her multifaceted role incorporates the vetting of manufacturers and products, training and marketing for new technology, technical advisor and industry consultant. As a trusted advisor, Michelle helps Stanion’s clients develop energy savings and independence through projects best suited for their individual energy profile, capital availability, tax appetite and sustainability goals. For 65 years, Stanion Wholesale Electric Co. devoutly served Kansas companies, communities, and industries - Michelle helps them understand the calculated risk and benefits of energy technologies while delivering superior material and resources. Prior to her position at Stanion, Michelle was the Wind Energy Technical Specialist for Milbank PowerGen. Her experience with renewable energy began during the utility scale wind boom of the early 2000’s as a member of Aggreko LLC’s Wind Energy Team managing the load testing equipment for the commissioning of utility scale wind turbines in South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri.

## Panel 3 SOLAR & STORAGE IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS



**JOSH SVATY, Moderator**  
**Energy Behavior Specialist**  
**Kansas Power Alliance**

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Joshua Svaty In his role as Senior Advisor for Intergovernmental Affairs at the Kansas Power Alliance, Joshua Svaty helps educate renewable energy developers about the counties and regions of Kansas, and also helps local elected officials understand what a renewable infrastructure project might mean in their area. He was a member of the Kansas House of Representatives, served as a Senior Adviser in the Environmental Protection Agency during the Obama Administration, and was the Kansas Secretary of Agriculture. A lifelong fifth-generation Kansan, Svaty owns and operates Free State Farms in Ellsworth County along with his wife, Kimberly. He co-authored 'Petroglyphs of the Kansas Smoky Hills', a Kansas Notable Book of 2020.



**WILLIAM WILKINS, Speaker**  
**Development Project Director**  
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Billy Wilkins is a Development Project Director for NextEra Energy Resources. As project director, he is responsible for the development of a portfolio of the company's renewable energy projects in the states of Kansas and Nebraska. Prior to joining NextEra Energy Resources in 2019, Billy served for 21 years in the U.S. Army as a civil affairs officer. After retiring in 2017, he attended the University of Notre Dame earning a Master of Business Administration. He is originally from Atlanta, Georgia and earned a Bachelor of Science in biology from the University of Georgia in 1996.



**LUKE HAGEDORN, Speaker**  
**Attorney**  
**Polsinelli PC**

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Luke Hagedorn is passionate about assisting clients with providing diverse, affordable, and reliable energy to their customers. Luke's dedication to understanding the complex and changing statutes and regulations that govern the energy industry allows him to work with public utility, renewable energy, oil and gas, and end-user companies to address the unique legal needs that arise out of generation, production or consumption of energy and natural resources. Over the course of his development as an energy attorney, Luke has been struck by the fascinating interplay between business considerations, politics, economics, and regulatory concerns that form the core of the United

States' energy policy. Luke's understanding of these complicated facets allows him to help companies navigate the complex legal issues that arise at every stage of an energy project's life. By focusing his practice in both transactional and regulatory aspects of energy projects, Luke strives to provide well-rounded guidance relating to clients' current legal needs, as well as efficiently identify and mitigate potential complications that might arise down the road. In addition to his legal work, Luke founded a blog, [RenewableEnergyLawInsider.com](http://RenewableEnergyLawInsider.com), in 2011 in an effort to remain on the cutting-edge of the business and legal issues that impact his clients' daily lives.

## **Panel 4 TRANSPORTATION ELECTRIFICATION & TRANSMISSION**



**KELLY GILBERT, Moderator**  
**Executive Director**  
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Kelly Gilbert is Executive Director of Metropolitan Energy Center, where she has worked toward energy and climate solutions since 2009. In her years with MEC, she has led many clean transportation and electrification projects across Kansas and Missouri. She was inducted into the U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Cities Hall of Fame in 2017 and was named an Agent of Change for her leadership in transportation sustainability by the Kansas City Regional Clean Cities Advisory Board in 2010. She serves on the Metro KC Air Quality Forum and other climate and energy policy groups across KS and MO, and is a founding member of Climate Action KC. In her free time, she enjoys supporting area farmers markets, barn dancing, and cheering on Sporting KC.



**JASON DAKE, Speaker**  
**Vice President Legal & Regulatory Affairs**  
**Orange EV**  
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Jason Dake is responsible for all legal and governmental interactions for Orange EV. Jason has more than 22 years of in-house counsel experience including Senior Legal Counsel (Americas) for Cargotec Holding, Inc., Counsel and Secretary for Cargotec Holding Inc. (including all of its US subsidiaries), Deputy General Counsel for DeLaval Inc., and General Counsel for Avanex Inc.



**TAMI ALEXANDER, Speaker**  
**Senior Program Coordinator**  
**Central Kansas Clean Cities Coalition**

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Tami Alexander joined Metropolitan Energy Center (MEC) in 2017 to support biofuels projects in Kansas. She is the Senior Program Coordinator for the Central Kansas Clean Cities Coalition, managing event coordination, outreach, and program administration for transportation projects. She organized and led the collaborative group developing the Kansas EV corridor plan. Before joining MEC, Tami had several years of facility and non-profit management experience where she implemented efficiency measures in organization practices. She has Bachelor's degrees in Mathematics-Statistics and Geology and a Master's in Environmental Science all from Wichita State University. A life-long Kansan, Tami lives in Wichita with her husband and their three children. She is passionate about promoting the environmental health and local economies of both urban and rural communities across Kansas. In her free time, she volunteers with her sons' Scouts BSA troop and her sorority housing board, and enjoys DIY projects, spending time outdoors, and cheering on the Shockers, Chiefs, and Royals.



**MARK AUGUSTINE, Speaker**  
**Owner and President**  
**Triplett, Inc.**

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Mark is the second-generation owner and President of Triplett, Inc. doing business as 24-7 Travel Stores of Kansas and Citywide Storage in Salina, KS. Mark served six years on the board of directors for the National Association of Truck Stops and is a past president of the Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association of Kansas, now Fuel True Independent Energy & Convenience. Mark is currently serving on the National Association of Truck Stops Government Affairs Committee and Salina 2020 Group. His company installed their first DC fast-charging stations at the McPherson 24-7 Travel Store in spring of 2021 and will soon complete a DC fast-charging installation at their new Goodland 24-7 Travel Store this fall. They are the first fuel retailer to own and operate fast-charging stations in Kansas.



**BRETT LEOPOLD, Speaker**

**President**

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Brett Leopold is Vice President, ITC Holdings Corp. and President, ITC Great Plains. Mr. Leopold serves as the business unit lead for ITC Great Plains, which received the Kansas Governor's Award of Excellence in 2015. He previously was Senior Counsel and Practice Group Leader for ITC Great Plains. Mr. Leopold joined ITC in 2008 as director of regulatory policy and attorney for ITC Great Plains, advocating regulatory objectives and legal positions before state regulators in the SPP region. Prior to joining ITC, he served as an attorney in regulatory and state government affairs positions for Sprint and in legal positions with law firms in Missouri and Kansas, the United States Attorney's Office in Kansas City, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. Mr. Leopold holds a juris doctor degree from Yale Law School and a bachelor's degree with highest distinction from the University of Kansas, where he was awarded the Harry S. Truman Scholarship. Mr. Leopold currently serves on the Southwest Power Pool's Members Committee and Corporate Governance Committee. He is a board member of the Kansas Chamber of Commerce, Missouri Energy Initiative, the KU Honors Program, Friends of Cedar Crest and the American Red Cross of the Capital Area. He is an appointee to the SPARK Economic Revitalization Advisory Panel and advisory council member for the NMSU Center for Public Utilities. Mr. Leopold also serves on the Council of Advisors for the State Chamber of Oklahoma and is a member of the Oklahoma Business Roundtable. He is a volunteer reader for the Audio-Reader Network for Kansas and Western Missouri.

