



In Partnership With:



Northeast Regional Clean Energy & Climatetech Workforce Summit

May 8, 2025 from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM
at Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School

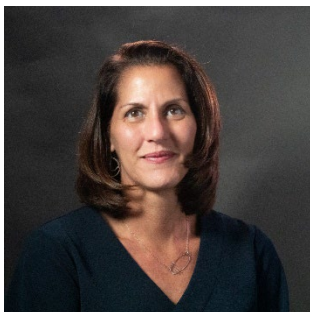


2025 Northeast Regional Climatetech & Clean Energy Workforce Summit Speakers:



Susan Almono, Director of Grants and Workforce Development at Greater Lawrence Technical School, leads efforts to secure funding for cutting-edge equipment and facilities, and to expand access to technical education for high school students and adults. She joined GLTS in 2020 at the height of the pandemic, bringing over 15 years of experience in workforce development with diverse communities. Her career has spanned teaching in New York City, working in the construction trades, and serving as an international development professional in the Dominican Republic. Susan holds a B.A.

from Vassar College in Science, Technology and Society, and an M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania in International Development and Appropriate Technology.



Meghan Abella-Bowen is a Senior Program Manager at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, where she focuses on advanced manufacturing workforce initiatives. In her role, she supports key stakeholder relations with industry, academia, and government, in the advanced manufacturing sector. Before coming to MassTech she was the Associate Dean of STEM at Bristol Community College where she managed numerous state and federal initiatives. Meghan has over 20 years of experience working in education, workforce training, and economic development as a facilitator and project

manager to develop partnerships and programs designed to address the educational and training needs of all learners to support economic growth at local, state and regional levels.



Shakir Cannon-Moye is a passionate leader in equitable workforce development and clean energy access. As Vice President at Julius Education, he spearheads initiatives that connect job seekers, with career pathways in fast moving industries like clean energy and advanced manufacturing. His work centers on building inclusive career navigation tools, facilitating public-private partnerships, and ensuring historically excluded individuals have access to sustainable, family-supporting jobs.



Jennifer Edwards recently joined GE Vernova following its separation from GE in early 2024. She leads the newly established GE Vernova Foundation and oversees the company's Corporate Social Responsibility. Under her leadership, the foundation is committed to advancing the global workforce essential for the energy transition and fostering resilient communities, building upon the century-long legacy of the GE Foundation. Before her current role, Jennifer served as the Director of Global Programs at the GE Foundation, where she managed diverse portfolios encompassing Health, Education, and Workforce Skills Development. Jennifer earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Vermont. She resides in Stamford, Connecticut, with her husband and four children.



Conor Helfrich is the Vice President of Business Operations and part of the third generation of family ownership at Helfrich Brothers Boiler Works, Inc. Helfrich Brothers is an industrial manufacturing company headquartered in Lawrence and has been in business since 1948. Conor received his undergraduate degree from Tufts University and a Master in Business Administration from the University of North Carolina. Conor is a member of the Board of Directors for the MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Development Board.



Crystal Johnson is a passionate Energy Strategist and Senior Environmental Planner with more than twenty-five years of accomplishments in strategic planning, management, policy, research, and assessment of energy and environmental resources. She focuses on climate/clean energy workforce development, stakeholder engagement and collaboration, tree canopy coverage, and climate action. She serves as the MA EEA Assistant Secretary of Environmental Justice. She values the role of communities in advancing climate action.



Alysia Ordway is the Undersecretary for Workforce Development at the MA EOLWD, where she leads statewide efforts to strengthen workforce systems, create career pathways, and align programs with the Commonwealth's economic priorities. She brings over 25 years of experience across sectors focused on expanding equitable access to education and employment. Prior to her current role, Alysia was a Senior Consultant at Public Consulting Group, where she led system redesigns and supported ARPA-funded initiatives. She also served as Director of Strategic Partnerships at XR Terra and as Director of Employer Engagement at the Boston Private Industry Council. Alysia is a Trustee of the Academy of the Pacific Rim and former Board Member of the African Bridge Network. She holds a B.S. from UMass Amherst and a Master in the Art of Teaching from Simmons College



Ed O'Sullivan is Executive Director of the MassHire North Shore Workforce Board (MHNSWB), one of 16 workforce boards across the state of Massachusetts that support our workforce development system so that individuals and employers needing labor market services, (i.e., education, training, job placement, etc.) can access them quickly and successfully. Ed has been instrumental in leading MHNSWB and driving workforce development projects across the North Shore, encompassing youth programs, advanced manufacturing, healthcare, offshore wind/clean energy, IT, and apprenticeships.



Miriam Ortiz is a passionate advocate for educational equity and economic mobility. As Senior Director of Education & Training at Just A Start, she leads workforce development programs that support adult learners and opportunity youth to enter careers in Biotechnology, IT, Construction and Retail/Entrepreneurship. With over 15 years of nonprofit leadership experience, Miriam brings a strengths-based, student-centered approach to building career pathways to opportunity.



Jennifer James Price is a seasoned public policy leader with over 20 years of experience driving innovation across workforce, education, and business systems. She currently serves as Assistant Vice President for Strategic Employer Relations at North Shore Community College, where she leads efforts to align education and workforce development through a \$2M+ division. Previously, she was Undersecretary of Workforce Development for Massachusetts, overseeing the statewide MassHire system and leading major initiatives through economic shifts and the COVID-19 pandemic. Jennifer holds a Master's from MIT and has held numerous leadership roles advancing equity, economic opportunity, and public service.



Dr. Heidi Riccio has been with Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School since July 2017, serving as one of the directors of career, technical, and agricultural education programs before her current position as Superintendent-Director. Dr. Riccio began her career in the hospitality industry as a sales manager for the Marriott Corporation. In 1997, she started her career in vocational-technical education, teaching hospitality at Greater Lawrence Technical School (GLTS). Dr. Riccio advanced her career at GLTS, earning various leadership roles, including department chairperson, academy supervisor, and CTE Director. In 2013, she became the Principal/Director of Medford Vocational Technical High School. While there, Dr. Riccio opened nine new Chapter 74 programs and worked collaboratively with the comprehensive high school to bring rigorous academic courses to vocational school students. She is an adjunct professor at Fitchburg State University and an educational consultant.



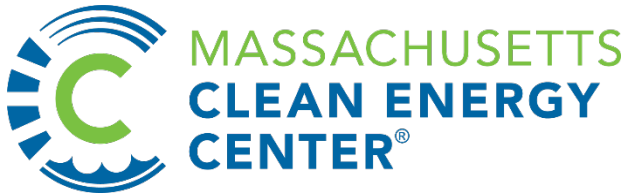
Adam Rodrigues is the Vice President of FORGE, where he drives strategic collaborations and partnerships to help startups with physical products scale from prototype to commercialization. He first joined FORGE in 2016 to lead its expansion into Western MA, later serving as a Western Massachusetts Advisory Council Member and Director of Regional Initiatives. Adam brings over 15 years of experience in manufacturing, supply chain, product development, and operations, with companies like Lenox Manufacturing, Chemex Coffee, and MachineMetrics. His superpower is building regional networks and creating meaningful connections, having supported hundreds of startups and manufacturers. Adam has also mentored for Valley Venture Mentors' manufacturing accelerator and served on the Western Massachusetts Entrepreneurship Committee.



Elise Strobach is the CEO, Founder, and Inventor at AeroShield Materials Inc. Elise founded AeroShield to pursue the vision of sustainable materials that improve lives and reduce environmental impact. She studied Mechanical Engineering during her PhD at MIT and has been working with aerogels and the built environment for 10+ years. AeroShield was founded in 2019 to manufacture aerogel insulated windows that can cut energy losses through windows in half. Together with her co-founders, Elise has raised \$10M, been awarded more than \$20M in non-dilutive funding, and been featured in Forbes 30 Under 30: Energy.



Abel Vargas is the President and founding partner of Valley Home Insulation, a Massachusetts-based contractor delivering energy efficiency services through the Mass Save program. Under his leadership, VHI has become a trusted provider in hard-to-reach communities, with a strong focus on serving Spanish-speaking households and advancing equitable access to clean energy upgrades. Prior to launching VHI, Abel served as Executive Director of the MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board and as Business and Economic Development Director for the City of Lawrence, where he led economic revitalization initiatives and workforce policy development. He holds an MBA from Southern New Hampshire University and brings over 10 years of experience at the intersection of business, workforce, and community development.



MassCEC Summit Speakers



Dr. Emily Reichert is Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, and leads MassCEC's efforts to build a robust, internationally competitive clean energy and climatetech economy in Massachusetts. Before joining MassCEC, Emily served as CEO of Greentown Labs, the largest climatetech startup incubator in North America, for nearly a decade. Over her tenure, Greentown incubated hundreds of cutting edge climatetech startups who have raised more than \$2 billion and created thousands of jobs in Massachusetts.

Emily started her career at Arthur D. Little as a Ph.D. scientist and was the Director of Business Operations at the Warner Babcock Institute for Green Chemistry. She holds a Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and earned her MBA from MIT Sloan School of Management.



Jennifer Applebaum is the Managing Director of Workforce Development at the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center. A former teacher and entrepreneur with a broad range of curriculum, training, and program innovation experience, Jennifer oversees a portfolio of workforce programs that support clean energy career exploration, new entrant and upskilling training in climate-critical occupations, and clean energy entrepreneurship/ small business development among underrepresented populations. Prior to her work at the MassCEC, Jennifer led a

statewide youth employment program centered on progressive skill-building and a career readiness initiative that reached over 100,000 participants across multiple states.



Raija Vaisanen is the Deputy Managing Director for Workforce Development at MassCEC. She has more than eighteen years of experience in workforce and economic development policy implementation and applied social science research. Previously, Raija was Executive Director of the Massachusetts Workforce Association and Director of Research at Commonwealth Corporation, Massachusetts' quasi-public workforce development agency.



Edward Hsieh is the Program Director of the Adult Training & MWBE Support Team, under the MassCEC Workforce Team, overseeing the Equity Workforce Training funding opportunities, as well as other training and underrepresented business support programs. Prior to MassCEC, he served as the COO of a workforce development CBO where he designed, improved, and implemented several training programs, including training for returning citizens and immigrants leading to employment as medium- and heavy-duty fleet technicians, building automation technicians, and hoisting and operating engineers; he also collaborated with several other partners to launch the Mass Save Clean Energy Pathways internship program. Before his pivot into workforce, he spent 14 years as executive director of several high-impact sustainability nonprofits.



Janel Granum is the Program Director of the Student and Young Adult team at MassCEC Workforce Development. Janel brings over fifteen years in youth development, program design and implementation. She currently oversees the youth-facing programming supporting pathways into clean energy careers for high school, training, and college students. Janel oversees the MassCEC Internship program, the Powering the Future Curriculum, Climate Service Corps program, and the young adult equity-focused programming. Her work reflects a deep commitment to community voice and long-term impact.



Elizabeth Youngblood is a Senior Program Manager focused on strategy, external engagement and research on the Workforce Development team at the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center. Elizabeth has been a leader in expanding Massachusetts clean energy workforce, awareness and adoption initiatives since 2009. She holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from Mount Holyoke College, and a Masters of Environmental Management from the Harvard University Extension School.