



## Speaker Biographies

### THURSDAY, AUGUST 4

#### **Roxane Battle, Vice President of Advocacy and Community | AbleTo, Inc.**

Roxane Battle is Vice President of Advocacy and Community at AbleTo, Inc., a leading behavioral health company based in New York. She held the same position at Minneapolis-based Sanvello Health, Inc. which has since integrated with AbleTo's suite of digital behavioral health care tools. You can see Roxane as host of "Checking in with Roxane Battle" in Sanvello's app, where she uses her gift of storytelling to help 4 million subscribers feel better.



Prior to her work as a mental health care advocate, Roxane spent 20+ years as a television journalist, including work as an award-winning news anchor and Emmy-nominated reporter at NBC Minneapolis, CBS, and FOX. A Minnesota native, Roxane earned her undergraduate degree in journalism from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. She completed her master's degree in journalism at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

An Amazon best-selling author, Roxane's self-help memoir, *Pockets of Joy: Deciding to Be Happy, Choosing to Be Free* (Whitaker House 2017), is now in its third printing.

She enjoys cycling, owns a pair of roller-skates, and makes a memorable mac and cheese. Follow her on LinkedIn and Instagram at @roxanebattle.

#### **Chris Andresen, Senior Vice President | Dutko Government Relations**

Chris Andresen serves as a Senior Vice President with Dutko GR. He works extensively with clients to identify policy opportunities and threats to create detailed funding, legislative and executive strategies. His broad experience includes working with companies, universities, non-profits, and trade associations in the following sectors: workforce development, consumer products, manufacturing, retail, renewable energy, criminal justice, mental health, technology, and higher education.



He has a bachelor's degree in organizational management and marketing from the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

## **Ling Becker, Director | Ramsey County Workforce Solutions**

Ling Becker is the Director of Ramsey County's Workforce Solutions department, a position she has held since 2019. Her responsibilities include providing overall vision and leadership to more than 80 department staff who provide workforce development services for job seekers and businesses throughout Ramsey County.

Previously, Ms. Becker was the Executive Director of the Vadnais Heights Economic Development Corporation, where she served from 2014 – 2019. Prior to this role, she was the principal of her own consulting firm – a specialty firm focused on local government and nonprofits. Earlier in her career, MS. Becker worked as project administrator for the Metropolitan Council and a process analyst for Andersen Consulting, LLP.



Ms. Becker earned a master's degree in public administration from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University where she was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow and a bachelor's degree in sociology and political science from the University of Minnesota. In 2017, she led a workforce partnership targeting manufacturing careers for youth that was awarded the Economic Development Association of Minnesota's Partnership Award. She was recognized as a (REAL) Power 50 recipient by Minnesota Business Magazine in 2018.

## **Shirwa Adan, Executive Director | Central Minnesota Community Empowerment Organization**

Shirwa Adan joined CMCEO in December 2019. Central Minnesota Community Empowerment Center provides Education Training, Housing Support, Career Advancement, Economic Empowerment, Youth Development & Business Development. Their integrated services are a bedrock of economic wellness, health, and social empowerment that impacts the community. Since 2015, CMCEO has been helping individuals and families who lack access to resources for employment, housing, and economic empowerment get the services they need. CMCEO supports nearly 10,000 people annually.



Mr. Adan has more than nine years of experience in economic development, research, finance, and fostering partnerships between government, nonprofit and for-profit agencies in underserved areas locally and internationally. Before joining CMCEO, Mr. Adan has supported his native Somalia by building universities, fostering multilateral economic partnerships and conflict resolutions. He served as the Senior Financial Governance Advisor for the Office of the Prime Minister, Federal Government of Somalia for three years from 2017 to 2019. He has also served as a board member of the East African Empowerment Center.

Mr. Adan holds a master's degree in Applied Economics from St. Cloud State University and a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Economics from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

**ChaQuana McEntyre, Founder, President, Acting Executive Director | Family Rise Together**

ChaQuana McEntyre has dedicated her life to acquiring experience around passionate and purposeful people strategy which has accumulated in the launch of Family Rise Together. Ms. McEntyre is an author, speaker, entrepreneur, and founder of Family Rise Together. The mission of Family Rise Together is to help strengthen family unity by engaging fathers in their children’s lives to establish family values, social roles, and participation in the community. Ms. McEntyre has a keen sense of facilitating uncomfortable forums about fatherhood, systematic oppression for the paternal family system and cross-cultural discussions. She has had the opportunity to participate in a variety of facilitating courses, workshops and seminars that have allowed for a broad resource base on which to build her career.



Ms. McEntyre holds a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

**Emily Edison, Executive Director | SOAR Career Solutions**

Emily Edison is the Executive Director of SOAR Career Solutions, a position she has held since January 2012. SOAR Career Solutions, formerly known as Project SOAR, has many years of experience supporting low-income individuals to address physical, emotional and psychological barriers that keep them from securing and maintaining sustainable employment. SOAR implements two programs – Employment and Re-entry Services. Employment Services assists participants one on one to create holistic career and educational action plans, build soft skills and job search skills, develop resumes and applications, connect to job trainings in partnership with the trades and post-secondary institutions, connect to apprenticeship opportunities and assist with job retention. Re-entry Services reduces recidivism by providing one-on-one case management & support services to individuals transitioning out of incarceration. In 2015, SOAR received TakeAction Minnesota’s Leadership Award, recognizing the work done with Vision Duluth to engage thousands of people in shaping a vision for Duluth rooted in equity and democracy.



Ms. Edison has a bachelor’s degree in English from St. Cloud State University.

**Amanda Wagner, Chief Operations Officer | Employ Prince George’s**

Amanda Wagner is the Chief Operations Officer of Employ Prince George’s in Maryland. She started at the organization as the Director of Strategic Planning & Development in 2021. Previously, Ms. Wagner was the Operations Director and then Senior Operations Director at Eckerd Connects in the Charleston, South Carolina area. In this role, she operated workforce programs for under-resourced individuals across South Carolina to prepare jobseekers for careers that lead to an economically sustainable future.



Ms. Wagner has a Master of Science in Youth Development Leadership from Clemson University and a bachelor’s degree in Communication from Southern New Hampshire University.



**Rachel Vilsack, Strategic and Policy Engagement Manager | Credential Engine**

Rachel Vilsack is the Strategic and Policy Engagement Manager for Credential Engine. In this capacity, she works to connect credential transparency with other state and national initiatives, projects, and policies.

Prior to joining Credential Engine, Ms. Vilsack was a Senior Fellow at National Skills Coalition where she served as the organization's expert on federal and state workforce data policy development and implementation. She also worked at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and has a 20-year track record in labor market analysis, federal and state workforce program reporting and evaluation, and leadership in cross-agency data system governance and use. Rachel is passionate about data transparency and data-informed policy development that led to better and more equitable outcomes for workers, businesses, and communities.

Ms. Vilsack holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the College of St. Benedict and a master's degree in economics from Miami University (Ohio).



**Philomena Morrissey Satre, Director of Diversity & Inclusion and External Strategic Partnerships | Land O'Lakes**

Philomena Morrissey Satre joined Land O'Lakes in June 2017, bringing more than 30 years of human resource experience in diversity and inclusion, community relations, work life, and wellbeing. Before joining Land O'Lakes, she worked at Wells Fargo & Company. Her previous roles included VP of Organizational Effectiveness Development, Diversity and Inclusion; Community Outreach Consultant; and Senior HR Consultant. Ms. Satre has extensive experience in developing and implementing diversity strategies, including internal initiatives and community-focused pipelines.



Ms. Satre co-leads the SHIFT Leadership Advisory Council and previously served on the Board of SHIFT (a nonprofit focused on people in midlife). She serves on the AG D&I Consortium and co-chairs the Twin Cities D&I Roundtable. She was named to the Minnesota Aging Workforce Citizen Commission in 2019. She previously served on the Minneapolis Workforce Council, the Executive Leadership Council/Board of Directors for Honoring Women Worldwide, Goodwill Easter Seals, Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES), Lifeworks, HIRED, and Resource Inc. Advisory Boards. She also co-led the 2020 Women on Boards initiative for Minnesota.

Ms. Satre has received numerous awards, including AARP/Pollen 50 over 50, the Minneapolis Business Journal's Woman Change Maker and Minority Advocate, Minnesota Business The (Real) Power of 50 Award and the University of Phoenix Diversity Leadership Award.

She holds an M.A. in Organizational Leadership from St. Catherine University and a B.A. in Public Administration and Political Science from the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse.

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 2022**

**Marc Majors, Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Development |**  
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Marc Majors was named DEED's Deputy Commissioner of Workforce Development in March 2022. In this role, Mr. Majors oversees the Office of Public Engagement, Employment and Training programs, CareerForce, and the Governor's Workforce Development Board.



Before being named Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Majors was DEED's Director of Employment and Training Programs – the group at DEED that runs grantmaking for workforce development. Additionally, he held responsibility for the agency's Workforce Innovative and Opportunity Act-Title I programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, State-funded Workforce Development Grants, and a new public-private initiative with Xcel Energy.

Mr. Majors been a key leader in advocating for and securing over \$130M in net new workforce dollars for Minnesota's workforce development system through federal and state sources. He also helped pioneer a new community review process that has engaged over 75 outside reviewers of DEED grant applications. These innovations and others have led to \$18M more in workforce grants going to equity-centered nonprofits.

Before joining DEED, Mr. Majors was a Workforce Development Manager with the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development. He also spent seven years in New York City Government – managing workforce development programs at the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, the largest public health care system in the country – and worked at the New York City Department of Employment, where he served as a program manager and oversaw Job Training Partnership Act programs.

Mr. Majors was born in Minneapolis. He holds a Juris Doctorate from Vermont Law School, a Master of Public Administration from New York University, and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of San Francisco. In 2021, Majors was named by Twin Cities Business Magazine as one of the notable BIPOC executives of the year.

**Maureen Ramirez, Director of the Office of Public Engagement |**  
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Maureen Ramirez first became the Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity at DEED in October 2019. Very recently, the office has reorganized into the Office of Public Engagement. The Office will focus on targeted outreach and engagement efforts on DEED's programs. In particular, it will connect with populations in Minnesota hit hardest by racial and other disparities in employment – including gender, sexual orientation, geography, race/ethnicity, national origin, color, disability, age, or other protected groups. The Office of Public Engagement will bring together many of DEED's outreach efforts under one division, and by growing the number of staff dedicated to this mission.



Prior to joining DEED, Ms. Ramirez was the Development Director at Propel Nonprofits, and previously the Director of Integrated Strategies for the Northside Funders Group. Ms. Ramirez was a 2014 Bush Foundation Leadership Fellow.

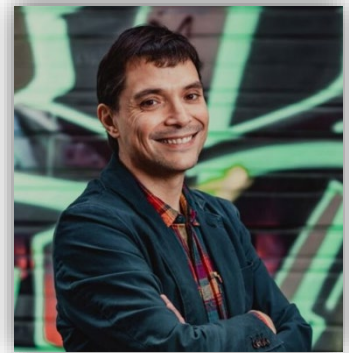
Ms. Ramirez holds an M.B.A. from the University of Minnesota – Carlson School of Management and a Master's in Advocacy and Public Leadership from the University of Minnesota-Duluth. She has a B.A. in Writing Intensive English and Spanish Language and Literature.

**James Whirlwind Soldier, Workforce Strategy Consultant |**  
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

James Whirlwind Soldier joined Minnesota DEED in April 2022 as the Workforce Strategy Consultant for the Northwest area of Minnesota. He is also a freelance implementer and presenter with Whirlwind Soldier Resources in the Moorhead area.

He served as the chairperson for the administrative committee on the North Dakota Workforce Development Council and is a member of the board for TrainND. Previously, he worked for Goldmark Property Management, specializing in Employee Relations and Community Outreach. He helped develop the Inclusive Workforce Employer designation with CareerForce in Minnesota. Previously, he worked with Mindshift, placing adults with high functioning autism in long-term, meaningful, careers.

Mr. Whirlwind Soldier earned an undergraduate degree in Anthropology from the University of Minnesota and an M.B.A. from the University of Mary. He graduated from Portland State University's Executive Education program in 2012, and the Small Business Administration's Emerging Leaders Initiative in 2016.



**Elena Foshay, Director of Workforce Development |** City of Duluth

Elena Foshay is the Director of Workforce Development at the City of Duluth. Previously, she was the Community Energy Program Manager for the Center for Energy and Environment in Minneapolis. Prior to that, she was the Director of Adult Programs at Rising Sun Energy Center.

Ms. Foshay holds a Master of Social Welfare – Management and Planning and a Master of Arts in International Area Studies, Community and Economic Development from the University of California, Berkeley. She also holds a B.A. in Women's Studies and Sociology from Oberlin College.



**Marnie Werner, Vice President of Research & Operations |**  
Center for Rural Policy and Development

Marnie Werner is Vice President of Research & Operations at the Center for Rural Policy and Development. Marnie joined the organization in 2000. Prior to her time at the Center, she spent eight years reporting for a group of east central Minnesota newspapers, covering everything from the state legislature to turtle races.

At the Center, Ms. Werner has developed a special interest in the child care shortage, addiction issues, broadband, water quality, and correcting other people's typos. In her spare time, she likes to write, spend time with friends and be outside as much as possible in the beautiful southern Minnesota landscape.

Ms. Werner holds a bachelor's in journalism from the University of Minnesota and a master's degree from the University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs.

