

2017-2018 Civic Leadership Academy Presenter Biographies

Allison Albrecht, BA, currently serves as the Communications Manager for the Village of Schaumburg, a position she has held since August 2014. Prior to working in Schaumburg, Allison served as a Communications Specialist for the City of Naperville for three years. Allison also spent time as a Communications Analyst for the Illinois House of Representatives where she worked both in Chicago and Springfield with various members of the Illinois legislature to produce their materials and develop their communication plans. Aside from her time spent in the public sector, Allison has communications experience in the private sector having worked as a Public Relations and Account Executive for a boutique strategic communications firm in downtown Chicago. There she created branding strategies and provided copywriting on web, identity, collateral, advertising and marketing projects for a variety of clients. Allison's passion for communications started when she worked as a General Assignment Reporter for Liberty Suburban Chicago Newspapers covering several towns in Cook County. As a journalist, she was a recipient of the NAACP Medal of Freedom for presenting fair and accurate coverage of diverse issues in Chicago communities. Allison holds a Bachelor's Degree in Communications from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She lives in North Aurora with her husband and two greyhounds.

Kelly Coyle, JD, is an associate at Clark Baird Smith. She has an extensive and well-rounded background in Labor and Employment Law. Kelly began her legal career in 2013 litigating unfair labor practices, petitions, and other Illinois Labor Relations Board matters for the Illinois Education Association (IEA). While with the IEA she also handled various pension issues, grievance investigations, and other public sector litigation. Kelly also conducted numerous trainings and seminars across Illinois for both attorneys and clients. Following her tenure with the IEA, in November 2014, Kelly became an administrative law judge (ALJ) with the Illinois Labor Relations Board. As an ALJ, Kelly was responsible for conducting numerous hearings, addressing a variety of pretrial issues, conducting in-depth labor law research, and drafting more than a dozen decisions. Kelly also drafted Board-level decisions which detailed the ultimate outcomes in multiple unfair labor practice and representation cases, and presented on behalf of the Board at several State and private functions. Currently, in addition to assisting clients with their traditional labor issues, Kelly also advises and represents clients on a variety of other employee issues including disability pension matters and Public Employee Safety Benefit Protection Act, as well as issues regarding Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Illinois Human Rights Act. She earned a J.D. degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law and a B.A. from DePaul University.

Roxana M. Crasovan, JD, represents employers in traditional labor and employment law matters, including: collective bargaining negotiations, grievance and interest arbitrations, unfair labor practice matters, and union representation matters. Roxana also counsels and defends employers against claims under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, the Illinois Military Leave of Absence Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, as well as under the Administrative Review Act, among others. In addition, Roxana is experienced in conducting neutral workplace investigations on behalf of public and private sector employers in various industries, as well as wage and hour audits. Roxana is an active member of the American Bar Association's Committee on State and Local Government Bargaining and Employment Law. She serves as the Management Co-Chair of the Representation and Jurisdiction subcommittee and regularly authors reports on representation and jurisdictional developments in the public sector. Roxana is a contributing editor to The Developing Labor Law (BNA). She has also recently authored a chapter on the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution in the Municipal Law Deskbook published by the American Bar Association. Roxana has been selected to the 2017 Illinois Rising Stars list, which recognizes no more than 2.5 percent of the attorneys in each state. She earned a J.D. degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law and a B.S. from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Cheryl Fayne-dePersio, BS, is the Communications Manager for the Village of Northbrook. Cheryl has been an active member of the Illinois Chapter and National Chapter of the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, in addition to serving as past-Chairman of the Northwest Municipal Conference Communicators Group and member of 3CMA. Cheryl has a background in cable television and television production as she has worked with a variety of Chicagoland cable companies and production houses. She has spent the last 25 years working in municipal government and is responsible for a variety of duties encompassing cable franchise administration, local programming, and communications, which includes media relations, crisis communications, social media, mass notification call outs and website management. She is the Editor of Northbrook - the Village newsletter and is the Executive Director of Northbrook Community Television. Cheryl holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Communications from Illinois State University and received a certificate in E-Government from UIC College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs. Recently she participated in several table-top and full-scale exercises with the Cook County Department of Homeland Security Emergency Management Division and has a variety of “high-profile” experiences dealing with local media. She is also a past presenter with the Northern Illinois Civic Leadership Academy; Center for Governmental Studies.

Sam Ferguson, MsEd, retired Municipal Director of Information Technology: Village of Palatine; Village of Schaumburg; Interim CIO for the City of Joliet has over 33 years of governmental Information Technology experience. Starting in 1983 as an Army Data Processing officer, Sam saw the rise of the PC and the Microsoft genesis along with the shift from “dumb terminals” and main frame systems to the PC on the desktops. He was one of the first IT directors in the Northwest suburbs with his first position being at the Village of Palatine in 1989 and retiring from the Village of Schaumburg in 2012. His experience includes: building IT departmental teams to service municipal customers, and specifically, working on projects dealing with GIS, E911, Asset Management, ERP implementations, phone systems, topology changes, office automation and data security. Sam is an emeritus member of Illinois and International GMIS, an organization of governmental IT leaders from across the globe who share best practices so all can benefit. Sam graduated from Monmouth College in Illinois with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Physical Education and Biology and received his Master’s degree in Educational Administration from Southern Illinois University – Carbondale and got the majority of his early IT education from the US Army.

Stacy French Reynolds, MS, has more than 20 years of experience in the nonprofit field, including the social service, association, and university arenas. Her experience encompasses strategic planning, organizational and board development, fundraising, and communications and marketing. As an advisor to nonprofit organizations and small businesses, she has a particular focus on organizations with 10-200 employees. Ms. Reynolds earned a M.S. degree in Communication from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, and a B.A. degree from Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. She lives in Chicago with her husband, an eccentric retired racing greyhound, and an assortment of motorcycles. More information about Ms. Reynolds and Anchor Advisors can be found at www.anchoradvisors.com

Benjamin Gehrt, JD, focuses his practice on traditional labor law and employment litigation. He has experience in grievance and interest arbitration cases, contract negotiations, and unfair labor practice charges. Ben also represents clients in EEO and wage-hour litigation. Prior to practicing law, Ben worked as a Plant Manager for a food manufacturing company in suburban Chicago. His experience as a supervisor and a manager gives him a unique perspective that helps him relate to the day-to-day challenges our clients face while managing people. Ben has represented public and private sector clients in contract negotiations and interest arbitration. In those settings, he has helped clients obtain significant cost savings through changes in staffing levels, wage schedules, retiree insurance benefits, sick leave buyback benefits, and work rule changes, among other things. Ben is also an experienced litigator. In addition to representing clients in grievance arbitration proceedings, Ben has also litigated cases in the state and federal trial courts. His litigation experience includes cases involving allegations of discrimination, employment cases alleging deprivation of constitutional rights, wage-hour disputes, and disputes over employee benefits under both ERISA and Illinois state law. Ben has successfully represented clients in the state and federal courts of appeal. Additionally, Ben has developed a niche practice at Clark Baird Smith LLP, counseling the firm’s clients on a wide variety of wage and hour issues under both state and federal law. In addition to handling the traditional wage payment questions that arise with private sector businesses, Ben is skilled at answering questions that are unique to the public sector, such as questions about compensatory time, 7(k) work periods, pay for canine handlers, and duty shift trades, to name a few. Ben was selected to the 2016 Illinois Rising Stars list. Only 2.5% of all attorneys in the State of Illinois were selected. He earned a J.D. degree from DePaul University College of Law, magna cum laude, and a B.A. from The University of Chicago.

Maria Elaine Hadden, MS, Project Manager, Participatory Budgeting Project, manages the Midwest and Southern regions of the U.S. Originally from Columbus, Ohio, Ms. Hadden started her professional career working as a mediator and mediation trainer with the Interfaith Center for Peace. She earned her B.A. degree in International Peace and Conflict Studies from The Ohio State University before moving to Illinois to serve as an AmeriCorps*VISTA. Ms. Hadden first became involved in Participatory Budgeting (PB) as a budget delegate during the very first PB cycle in the U.S. in 2009 and was so inspired by the experience that she joined the organization in 2010 as a founding Board member. Ms. Hadden's interests in community voice and the role of civil society were the focus on her graduate studies at DePaul University where she earned an M.S. degree in International Public Service Management.

Gregory T. Kuhn, PhD, is Assistant Director for Public Management and Training at the Center for Governmental Studies at NIU. He has over 34 years of combined experience in government administration, consulting, and academics. In addition to serving at CGS for good portions of his career, Greg has also served in city management assignments as Village Manager in Clarendon Hills and Assistant to the Manager in Skokie, both Illinois communities in the Chicago area. Greg has also provided services to governments on a consulting basis as Director of Local Government Management Services at Sikich, LLP., Managing Vice-President of the PAR Group, and Sr. Associate in Governmental Services at Korn-Ferry International. Dr. Kuhn specializes in organizational development, design and training, strategic planning, leadership, urban management and public policy formulation. He serves as a lecturer/adjunct faculty member in NIU's Division of Public Administration and Northwestern University's Graduate Program in Public Policy and Public Administration. He earned a Bachelor's degree in political science from Marquette University and a Master's degree in Public Administration and Ph.D. in Public Administration and Political Science from NIU.

Robert Marovich, MBA, is an associate with Ruby & Associates has nearly 30 years of nonprofit development experience. He has worked with and for organizations representing education, healthcare, animal welfare, youth programs, museums, and public television, and radio. His expertise spans the gamut of giving, from annual and major giving to planned gifts and foundation/corporation relations. During his tenure as vice president with the firm of Ter Molen Watkins & Brandt, Mr. Marovich helped complete the proposal that secured the largest challenge grant ever made by the Kresge Foundation to an Indiana nonprofit. Since 2009, he has focused his nonprofit efforts almost exclusively on grant writing. His current clients represent charter and private schools, early childhood education, an after-school program, supportive housing, animal welfare, autism services, a museum, and a workers' rights advocacy group. He holds a B.A. degree in American Studies from the University of Notre Dame and an MBA degree from the Lake Forest Graduate of Management.

Tracy Rogers-Tryba, MsEd, is a Research Fellow at Northern Illinois University's Center for P-20 Engagement, home to NIU STEAM Works. With over nine years of experience at NIU, Tracy's familiarity with strategic visioning has contributed to the development of Huskie Hack, a new program focused on digital literacy involving computer coding and hacking skills for innovative community problem solving. Having previously worked with the National Security Agency as an Intelligence Analyst, her extensive international experiences in Africa, South America, Europe, and the South Pacific uniquely qualify her in working with "global" issues of early financial literacy, digital literacy, dialogue and deliberation, and program development. Tracy is currently involved with projects throughout the Division of Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development focused on community building through collective impact and dialogue activities, serving as Co-Investigator on an economic and entrepreneurial education program in South Africa, as well as assisting in the development of several new summer camps on coding and curriculum on global leadership skills. An avid traveler, reader, and chef, Tracy likes to cook for friends and if possible tie her dishes to her latest literary read or recent travels. With her dual BA in international relations and communications, MsEd in adult and higher education, she continues to learn, engaging in coursework on her EdD in community development.. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in adult education and community development

Judy Santacaterina, MA, has served as the coach of the award winning NIU Forensics team for the last 37 years. In that time she has coached numerous national and state champions. Ms. Santacaterina holds both a BA and MA in Communication Education from Northern Illinois University. She has conducted workshops for student, faculty, and staff on the NIU campus as well as other universities throughout the country and has served as a communication consultant for both public and private businesses and organizations. She is the current Executive Director of the Illinois Intercollegiate Forensics Association as well as a past president of the Illinois Communication and Theater Association. She is the recipient of numerous awards including NIU' College of LA&S Golden Alumni Award, the American Forensics Association's Distinguished Service Award, and the Illinois Communication and Theater's Lifetime Achievement Award. Ms. Santacaterina also serves as the Director of NIU's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences' Bachelor of General Studies baccalaureate degree program.

Alicia Schatteman, PhD, is an Associate Professor at Northern Illinois University (NIU) in the Department of Public Administration and the Center for Nonprofit and NGO Studies. She worked in the government and nonprofit sectors for 12 years, including four years as Executive Director of a community nonprofit. Her research and teaching interests include nonprofit resource management and performance measurement. Dr. Schatteman earned a BSSc from the University of Ottawa, an M.A. degree from Trent University, an M.S. degree from Syracuse University, and her PhD from Rutgers University.

Mindy Schneiderman, PhD, is an Assistant Director of the Center for Governmental Studies (CGS) and is responsible for the survey research team. Mindy has over 25 years of survey research experience. She has experience managing projects using telephone, mail, Internet, and mixed-mode survey data collection methodologies, as well as focus group and in-person interviewing experience. She has managed numerous community survey projects for municipalities, libraries, school districts, park districts, county health departments, and nonprofit organizations. She was the Associate Director of NIU's Public Opinion Laboratory from 2008-2013. Previously she worked at the American Medical Association for 18 years, the last 11 years as the Director of Survey Research overseeing all health care and strategic issue research. Mindy received her doctorate in Cognitive Psychology from Rutgers University in 1990. She has numerous publications on survey research methodology. Her survey research has been cited in the New York Times and Wall Street Journal and has been used in Congressional testimony.

Susy Schultz, is President of Public Narrative. She is an editor, digital strategist, educator, writer and change agent, who has been telling stories for more than 20 years. In 2017, she was named one of the 20 most powerful women in Chicago journalism by media columnist Robert Feder. Her past titles include managing, digital and investigative editor, executive director, associate publisher, president, communications director, reporter, columnist and editorial writer.

Susy is president of Public Narrative, an organization that works with and trains both nonprofits and the media — mainstream as well as the 170-some ethnic and community news outlets in Chicago's neighborhoods. Her career has wound her through the worlds of journalism, academia, government, foundations and nonprofits. She ran the Chicago Department of Public Health's communication department and held the title of advocacy and communications director at the Chicago Foundation for Women. She has taught journalism at Columbia College Chicago, Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism and Roosevelt University. She is the founding president of the Association for Women Journalists' Chicago chapter, a member of Investigative Reporters and Editors, the Society of Professional Journalists and was president and vice president of JAWS, Journalism and Women's Symposium.

Michael T. Shrake, PE, is Vice President of Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc., a 90-person consulting firm located in Vernon Hills, IL. He joined the firm in 1985 and has over 30 years of engineering experience focusing on municipal services, site design and construction phase services. Mike has served as Village Engineer for Kildeer, Long Grove, Wadsworth, Riverwoods, and Lake Barrington, and as special consultant to numerous other municipalities. He has extensive experience as a site designer/project manager for school districts, park districts and commercial properties. Park districts represented include Glenview, Arlington Heights, Waukegan, Vernon Hills, Gurnee, Grayslake, and Wilmette. School districts include Warren Township District 121, Arlington Heights District 25, Glenview District 34, Kaneland District #302, Woodstock District 200, Gurnee District 56, Special Education District of Lake County (SEDOL), Hawthorn District 73, Evanston Township High School 202, Gurnee Woodland District 50, Grayslake North District 127. Mike has overseen the design, review and construction of over \$450 million dollars of improvements. This blend of clients and responsibilities gives Mike a balanced perspective that fosters successful intergovernmental partnerships, prudent infrastructure planning and management, and responsible site development. Mike earned a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering, and a Master's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering, both from the University of Rhode Island.

Ann Elizabeth Tennes, MPA, began her tenure as the Village of Skokie's Director of Marketing and Communications in October 1998. For six years prior to that, Ann served as the Assistant Executive Director of the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County. Ann holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Columbia College, Chicago and a Master of Public Administration degree from Roosevelt University, Chicago. In April 2013, Ann was elected to a six-year term on the Board of Trustees of Oakton Community College and currently serves chairman of the board. She has served on Oakton's board since 2007.

Ann also serves on the boards of the Chicago's North Shore Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Skokie Festival of Cultures, the Independent Merchants of Downtown Skokie, the Centre East Metropolitan Exposition Authority and the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts Foundation. She is the immediate past-chairman of the Northwest Municipal Conference Local Government Communicators Committee, and previously served on the boards of the City-County Communications and Marketing Association and the Glenview Chamber of Commerce. She is a member of the Skokie Kiwanis Club and a founding board member of the Skokie Tennis Association. From 2002 to 2010, Ann served as chairman of the Park Ridge Zoning Board of Appeals. Ann and her family moved to Skokie in 2010 after more than 30 years of living in Park Ridge. Ann also is a past presenter with the Northern Illinois Civic Leadership Academy, Center for Governmental Studies.

Kurt Thurmaier, PhD, Presidential Engagement Professor and Chair, NIU Department of Public Administration/Director School of Public and Global Affairs, received his B.A. and M.P.P.A. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his Ph.D. from the Maxwell School, Syracuse University. He held assistant and associate professor positions at the University of Kansas before becoming MPA director at Iowa State University, 2002-2005. His research and teaching interests include budgetary decision making at the local and state levels in the U.S. and other countries, comparative public administration (especially fiscal decentralization), and intergovernmental relations (especially interlocal collaboration). His most recent work has focused on city-county consolidations and interlocal agreements among cities and counties, especially fiscal accountability in public management networks. He leads a month-long study abroad course for graduate and undergraduate students to Musoma, Tanzania every other year to study the role of NGOs in developing countries. He and has served as a consultant and researcher with ICMA, HIID, and several local governments. He is a lifetime member of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), and has served as chair of the Association for Budgeting and Financial Management (ABFM). He is a member of the Government Finance Officers Association (including the Illinois Government Finance Officers Association), the International City/County Management Association (including the Illinois and Wisconsin associations), and has served as chapter president at KU, Iowa State, and NIU in their chapters of Phi Beta Delta, The National Honor Society for International Studies.

Curtis Wood, PhD, from University of Kansas, is an Associate Professor Emeritus of Public Administration at Northern Illinois University. He served in municipal government for 21 years, as an assistant to the City Manager in Salina Kansas; Assistant City Manager in Hays, Kansas; City Administrator in Smithville, Missouri; and the Finance Director/Treasurer/Clerk in Pratt and Manhattan, KS. Wood is a co-author of *The Adapted City: Institutional Dynamics and Structural Change* with H. George Frederickson and Gary A. Johnson. Wood has also published academic articles regarding municipal finance/budgeting, metropolitan governance, inter-local agreements, innovation management, and contract management and accountability. Currently Wood teaches as an instructor in the School of Public Affairs and Administration at the University of Kansas at the Edwards Campus in Overland Park, KS.

Eric Zeemering, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Public Administration in the School of Public and Global Affairs at NIU. Prof. Zeemering studies collaborative governance in cities and local governments. His new book *Collaborative Strategies for Sustainable Cities: Economy, Environment and Community in Baltimore* investigates how sustainability is defined in Baltimore and how nongovernmental organizations contribute to the implementation of sustainability initiatives in the city. His recent research investigates the adoption, oversight, and termination of municipal service sharing agreements for police and fire services by city governments in California. He has received funding from the Canadian government to analyze intergovernmental coordination on sustainability efforts by local governments across the border between the U.S. and Canada. In 2014, he was Fulbright Visiting Research Chair in Governance and Public Administration at the University of Ottawa. Prof. Zeemering's interest in local government led to his elected service on the city council in Rockford, MI (1999-2001), and appointed service on the Kent County Housing Commission (2003-2006), and the Daly City Parks and Recreation Commission (2009-2011). He received his Ph.D. in political science from Indiana University in 2007, and his B.A. degree in political science from Aquinas College in 2001.