



UNA * USA
Westchester Chapter

EARTH DAY 2024!

SUNDAY, APRIL 28TH

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Keynote speaker **KALE ROBERTS** Supports the United Nations' Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) major group, coordinating the U.S. local government engagement with UN climate and biodiversity conventions — including bringing delegations of mayors to the annual COP climate conferences. He has provided technical assistance to 500+ cities and counties on climate action planning, SDGs-alignment, biodiversity, and sustainability planning. Prior experience includes work with the United Nations Development Programme's Climate Change Adaptation Team from the Bangkok Regional Hub, where he supported countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region to develop Green Climate Fund adaptation projects. He earlier served as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand. Today, he supports ICLEI USA's Northeast regional members and is energy editor for Mother Earth News magazine. He teaches at the Bard College Center for Environmental Policy and lives in the Hudson Valley.



KEYNOTE

NICOLA ARMACOST has served as Mayor of Hastings-on-Hudson, NY since 2019, and before that as Trustee since 2009. Under her leadership, Hastings is currently the highest-ranking Climate Smart Community (CSC) in New York State. The municipality has adopted the New York Stretch Energy Code, signed up for Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), expanded financing for energy efficiency and alternative fuel infrastructure, promoted solarize and community solar campaigns, and invested in electric vehicles and in renewable energy technology including geothermal and solar for municipal buildings. The village has implemented a complete streets policy, promoted “buy local” initiatives, supported volunteer-run community repair and reuse programs, dedicated over 89% of municipal-owned open space as parkland, and commissioned studies that assess climate vulnerabilities, enhance resiliency planning and reduce waste. Mayor Armacost is an ICLEI-USA Race to Zero Leader and a member of ICLEI's RexCom. She serves on the Executive Committee of the Westchester Municipal Officials Association (WMOA) and is a member of the Environment, Energy and Technology Policy Committee the New York Conference of Mayors (NYCOM).



PANELIST



PANELIST

MARY LAMBERT, Coordinator of the Climate Action Planning Institute, joined the Hudson Valley Regional Council (HVRC) in July 2022. She leads cohorts of local governments in creating GHG inventories, climate action plans, vulnerability assessments, and climate adaptation plans in Dutchess and Westchester Counties. Ms. Lambert previously served on the Hastings-on-Hudson Board of Trustees, as the Co-Chair of the Hastings-on-Hudson Climate Smart Communities Task, and as a member of the Hastings Conservation Commission and the Zero Waste Advisory Task Force. She has also served as Executive Director of the Weeden Foundation and as a project coordinator for Conservation International. In addition, Ms. Lambert has worked for over 20 years in technology and media, holding senior management roles at Google, Opera Software, and at Volta Charging. She was the Founder of an award-winning green e-marketplace, and most recently, ran her own marketing consulting business, Closed Loop Consultants. Ms. Lambert received her master's degree in business administration from Columbia University and her bachelor's degree in American Studies from Yale University.



PANELIST

MAYOR YADIRA RAMOS-HERBERT is the 24th mayor of the City of New Rochelle, New York, and the first woman and person of color to serve in that position; she was inaugurated in 2024. Prior to her election as Mayor, she served as a member of City Council. A few of her accomplishments on the City Council include: facilitating the City's police reform plan; securing a COVID-19 vaccine bus to the heart of her district to help close the vaccination disparity gap; and leading an initiative to increase the number of youth applying for summer employment.

Now she is shepherding New Rochelle through the CSC process. The City made a commitment to climate action by passing the CSC pledge in 2009, and over the next 13 years completed a list of actions to qualify as a Bronze Certified Climate Smart Community. The City received the Bronze Certification in October 2023. Yadira received her B.A. from St. Francis College, J.D. from SUNY Buffalo Law School and a M.Ed. from Northeastern University.



MODERATOR

PAUL PRESENDIEU is Co-chair of the UNA Westchester Young Professionals Committee, UNA-USA Global Goals Ambassador for Climate Action, and currently serves as the Chairman of the City of New Rochelle's Sustainability Advisory Committee, Co-Chairman for the New Rochelle School Districts Green Schools Advisory Committee, and Board Secretary/Environmental Justice Co-Chairman of the New York State Association of Conservation Commissions. Paul received the Key to SUNY Westchester Community College for outstanding student leadership in being the founder of the college's delegation to the Harvard National Model United Nations and founder of the Environmental Club.

Prior to joining Soulful Synergy as the Community Engagement Manager, Paul served as the Outreach Manager of Sustainable Westchester, Westchester County's nonprofit consortium of 44 municipal governments and the County Government. Paul also pioneered programming in environmental equity, including the creation of a Hispanic Roundtable. An accomplished young professional, Paul has received a wealth of awards and recognition. This includes five proclamations from the Westchester County Government, being named to four 40 under 40 lists, and being named a top 22 under 30 Young Professional Wunderkind by Westchester Magazine in 2018.