



*Sustainable Livelihoods and Behavioral Health: Strategies and Partnerships to Address Farm Stress and Suicide*

**Virtual Convening**

**Tuesday – Thursday**

**1-5pm EDT, May 17-19, 2022**

[Registration](#)



**Jewel H. Bronaugh, PhD**

Deputy Secretary

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Dr. Jewel H. Bronaugh was appointed the 16th Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in 2018 by Governor Ralph Northam. She previously served as the Virginia State Executive Director for the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), appointed by Governor Terry McAuliffe and then-U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, in July 2015. Prior to her FSA appointment, she served as Dean of the College of Agriculture at Virginia State University (VSU) with oversight of Extension, Research and Academic Programs. Previously she was the Associate Administrator for Extension Programs and a 4-H Extension Specialist.

In spring 2019, Dr. Bronaugh launched the Virginia Farmer Stress Task Force to raise awareness and coordinate resources to address farmer stress and mental health challenges in Virginia. In the fall of 2020, she helped establish the Virginia Food Access Investment Fund and Program, the first statewide program of its kind to address food access within historically marginalized communities.

Dr. Bronaugh received her Ph.D. in Career and Technical Education from Virginia Tech. She is passionate about the advancement of youth leadership in agriculture. Dr. Bronaugh is from Petersburg, Virginia. She is married to Cleavon, a retired United States Army Veteran.



**Andrea Palm**

Deputy Secretary

Department of Health and Human Services

Andrea Palm is the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). As Deputy Secretary, she is the Chief Operating Officer and is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Department.

Palm most recently served as Secretary-designee of the Department of Health Services (DHS), overseeing one of the largest state agencies in Wisconsin as a member of Governor Tony Evers' cabinet. In this role, she had responsibility for the state's Medicaid program, its Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and behavioral health programs, among others. DHS is also Wisconsin's public health agency, and as such, Palm led the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Previously, Palm held a number of policy and operational roles in the Obama-Biden Administration at HHS, including Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Counselor, Chief of Staff and Senior Counselor to the



Secretary. During her eight-year tenure, she worked on a variety of Administration priorities, including the Affordable Care Act, as well as providing leadership for the Department's work to combat the opioid epidemic.

Palm was born and raised in rural, upstate New York. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Cornell University and a Master's degree from Washington University in St. Louis.



**Lisa Ramirez, EdD**

Director

USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement

Dr. Lisa R. Ramirez most recently served as the Chief Innovation Officer for the Lubbock Independent School District in Texas. She also has served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Programs in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education.

Ramirez's professional career includes deep experience in education, especially in educating migrant children. She is the daughter of migrant workers and a former migrant worker herself. Ramirez left the fields to serve in the United States Army Reserves. She financed portions of her college education through the GI Bill and began her career as an educator in 1992 – first as a middle and high school teacher in English and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in Texas.

Born in Chicago, but a Texan at heart, Ramirez received her B.A., M.Ed., and Ed.D. degrees from Texas Tech University, in Lubbock, Texas. A life-long learner, she is an alumna of the Executive Leadership program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the National Hispana Leadership Institute. She also is a Pahara-Aspen Institute Fellow. Ramirez enjoys running, hiking, writing and the study of film/world cinema. Dr. Ramirez currently lives with her husband, two children and two dogs in Alexandria, Virginia.



**Commissioner Richard Ball**

Commissioner

New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

On January 9, 2014, Richard A. Ball was nominated as Commissioner of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.

A native New Yorker, Mr. Ball has made a living in agriculture his entire life. His inspiration to become a farmer came from his grandparents, who were lifelong dairy farmers. At 18 years old, Mr. Ball began his own career in agriculture as a farm worker on a vegetable farm. He later became operations manager of that same farm. After 20 years there, in 1993 the opportunity arose to be a farm owner and for the past 27 years, he has been the owner and operator of Schoharie Valley Farms in Schoharie, NY, which consists of 200 acres and produces a wide range of vegetable crops, small fruits and greenhouse crops. The farm serves both retail and wholesale consumers through an onsite farm market and ships to brokers and restaurants in the local area as well as New York City.



Mr. Ball has held a number of positions within agriculture and community organizations at the local, state and national level, including the New York State Vegetable Growers Association, the New York Farm Bureau, the American Farm Bureau and the Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce.

He currently serves as the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) 2021-2022 President. As president, Commissioner Ball will help guide the implementation of NASDA's priorities and additional policies adopted at NASDA's 2021 annual meeting. He is also the President of Food Export Northeast. Mr. Ball along with his wife, Shirley, reside on the farm in Schoharie and appreciate having three generations engaged in the farm operation.

*Speakers in order of appearance*

**Setting the Stage and the Lived Experience**



**Cristina Miller, Ph.D.**  
Research Economist  
USDA Rural Development Innovation Center

Cristina Miller is a Research Economist in the Innovation Center at US Department of Agriculture Rural Development. She received her Ph.D. and M.A. in Economics from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a M.S. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a M.A. in Political Science from the University of Birmingham (UK). She earned her Bachelor's degree in International Economics and Marketing from Baylor University.

Miller's research primarily focuses on access to healthcare in rural America; more specifically the impacts of rural hospital closures on local labor markets and mortality rates. Another line of research analyzes health insurance coverage for rural and farm households and labor force decisions due to healthcare policy changes. She is also interested in population health and disability. She serves on the board of the Society of Government Economists in Washington, DC and is the conference chair. Miller is also an editorial assistant for the Review of Regional Studies.



**Xochitl Torres Small**  
Under Secretary  
Rural Development

Xochitl Torres Small serves Under Secretary for Rural Development, overseeing loans and grants that provide infrastructure improvements; business development; affordable housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety, and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, Tribal, and high-poverty areas. During her leadership, USDA Rural Development secured \$2 billion to support rural broadband through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Prior to coming to Rural Development, Xochitl was a United States Representative for the fifth largest district in the country. As a Representative, Xochitl served as a member of the House Agriculture Committee, the House Armed Services Committee and as chairwoman of the Oversight, Management, and Accountability subcommittee of the House Homeland Security Committee. Xochitl was the first woman and first person of color to represent New Mexico's second congressional district.



The granddaughter of farmworkers, Xochitl Torres Small grew up in the borderlands of New Mexico. She has worked as a field representative for Senator Tom Udall, a clerk for United States District Court Judge Robert C. Brack, and an attorney practicing water and natural resources law. Xochitl has a law degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law, an undergraduate degree from Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, and an international baccalaureate from Waterford Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa. She’s happily married to her husband, New Mexico State Representative Nathan Small.



**Erin Kimbrough**  
Program Manager and Co-Director, Battle Ground to Breaking Ground  
Texas AgrAbility  
Texas A&M Agrilife Extension

Erin Kimbrough is the program manager and co-director for Texas A&M Agrilife Extension’s programs BattleGround to Breaking Ground and Texas Agrability. She holds a bachelor’s degree from Texas A&M University in agriculture science and has a teaching certificate in agriculture education. She is responsible for developing programs, securing funding, writing curriculum, creating educational materials, providing education, and managing day-to-day operations. She also conducts outreach for the programs and builds relationships with program partners locally, regionally, and nationally.



**John Kimbrough (Marine veteran and first responder)**  
Texas Veteran Farmers Coalition

Together they own Growin on Faith Farm (GOF), which utilizes sustainable, regenerative practices to raise grass-fed, grass-finished Wagyu Angus beef.



**Dale Dobson**  
Farm and Home Safety Administrator  
Kentucky Department of Agriculture

Dobson leads the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s Farm and Home Safety program, responsible for increasing safety awareness and provide educational resources to ensure the safety of farmers and their families. The KDA Farm and Home Safety Program conducts educational programs across Kentucky, including farmer suicide prevention PSAs, farm safety demonstrations for local FFA chapters, and ATV mock rescue demonstrations.

### USDA Response



**Shefali Mehta, Ph.D.**  
Deputy Undersecretary  
USDA Research, Education, and Economics

Dr. Mehta, an environmental and agricultural economist and statistician, comes to USDA from Open Rivers Consulting Associates, a science & technology and management consulting firm she founded and led. In her



role and Founder and Principal, she helped clients intertwine innovation, data and science, compassion, diversity of perspectives and the importance of the environment for overall health into their skills and values.

Dr. Mehta has worked in roles across private, public and non-profit sectors including McKinsey, Syngenta, the Soil Health Partnership, amongst others. She has served as a Board member for various groups including Pheasants Forever, Minnesota Invasive Terrestrial Plants and Pest Center (MITPPC), the School of Statistics at University of Minnesota, and The Gates Scholar Advisory Council, amongst others.

Dr. Mehta received her Ph.D. in Agricultural and Applied Economics and MS in Statistics from the University of Minnesota, MPhil in Economics from Cambridge University and a BA in Economics from New York University.



**Kellie Kubena**  
Rural Health Liaison  
Rural Development  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Kellie Kubena has recently been appointed as the USDA Rural Health Liaison in the Rural Development Innovation Center. Kellie most recently served as the Deputy Chief Innovation Officer in Rural Development and prior to that served as the Director of the Engineering and Environmental Staff (EES) in USDA's Rural Utilities Service Water and Environmental Programs in 2015. Before joining USDA, Kellie served in various positions over 17 years at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Kellie has a Bachelors degree in Wildlife and Fisheries with a minor in Oceanography from Texas A&M University and a Masters degree in Fisheries from the University of Washington where her research focused on aquatic toxicology.



**J. Latrice Hill**  
Director of Outreach  
USDA Farm Service Agency

Latrice Hill was selected to serve as the National Director of Outreach for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in 2013. As Director, she establishes program outreach policy and maintains oversight of FSA outreach activities nationwide.

Hill began her federal career as a county office clerk with FSA (formerly Farmers Home Administration). She later served in the positions of loan officer and district outreach coordinator where she was responsible for determining feasibility, assessing financial situations and risks, approving and servicing borrower farm loan accounts for six counties. With a strong background in communications and passion for serving others, Hill was later selected to serve as the FSA State Public Relations and Outreach Specialist, overseeing outreach activities in 71 counties. While in MS, Hill was appointed by two US Secretaries of Agriculture to serve on the National Advisory Committee for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers for three two-year terms.

Hill has received several awards and recognition for her collaborations and work with rural farmers, organizations and students. Notable accomplishments include the Emerson Congressional Hunger Center's Policy Leadership Award, Secretary's Award for work with local and regional food systems, Administrator's Team Award for Farm Bill Outreach and many others.



A native of Mississippi, Hill earned her bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Belhaven University. She maintains residences in Virginia and Mississippi.



**Heather Dawn Thompson, JD**  
Director  
Office of Tribal Relations  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Heather Dawn Thompson was appointed Director of the Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) in January 2021, acting as the Department's lead voice on tribal issues, relations and economic development within the Office of the Secretary.

Before leading OTR, Thompson served a member of the American Indian Law Practice Group at Greenberg Traurig, where she worked on federal Indian law and Tribal agriculture. Thompson has a long record of public service, beginning as a Presidential Management Fellow at the Department of Justice. Since then, Thompson has served as a law clerk with the Attorney General's Office for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, as Counsel and Policy Advisor to the U.S. Senate's Democratic Policy Committee, and as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for South Dakota's Indian Country Section, where she prosecuted cases involving violence against women and children.

In the private sector, Thompson was previously a partner at Dentons, where she was one of only a handful of Native American partners at an "AmLaw 100" law firm. In addition, she has served as the Director of Government Affairs for the National Congress of American Indians, President of the South Dakota Indian Country Bar Association, and President of the National Native American Bar Association. Thompson holds a Juris Doctor cum laude from Harvard Law School, as well as a master's degree in public policy from the University of Florida, and a bachelor's degree in International Studies from Carnegie Mellon University.

### Challenges Facing Today's Family Farmers



**Scott Marlow**  
Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs  
Farm Service Agency  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Scott Marlow is the Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs at USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). He oversees management of FSA's disaster assistance, conservation, safety net and price support programs, which play a critical role in the operations of America's farmers and ranchers. Before joining FSA, he most recently served as the founder and CEO of Long Rows Consulting, where he provided analysis of risk management, credit, and disaster assistance programs including the role of risk management programs in credit access and their combined effect on conservation and climate change. He also facilitated policy development processes for agricultural organizations and provided training for farm services organizations on working with farmers in financial crisis and addressing the mental health impacts of farm transitions.

Marlow has spent 10 years as an operator on farm crisis hotlines, providing financial counseling and services referrals for farm families in crisis. He also served in multiple positions with the Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI), where he focused on building coalitions, farm policy, farm credit, and disaster response initiatives.

Marlow is from North Carolina, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree from Duke University and a Masters of Crop Science from North Carolina State University. He lives with his wife, J.J., and two cats, and is the proud father of two grown daughters.



**Mary Hendrickson, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor  
University of Missouri

Dr. Mary Hendrickson is a rural sociologist studying the connections between agriculture, food, climate change, water scarcity, hunger and energy use. Specific scholarship focuses on the social and economic organization of different types of food systems, the social, ecological and economic impacts of that organization, and options for changing how we organize the food system.

Dr. Hendrickson works as an Associate Professor in the College of Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources at the University of Missouri, Columbia. Previously, she was an Assistant Professor in the Division of Applied Social Sciences from 2012-2019. From 1998-2012, she served as director of the Food Circles Networking Project and as associate director of the Community Food Systems and Sustainable Agriculture Program for University of Missouri Extension. In 2008, she was promoted to Extension Associate Professor at University of Missouri.

Her education includes a Ph.D. in Rural Sociology from the University of Missouri, an MS in Rural Sociology from the University of Missouri, and a B.S. in Agricultural Honors and Agribusiness from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



**Alexis Racelis, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor  
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Dr. Alexis Racelis is an Associate Professor in the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley’s Department of Biology and School for Earth, Environmental, and Marine Sciences. His scholarship studies ecological interactions in the social, political, and economic contexts in which they occur. Dr. Racelis’ research is driven by a better understanding of how agriculture, urban development, invasive species and resource management affects certain ecological processes in the light of pressing social and environmental issues, such as climate change, food and water security, sustainable development, and social justice.

In 2022, Dr. Racelis was appointed to the inaugural Agriculture Subcommittee of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Equity Commission. The subcommittee will provide recommendations to USDA Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on policies, programs and actions needed to address equity issues – including racial equity issues – to strengthen accountability within the federal department and its programs.

His education includes a Ph.D. in Environmental Studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz, an M.S. in Environmental Science from Florida International University, and a B.S. in Biological Sciences at University of California, Santa Barbara.



**Toni Stanger-McLaughlin, JD**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Native American Agriculture Fund

Toni Stanger-McLaughlin, J.D., a citizen of the Colville Confederated Tribes, serves as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF). Mrs. Stanger-McLaughlin has compassionately worked in agriculture law and policy for many years. Before being named the CEO of NAAF, she served as the first NAAF Director of Programs where she assisted the development and delivery of millions of dollars of NAAF philanthropic investment in Tribal food systems.

Mrs. Stanger-McLaughlin started her agricultural career working in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) headquarters in Washington D.C., within the Office of Civil Rights. Mrs. Stanger-McLaughlin thereafter moved from the Office of Civil Rights to the USDA Office of Tribal Relations in the Office of the Secretary. While in the Office of Tribal Relations, Toni working across multiple USDA agencies and offices as well as other federal departments to advance Tribal needs in agriculture, natural resources, land use and infrastructure development. Prior to joining NAAF, Toni served as the Director of Tribal Relations for the University of Arkansas School of Law Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI).

She attended the University of North Dakota School of Law and received her JD, focusing on federal Indian law. In her spare time, Toni enjoys being outdoors with her husband and three children, as well as beading and sewing powwow regalia for her immediate and extended family.



**B. Ray Jeffers**  
Policy and Program Manager  
Rural Advancement Foundation International

B. Ray Jeffers was born and raised in Person County, NC, where he also operates the family's century farm purchased by his great grandfather in 1919. Previously Ray served for 12 years as an elected Person County Commissioner (2008-2020), was President of N.C. Association of County Commissioners in 2014 and was an executive board member of the National Association of Counties. Ray continues to serve on several local and state boards promoting agriculture and rural communities. Ray attended Piedmont Community College and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University.

### USDA and HHS: Partnering for Health



**Monica Rousseau, DrPH**  
Public Health Analyst  
Federal Office of Rural Health Policy  
Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)  
Department of Health and Human Services

Monica Rousseau serves as a Public Health Analyst within the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy at the Health Resources and Services Administration. In this role, Monica analyzes behavioral health regulations and policies, develops and administers grants within the Rural Opioid Response Program, and coordinates efforts to improve mental health initiatives among federal and non-federal partners. Prior to joining HRSA, Monica

coordinated a series of collaborative, community-based efforts to reduce rates of suicide and substance use disorders in Tampa Bay Florida. Monica has her Doctorate of Public Health, and has served on several local, state, and national task forces to improve public health.



**Kimberly Nelson**  
 Regional Administrator – Region VII  
 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
 Department of Health and Human Services

Kimberly Nelson (Kim) is the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Regional Administrator serving Region 7: Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska, since 2015. Ms. Nelson has worked in the behavioral health care field since 1992. Her clinical work was early in her career and mainly focused on addiction services, initially in community-based settings in women’s and children’s residential programs in Kansas. She then moved into executive leadership roles primarily. Ms. Nelson provided leadership as program director in programs with criminal justice clients in community-based residential and outpatient settings, as well as with prison-based substance use disorder care.

Ms. Nelson was recruited to the state of Kansas with the Addiction and Prevention Services Division as the Medicaid Coordinator. As the liaison between the behavioral health and Medicaid divisions, her primary

responsibility was to ensure Medicaid policy was aligned with the state goals for addiction services. This was accomplished via a pre-paid inpatient health plan; part of a 1915 b/c managed care waiver for behavioral health.

Ms. Nelson was part of the team that wrote the waiver, request for proposals, awarded the contract and then led the team that managed the contractor for the five years of this waiver.

As the state administration changed, after a brief time as the state’s Substance Abuse Authority, in continuing roles of increasing responsibility, Ms. Nelson moved into the role of Director of Managed Care for the Behavioral Health and Disabilities division in the state. She helped implement a statewide comprehensive integrated managed care system in 2012 under an 1115 demonstration waiver that covered all services; including physical health, behavioral health, and long-term services and supports. Ms. Nelson shared in the management of this contract, leading the team that managed the aspects of this contract dedicated to behavioral health and long-term services and supports in the state. During her tenure with the state of Kansas, Ms. Nelson was part of the team that got the state plan amendment approved for implementation of Health Homes for those with severe mental illness. In her position of Vice President of Marketing and New Business Development for a large integrated health services provider in Kansas, prior to becoming the Region VII Administrator, Ms. Nelson lead the team that launched their Health Home program. Perhaps most importantly, Kim is a person in long-term recovery from addiction. She is a Licensed Addictions Counselor and a Certified Peer Support Specialist. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Sociology and her master’s degree in Public Administration from the University of Kansas.



**Diane Hall, Ph.D., MSED**  
 Lead Behavioral Scientist  
 Senior Scientist for Policy and Strategy  
 Policy Research, Analysis, and Development Office (PRADO)  
 Office of the Associate Director for Policy and Strategy

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
 Department of Health and Human Services

Diane M. Hall, Ph.D., MSED, is a lead behavioral scientist with the Prevention Practice and Translation Branch in the Division of Violence Prevention at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC). Dr. Hall’s research interests include teen dating violence and intimate partner violence. In addition, she has worked with two of the Academic Centers of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention. As a lead behavioral scientist, Dr. Hall directs program evaluation, dissemination and implementation research, and synthesis and translation activities. Before joining CDC in January 2007, Dr. Hall served as a faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania, where she trained school and mental health counselors. She is also trained as a school, community, and child clinical psychologist.

Dr. Hall earned a Bachelor of Arts in psychology at Hollins University. She received a Master of Science in counseling psychology and a Ph.D. in school, community, and child clinical psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. She is licensed as a clinical psychologist.

Dr. Hall served as an on-camera subject matter expert for Dating Matters, a free online, interactive training designed to help educators, youth-serving organizations, and others working with teens understand the risk factors and warning signs associated with teen dating violence.



**Jennifer Lincoln, Ph.D.**  
 Associate Director, Office of Agriculture Safety and Health  
 National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health  
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
 Department of Health and Human Services

Dr. Jennifer Lincoln has three decades of occupational safety and health experience focusing on the prevention of traumatic injuries among workers in high-risk industries. She is best known for her work in the commercial fishing industry. In 2007, she created the NIOSH Commercial Fishing Safety Research and Design Program, and in 2015 she established the NIOSH Center for Maritime Safety and Health Studies, which, in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard, has led to a substantial decline in commercial fishing deaths in the United States. Throughout her career, Dr. Lincoln has brought energy, vision and commitment to ensure investments in science and outreach pay off with evidence-based research findings and evaluated interventions.

Dr. Lincoln grew up in rural Indiana and after a 28-year career in Alaska with the US Public Health Service, she and her husband moved back to settle on their 80-acre farm. In 2020, she returned to NIOSH to lead the Office of Agriculture Safety and Health. Dr. Lincoln served on the CDCs COVID-19 response as a part of the Worker Safety and Health Team and Essential Worker Team, drafting and reviewing a variety of guidance products to protect workers from COVID-19 infection. In 2022, the Journal of Agromedicine recognized Dr. Lincoln as a “Leader in the Field” for her contributions in occupational safety and health research as well as her leadership and dedication during the COVID-19 pandemic response.

Dr. Lincoln is a Certified Safety Professional. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health (Industrial Hygiene) from Indiana State University, a Master of Science in Environmental Quality Science from the University of Alaska, Anchorage, and a Ph.D. in Health Policy and Management with an emphasis on Occupational Injury Control from Johns Hopkins University.

### USDA Awardees / Program Impacts



**Jac Wypler, Ph.D.**  
Farmer Mental Health Director  
National Young Farmers Coalition

Jac (or Jaclyn) helps facilitate the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) in the Northeast. Jac has worked in agriculture for a decade – on farms, with non-profits, and in education. Jac received a Ph.D. in Sociology at University of Wisconsin-Madison for their research on social power and resistance strategies in Midwest farming communities. Jac’s research and organizing focused specifically on queer farmers, which took them to Australia where they became passionate about farmer stress, wellness, and mental health. Jac is thrilled to collaborate with farmers and agriculture service providers on FRSAN-NE.



**Courtney Cuthbertson, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist  
Human Development and Family Studies  
University of Illinois  
North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center

Dr. Courtney Cuthbertson is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Illinois. As a sociologist, their research and outreach focus on social determinants of mental health and improving community mental health literacy, including in agricultural communities. They have conducted research on depression, anxiety, and suicide risk among farming populations and have ongoing projects related to COVID-19’s mental health impacts on Illinois farmers. Dr. Cuthbertson is a co-director of the North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center and has collaborated with USDA Farm Service Agency, American Farm Bureau Federation, National Farmers Union, and Farm Credit Council to create and offer farm stress trainings. They were the lead content developer for two farm stress programs through Michigan State University Extension which have now been offered to more than 2,000 people by Cooperative Extension Services in over 15 states. Dr. Cuthbertson serves on the board of the National Association for Rural Mental Health and the American Public Health Association’s Intersectional Council for Suicide Prevention.



**Anna Seymour, MPA**  
Special Projects Manager, Commissioner’s Office  
Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)

Anna Seymour currently serves as a Special Projects Manager in the Commissioner’s Office of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). She has worked for the agency since



2014, serving under three appointed Commissioners in that time. Her work in the area of farmer stress began under the helm of USDA Deputy Secretary Jewel Bronaugh, helping to organize the Farmer Stress Task Force and its relevant activities.

Prior to her work at VDACS, Anna was employed at the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission where she worked as a legislative analyst, evaluating the operations and performance of state agencies and programs and co-authoring several reports on state spending, employee misclassification, and public education.

Anna graduated with a degree in International Affairs from James Madison University. She obtained a Master of Public Administration degree at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.



**Leslie Rodriguez, JD**  
FRSAN-NE Manager  
National Young Farmers Coalition

Leslie Rodriguez serves as the FRSAN-NE Manager. She completed her undergraduate degree from Hood College in Law and Society in 2015 and she earned her Juris Doctorate Degree at New England Law Boston in 2018. As a Latinx advocate, Leslie has a strong desire to serve under-resourced immigrants. For over seven years, Leslie assisted community-based organizations serving migrant farmworkers on the Delmarva Peninsula. Leslie is devoted to advancing the mental, emotional, social, and financial well-being of farmworkers and their families.

Leslie was born in the United States to immigrant parents from the Dominican Republic, where she visits frequently. She enjoys traveling, Latin dancing, and spending time with her family, which includes three adorable Shih Tzu mixes named Mono, Moka, and Mambo.



**Thea Rittenhouse**  
Farm Equity Advisor  
Tribal Liaison  
California Department of Food and Agriculture

Serves as Farm Equity Advisor in the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Her career has been dedicated to working with farmers, farmworkers and sustainable agriculture projects in different capacities. She received a master’s degree from UC Davis in Community Development with a specialization in Food Systems. Most recently she was a sustainable agriculture specialist with NCAT/ATTRA where she taught workshops for farmers in English and Spanish, co-developed the Latino Farmer Conference, and created farm business resources for beginning farmers and ranchers. She was raised on a farm in the Midwest and is the co-owner of an organic farm in Yolo County.

## Emergent Needs and Next Steps



**Matt Russell**  
Iowa State Executive Director  
Farm Service Agency  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Appointed as the Iowa State Executive Director (SED) in November 2021, Russell is a fifth-generation farmer operating a family farm and ranch in Iowa. In 2018, he began as the executive director of Iowa Interfaith Power and Light, a statewide faith-based climate action organization. Russell has previously worked at Drake University’s Agricultural Law Center, the Iowa Citizen Action Network, the National Catholic Rural Life Conference and Bishop Gorman High School in Law Vegas, Nevada. He has a master’s degree in Rural Sociology from Iowa State University and a bachelor’s degree from Loras College. As SED, Russell oversees the delivery of FSA programs to agricultural producers in Iowa. These commodity, conservation, credit, and disaster assistance programs ensure a safe, affordable, abundant, and nutritious food, fiber, and fuel supply for consumers.



**Rob Larew**  
President  
National Farmers Union (NFU)

NFU President Rob Larew was elected National Farmers Union’s 15th president during the organization’s 118th anniversary convention in 2020. He previously serviced as NFU’s Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Communications, and prior to his employment with NFU, served over 22 years in Congress and USDA. Larew was raised on a dairy farm in Greenville, West Virginia. He graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University with a Bachelor of Science in Dairy Science and completed graduate work in Agronomy at Pennsylvania State University.



**Charles Smith, Ph.D., M.A.**  
Regional Administrator, Region 8  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

In 2011, Dr. Charles Smith was selected as the first Regional Administrator for the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, and 33 Federally-recognized Tribes). In this role, Dr. Smith serves as the lead Federal authority for mental health and substance use and represents the Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in fulfilling the agency’s mission of reducing the impact of mental illness and substance use on America’s communities.

Prior to joining SAMHSA, Dr. Smith served as the Director of the Colorado Division of Behavioral Health and Deputy Commissioner of Mental Health and Substance Abuse for the State of Colorado. Dr. Smith led the statewide integration of substance use and mental health systems, coordinated initiatives to increase behavioral health workforce, expanded statewide prevention and early intervention programs, advanced community-based behavioral health services and re-entry policies for offenders, and developed state’s first recovery-oriented



system of care plan. Dr. Smith served on the Governor's Behavioral Health Transformation Council, Governor's Justice Assistance Grant Board, Chair of the Legislative Interagency Advisory Council on Adult and Juvenile Correctional Treatment, Vice-Chair of the Attorney General's Statewide Methamphetamine Task Force and member of Colorado's State Psychiatric Hospital Oversight Committees. Dr. Smith has served as the Director of the Office of Community Health and Mental Health Services for the Colorado Division of Parole, Community Corrections, and Youth Offender Services, as well as Director of Mental Health for the Colorado Department of Corrections-Denver Complex overseeing psychiatric, addictions, and sex offender treatment services for three State prison facilities.



**Florence Becot, Ph.D., M.Sc.**  
Associate Research Scientist  
National Farm Medicine Center

Florence Becot is a rural sociologist with over 10 years of agricultural interdisciplinary research experience. As an Associate Research Scientist at the National Farm Medicine Center, her research program focuses on the health, well-being, safety, and economic viability of farm families in the United States and France. Her research considers the difficulties farm families face in meeting social needs such as health care, childcare, or aging and the impacts that can have on the farm business development.

Her work also explores the availability and types of social supports, including social policy and crisis support. She earned her Ph.D. from The Ohio State University, where she holds an adjunct position, and was previously a researcher at the University of Vermont Center for Rural Studies.

### Tools and Best Practices to Address Farm Stress for USDA employees and Producer Serving Organizations



**Louis Aspey**  
Associate Chief  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

As Associate Chief, Louis ensures that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation mission is carried out in line with the Chief's priorities and with an emphasis on doing what's best for the agency's customers. He provides national leadership and coordination across the following NRCS deputy areas: Programs, Soil Science and Resource Assessment, Science and Technology, and Management and Strategy.

Louis has served in multiple leadership positions with NRCS and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers during his 30-year career. Most recently, he served as Deputy Chief for Management and Strategy. In that position, he led the establishment of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production and oversaw workload analysis, budget formulation and execution, outreach and partnerships, strategic support services, and international programs.

Prior to arriving at NRCS's National Headquarters, Louis served as the State Conservationist in West Virginia. During his tenure, he, along with his staff and partners, addressed broad-scale flooding, water supply, and food resiliency challenges. These issues are some of the greatest barriers to economic prosperity in Appalachia and often disproportionately impact underserved and disadvantaged communities.



Louis, a native of southwestern Pennsylvania, is proud to be the first in his family to attend college. He earned an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, and a graduate degree in public administration from American University in Washington, D.C. In his free time, Louis enjoys fishing, camping, traveling, and exploring the outdoors with his wife, Karen, and beloved rescue dog Oatie.



**Caitlin Arnold Stephano**  
Hotline Program Manager  
FarmAid

Jennifer is Farm Aid’s Communications Director. She spends her time sharing stories of farmer heroes, informing people about the challenges family farmers face, and keeping on top of all the farm news. In her spare time, Jennifer loves spending time with her family, including her dog Timber, skiing, biking and baking. Jennifer is a master urban gardener and her favorite crop to grow is garlic!



**Jonathan LaPorte**  
Farm Business Management Educator - Southwest Michigan  
Cass County Extension Office

Jon LaPorte is an Educator with Michigan State University Extension based in Cass County, Michigan. His main area of focus is in Farm Business Management, with an emphasis on farm business analysis, business transition, income tax education, and general farm business management topics such as economics of technologies and return on investment. He provides leadership and programming expertise in the area of Farm Business to farmers and agribusiness across western and southwestern Michigan while also working statewide as needed. Jon also coordinates the Beginning Farmer DEMaND series that focuses on financial and business strategies.

Prior to joining MSU Extension, Jon worked for USDA as a Farm Loan Officer and later as a Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) at a farm retail cooperative. Jon continues to be involved in the family’s small cash crop operation where the farm raises corn and soybeans in the southwest area of Michigan.

### Advocating for Mental Healthiness: Sharing Impactful Community-level Approaches from the Field



**Katherine McGuire**  
Chief Advocacy Officer  
American Psychological Association

Katherine B. McGuire is APA’s first chief advocacy officer, responsible for implementing a unified, strategic vision for the association’s government relations efforts and coordinating APA’s broader advocacy initiatives in nongovernmental sectors. Her mandate includes working with APA and its companion APA Services, Inc. to merge the approximately 24 government relations staff into a single department and ensuring that APA speaks with one voice before Congress, federal agencies and the White House. She will also be responsible for growing psychology’s political action committee, Psychology PAC.

With more than 25 years of senior-level policy experience in Congress, the executive branch and the private sector, McGuire was most recently assistant secretary for congressional and intergovernmental affairs at the

U.S. Department of Labor. She has also been actively engaged in federal policy solutions to address the opioid epidemic since initiating the first congressional public health model opioid roundtable in the Chicago region in 2015. She served as staff for almost 31 years in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives, where she held numerous senior leadership roles.



**Rebecca Roller, PsyD, LMFT**  
 Clinical Psychologist, Marital & Family Therapist  
 Sac River Consulting Inc.  
 Owner/Operator  
 Back Forty Bison Ranch

Dr. Roller is a licensed clinical psychologist and marriage and family therapist. She founded Sac River Counseling, a private practice located in rural Missouri and certified as a National Health Services Corps site. She retired from full time practice in 2017 but continues to be involved in the field of rural substance abuse. She serves on the Board of Directors for RHAA (Restoring Hope Against Addiction), a local not for profit organization working in conjunction with Recovery Court and other organizations with the primary goal of aiding individuals in maintaining sobriety and assimilating back into their communities. She is also very involved in the world of agriculture as an owner/operator of Back Forty Bison, a conservation focused bison ranch hosting four herds of North American Bison.



**Andrew J. McLean, MD, MPH**  
 Clinical Professor and Chair, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science  
 University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences

Dr. Andrew McLean is Medical Director of the North Dakota Department of Human Services. He received his medical degree from the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and his MPH degree from the University of Minnesota. Dr. McLean completed a psychiatry residency at the University of Wisconsin. He is the recipient of a number of awards including the UND School of Medicine Distinguished Alumnus Award, the American Psychiatric Association Bruno Lima Award for outstanding contributions to Disaster Psychiatry and teaching excellence awards. Dr. McLean has lectured internationally on pertinent mental and public health issues and is published in the area of Disaster Mental Health. Dr. McLean has served as Vice-Chair of the North Dakota State Board of Medical Examiners, as Academic Department Chair and is currently a Clinical Professor. He is a proponent of lifelong learning and has a particular interest in clinician education, wellness and resiliency.



**Maridee Shogren DNP, CNM, CLC**  
 Clinical Professor, College of Nursing and Professional Disciplines  
 University of North Dakota

Dr. Maridee Shogren is a Clinical Professor at the University of North Dakota, Certified Nurse-Midwife and Certified Lactation Counselor. Dr. Shogren has been a faculty member at the UND College of Nursing and Professional Disciplines since 2008 and currently serves as full time graduate faculty. She previously served as the Graduate Nursing Department Chair and director of the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program. Dr. Shogren has extensive knowledge regarding rural health systems, the use of SBIRT and

interprofessional education and training. She has practiced as a nurse-midwife in a variety of settings including private practice, rural health clinics, family planning and federally qualified health centers where she shares her passion for women’s health with her colleagues and her patients. Her clinical practice interests include obstetrics and gynecology, contraceptive options, sexually transmitted infections, well woman care, postpartum care and breastfeeding. Dr. Shogren has been a regional nurse consultant with the Frontier Regional FASD Training Center and assisted with development, implementation, and evaluation of educational curricula regarding FASD prevention and identification which utilized SBIRT. Dr. Shogren has also been involved in SAMHSA funded grant work at UND where she spent three years on the interprofessional SBIRT training grant and now works with the Region 8: Mountain Plains Addiction Technology Transfer Center and the Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Center grant teams housed at UND. Her areas of expertise on the grant teams include SBIRT, for general populations as well as pregnant women and adolescents; substance exposed mothers and infants; peripartum depression; stigma and women with substance use disorders; and farm stress.

Most recently, Dr. Shogren began work as the principal investigator on the Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts grant funded program, Don’t Quit the Quit, where she is working to increase access to treatment and care, enhance community education about substance use disorders, and grow community awareness and support for women who are pregnant or postpartum and in recovery from opioid use disorder.



**Cecily Rodriguez**  
 Manager of Applied Research  
 Virginia Tech, School of Public and International Affairs

For 30 years, Cecily Peoples Rodriguez has been developing, implementing, and evaluating policies and programs that address equity and access in the human services sector. Currently, she is responsible for developing and implementing interventions designed to advance social equity in public sector management. She is one of several members of the SPIA-Richmond team that works to shape and manage state government and non-profit research initiatives and program evaluations. Current projects include curriculum development and knowledge transfer for a national behavioral health interpreter training program; a project with the National Hispanic/Latino Mental Health Technology Transfer Center on behavioral health and wellness in agricultural communities; the design and implementation of a racial equity review program at the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation; and a diversity, equity, and inclusion evaluation and planning project with the American Research Center in Egypt.

Along with her duties as the manager for applied research, she also teaches courses related to social equity and policy evaluation at Virginia Tech’s Center for Public Administration and Policy. Cecily recently wrapped up her year-long appointment as the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the College of Architecture and Urban Studies. She came to Virginia Tech from the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) where she was the Director of Refugee Health Services Division. She was responsible for executive leadership of grant and contract-related planning; implementation of new state health and wellness programs; and the development, management and oversight of program budgets totaling more than \$30 million annually. During previous service with the Commonwealth of Virginia, Cecily was the Director of the Office of Health Equity Advancement and Workforce Development at the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS). There, she led the agency’s response to inequities in state behavioral health and developmental services. She was responsible for developing and implementing numerous programs and initiatives designed to increase health equity in the state system of care.

In her free time, she serves as the Vice President of Communications at the League of United Latin American

Citizens (LULAC) Richmond Region Council #4614; a board member of the Health Brigade, a Latinx serving health clinic; a member of the Virginia Medical Reserve Corps; and a member of the advisory committee of the National Network for the Elimination of Disparities (NNED). She has a degree in political science with a minor in international relations from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master’s in Public Administration from Virginia Tech. Cecily will be teaching a course on diversity and inclusion for SPIA during the Spring 2022 semester.



**Angel D. S. Casillas Carmona**

Manager, Universidad Central del Caribe, Institute of Research, Education and Services on Addiction  
National Hispanic and Latino Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (TTC)

Angel Casillas-Carmona, M.H.S. completed his graduate studies at Universidad Central del Caribe (UCC) in 2020 and obtained his Master's in Health Sciences in Substance Abuse Counseling. He currently stands as Project Manager for the National Hispanic and Latino Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC). Project subsidized by SAMHSA with an emphasis on the Hispanic and Latino populations in the United States and its territories. He began his professional development as a Technology Transfer Specialist at the Addiction Research, Education and Services Institute (IRESA) of UCC. Here he coordinated training services, education, and provided technical assistance for the SAMHSA-subsidized Opioid Response Network (ORN) for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. He is a volunteer coordinator for *Gua'kia pa la calle*, an independent harm reduction and syringe exchange program