

SPEAKERS

Stephen Lerch

Stephen “Steve” Lerch is the executive director of the Washington State Economic and Revenue Forecast Council. Previously, he has worked as an economist and researcher on public finance and health care issues in government (U.S. Congress, Joint Committee on Taxation; Washington State Department of Revenue) and the private sector (HCIA-Sachs/Solucient). He has also previously served as an interim director for the Economic and Revenue Forecast Council. Most recently, he held the position of Research Director at the Washington State Investment Board. He has a Ph.D. in economics from Johns Hopkins University.

Melissa Beard

Melissa Beard works for Washington’s Office of Financial Management in the Forecasting and Research Division. Part of her responsibilities include coordinating the sharing of data with and from the P-20 Workforce data warehouse. She began her state government career as a fiscal analyst with the Washington State House Transportation Committee and was a budget advisor to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Melissa is also working on a PhD at the University of Washington in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. Her dissertation topic is understanding use of state outcome data at the local level.

Gary Blackmer

Gary Blackmer was appointed Director of the Audits Division in 2009 by Kate Brown, the Oregon Secretary of State. The Division conducts performance, financial, and information technology audits, monitors financial audits of local governments, and responds to hotline allegations. Previously, Gary served 10 years as the elected Portland City Auditor, eight years as elected Multnomah County Auditor, a management auditor, and analyst for a variety of state and local agencies. Gary is past-Chair of PNIAF, past-President of the Association of Local Government Auditors, and a columnist for the Local Government Auditing Quarterly. Gary became a Certified Internal Auditor in 1988, received a bachelor’s degree from Northern Illinois University, and was a student in the Systems Science PhD Program at Portland State University.

David Dean

David Dean is the Deputy Director of performance audits in the Washington State Auditor’s Office. A native of the Pacific Northwest, he has more than 21 years of experience in performance auditing and program evaluation. His educational background includes a master’s degree in public administration with a specialization in program evaluation and performance auditing.

Chuck Pfeil

Chuck Pfeil, CPA, is the Director of State and Local Audit with the Washington State Auditor’s Office. He is responsible for 20 audit and administrative teams, which perform financial, single and accountability audits of over 2,200 local governments and 160 state agencies; conduct fraud and whistleblower investigations; and prescribe budgeting, accounting and financial reporting requirements for local governments.

Chuck has been with the State Auditor’s Office for 33 years and has previously served as Director of Administration as well as Assistant Director for State Agency Audits.

He serves on the board of the Washington Finance Officers Association. He was formerly president of the Olympia Chapter of Washington Society of Certified Public Accountants and a board member of the Olympia Chapter of Association of Government Accountants.

David Sheppard

David Sheppard has served as Regional Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Commerce since July 2001. His office has done considerable work on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration programs, including congressionally requested reviews of

SPEAKERS

NOAA's consultation process, the Marine Operations Center's move from Seattle to Newport, Oregon, the efficacy of its climate monitoring systems, and NOAA's fishery enforcement efforts and rule making process.

David previously served as Special Assistant to the IG and Deputy Assistant IG. He has received numerous awards for his contributions to the Department of Commerce. In November 2001, he was awarded a Silver Medal by the Secretary of Commerce for meritorious federal service. He also received Bronze Medals awarded by the Inspector General on six occasions.

Charles Young

Charles "Chuck" Young brought more than 20 years of experience in media, government, and communications to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) in 2007. At GAO he leads all communications efforts for this large Congressional agency including serving as agency spokesperson and top communications advisor to the Comptroller General of the United States, the head of the GAO. He also supervises a public affairs staff of 15, serves as primary point of contact for major national print and broadcast journalists covering GAO reports and testimonies, oversees development of the agency's internet presence, and spearheads all major communications initiatives. Chuck has led GAO's efforts to utilize new technologies such as YouTube and Twitter in agency communications.

Prior to GAO Chuck spent nearly five years in the private sector working for two communications consulting firms: The Brunswick Group and Chlopak, Leonard, Schechter, and Associates (CLS). At both firms Chuck advised clients on communications issues. Prior to that Chuck spent six years on Capitol Hill, serving as Chief of Staff for two members of Congress. Chuck directed all aspects of their offices from communications to strategic planning.

Chuck also spent a decade in the media, serving as a reporter or editor for newspapers, television stations, and radio stations. He also ran his own public relations consulting business in New Jersey and taught college journalism courses in Boston.

Chuck holds a Master's Degree in Mass Communications and a B.A. in Political Science.

Hollie Jensen

Hollie Jensen recently joined state government as an Enterprise Lean Consultant after her 17-year tenure with Starbucks. She started her career at Starbucks as a barista on the front lines and worked up through the organization with roles in Human Resources, Global Strategy and Operations. Most recently she was a Lean Practice Strategy Manager with a focus on implementation of the store system of work and the leadership/coaching program. As part of her role with the State of Washington, Hollie is developing and implementing a Lean Fellowship and Leadership program while also consulting on the Governor's priority goal areas. She is a graduate from the University of Washington with a BA in Liberal Studies – focused primarily in sociology.

Wendy Korthuis-Smith

Wendy Korthuis-Smith is the Director of Results Washington for the Office of Governor Jay Inslee. Her role includes oversight of the Governor's performance management system (Results Washington), Washington's Lean transformation journey, coordination with the State Auditor's office on performance audits, and providing assistance to state agencies on a variety of performance and accountability topics. Wendy has extensive experience in change management, leadership development and performance improvement in the private and

SPEAKERS

public arena, including government operations, healthcare, and higher education. She holds a doctorate in Educational Leadership with an emphasis in organizational development.

Lance McCleve

Lance McCleve joined the Office of Performance Evaluations, Idaho Legislature in 2010. He has an undergraduate degree in political science and a master's degree in public administration from Boise State University. Before coming to OPE, Lance was an extern for the US District and Bankruptcy Court: District of Idaho in the pro se unit handling prisoner complaints. Lance is a member of the American Evaluation Association and the Oregon Program Evaluators Network. While at OPE, Lance has worked on projects in a variety of policy areas including state liquor sales, transportation, higher education funding, public education, health and welfare services, and water quality.

Bryon Welch

Bryon Welch joined the Office of Performance Evaluations, Idaho Legislature in 2010. He has a master of public administration and is currently pursuing a PhD in public policy from Boise State University. Bryon has also received graduate certificates in Community and Regional Planning and Geographic Information Analysis from Boise State University. Bryon is a member of the American Evaluation Association and the Oregon Program Evaluators Network. He also serves as the technology and social media resource for the office. While at OPE, Bryon has worked on projects in a variety of policy areas including senior services, Medicaid claims processing, postsecondary education, state employee compensation, health and welfare services, and water quality.

Bob Thomas

Bob Thomas has 29 years of experience in performance auditing and consulting. He currently is serving as interim Deputy Auditor with the King County Auditor's Office.

His approach to conducting performance audits is multidisciplinary, drawing on knowledge and experience with budgeting, finance, economics, operations research and capital planning.

Several of Bob's studies have earned national recognition for impact, evaluation design and as best practice methodologies

Ben Thompson

Ben Thompson is a Principal Management Auditor in the King County Auditor's Office in Washington State. Before joining King County, Ben spent six years at the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), in D.C. and at the Seattle field office. At GAO, Ben worked on and led a number of Defense Department performance audits, including evaluations of supply chain management, tactical aircraft requirements, Navy personnel and training policies, and the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure round. Previously, Ben was a research fellow at a non-profit government consulting company in the D.C. area. Ben served in the Peace Corps in Uzbekistan, teaching finance, accounting, and economics to university students. He has conducted trainings in a variety of topics including interviewing, audit documentation, workplace diversity, and Excel. Ben has a Master's in Public Policy from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Deborah Stephens

Deborah Stephens is a Senior Performance Auditor with the State Auditor's Office, currently leading a series of audits on regulatory reform in Washington State.

Deborah is an economist with a long career in the public sector in both policy and research, beginning at Iowa State University, where she worked on global trade and agricultural policy issues at the Center for Agricultural and Rural Development.

SPEAKERS

In Washington state, Deborah has worked on various issues including energy, economic development and higher education. She advised utility commissioners on energy and rail issues at the Utilities and Transportation Commission. As a policy advisor at the Department of Commerce, Deborah staffed Governor Locke's Competitiveness Council and served as the primary staff to the Economic Development Commission from its inception until it was turned into an independent agency by the Legislature. At the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Deborah conducted research on workforce education issues and was responsible for the accountability measures of the 2-year postsecondary system.

Kathleen van Gelder

Kathleen "Kate" van Gelder has been with GAO since 2008 and is based in Seattle. She is a senior communications analyst (CA) in the Education, Workforce, and Income Security mission team. As a CA, Kate helps engagement teams think through their audit objectives, synthesize their data, and prepare reports. Kate's prior public information experience with writing one-page news releases and speaking in sound-bites was ideal training for her role as a "synthesizer" at GAO. Also helpful was her graduate work in assessing and addressing public problems. Kate received a master's degree in interdisciplinary studies at the University of Washington, Tacoma, and a liberal arts degree from the Evergreen State College.

Dana Lynn

Dana Lynn joined the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) staff in September 2009 as part of the tax team, specifically working on JLARC's tax preference reviews. She has a strong background in tax policy research, interpretation, and education, with over 22 years of experience with the Washington State Department of Revenue in the Taxpayer Services, Legislation and Policy, and Compliance divisions. She holds BAs in English and Political Science from Linfield College and attended the University of Puget Sound School of Law.

Justin Marlowe

Justin Marlowe is Associate Professor in the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Governing Institute and writes an occasional column for Governing magazine. He has written three books and more than 60 articles on public capital markets, government financial reporting, public-private partnerships, and local government fiscal policy. Prior to academia he worked in local government in Michigan, and he since done consulting and funded research for the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, the Internal Revenue Service, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and many other organizations. He is a Certified Government Financial Manager and he holds a Ph.D. in government and political science from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Mary Welsh

Mary Welsh joined the Washington JLARC staff in 2008. Previously, she worked for 24 years in the research division of the Washington State Department of Revenue, serving 11 of those years as the Assistant Director. Her prior experience has been as a management analyst for the Department of Labor and Industries, a newspaper reporter, and a press secretary to a member of the U.S. Congress. She earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Oregon and master's degrees from the University of Washington in business administration and communications.

Paul Aussendorf

Paul Aussendorf is an Assistant Director with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) in Seattle, WA. He holds undergraduate degrees in Economics and Business Administration from Augsburg College in Minneapolis and a master's degree in Finance from

SPEAKERS

the University of Wisconsin. Paul is also a Certified Management Accountant (CMA) and serves on the Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Aviation Economics and Forecast Committee.

During his almost 30 years with GAO, Paul has led numerous reports and testimonies for the U.S. Congress while working in Chicago, Frankfurt (Germany), and Seattle. While in GAO's European Office, Paul managed GAO's trade and finance work in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. For the last 20 years, Paul has worked in GAO's Seattle office authoring numerous reports and testimonies on aviation and transportation issues and has spoken before numerous audiences on transportation issues.

Jonathan Carver

Jonathan "Jon" Carver is a Senior Analyst with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) in Seattle, WA. He holds an undergraduate degree in Political Science and Russian Studies from Middlebury College in Vermont and a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Washington's Evans School of Public Affairs.

During his career with GAO, Jon has led numerous audits and testimonies on issues topics ranging from telecommunications to maritime infrastructure. Jon is current leading GAO's work on the state of competition and financial health of the U.S. airline industry.

Brooke Leary

Brooke Leary is a Senior Analyst with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) in Seattle, WA. She holds an undergraduate degree in Political Science and Psychology from Yale University in New Haven, CT and a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Washington's Evans School of Public Affairs.

During her career with GAO, Brooke has led numerous reports and testimonies for the U.S. Congress. Brooke has authored reports and testimonies primarily on aviation safety and other transportation issues and is currently leading GAO's work on aviation industry implementation of safety management systems. Brooke also led the transportation segment of GAO's oversight of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 spending in California.

Michael Shadow

Michael Shadow is an internationally acknowledged trainer/coach in persuasive communication. He heads the Seattle-based firm of Shadow and Associates, which specializes in public speaking and media preparation for public and private sector leaders. In addition to his private coaching, Michael has designed and facilitated over 500 major seminars for executives and public officials. His clients include environmental activists, judges and attorneys, educators, lobbyists, and political and business leaders in Europe, Africa, South America, Canada and the United States.