

## SPEAKER BIOS



**Andrea Ponsor**, *Policy Director, Local Initiatives Service Corporation (LISC)*

As the Policy Director, Andrea advocates for federal programs that provide support for LISC's housing and community development programs by communicating LISC's policy agenda to members of Congress, Congressional staff and other Federal policy makers, analyzing federal laws and policies, developing policy briefs and representing LISC in advocacy coalitions. Before joining LISC, Andrea was a principal at the law firm of Hessel, Aluise and Neun, P.C., a boutique law firm with a national practice in affordable housing transactions and policy. She began her career as an Attorney Advisor at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Andrea earned her B.A. in Economics from Tulane University and her J.D. from the University of Florida.



**Paul Weech**, *President and CEO of NeighborWorks America*

Paul was named to head the organization in December of 2014. Previously, he was the executive vice president for policy and external affairs at the Housing Partnership Network. Prior to that he was the senior vice president for policy for both the Housing Partnership Network and Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future.

Weech served as Chief of Staff at the U.S. Small Business Administration; Staff Director for the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development for the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs; and Senior Analyst for Housing and Credit for the U.S. Senate Committee on Budget. He also worked in various positions at Fannie Mae culminating in the role of vice president for mission strategy in the office of corporate strategy.



**Bill Bynum**, *CEO and President of Hope Enterprise Corporation*

For more than three decades, Bill Bynum has worked to advance economic opportunity for disenfranchised populations. He began his professional career by helping to establish Self-Help, a pioneer in the development finance industry, and later built nationally recognized programs at the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center.

In 1994 Bill became the founding CEO of the Enterprise Corporation of the Delta, and in 1995 organized Hope Community Credit Union. Since then, HOPE (Hope Enterprise Corporation/ Hope Credit Union) has generated more than \$2 billion in financing that has benefited over 650,000 residents throughout Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee. Today, HOPE is a highly regarded community development financial institution and policy center that advances economic inclusion across the Mid-South, and influences related policies and practices nationwide.



**Tony Hernandez**, *Rural Housing Service Administrator, USDA*

Tony was appointed on December 16, 2013 and has more than 26 years of experience in housing, community and economic development, business strategic planning, sales, marketing, business advocacy, policy development, legislative and government relations.

Prior to being appointed as the RHS Administrator, Tony served as the Director of Division of Local Government within the Colorado Department of Local Affairs managing community development programs for rural communities. His work there focused on enhancing the livability and sustainability of communities with jobs, housing, education, transportation, environment and health through strategic community development.

## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PANELISTS

### **Bobby Goode**, *State Director, USDA Rural Development – Tennessee*

Bobby was appointed on August 25, 2009. During the last six years, Goode has led Tennessee Rural Development to invest in jobs, infrastructure, community development, homeownership and affordable rental housing. Under Goode's direction, the agency has assisted more than 1.5 million Tennessee families and businesses in 230 communities in all 95 counties of Tennessee, investing more than \$6.3 Billion through affordable loans, loan guarantees, and grants.

### **Basil Gooden**, *State Director, USDA Rural Development – Virginia*

Basil was appointed in May 2014. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in addressing housing, as well as community and economic development issues in rural Virginia. Basil's primary educational and professional background is in the areas of housing, community and economic development, family financial management and consumer-related issues. Prior to joining USDA, Basil served as the Chief Deputy Director of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for twelve years.

### **Tom Fern**, *State Director, USDA Rural Development - Kentucky*

This is Tom's second appointment as State Director for Rural Development in KY. After working his way through the ranks of USDA, he was appointed to his first term in 1993 during the Clinton Administration and served in that position until 2001. Fern has extensive managerial experience, in addition to in-depth knowledge of a wide variety of Rural Development programs, including processing rural housing and farm program loans and grants and ensuring compliance with equal employment opportunity laws and affirmative action guidelines.

### **David Cain**, *Housing Program Director – West Virginia*

David has been the Housing Program director since September of 2010. He previously served as a Multi-Family Housing Specialist and has been with USDA since 1986.

## STATE HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY PANELISTS

### **Erica Boggess**, *Acting Executive Director, West Virginia Housing Development Fund*

Erica joined the Fund in 1986, serving in various accounting and finance positions. She was appointed Deputy Director in January 2005. Prior to joining the Fund, she worked in public accounting. Erica is a graduate of Marshall University and is a Certified Public Accountant.

### **Chris Hilbert**, *Senior Strategic Markets Lending Officer, Virginia Housing Development Authority*

Chris's primary responsibility is lending to developers of affordable rental apartments which address the issues of homelessness, rural housing, housing for persons with disabilities and community revitalization. Prior to assuming his current duties, Chris was the Non-Profit Liaison for the authority for 10 years. Before taking his current position at VHDA in 2002, he had an 18-year banking career concentrating in real estate lending.

### **Ralph Perrey**, *Executive Director, Tennessee Housing Development Authority*

Ralph was appointed by the Board of Directors in September 2012. He came to THDA from Fannie Mae, where he held a number of positions including director of the Tennessee Community Business Center, coordinator of the company's Central Appalachian Initiative, and national co-leader of the Public Entities Loan Team. Prior to joining Fannie Mae in 2000 he served on the senior staff of former Tennessee Governor Don Sundquist, and served on the THDA Board three times.

### **Kathy Peters**, *Executive Director, Kentucky Housing Corporation*

Kathy was named to her current position at KHC in December of 2013. She joined KHC in 1987 as resource development manager and was named director of The Housing Foundation when it was created in 1989 as a nonprofit subsidiary of KHC. Before joining KHC, Kathy spent 14 years in various management positions with Kentucky state government. She is a graduate of Georgetown College and holds a master's degree in public administration from Kentucky State University.