

#### **Speaker Biographies**

# Ray Drake, Vice President - State Government Affairs UPS - Central Region



Ray Drake is Vice President for State Government Affairs, responsible for twentyone Midwest and Northeast states including the states of Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. Ray has served in this capacity for the last seven years. Prior to his transition to Government Affairs, Ray spent thirty-five years in Engineering and Operations management at UPS. Ray's prior position was as the Central Region Operations Manager with responsibilities for the operations covering seventeen states, involving the pick-up, sorting, transport and delivery of millions of packages to over two million customers per day.

Ray began his career with UPS in 1976 in New Jersey as a package handler, while attending the College of New Jersey. Upon graduating with a degree in Political Science, Ray joined the management team at UPS in the Industrial Engineering (I.E.) Department. Serving in various assignments in I.E. and Operations at both the district and region levels, Ray has worked for UPS in eight different states.

Ray has been deeply involved with Chambers of Commerce. Ray is a past Chairman of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce as well as serving as Vice Chairman and Secretary. Ray is the current Chairman of the Illinois Chamber Foundation Board. Ray also serves on the Chicagoland Chamber's Public Policy Committee and co-chairs the Logistics and Transportation Council.

As a transportation advocate, Ray serves on the Illinois State Freight Advisory Council and chairs the Executive Steering Committee for the group. Ray also serves on the board of Natural Gas Vehicles for America (NGAV) and co-chairs the State Government Advocacy Committee.

In addition, Ray is a board and executive committee member of the Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin trucking associations, as well as being involved with several legislative committees of other state chambers, tax policy organizations and other federal and state government public policy organizations.



# Laura Ortega, Executive Director International Business Council, Illinois Chamber of Commerce



Laura is the Executive Director of the International Business Council in this role her objective is to increase global trading opportunities for Illinois and bringing needed Investments and jobs to our state. She has experience with: Business & Economic Development; Cross-Border Transactions & Multijurisdiction; Diplomacy & Foreign Relations; Export Facilitation & Market Access; European Union; Foreign Investment (FDI, BITS); Immigration and Naturalization; International Arbitration and Dispute Resolution; International Business Strategy; International Law and Trade Law & Policy.

She is also involved in the following: A Safe Haven Foundation; American Club of Madrid; Illinois Business Immigration Coalition (IBIC); Loyola Club of Spain Foundation; U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC); U.S. Trade & Development Agency (USTDA); Women in International Trade Organization (WIIT); Member Bar Association of Madrid (ICAM); ABA Section of International Law and Founding member of the Alumni Association of the Diplomatic School of Madrid and is also a lecturer at Kellogg School of Business, DeVry-Keller Graduate School of Management, UIC, Loyola Univ. and Club Genova de Economia, Madrid.

Laura has bachelor's degree in Law from the Universidad de Cordoba, Spain and a L.L.M from Universidad National de Educacion a Distancia (UNED), Madrid. She also holds a M.A. in Diplomacy & International Relations from the Diplomatic School of Spain with concentration on International Commerce.

# John G. Murphy, Senior Vice President for International Policy, U.S. Chamber of Commerce



John G. Murphy directs the U.S. Chamber's advocacy relating to international trade and investment policy. Since joining the Chamber in 1999, Murphy has led its successful campaigns to win congressional passage of trade agreements with a dozen nations, including Colombia, Panama, and South Korea in 2011, as well as Trade Promotion Authority in 2015. Murphy also plays a key role in the Chamber's advocacy for international business priorities before Congress, the administration, foreign governments, and the World Trade Organization.



From 2001 to 2008, Murphy served as the Chamber's Vice President for Western Hemisphere Affairs and as Executive Vice President of the Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America (AACCLA). In 2008, he received AACCLA's Eagle of the Americas award, which is given annually to the individual who has "done the most to advance our mission of increased trade and investment between the United States and Latin America."

In the 1990s, Murphy worked at the International Republican Institute (IRI), a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of democracy overseas, and at the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), which champions market-oriented economic reform around the world. From 1992 to 1993, he was the first Western lecturer in economics at the National University of Economics in Czechoslovakia.

Murphy graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Colorado at Boulder, and he received his Master of Science degree from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. He serves on the boards of the Global Business Dialogue, the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, and the Washington International Trade Foundation. He is fluent in Spanish.

# Anne Blackwood, Senior Trade Sales Specialist – Working Capital Solutions, Citi Commercial Banks



Anne is the Trade Sales Specialist for Citibank Emerging Corporate Clients in the Midwest and Western US. She provides solutions for importers and exporters to manage their global credit risk and payments through letters of credit, documentary collections and enhanced open account, as well as providing working capital financing through the Exim and SBA Working Capital programs. In addition, Anne is responsible for overall program management and implementation for trade products across all business segments of Citi Commercial Bank. Anne has been at Citibank for fifteen years. She has been in the banking industry

for thirty-four years, including ten years as a Commercial Banking Relationship Manager before specializing in international trade.

Anne is very active in the international trade community and is past president of both the Foreign Trade Association of Southern California and Women in International Trade, Los Angeles. She has a BA in Management Science from the University of Southern California – San Diego (UCSD) and an MBA in Corporate Finance from the University of Southern California (USC).



#### Aaron Schildhaus, Law Offices of Aaron Schildhaus



Aaron Schildhaus represents corporations, NGO's, governments and businesses with respect to structural and transactional matters in the US and internationally. He evaluates political and legal risks, assists with the setup of new businesses, and helps expand business operations, in new countries and markets, whether stand-alone or as joint ventures, mergers or acquisitions. He also assists with divestitures and all manners of civil litigation and dispute resolution in the US and abroad. In the past year, he has served as an arbitrator in 18 cases in the State of Illinois.

Mr. Schildhaus has written articles about the EU's GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and has served as moderator and speaker on the subject. He is a member of the American Bar Association (ABA) Cybersecurity Task Force. He has spoken and written extensively about the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and assists companies with internal and external due diligence and with their corporate compliance programs.

Mr. Schildhaus has worked closely with the World Bank and has been consulted by the Bank for his expertise on doing business in Africa, both Francophone and Anglophone and for his knowledge and experience regarding international anti-corruption. He has worked on transactions with the Export-Import Bank, and on cases requiring export clearances from US government agencies on sensitive, technical matters, including all ramifications of international satellite launch contracts and relationships. His clients include small, medium and large corporations, businesses and NGO's, in the US and in Europe and China. Mr. Schildhaus was in-house counsel for PepsiCo, Inc., and has worked in large and small law firms in the US and abroad, with a predominant focus on international transactions. His international professional experience includes ten years in Paris, France and four years in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He speaks fluent French and is conversant in Spanish and German.

Mr. Schildhaus has extensive experience in the energy, transportation, aerospace, telecommunications and manufacturing industries. His experience includes matters in aviation finance, privatization, exports, imports, equipment lease and conditional sale financing, data privacy, and cybersecurity. He reviews transactions for compliance with the laws of the United States and relevant international jurisdictions and assists with structuring, drafting, negotiating and implementing them. Aaron works closely with corporate management on international trade and finance, export control matters, anticorruption due diligence and compliance structuring and implementation, and international licensing of products and services. He assists in the structuring and negotiation of joint ventures and all types of deals and transactions.



Mr. Schildhaus was Chair of the Section of International Law of the American Bar Association (ABA) in 2008-2009 and has been a member of its prestigious Council since 2000. He is a Fellow of the ABA. He has been a senior advisor to the ABA's Section of International Law's International Anti-Corruption Committee and its India Committee for the past eight years and has been Liaison to the Council of the Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), which is the umbrella organization of all European bars, for ten years, and has been Liaison to the Israel Bar Association for the past seven years. He now serves as co-Chair of the International Committee of the Senior Lawyers Division.

#### Kenneth W. Maly, Senior Managing Director,

#### **Newmark Knight Frank**



Ken Maly serves as a senior managing director in Newmark Knight Frank's Chicago office, where he specializes in corporate site selection, labor analytics, site development, data analysis, economic geography, economic development, real estate development, economic impact assessment and incentive negotiation. Since joining NKF in 2011, Mr. Maly has led several high-profile corporate site selection projects in the U.S., Mexico, Europe and China for several different industries and facility types. Mr. Maly also provides leadership for the development of NKF's internal location databases, GIS systems and analytics tools. Prior to NKF, Mr. Maly worked for more than eight years as a principal and department manager with Vierbicher Associates, a Madison, Wisconsin-based

community development and civil engineering firm, where he led a team of planners, urban designers, economic developers and landscape architects that conducted economic development, community planning and real estate development projects. He also conducted incentive negotiations on behalf of the developers and communities he represented. In addition, Mr. Maly managed multi-disciplined teams that conducted economic development and land planning projects for the public and private sector.

Prior to NKF, Mr. Maly held positions with the police departments of San Antonio, Texas, and Akron, Ohio, where he applied GIS analysis, data mining and targeted resource allocation to improve their effectiveness.

Mr. Maly attended the University of Akron, where he earned a Master of Geography degree, specializing in economic geography, community planning and GIS. He also has bachelor's degrees in economics and geography from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, specializing in economic geography, site selection and macroeconomics. In 2009, Mr. Maly earned an Economic Developer Certification (CEcD) from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC).



### Kevin Breaux, Director of Enterprise Solutions, UPS International



Kevin has been with United Parcel Service for 19 years in various roles, most currently as Director of Enterprise Solutions. In this position, his responsibility is to help customers increase market share by providing Solutions which increase visibility, information flow, reduce sales cycles, expand global footprint. Kevin has been in Business Development since joining UPS in 2000. Prior to UPS, he worked with DHL in business development in addition to selling DHL's international portfolio for 7 years.

# Amber M. Johns, Principal, Corporate Attorney, Jackson Corporate Law, P.C.

Amber M. Johns is a principal at Jackson Corporate Law and her practice focuses international business



compliance and corporate law. Ms. Johns advises small and medium sized companies on international corporate structuring and international compliance. She specializes in developing compliance programs for multinational companies, particularly, in Africa and Europe. Her diverse range of experience has given her extensive practice in dealing with the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and other international anti-bribery laws, in additional to industry specific compliance issues in manufacturing, consumer products, petroleum and electronics. She has also had extensive experience in negotiation and managing international investments agreements in Ghana and South Africa and distribution and purchase

agreements for US companies in France and the UK.

Ms. Johns is fluent in French, serves on the Boards of the Africa Global Chamber of Commerce and Henry Booth House. She is a member of the Chicago Bar Association, the Black Women Lawyers Association, the Cook County Bar Association and she is involved with the French American Chamber of Commerce, the International Trade Association of Greater Chicago and is an Advisor for the African



Business Portal. Believing strongly in investing in her community, she is also a college student mentor at the One Million Degrees Program.

Prior to joining Jackson Corporate Law Offices, Ms. Johns was the Associate In-Counsel for the Woodlawn Community Development Corporation (WCDC). She holds two Bachelors' of Art degrees in French and International Relations from the University of California, Berkeley and she received her Juris Doctorate (J.D.) and her Law and Business Certificate from Vanderbilt University Law School. She is currently earning her master's in law (L.L.M.) in Business and Trade Law at the John Marshall Law School.

## Aisha Ceballos- Crump, Founder & CEO, Honey Baby Naturals



Passion, Grit & Enthusiasm are the keys to success for Honey Baby Naturals Founder and CEO, Aisha Ceballos- Crump. What started as a career in chemical engineering has blossomed into an emerging beauty brand and empire that has naturalistas and curlfriends buzzing about across the country.

Graduating as the valedictorian of her high school class, the Gary, Indiana native studied chemical engineering and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from Purdue University, though she'd always been intrigued by beauty, fashion and the arts. For nearly 15 years, she worked in the hair &

skincare industry, developing products, formulation and marketing for several major brands. For nearly 15 years, she worked in the hair & skincare industry, developing products, formulas & marketing for several major brands.

Finally, in 2015, Aisha stepped out on faith and began working on her own products; one that she had been using on her own multi-cultural family for over a decade; one that was effective for the entire family to use; and one that consisted of her secret ingredient: honey. Thus, Honey Baby Naturals was born. Aisha has been happily married to her husband, Greg, for 15 years, and they reside in Chicago with their three beautiful children, Khalil, Kyra and Karynn.



#### Todd Zehr, Founder & Owner, SoilBiotics



Todd Zehr is a leader in the development of organic and conventional seed and crop inputs within the agricultural industry. He has distinguished himself as an innovator in plant food and seed physiological products and services across a continuum of over 300 different plant species around the world. This includes significant experience in providing yield improvement and soil quality upgrades in high value produce crops (fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc.) and in row crops (corn, soybeans, etc.). For over 30 years, Todd has developed and implemented product specific technology for plant and soil health. He has significant experience in

bringing new technology to the full product development life cycle in seed physiology and plant nutrition. A committed lifelong learner, Todd holds a unique combination of agronomic and chemistry degrees.

Todd is the founder and owner of SoilBiotics, a company specializing in developing and manufacturing unique seed enhancements and plant nutritional products for agriculture. Todd located his company in the heartland of Illinois and has moved SoilBiotics into the forefront of developing organic products that are not only 100% sustainable, but environmentally friendly to soils and ground water. Todd is dedicated to passing along his expertise and vision for sustainability by consulting throughout the agricultural industry on how to increase profitability by growing crops with less inputs and better management practices. As agriculture grows and the industry transforms, he is driven to impact the direction of technological advancement from the ground up.

### Eric Woodies, Trade Analyst, Illinois Soybean Association



Eric Woodie serves as trade analyst on behalf of the Illinois Soybean Association. Woodie's 14 years in international agricultural trade, marketing and global logistics allow him to make continued expansion of Illinois soy exports possible. Through the ISA checkoff program, Woodie focuses on generating more demand in rapid-growth markets and strengthening relationships with current trading partners.



#### Derek Begue, Managing Director, PRA



Derek Begue is Vice President Business Development and heads all of PRA's global sales and marketing efforts. He is directly responsible for overseeing PRA's global revenue generation and new client acquisition activities. With educational and real-life experience from his time living and travelling in Taiwan and China, his unique set of skills and background in East Asia has played a critical role in supporting many PRA clients since 2013.

# Teodora Boteva, President of CITGA & Trade Commissioner for Bulgaria



Teodora Boteva was appointed at the end of 2016 to establish the first Chicago Commercial and Economic Office of the Ministry of Economy of Bulgaria to the Midwest dealing with trade, tourism, investments and other economic topics. She has many years of experience in oil and gas business development, the IT sector, and the international economy. She has worked for the private sector and for the governmental authorities as well. Since July 2018 she is president of CITCA. Teodora holds 3 masters' degrees in mechanical engineering, international economy and MBA.



# Marcelo Boffi, Deputy Consul, Trade Commissioner for Consulate General Argentina



Education:

International Relations Degree El Salvador University, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Employment: Consulate General of the Argentine Republic in Chicago Post: Secretary of Embassy, February 2016

Embassy of the Argentine Republic in the Republic of Korea Post: Secretary of Embassy, July 2012 to February 2016

Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship - Buenos Aires, Argentina Post: Press Office, January 2012 to July 2012

University of El Salvador - Buenos Aires, Argentina Post: Professor International Relations, January 2003 to July 2010

## Oliver Kamanzi, Co-Founder & Chairman of Africa Global Chamber of Commerce



Olivier Kamanzi is Capital markets expert, International Financial Sector Development Consultant, Inspirational Speaker, and Philanthropist. He is Co-Founder and Chairman of Africa Global Chamber of Commerce headquartered in Chicago. Mr. Kamanzi is Founder and CEO of Globrock Financial Group Inc., a global management Consulting and investment advisory firm with its headquarters in Chicago and its subsidiaries both in US and Africa. He is former Deputy CEO of Capital Market Authority of Rwanda, former Senior Investment Specialist of Citigroup (Citibank) and



Executive employee at JPMorgan Chase. He is Founder and Chairman of The Olivier Kamanzi Foundation – a public charitable organization. Also, he is President of the Board of Directors of Saint Sabina Academy an affiliate to Saint Sabina Catholic Church based in Chicago, United States.

Mr. Kamanzi assisted in the establishment of the Rwandan capital markets industry and the creation of the Rwanda Capital Market Authority and Rwanda Stock Exchange. He initiated different policies including the East Africa Regional Financial Market Infrastructure Development and Regional Capital Markets harmonization and integration.

Mr. Kamanzi is a current Doctorate Candidate in Philosophy Organizational Leadership and Entrepreneurship with specialization in Entrepreneurship and Innovation. He holds MBA in Finance from Ashford University, the Forbes School of Business in Iowa and a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. His hobbies are running, reading, and serving the community by mentoring youth, providing financial literacy classes, and he teaches Stock Market Program to 8th Grade. He appeared in various radios, TV, and written media including WVON Radio, BBC World Services, Voice of America, CNBC Africa, Reuters, Nation, East African, GhanaWeb, and many more. He has written multiple articles on financial and leadership matters.

#### José David Murillo, Consul General, Republic of Costa Rico



Since October 2017, José David Murillo has been appointed as Consul General of the Republic of Costa Rica in the city of Chicago, serving the states of Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Indiana, and Wisconsin.

José David Murillo is a career diplomat that joined the Foreign Service in March 2010. He has a solid experience at the Foreign Policy Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, being responsible for various positions like the Central America desk, European Union desk, Environmental Protection desk and the Cooperation with the United Nations System in Costa Rica. In 2012, he was promoted to *Assistant to the Foreign Policy Director*. From 2012 to 2017, Mr.

Murillo served as Counselor for the Costa Rica Embassy in the People's Republic of China, where he was responsible for the political section. During the year 2015, he was Charge d' Affairs of the Embassy during The *First Forum of China and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States*, where



Costa Rica had the Pro Tempore Presidency. The Forum was the first grand political platform for political consultations between Ministers of Foreign Affairs. During his tenure, He contributed to strengthen the Costa Rica-China cooperation in Political Consultations, Commerce, Investment and Tourism and actively participated in the promotion of arts; especially in Costa Rican modern films and music. Consul General Murillo's education background comes from international fields. He majored in International Affairs, completed his Master's in Diplomacy from *Universidad de Costa Rica* and has advanced studies in Business Administration with emphasis on International Commerce. He has also relevant teaching experience, focused on history and politics of Costa Rica, as well as Spanish for business to foreign students. Mr. Murillo has also received several invitations to deliver keynote speeches in universities in his home country, especially about Diplomacy and about China. José David Murillo has lived in countries such as México, Honduras, Denmark, and China; also, he has accumulated international experience in the private fields working in managing positions at corporates such as DHL and IBM.

# Neli Vazquez Rowland, Co-Founder & President, A Safe Haven Foundation



Neli Vazquez Rowland is the President and co-founder of A Safe Haven Foundation. She has a diverse background in finance, general contracting, social and economic development, along with extensive experience as a public servant. Neli is recognized as a trailblazer and innovative leader on topics of social, economic and real estate development; she shares her message on the world stage as a subject matter expert and is a highly sought-after speaker on poverty, homelessness, veterans, social business enterprise, and social impact models within academia, public/private sector and government agencies. She has been the recipient of the many honors and awards, e.g., White House Champions of

Change, and Chicagoan of the Year by Chicago Magazine; her SBE landscaping company, A Safe Haven Landscaping, has been named the recipient of two gold awards by the Landscaping Contractors Association in recognition for their work on Michigan Avenue and Wacker Drive.