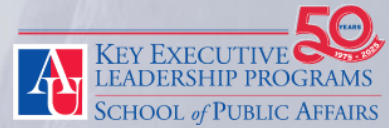


# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## **RAIN: A Guided Teaching & Meditation Practice for Navigating Turbulent Times**

Are you feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or fearful amid today's challenges? Join Ruth Zaplin as she leads you through a pre-recorded RAIN meditation practice—four principles for mindful transformation: Recognition, Acceptance, Investigation, and Non-Identification. This transformative practice not only steadies and calms both body and mind but also equips you with effective strategies to manage and transform difficult emotions.



### **Dr. Ruth Zaplin**

*Senior Executive-in-Residence, AU School of Public Affairs*

Ruth serves as a Senior Executive-in-Residence at American University's School of Public Affairs (SPA), where she designs and teaches graduate-level courses on leadership, public policy implementation, organizational analysis, coaching for performance, and ethics. She also holds the role of Director of Coaching for the Key Executive Leadership Programs at SPA. Ruth incorporates mindfulness and other centering practices into her teaching and workshops, fostering personal resilience, presence, and enhanced leadership capacity.



### **Pre-recorded Welcome Remarks**

#### **President Jonathan Alger**

*President American University*

Jonathan R. Alger is American University's 16th president.

President Alger is an experienced and visionary higher education leader who spent the last 12 years as president of James Madison University (JMU).

Under his leadership, JMU created and implemented a bold and visionary strategic plan focused on engaged learning, community engagement, and civic engagement, and developed many new initiatives such as the Valley Scholars Program for first-generation students, the comprehensive and highly successful Unleashed fundraising campaign, and the comprehensive Task Force on Racial Equity. President Alger also led JMU to achieve the R2 national research university designation and helped to grow the university's external research funding by 92 percent from 2019 to 2023.

President Alger is a nationally recognized scholar and speaker on higher education policy and law, who has published numerous articles for scholarly journals and publications such as *The Journal of College and University Law* and *The Law of Higher Education*.



## Introduction, Closing Remarks & Emcee

### Laura Schwartz

*Professional Emcee, Keynote Speaker, Author & Television Personality*

Laura Schwartz is all about connection. Whether appearing on your stage or virtually through your screen, she connects to your audience, to your brand, to your objective, to people. As a professional emcee and keynote speaker, Laura motivates and inspires leaders across the globe and all industries, delivering a powerful message to every audience — connecting them with you and your goals to create a lasting impact for your event. Laura was named One of the 100 Most Influential People in Global Events in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.



## Opening Keynote Remarks

### Hamza Khan

*Future of Work and People-First Leadership Expert | Bestselling Author*

Hamza Khan believes the future of work is more human, not less. He's on a mission to help organizations achieve inclusive and sustainable growth by rehumanizing the workplace. Rather than be reactive to rapidly changing external conditions, Khan shows leaders how to embrace a bold "people first" approach to better support diverse, engaged, and connected teams in a hybrid environment. In doing so, they'll unlock the tremendous upside of a loyal, thriving, and innovative workforce.

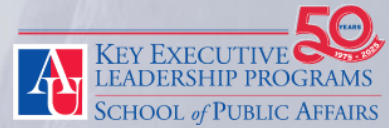
Rehumanizing workplaces is the winning strategy of the future.

Khan is a multi-award-winning entrepreneur, bestselling author, and world-renowned keynote speaker whose TEDx talk "Stop Managing, Start Leading" has been viewed over two million times. He has spoken on various global stages, including the World Youth Forum, and his clients have included some of the world's most dynamic companies and organizations, such as Microsoft, PepsiCo, LinkedIn, Deloitte, Salesforce, TikTok, and hundreds of colleges and universities. These leading organizations trust Khan to inspire modern leadership, unleash purposeful productivity, transcend burnout culture, and embrace constant change.

As a trusted thought leader, Khan's insights have been featured by notable media outlets such as Inc., Bloomberg, and Business Insider. He is also the bestselling author of *The Burnout Gamble: Achieve More by Beating Burnout and Building Resilience and Leadership, Reinvented*. Through his writing, speaking, teaching, and executive coaching, Khan empowers people to evolve and thrive in the future of work.



# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## Breakout Session I - 10:15 - 11:15 am

### Pithy Punchy and Powerful

This session will help current and emerging leaders prepare and deliver great speeches and presentations.

- Crafting a catchy opening, but—importantly—being sure to bookend that with a closing that relates back to the opening;
- Resisting the temptation to start with a litany of thank-yous;
- Developing clear and memorable phrases that everyone can understand;
- Using sequencing to build crescendos and add oomph;
- Changing speech patterns to make listeners lean forward in anticipation (using several dimensions: speeding up and slowing down your cadence, modulating your voice louder and softer, mixing short sentences with occasional longer ones);
- Using simple verbal cues that will ensure the audience hears your most important points;
- Perhaps most importantly, focusing on the listeners' needs and answering the question of "What's in it for me?"



### Mark Lee Greenblatt

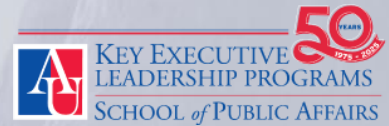
*Former Inspector General, U.S. Department of the Interior*

The Honorable Mark Lee Greenblatt began his tenure as the Inspector General for the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) on August 26, 2019, after being confirmed by the U.S. Senate. As the Inspector General, Mr. Greenblatt led a nationwide workforce of investigators, auditors, evaluators, attorneys, and support staff. Their mission is to provide independent oversight to promote accountability, integrity, economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within the DOI. Mr. Greenblatt was the senior official responsible for providing oversight of the programs and operations of the DOI, which

has more than 70,000 employees and a range of diverse programs, including roughly \$10 billion in grants and contracts, \$20 billion in natural resource revenues, Federal trust responsibilities to 574 federally recognized Indian Tribes and Alaska Native villages, stewardship of 20 percent of the Nation's lands, and management of lands, subsurface rights, and offshore areas that produce approximately 17 percent of the Nation's energy.

In December 2022, Mr. Greenblatt was elected by the membership of the 74 Federal inspectors general to serve as the Chair of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE). Mr. Greenblatt's 2-year term as Chair began on January 1, 2023. In this role, he led the Inspector General community's mission to combat fraud, waste, and mismanagement. From January 2021 to December 2022, Mr. Greenblatt served as the CIGIE Vice Chair.

# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Mr. Greenblatt has been in the Federal oversight community since 2003 as part of the legislative and executive branches. Before becoming the DOI Inspector General, he served as the executive director of CIGIE. He previously held leadership roles at the U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Mr. Greenblatt also served as an investigative counsel at the U.S. Department of Justice OIG. Over the course of his Federal career, he has received several awards, including a CIGIE award for excellence, U.S. Department of Commerce gold medal and bronze medals, and a U.S. Department of Justice OIG distinguished service award.

Mr. Greenblatt served as a Federal law clerk, was a litigator at two large, international law firms, and is a published author.

Mr. Greenblatt graduated from Columbia University School of Law, where he was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar, and earned his undergraduate degree from Duke University. He also completed the Senior Managers in Government Fellowship at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

## Consensus in Complex Times: Uniting Teams for Lasting Public Service Impact

Join distinguished former congressional leaders and seasoned federal executives for a candid panel discussion on the art of consensus building in Washington's most challenging environments. Drawing from their firsthand experiences on Capitol Hill and across federal agencies, our expert panel will share compelling stories of both challenges and breakthrough moments in bringing diverse stakeholders together.

This interactive session offers a rare opportunity to learn from those who've mastered the delicate balance of principle and pragmatism in federal leadership. Come prepared with your questions for these seasoned practitioners of the art of consensus.



### Keith Stern

*Principal, Cornerstone*

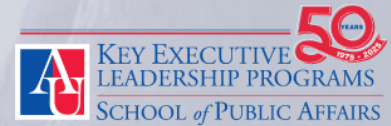
Keith Stern brings more than 25 years of experience in the House of Representatives, most recently serving as the Senior Advisor to the House Democratic Whip Katherine Clark (D-MA). In this role, Keith advised on major issues facing the House of Representatives and the Democratic Caucus, including on the debt limit crisis and the appropriations process.

Prior to this role, Keith served as the Director of Floor Operations for the Democratic Leader and then Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), where he advised Democratic Leadership on floor operations strategy, policy development and analysis. Keith worked closely with Democratic and Republican Chairs and Ranking Members, as well as with the White House and Senate leadership staff. Keith's expertise in legislative strategy and policy development played a major role in the enactment of major legislation, such as

Learn more at [key.american.edu](https://key.american.edu)



# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



the American Rescue Plan, the Inflation Reduction Act, the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act and the CHIPS and Science Act, as well as multiple responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and two historic impeachments, along with important structural reforms in the House of Representatives.

Before his roles for the Democratic Leader and then Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Keith served as Chief of Staff and Rules Associate for Rep. James McGovern (D-MA) for over a decade.

Keith received his bachelor's degree in political science from Allegheny College.



## **Liz Johnson**

*Chief of Staff, U.S. Senator Mitt Romney*

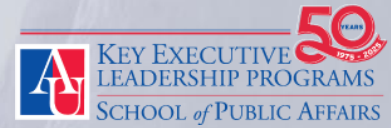
Liz Johnson is Chief of Staff for U.S. Senator Mitt Romney. A veteran communications and policy strategist with nearly 20 years of government and political experience, Ms. Johnson was named Chief of Staff in 2021 after having served as the Senator's communications director.

Prior to joining Senator Romney's team, Ms. Johnson directed the Office of Public Affairs for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, leading the agency's global communications strategy and a staff of nearly 60 employees. In 2017, she served as spokeswoman for U.S. Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch and helped lead messaging strategy for his successful Senate confirmation.

Her congressional and campaign experience includes having served as communications director and senior political advisor to U.S. Senator Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire where she established Ayotte's national profile on major foreign policy and national security issues. Ms. Johnson also served as a spokesperson for U.S. Senator Susan Collins of Maine and the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

Ms. Johnson is an advisory board member of the Pew Charitable Trusts' Bipartisan Chiefs of Staff Initiative and past president of the U.S. Senate Press Secretaries Association. A Maine native, Ms. Johnson graduated magna cum laude from St. Michael's College in 2006 with a B.A. in Political Science and Spanish.

# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## **Kelly Dixon Chambers**

*Vice President, Government Affairs, SHEIN*

Kelly Dixon Chambers is a senior political director with over 25 years of experience in federal public policy development and legislative / political management. She brings close and meaningful relationships with Members, committee chairs, and senior personal office, committee, and leadership staff. Kelly possesses a thorough understanding of the mechanics of moving legislation from committee to floor, and expertise in planning and executing Member engagement and legislative strategies.



## **Amy Dacey**

*Session Facilitator & Executive Director, Sine Institute of Policy & Politics, American University*

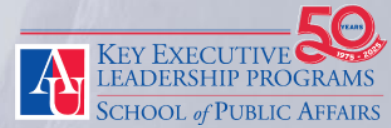
Amy K. Dacey is Executive Director of the Sine Institute of Policy & Politics at American University. For more than two decades, she managed prominent national organizations, advised leading elected officials and candidates, including President Barack Obama and Senator John Kerry, and counseled a variety of nonprofits and companies.

Before joining AU, Amy was President of AKD Strategies, a strategic firm working with non-profits, and Foundations in the progressive policy space. During the 2016 presidential election, she served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Democratic National Committee. During the 2004 elections, she worked for then-Senator John Kerry on his presidential campaign and, following his narrow loss, helped to lead Kerry's political operation. She also managed Rep. Louise Slaughter's congressional campaign in 1998.

From 2010 to 2013, Amy served as Executive Director of EMILY's List, the organization dedicated to electing Democratic women to national, state, and local offices, and led the organization's revitalization, restructuring and rebranding efforts. In addition, she served in various leadership positions for several other organizations, including the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Fund for America, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Recently, Amy served as Executive Vice President and Managing Director for MWWPR, one of the world's top independent public relations agencies.



# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## Rooted Reconnection: Leading from the Group Up

This session delves into the power of grounding principles and authentic connection as the foundation for effective leadership. We'll explore how to cultivate self-awareness, build trust-based relationships, and lead with a rooted presence in an increasingly complex world. Participants will engage in practical exercises to enhance their ability to lead from a place of inner stability and genuine connection.

Participants will:

- Develop strategies for maintaining a sense of groundedness and resilience in the face of leadership challenges
- Reconnect with their own values and forge new connections



### Angela Chiarenza

*Consultant, Executive Coach & Facilitator, TactileWorx, LLC*

Angela leverages over 19 years of experience in talent development, corporate and executive education, coaching, and athletics to drive impactful leadership development and organizational change through coaching and facilitation.

As an ICF Certified Coach, an adjunct faculty member at American University, a seasoned consultant, the Head of Global Learning and Development for a start-up, and a former Division I rowing coach, Angela has empowered individuals and teams across diverse industries, including gaming and entertainment, start-ups, defense and aerospace, healthcare, international finance, education, and government.

Angela's diverse background and fresh, creative perspective allow her to tailor solutions and accelerate growth for individuals and organizations.

## Unlocking Powerful Presence:

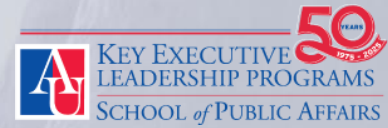
### Practical Leadership Skills to Lead with Confidence & Clarity

Federal executives face the challenge of balancing complex responsibilities while maintaining influence and driving performance. This session equips leaders with **practical tools** to cultivate a powerful presence that enhances their ability to lead confidently and communicate effectively under pressure. Attendees will explore how to strengthen emotional self-awareness, develop a clear thought leadership stance, and master communication skills to drive organizational success.

Through hands-on activities and real-world scenarios, participants will leave with actionable strategies that can be applied in the workplace the very next day. This session addresses the specific needs of federal managers

Learn more at [key.american.edu](https://key.american.edu)

# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



and executives, focusing on practical executive skills that promote clear leadership, build trust, and improve team engagement.

- 1. Develop emotional self-awareness:** Learn practical strategies to manage stress and maintain composure, even in high-pressure situations.
  - *Takeaway: A quick emotional regulation technique for managing stress before any key meeting.*
- 2. Identify and articulate a unique point of view as a thought leader:** Gain clarity on personal leadership strengths and how to express them effectively in any leadership setting.
  - *Takeaway: A framework for developing and expressing your unique leadership voice in a way that aligns with your agency's goals.*
- 3. Improve communication skills for clarity and influence:** Learn how to structure messages to ensure they are understood and inspire action, especially when managing up.
  - *Takeaway: A step-by-step approach to crafting messages that resonate with senior leadership and cross-functional teams*
- 4. Inspire and engage teams for better collaboration and performance:** Use presence to build trust, align teams, and foster a culture of collaboration and resilience.
  - *Takeaway: A guide to increasing team engagement and aligning team efforts with leadership priorities in the federal environment.*



## Robin Camarote

*Facilitator, Strategic Communications Consultant, & Executive Coach*

Robin Camarote is a seasoned executive coach, facilitator, and strategic communications consultant with a knack for helping leaders unlock their full potential. With over 24 years of experience working with federal agencies, non-profits, and private sector clients, Robin has become an expert in helping executives master the art of presence—enabling them to lead with clarity, confidence, and conviction.

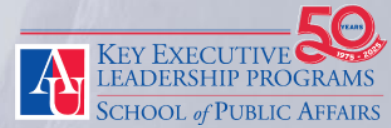
Robin has facilitated high-stakes meetings for organizations like the National Park Service, EPA, and Internal Revenue Service, where her practical strategies have transformed team dynamics and improved leadership performance. Known for blending tough love with actionable insights, Robin challenges her clients to rethink their approach to leadership, empowering them to communicate more effectively and inspire their teams to greater success.

An engaging speaker, Robin has shared her insights on leadership and executive presence at key conferences,

Learn more at [key.american.edu](https://key.american.edu)



# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



including TEDx Youth at Berwyn and the National Facilities Management and Technology Conference. She's also a best-selling author and columnist for Inc.com, where she shares practical advice on leading with impact.

## Breakout Session II - 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

### Key Storytellers: Experiences of Senior Executives

This dynamic panel discussion brings together accomplished leaders who have broken barriers to become members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) in the federal government roles across various industries. The session will explore the unique challenges, opportunities, and experiences, and lessons learned these leaders have encountered in their leadership journeys.



#### **Toayoa Aldridge**

*Assistant Inspector General for Audits, Inspections and Evaluations  
US Agency for International Development, OIG*

Ms. Aldridge is the Assistant Inspector General for the Office of Audits, Inspections, and Evaluations (OAI&E) at the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Inspector General (OIG). In this role she is responsible for the supervision of USAID OIG's OAI&E regional hubs in Asia, Europe, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and six U.S. based OAI&E units; the Audit Support Division, Global and

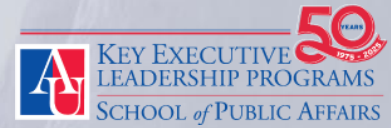
Strategic Audits and Millennium Challenge Corporation Division, Information Technology Audits, Financial Audits, External Financial Audits, and the Inspections and Evaluations unit. She provides guidance and strategic direction to three executives and a workforce comprised of 150 supervisors, managers, locally engaged staff, and US direct hire staff in policy and process development, training, quality assurance, planning, design, execution, and reporting of financial and performance audits, inspections, and evaluations.

Ms. Aldridge has over 20 years' experience in the accountability community, where she started as a junior analyst at the Government Accountability Office in its Financial Markets and Community Investment team. Prior to starting with USAID OIG, she served as the Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audit at the Smithsonian Institution OIG, and before that, she served in senior audit management positions at the District of Columbia OIG, the U.S. Department of Transportation OIG, and the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board Internal Oversight and Performance Assurance team.

Ms. Aldridge began her professional career on Wall Street as a financial accountant with J.P. Morgan Securities and the Carlyle Group and holds a bachelor's degree in finance from Howard University and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Maryland, College Park. She is a native of Dayton, Ohio.

Learn more at [key.american.edu](https://key.american.edu)

# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## **Kilah S. White**

*Assistant Inspector General for Audit, The Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General*

Kilah White is the Assistant Inspector General for the Office of Audit at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of the Inspector General (HUD OIG) in Washington, D.C. In this role Ms. White provides executive oversight for three SES-level deputies and nine divisions, ensuring efficient execution of audit operations. Under her leadership, the Office of Audit delivers critical insights that support HUD officials, policymakers, and stakeholders in advancing the Department’s mission and achieving program success.

Ms. White brings extensive expertise in auditing and oversight, focusing on enhancing the audit lifecycle processes across HUD programs and operations. Her strategic leadership has been instrumental in identifying opportunities to improve operational accountability and strengthen internal controls across HUD. With her guidance, the HUD OIG Office of Audit has implemented impactful changes and conducted audits that identified billions of dollars in potential savings and recoveries that ensure effective stewardship of federal funds and the advancement of organizational objectives. Her teams have earned multiple Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) awards for audit excellence, highlighting their contributions to the OIG community. Ms. White actively supports CIGIE initiatives as a member of the Employee Engagement and Innovation Committee, where she leads the Partner Oversight Subcommittee,

providing executive-level support to the chair and vice-chair. Additionally, Ms. White serves as a formal mentor and coach through CIGIE and HUD OIG’s mentorship programs, fostering the next generation of federal oversight leaders.

Prior to her current role, Ms. White served as the Regional Inspector General for Audit in the Fort Worth, Texas, Field Office. There, she led complex audits and reviews, fostering collaboration among multidisciplinary teams and delivering actionable recommendations that resulted in improved program efficiencies. Her oversight of disaster related audits, particularly within the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery program has strengthened program integrity and enhanced HUD’s control measures, ensuring effective management of critical federal recovery funds.

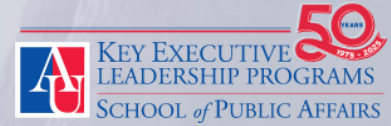
Throughout her career, Ms. White has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to excellence, earning numerous awards for her audit work and consistently upholding high standards of accountability and compliance. Ms.

White holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Howard University and is a Certified Internal

Learn more at [key.american.edu](https://key.american.edu)



# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Auditor and a Certified ACL Data Analyst. She leverages her analytical skills to drive data-informed decision-making and advance HUD OIG effectiveness.



## **Allison G. Wise**

*Deputy Director, Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI), U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission*

Allison Wise is currently the Deputy Director for the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI) at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Ms. Wise is a senior manager providing direction in developing, implementing, and monitoring programs and initiatives related to maintaining workforce diversity, cultivating workplace inclusion, promoting supplier diversity in the SEC's business activities, and ensuring compliance with federal laws related to financially regulated entities.

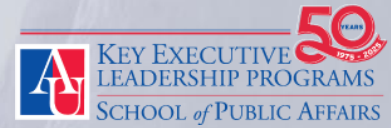
Prior to joining the SEC, Ms. Wise was the Program Director for Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). She led OPM's effort to shape the D&I landscape at a national level developing government-wide policies and guidance to assist Federal agencies in building diverse, inclusive, and engaged workforces. She also served as the first Director of Diversity and Inclusion at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) where she was instrumental in establishing NARA's inaugural D&I Program Office and recognized with the Archivist's award for Outstanding Achievement in Promoting Diversity.

Allison is a career public servant whose commitment and passion toward building and sustaining effective

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs is evident in her active leadership in the DEI community. Over the past 25 years, she has forged valuable coalitions with practitioners at federal agencies and leaders of stakeholder organizations. Specifically, Allison has held countless advisory roles on Federal DEI Councils, is an inaugural board member for the Diversity Executive Leadership Academy (DELA) and the co-founder of the Federal Interagency Diversity Partnership (FIDP) which was established as a forum to promote a collective commitment to DEI across the federal government.

Ms. Wise holds a Bachelor of Arts in Finance from the University of Maryland Robert H. Smith School of Business and Executive Certifications in Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Management from both Georgetown University and the Harvard Kennedy School.

# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## **Dr. Russell Robinson**

*Panel Moderator & Director, Key Undergraduate Leadership Program, AU School of Public Affairs*

Dr. Robinson is the Director of the newly created Key Undergraduate Leadership Program (Key) and is an Associate Professor within SPA and the Key Executive Leadership Program. His expertise is on public sector leadership with an emphasis on employee voice/silence and employee engagement. He is a frequent guest lecturer and keynote speaker on the topics of the Future of Work, employee engagement, voice culture, resilience, wellness, and diversity & inclusion. Prior to working at AU, Russell spent 22 years as a civil servant within the US federal government, where he developed and taught leadership and culture to all levels of employees.

## **Authenticity in the Workplace**

Delve into the realm of authentic workplace dynamics. Uncover the transformative influence of authenticity on both productivity and organizational culture. Engage in enriching dialogues and illustrative scenarios that will compel participants to embrace amore genuine approach in their interactions, fostering improved communication and heightened collaboration. Gain profound insights into personal and collective motivations through the unique lens of the saboteur, the guardian of your power of choice. Depart empowered not only with the tools to present your "Whole Best Self" but also with a renewed sense of purpose and determination to effect positive change within your professional environment



## **Erika Davis**

*Founder & CEO, Exhale Consulting*

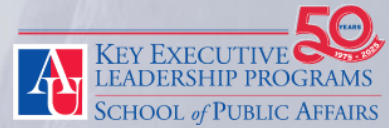
Erika's successful and multifaceted federal career includes engineering, program management, strategic planning, workforce, leadership, and organizational development. Her expertise includes leveraging strategic thought with inclusive leadership to drive change and innovation. With a strong focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, she oversaw programs with budgets up to \$20 million in various programs from Sustainable Operations to the Chief Information Office to Information Management.

From her strategic facilitation of engagement sessions to enhance employee experiences and foster teamwork to developing her team members to deliver more, Erika knows that investing in people is the key to unlocking individual and organizational potential. Her exceptional conflict resolution abilities and eye for identifying

Learn more at [key.american.edu](https://key.american.edu)



# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



inefficiencies and transforming them into streamlined processes enable her to be a valuable strategic partner for her client companies at both the organizational and individual leader levels.

Erika launched her business in 2020 as a strategic partner and consultant to socially responsible corporations and non-profits. Leveraging her collaboration, project planning, and stakeholder engagement skills, she crafts high-impact strategic plans. Erika supports organizational alignment and the development of actionable steps to drive projects with precision and purpose. Her trainings include Authenticity in the Workplace, Conflict in Conversations, Career Strengths, and Leading in a Hybrid Environment.

## Servant Leadership in Action: Building Resilient & Accountable Workplaces

Managers and executives must develop practical skills to lead with empathy, foster accountability, and drive engagement in their teams. In this workshop, Dr. Kristy K. Taylor, an expert in leadership development, will guide participants through a servant leadership approach grounded in Rational Emotive Behavior Theory

(REBT) principles. This session is designed for leaders seeking actionable strategies to strengthen workplace resilience, enhance team trust, and support continuous improvement. Attendees will gain tools to challenge limiting beliefs, promote accountability, and lead change effectively while fostering a culture of psychological safety and adaptability.

- Apply REBT principles to integrate servant leadership into workplace culture and change management.
- Develop strategies to identify and challenge limiting beliefs that hinder workplace resilience.
- Learn practical techniques to foster accountability, trust, and high-performance teams.
- Gain immediate, actionable tools to improve team engagement, communication, and adaptability.
- Cultivate a resilient workplace culture that supports continuous learning and effective change management.



### Dr. Kristy Taylor

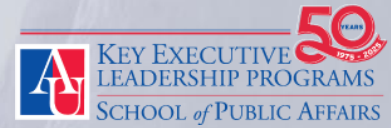
*Certified Career and Executive Coach & Founder, WORxK Solutions, LLC*

Dr. Kristy K. Taylor, founder of WORxK Solutions, LLC, has lectured at Yale University, was named one of Harvard's Women in Higher Educational Leadership, and is a Higher Education Leadership Fellow (HELFF). A military veteran, author, and Certified Professional Career & Executive Coach.

Dr Taylor specializes in career branding, DEIA, and organizational development services, utilizing her REBT Framework to build resilient teams. She has facilitated workshops for organizations like Walmart and Pathways to Housing DC and has been a featured guest on multiple podcasts and summits.

Learn more at [key.american.edu](https://key.american.edu)

# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## Public Service Leadership, Change & Collaborations amid Turbulent Environments

In this engaging talk, participants will explore the critical themes of Public Service Leadership, Change management, and collaboration in an increasingly turbulent world. Drawing inspiration from historical technological revolutions, such as birth of the internet and different “summers and winters” of artificial intelligence over the last fifty years, we'll examine how exponential changes in technology and connectivity are reshaping our society and challenging traditional organizational structures.

The presentation will highlight the unprecedented scale and speed of change we're experiencing, from the explosive growth of networked devices to the vast amounts of data being generated. We'll discuss how these rapid advancements are creating both opportunities and challenges for public service leaders, emphasizing the need for adaptive and innovative approaches.

Key topics will include:

1. The power of diversity and plurality in problem-solving
2. The importance of shared goals in effective collaboration
3. Overcoming human biases and the challenges of information overload
4. Fostering a culture of experimentation and learning from mistakes
5. Balancing expertise with openness to new perspectives

Participants will learn strategies for becoming positive change agents in this new era, including embracing disruptive empathy, encouraging complex narratives, and updating ethical frameworks for the digital age. The session will include a lively, interactive Q&A, allowing participants to engage in lively discussions on practical applications of these concepts in their own public service roles. Together, we'll explore innovative ways to

improve public service leadership, implement effective change management strategies, and foster meaningful collaborations in our rapidly evolving global landscape.



### **Dr. David Bray**

*Chair of the Accelerator, Loomis Council & Distinguished Fellow, Stimson Center*

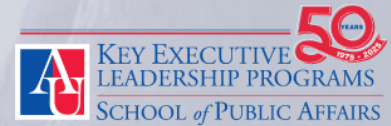
Dr. David A. Bray is Chair of the Accelerator at the Loomis Council and a Distinguished Fellow with the Stimson Center. He also is a CEO and transformation leader for different “under the radar” tech and data ventures seeking to get started in novel situations. He is Principal at LeadDoAdapt Ventures and has served in a variety of leadership roles in turbulent environments, including bioterrorism preparedness and response, Executive Director for a bipartisan National Commission on R&D, provided a

federal agency Senior Executive, senior advisor to the U.S. Navy and Marines on improving organizational

Learn more at [key.american.edu](https://key.american.edu)



# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



adaptability, and work with special operations on countering disinformation and influence operations. He has received both the Joint Civilian Service Commendation Award and the National Intelligence Exceptional Achievement Medal.

Business Insider named Dr. Bray one of the top “24 Americans Who Are Changing the World” under 40 and he is an inducted National Academies of Public Administration Fellow. He has been an invited keynote speaker to CEOs, world leaders, and crowds of more than 3,000 participants at events in India, Vietnam, Australia, Taiwan, Dubai, South Africa, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Canada, Belgium, Sweden, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

## Breakout Session III - 2:15 - 3:15 pm

### Change in Changing Times: Certain But Not Imminent

Lessons from operating a 70-year-old federal laboratory.

This presentation and Q&A will highlight the work we’ve done at Plum Island Animal Disease Center to enable safe and effective operations and encourage the entire workforce to prepare and lean into change. We’ll talk about Plum Island, the changes coming and the uncertainty that led to challenges. I’ll discuss how we tried and struggled to communicate with our team. Following some concerning events, we rebooted our efforts and focused on reconnecting with the mission while guiding our team to a place of agency rather than powerlessness or complacency in the face of change. I’ll focus on efforts at the organizational and individual level to make space for complex emotions and difficult conversations. Organizational change is unique in experience, but I’ve seen reorgs, disasters, pandemics and now am leading this team to a new future – let me share what I’ve seen and how that supports anyone guiding people through change.



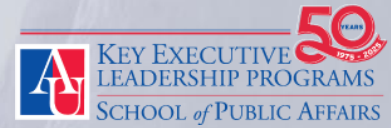
### Tod Companion, PhD

*Director, Plum Island Animal Disease Center (PIADC), U.S. Department of Homeland Security*

Dr. Tod Companion is the Director of the Plum Island Animal Disease Center (PIADC). The lab and its staff of nearly 400 employees provide a host of high-impact, preparedness, and response capabilities, including vaccine research and development, diagnostics, training, and bioforensics. Prior to joining PIADC, Dr. Companion was Director of Program Management for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology (S&T) Mission Capability Support, leading a large team to deliver capabilities to DHS components. Tod’s 20 years of experience in civil service includes strategic thinking and planning, emergency management, science and technology policy, standards, public

Learn more at [key.american.edu](https://key.american.edu)

# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



health, and spaceflight mission planning. In the last few years, Tod led the revitalization of S&T program and project management and led the DHS research and development response to COVID-19, receiving the Secretary's Pandemic Heroism citation. Tod has also been recognized by DHS for his commitment to Joy in the Office, Service and Leadership. Tod joined DHS in 2005 after beginning federal service at NASA, following graduate work in immunology, biochemistry, and public health.

## The Ripple Effect of Engagement: How Active Leadership Motivates and Inspires

All leaders navigate change. Few do it effectively. This session brings together a panel of experts in change management to share actionable ways attendees can inspire their teams even in times of intense change. Panelists will engage with the audience and share tips to navigate specific challenges such as reorganizations, layoffs, project shifts, and culture changes.

- Leaders are not inherently inspiring. They inspire through actions.
- Leaders must meet people where they are and be proactive when change happens.
- Leaders need to be more visible during change, not less.



### Martina Fongyen

*Workforce Transformation Practice Lead, The Cadmus Group*

As the Workforce Transformation Practice Lead at Cadmus, Martina Fongyen helps organizations evolve by aligning people, actions, and results. A collaborative leader, she elevates her team of experts to pave new paths to success in the workplace and beyond, removing roadblocks to high-growth, high-demand careers for people with disabilities and underserved communities. She uses her 20+ year career in global development, ed-tech, and consulting across multiple federal, private sector, and international partners to guide clients through complex change and come out stronger. Passionate about mentoring others to achieve their personal and professional goals, she is a trusted advisor to many. Her commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) permeates everything she does, from her career choices to coaching Girls on the Run and serving as an NAACP-Parent Equity Representative in her community.



# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## **Julie Jean-Louis**

*Talent Management and Workforce Transformation Consultant, The Cadmus Group*

Julie Jean-Louis is an experienced Talent Management and Workforce Transformation consultant with 12 years of experience in delivering strategic solutions to drive organizational growth and workforce optimization. Proven track record in both internal corporate consulting and client-facing consulting in federal environments supporting clients like Department of Commerce, Department of Labor, and U.S. General Services Administration, with expertise in talent acquisition, change management, project management, and workforce planning. Julie helps organizations navigate complexity—culture, operations, and process—focusing on the people side of change. She is driven by a commitment to building resilience and advancing social equity within organizations and communities.



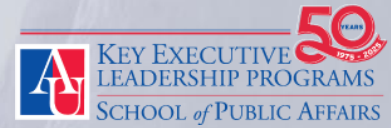
## **Kelly Stuck**

*Senior Specialist, The Cadmus Group*

Kelly Stuck is a senior specialist working in Cadmus' strategy and transformation service area, primarily supporting the communication and change management practice. She has over 20 years of experience as an organized, energetic, and client-focused professional leading successful communications, engagement, and technology adoption efforts. She works with a variety of private sector and federal agency clients, most recently leading executive level, strategic communications and employee engagement campaigns at the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Mint.

Kelly is an innovative, detail oriented, and effective leader—skilled at seeing the big picture while identifying and expertly executing tasks. She has a reputation for sparking positivity and laughter, fueling creativity and fun at work. Kelly holds an MBA from George Mason University and a bachelor's in business marketing from James Madison University.

# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## **Lisa Wolfe,**

*Senior Associate, The Cadmus Group*

Lisa Wolfe, Cadmus Senior Associate, has over 23 years of leadership experience as a strategic communications, stakeholder engagement, and change management professional and is recognized as a Project Management Professional (PMP) by the Project Management Institute. Lisa Wolfe has spent her career optimizing processes and motivating people to embrace transformational change. As a former media executive, she leverages her research, writing, and presentation experience to support her clients with interpersonal, program, and enterprise change management and communications strategies and tactics. Lisa is a committed, detail-oriented collaborator and brings an entrepreneurial spirit and optimistic mindset to every task.

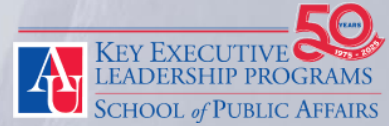
## **Leadership: Lessons Learned from 30 Years of Public Sector Leadership**

Leading people and organizations are too important to leave to chance. This session explores the important elements of leadership. It introduces a leadership framework and provides tools to work effectively within the framework. It helps leaders better understand themselves and their organizations. We will celebrate the important role we play as civil servants in the service of our country and how we can better lead our organization, take care of ourselves and each other, embrace learning, give and receive feedback, and ultimately articulate the legacy you would like to leave.

- Understand the importance of a leadership framework as a strategic tool;
- Develop strategies to work within the framework to guide strategic, operational and people leadership; and maintain alignment with all stakeholders;
- Develop an awareness of individual strengths when leading and developing a team;
- Understand the importance of personal wellness and its impact on your effectiveness at work;
- Develop a learning and growth mindset; and, the importance of giving and receiving feedback factoring into individual development and innovation within our organization;
- Bridge the gaps to align political appointee and career staff dynamics;
- Create your legacy.



# 2025 ANNUAL KEY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## **Dave Lebryk**

*Former Fiscal Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of the Treasury*

David A. Lebryk was appointed the Fiscal Assistant Secretary on June 30, 2014. The Fiscal Assistant Secretary is the Department's most senior career position. As the Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Mr. Lebryk was responsible for developing policy and overseeing the operations of the financial infrastructure of the federal government.

Mr. Lebryk served the Department of the Treasury with distinction in numerous policy and operations positions during his 30 plus years of federal service. He has served under 11 Secretaries of the Treasury and has been an advisor to two Deputy Secretaries and three Undersecretaries for Domestic Finance.

Mr. Lebryk has received numerous awards for leadership including American University's 2014 Roger W. Jones Award for Executive Leadership; The Association of Government Accountants' (AGA) 2018 Elmer Staat's Award for outstanding leadership, high ethical standards, and innovation; the AGA's 2020 Frank Greathouse Distinguished Leadership Award; and three Presidential Rank Awards. He is included in Federal Computing World's list of 100 outstanding individuals. He is an elected Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administrations. Mr. Lebryk graduated with an A.B. in Economics from Harvard University and a Master of Public Administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.