

THINC30 Tank: Creating Circular Economy Communities Tuesday, June 8, 2021 PROGRAM AGENDA

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Welcome, Rebecca Lucore, Head of Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility, Covestro LLC



Rebecca L. Lucore is head of Sustainability and CSR for Covestro LLC's America's region, responsible for devising new models that apply the company's commitment to sustainable business practices and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) to its social programs, philanthropy, community relations and sustainability initiatives.

Lucore oversees i³ (ignite, imagine, innovate), Covestro's companywide CSR program that aims to spark curiosity, to envision what could be and help create it.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Main Stage Speaker

Creating Circular Cities

Andrew McCue, Cities Consultant for Metabolic



Coming from a background in sustainable urban food systems, Andrew joined Metabolic two years ago to begin work as a circular economy consultant. His current areas of focus are circular cities (including Philadelphia, Boulder, Cleveland, and Cambridge), regenerative food systems, and packaging. At Metabolic, Andrew works as a consultant, business developer and external speaker on the topic of using a systems thinking approach to build a resilient circular economy.

Panel Discussion

What's Happening in Pittsburgh

Moderator

Andrew McCue

Guests

Grant Ervin, Chief Resilience Officer, City of Pittsburgh



Grant Ervin serves as the Chief Resilience Officer and Assistant Director for the Department of City Planning for the City of Pittsburgh. Grant oversees the integration of sustainability and resilience into City of Pittsburgh's services, programs and policy. He works to make the City of Pittsburgh a smart, sustainable and resilient city by fostering partnerships, leveraging assets and finding creative ways to solve problems.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Mike Gable, Executive Director, Construction Junction



Mike Gable is the founding Executive Director of Construction Junction (CJ), a nonprofit retailer promoting conservation through the reuse of building materials. Under Mike's 20 years of leadership, CJ has grown into a \$2 million operation with close to 30 staff including an award winning job training program for Goodwill clients with disabilities and a deconstruction job experience/training program with the South Hilltop Group.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Melissa Bilec, Deputy Director, Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation, University of Pittsburgh



Dr. Melissa Bilec is an associate professor in the Swanson School of Engineering's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering; she is the Deputy Director of the Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation. She is also the Roberta A. Luxbacher Faculty Fellow, and she serves as the Pitt STRIVE Director of Faculty Community Building and Engagement for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Spotlight Speaker

Circularity: Industry's Commitment

Lauren Phipps, Editor, Circularity Weekly



Lauren Phipps leads circular economy strategy, content and convening as GreenBiz Group's Director and Senior Analyst on the Circular Economy. Lauren launched the largest [circular economy conference in North America](#) and writes a [weekly column](#) with the aim of elevating and accelerating circular solutions at the intersection of business, climate and community. A solutions-oriented skeptic, Lauren emphasizes systems thinking, value chain engagement and cross-sector collaboration. Previously, Lauren managed business development at GreenBiz Group. She holds a BA in Environmental Analysis and Sociology from Pitzer College.

Fireside Chat

Covestro's Commitment to Circularity

Richard Skorpenske, Head of Advocacy and Sustainability, Covestro LLC



Richard Skorpenske leads advocacy and sustainability activities within the Covestro polyurethane business in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In this role, Richard supports the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit impacting the Covestro North American polyurethanes business. These efforts are achieved by leading engagement with relevant trade associations, federal and state governments, regulatory agencies and NGOs.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Lynette Chung, Chief Sustainability Officer, Covestro AG



Lynette Chung is Chief Sustainability Officer of Covestro since July 2020, based at the company's corporate headquarters in Leverkusen, Germany. In this position, she is responsible for Sustainability and Government Affairs at a global level.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Panel Discussion **Higher Education's Role**

Moderator

Dr. Joel Tickner, Professor, Zuckerg College of Health Sciences,
University of Massachusetts, Lowell



Joel Tickner is a leading researcher and strategist in making chemistry safer for people and the environment. His research focuses on the development of innovative scientific methods and policies to implement and accelerate the design and application of safer products and manufacturing processes. He is also a leading expert on environmental health, risk assessment, green chemistry, chemicals policy, and pollution prevention.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Guests

Melissa Bilec, Deputy Director, Mascaro Center for Sustainable
Innovation, University of Pittsburgh

Dr. Rajesh Buch, Director, Circular Economy Practice, Arizona State
University



Raj Buch drives Arizona State University's efforts to provide solutions to the complex sustainability challenges facing the developing world by linking ASU's world-class researchers to funding agencies, and by fostering partnerships with NGOs, the public and private sectors, and foundations. He was instrumental in collaboratively building a hybrid, university-based sustainability solutions knowledge and discovery practice at ASU, with applied research and solutions development work.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Dr. Karen Pearson, Chair, Science and Math Department and FIT's
Sustainability Council, Fashion Institute of Technology



Karen R. Pearson, PhD is a Professor and Chair of Science and Mathematics at FIT and Chair of FIT's Sustainability Council. Her efforts at FIT focus on curricular innovation and research related to cross-disciplinary STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) learning that supports FIT's core math and science programs. These efforts include introducing new experiential and interactive components to the core curricula and establishing a focus on sustainability across our programs.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Spotlight Speaker

Re-using Plastic Waste

Miranda Wang, Co-Founder and CEO, Novoloop



Miranda Wang is a climate tech entrepreneur who's building an innovative plastic transformation company. She is the co-founder and CEO of Novoloop, a low-carbon advanced recycling and sustainable materials provider that upgrades the most common plastic waste into performance materials worth up to 50x more. Ms. Wang is a Forbes 30 under 30, UN Young Champion of the Earth, a Pritzker Environmental "Genius" Awardee, and a Rolex Awards for Enterprise Laureate.

Panel Discussion

Circularity: Where's It Headed?

Moderator

Aleta Richards, Senior Vice President, Coatings, Adhesives and Specialties, Covestro LLC



Aleta Richards is head of the Coatings, Adhesives & Specialties (CAS) sales and market development business unit for Covestro LLC. Having started her career at Covestro (then part of Bayer) in 1990, Aleta is well acquainted with the organization and has almost 30 years' experience in marketing, sales, product management, human resources and general management.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Guests

Noah Deich, President, Carbon180



Noah Deich is the co-founder and President at Carbon180, where he keeps the organization on track and thinking big while championing carbon removal solutions. He is a recovering management consultant with past experience in environmental markets modeling, clean energy financing, and energy management program design. Noah received his M.B.A. from the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley and his B.A. from the University of Virginia.

Katy Franklin, Operations Director, ReFED



Katy Franklin serves as ReFED's Operations Director, supporting organizational development and strategy and designing systems for effective program implementation and management. Previously, Katy managed operations at Sustainable America, where she gained a deep understanding of successful food waste reduction programs with consumers, food service providers, private firms, and at major events. Katy has authored industry and academic research on food waste and opportunities to solve this global challenge. Katy also helped develop Further with Food, a public-private partnership convened to address food loss and waste.

Stacy Smedley, Director of Sustainability, Skanska USA and Executive Director, Building Transparency



Stacy has a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture from the University of Washington, and over 18 years in the architecture and construction professions. Her resume includes the first LEED for Homes Platinum certified project in Washington State as well as the first project in the world to be certified under Living Building Version 2.0 standards. As Sustainability Director at Skanska, Stacy has led sustainable initiatives, and is considered a subject matter expert in LEED, Living Building Challenge and carbon emissions associated with buildings and construction.

[Click here](#) for full biography.

Closing Remarks, Rebecca Lucore, Head of Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility, Covestro LLC

Rebecca Lucore

**Head of Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility
Covestro LLC**



Rebecca L. Lucore is head of Sustainability and CSR for Covestro LLC's America's region, responsible for devising new models that apply the company's commitment to sustainable business practices and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) to its social programs, philanthropy, community relations and sustainability initiatives. Lucore oversees i3 (ignite, imagine, innovate) Covestro's companywide CSR program that aims to spark curiosity, to envision what could be and to help create it. Its three focus areas, i3 Engage, i3 STEM and i3 Give, leverage the company's current and future workforce, the communities in which it operates, and its partners and collaborators – all to create sustainable and lasting impacts.

Lucore is a leading voice in Corporate America for empowering employee purpose and creating employee-citizen-philanthropist to drive sustainable communities through the transformation of traditional corporate volunteerism to next gen Skills-Based Volunteerism (SBV). With SBV, teams of employees use their skills and expertise to help nonprofits and municipalities solve organizational challenges in IT, marketing, finance, systems, et al. These short-term consulting projects help needy organizations build capacity and become sustainable. She was instrumental in the establishment of the Covestro Center for Community Engagement at Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh which provides SBV and other volunteer training to Covestro employees and those of other companies throughout the region wishing to create their own citizen philanthropists.

Lucore is working with the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) to bring the UNSDGs to Covestro's U.S. site communities and showcase them as a framework for companies, organizations, cities and communities interested in integrating sustainable practices into their business and innovation strategies, impacting the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Prosperity. Recently, Lucore took a leadership role on the UNGC's Ocean's Platform working group. Under Lucore's leadership and direction, Covestro holds its annual THINC30 Summit in Pittsburgh to bring the global goals local. THINC stands for transforming, harnessing, innovating, navigating and collaborating for a purpose-driven, sustainable future by 2030. Its mission is two-fold. First, to accelerate partnerships that foster sustainable business development and social innovation around the 17 UNSDGs. Second, to showcase how these goals can be achieved by leveraging the growing need for purpose among individuals,



organizations and businesses. With the i3 Index, the public opinion research project she oversees, Covestro is exploring timely issues around purpose, sustainability, employee engagement and corporate responsibility, and helping to lead national dialogue and greater understanding of their impacts on business today and in the coming decade.

Prior to joining Covestro, Lucore worked for 20 years in various capacities in corporate citizenship, philanthropy, environment/sustainability and STEM education and diversity. From 2012 to 2015 she served as Chief of Staff at Bayer MaterialScience LLC where she was responsible for leading and streamlining organizational initiatives, including talent management; donations; and community, executive and employee engagement. Before that, for more than a decade, Lucore served as Executive Director of the Bayer USA Foundation and Head of U.S. CSR for Bayer Corporation. In these dual roles, she was responsible for directing all CSR initiatives including the company's STEM education partnerships with the United Nations Environment Programme, the National Governor's Association and the National Science Teachers Association, among others, and was a lead architect of Bayer's flagship CSR program, Making Science Make Sense. Led by national spokesperson, Dr. Mae Jemison, the first woman of color to orbit the Earth, Making Science Sense was one of the first corporate initiatives to advocate for science literacy and science education reform. As part of this work, Lucore helped introduce and then drive the national conversation about the issue of gender and racial equity in the nation's STEM fields through annual research and periodic summits and reports on the issue. In recognition, Bayer was awarded two Presidential Awards – President's Service Award (President William J. Clinton) and the Ron Brown Award (President George W. Bush) – as well as the National Science Board's highest honor – the National Public Service Award. A leader in the Pittsburgh community, she was instrumental in Pittsburgh being named World Environment Day North American Host City in 2010 and host of One Young World in 2012.

She is currently on the Board of Directors of Sustainable Pittsburgh, and is Advisory Board President for the Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management at Robert Morris University. She serves on several local sustainability working groups as well. Ms. Lucore has spoken widely at national CSR and Sustainability conferences including GreenBiz, the Social Innovation Forum, CGI America, National Governor's Association, U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Conference Board. She has contributed articles on CSR, Sustainability and employee engagement issues to the Huffington Post and the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation's blog. She resides in Pittsburgh with her husband and three boys.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Grant Ervin

**Chief Resilience Officer
City of Pittsburgh**



Grant Ervin serves as the Chief Resilience Officer and Assistant Director for the Department of City Planning for the City of Pittsburgh. Grant oversees the integration of sustainability and resilience into City of Pittsburgh’s services, programs and policy. He works to make the City of Pittsburgh a smart, sustainable and resilient city by fostering partnerships, leveraging assets and finding creative ways to solve problems. Prior to joining the City of Pittsburgh, Grant served as the Regional Director for 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, a statewide sustainable development policy organization where he focused on land use, transportation finance and infrastructure policy; and as Public Policy Manager for Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG).

Mr. Ervin serves as an integrator by working across departments, agencies and sectors to formulate sustainable and resilient solutions. He brings deep experience, intersecting the worlds of environmental, energy, technology, community & economic development and infrastructure policy to create innovative and sustainable solutions for the public, private and non-governmental sectors.

Mr. Ervin has helped lead the development of a variety of innovative programs including: Pittsburgh’s ONEPGH Resilience Strategy, Pittsburgh Climate Plan, Pittsburgh’s inclusion in the Rockefeller Foundation’s 100 Resilient Cities Initiative; Bloomberg Philanthropies – American Cities Climate Challenge, Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the United States Department of Transportation’s Smart Cities Challenge, the creation of the Uptown Eco-Innovation District, District Energy Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh and Neighborhood Community Information System and the Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative.

Mr. Ervin has senior management experience in energy portfolio management, the evaluation and deployment of clean technologies and renewable and district scale power procurement. Mr. Ervin speaks frequently on topics ranging from urbanism, urban resilience, organizational sustainability strategies, smart cities and climate change and cities.

Mr. Ervin is a graduate of Washington and Jefferson College and the Graduate School for Public and International Affairs and the University of Pittsburgh. He serves on the board of directors of Sustainable



Pittsburgh, Eco Districts, Pittsburgh Allegheny County Thermal (PACT) and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA). Mr. Ervin resides in the Morningside neighborhood of Pittsburgh with his wife and two daughters.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Mike Gable

**Executive Director
Construction Junction**



Mike Gable is the founding Executive Director of Construction Junction (CJ), a nonprofit retailer promoting conservation through the reuse of building materials. Under Mike's 20 years of leadership, CJ has grown into a \$2 million operation with close to 30 staff including an award winning job training program for Goodwill clients with disabilities and a deconstruction job experience/training program with the South Hilltop Group. In 2015, CJ launched Reuse Retail an integrated inventory tracking and sales platform for donated building materials.

Mike has a BA in Environmental Studies from the University of California at Santa Barbara. He spreads the reuse message through participation on the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Resources Council, as a member of the Pittsburgh American Institute of Architects' Committee on the Environment, and as the current President of the Board of Directors of Build Reuse.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Melissa Bilec

**Deputy Director, Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation
University of Pittsburgh**



Dr. Melissa Bilec is an associate professor in the Swanson School of Engineering's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering; she is the Deputy Director of the Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation. She is also the Roberta A. Luxbacher Faculty Fellow, and she serves as the Pitt STRIVE Director of Faculty Community Building and Engagement for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Dr. Bilec's research focuses on the sustainable built environment. She explores system-level environmental performance of buildings, while developing a deeper understanding of environmental impacts, energy use, and indoor air quality. She is an expert in life cycle assessment (LCA), and works to advance LCA through method development. Dr. Bilec is personally interested in high-impact research that addresses significant societal challenges through innovative research approaches. Most recently, she is working to solve the global plastic waste challenge through the advancement and development of circular economy principles.

Dr. Bilec has published 135 peer review papers: 82 journal articles and 53 conference proceedings and has secured \$9.25 million in funding, including 14 National Science Foundation grants and three supplements. She has received four education excellence awards, and she developed a new M.S. in Sustainable Engineering degree and co-developed a university-wide undergraduate certificate in sustainability. Dr. Bilec is committed to diversity, inclusion, and equity. She serves on the Engineering Diversity Advisory Committee and NSF Pitt STRIVE Leadership team, along with being co-faculty advisor for Pitt Society for Women Engineering. She was awarded the School of Engineering Diversity Award 2017-2018 and received Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement's Partnerships of Distinction award in 2019. Dr. Bilec's work prior to academia focused on green infrastructure projects, including the conversion of a 100-year bridge into a pedestrian bridge.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Richard Skorpenske

**Head of Advocacy and Sustainability
Covestro LLC**



Richard Skorpenske leads advocacy and sustainability activities within the Covestro polyurethane business in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In this role, Richard supports the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit impacting the Covestro North American polyurethanes business. These efforts are achieved by leading engagement with relevant trade associations, federal and state governments, regulatory agencies and NGOs.

Richard's industrial career has spanned 30+ years focused on product R&D, new business development, global technology management, business team strategy and employee growth. He has led the development of technologies for the elimination of ozone depleting blowing agents, improved combustion resistant foams, improved indoor air quality and the implementation of more sustainable polyol process technology. Richard holds BS and MS degrees in Chemistry, an MS degree in Environmental Science/Policy and is the author of numerous publications and patents.

Richard resides in Sewickley, Pennsylvania with Corinna, his wife of 36 years. They have two adult daughters living in Brooklyn and Chicago, where they enjoy visiting often. Richard gives back to the community by serving on the board of Cribs For Kids, an organization that provides cribs and services to underserved families.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Lynette Chung

**Chief Sustainability Officer
Covestro AG**



Lynette Chung is Chief Sustainability Officer of Covestro since July 2020, based at the company's corporate headquarters in Leverkusen, Germany. In this position, she is responsible for Sustainability and Government Affairs at global level.

Prior to joining Covestro, Lynette was most recently Head of Sustainability Strategy and Advocacy at Clariant, which she joined in 2011. She also has worked in Brussels for many years on EU environmental and trade policies for Eurometaux, the EU non-ferrous metals industry association, and other trade associations.

Lynette is a lawyer by education, born in Sweden and now lives in Germany.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Dr. Joel Tickner

**Professor, Zuckerman College of Health Sciences
University of Massachusetts, Lowell**



Joel Tickner is a leading researcher and strategist in making chemistry safer for people and the environment. His research focuses on the development of innovative scientific methods and policies to implement and accelerate the design and application of safer products and manufacturing processes. He is also a leading expert on environmental health, risk assessment, green chemistry, chemicals policy, and pollution prevention.

Tickner is an internationally respected expert on how chemicals in everyday life can adversely affect adults and children and based on that understanding he has worked tirelessly to advocate for the adoption of safer alternatives in household products, manufacturing processes and more. His research has led to the establishment and growth of the field of chemical alternatives assessment, the process of comparing alternatives for chemicals of concern. He is the founding Executive Director of the Association for the Advancement of Alternatives Assessment, a professional association dedicated to advancing the science, practice, and policy of alternatives assessment and informed substitution.

Tickner also founded the Green Chemistry and Commerce Council (GC3), a powerful network of more than 120 companies, bringing together the entire value chain from chemical producers to major brands and retailers. The GC3 occupies a unique role as a highly credible convener and facilitator of green chemistry commercialization, with access to leading-edge research and practice. It offers a tangible opportunity to influence and scale fundamental industry shifts, achieving significantly greater adoption of green chemistry

Tickner is a Professor of Environmental Health at University of Massachusetts-Lowell, where he has worked to build interdisciplinary bridges across departments and colleges to position the university as a leading institution in the design and application of sustainable chemicals and materials. He established the first undergraduate, accredited environmental health BS program in New England. He is Co-Director of the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Institute, which provides resources and tools to help businesses, municipalities, and communities in Massachusetts find safer alternatives to toxic chemicals.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Dr. Rajesh Buch

**Director, Circular Economy Practice
Arizona State University**



Raj Buch drives Arizona State University's efforts to provide solutions to the complex sustainability challenges facing the developing world by linking ASU's world-class researchers to funding agencies, and by fostering partnerships with NGOs, the public and private sectors, and foundations. He was instrumental in collaboratively building a hybrid, university-based sustainability solutions knowledge and discovery practice at ASU, with applied research and solutions development work. Over the last eight years, he has developed systemic circular economy solutions at local and regional scales, building collaborative networks to advance circular economy, and building circular economy curricula for professional and academic classes and workshops, founded on the concept of an ethical circular economy.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Dr. Karen Pearson

**Chair, Science and Math Department and FIT's Sustainability Council
Fashion Institute of Technology**



Karen R. Pearson, PhD is a Professor and Chair of Science and Mathematics at FIT and Chair of FIT's Sustainability Council. Her efforts at FIT focus on curricular innovation and research related to cross-disciplinary STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) learning that supports FIT's core math and science programs. These efforts include introducing new experiential and interactive components to the core curricula and establishing a focus on sustainability across our programs. She is the recipient of multiple National Science Foundation (NSF) and National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) grants to support this work and has published in numerous peer-reviewed journals and the recipient of numerous awards including a SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, the President's Award for Curricular Innovation and has been noted in top 100 of most influential women in STEM.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Aleta Richards

**Senior Vice President, Coatings, Adhesives and Specialties
Covestro LLC**



Aleta Richards is head of the Coatings, Adhesives & Specialties (CAS) sales and market development business unit for Covestro LLC. Having started her career at Covestro (then part of Bayer) in 1990, Aleta is well acquainted with the organization and has almost 30 years' experience in marketing, sales, product management, human resources and general management. She has held various leadership positions with time spent in HR and in the Polycarbonates, Polyurethanes and Inorganic Basic Chemicals businesses.

A Pittsburgh native, Aleta received both her bachelor's degree and M.B.A. in marketing and international business from the University of Pittsburgh. She has also received a Doctorate in Business Administration from Georgia State University. She continues to support the Pittsburgh community and her passion for education as the Vice President of Operations for the PBAN Board of Directors, a group dedicated to ensuring diversity within the PITT Katz Business School MBA Program, and as a Board member of the Pittsburgh Promise. Aleta also serves on the Board of Distinguished Visitors for Westminster College in New Wilmington, PA.

[Return to Agenda](#)

Stacy Smedley

**Director of Sustainability, Skanska USA and Executive Director
Building Transparency**



Stacy has a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture from the University of Washington, and over 18 years in the architecture and construction professions. Her resume includes the first LEED for Homes Platinum certified project in Washington State as well as the first project in the world to be certified under Living Building Version 2.0 standards. As Sustainability Director at Skanska, Stacy has led sustainable initiatives, and is considered a subject matter expert in LEED, Living Building Challenge and carbon emissions associated with buildings and construction.

In her role at the newly established nonprofit, Building Transparency, Stacy leads the continued management and development of the free, open-access Embodied Carbon in Construction Calculator (EC3) tool and works to educate and engage the building industry on actionably reducing embodied carbon emissions of building materials.

Stacy has served in various advisory and leadership roles, including: Industry Advisory Group Member for the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, Co-Chair of the Washington Businesses for Climate Action; Advisory Board Member for the University of Washington Carbon Leadership Forum; Construction Taskforce Chair for the Embodied Carbon Network; Advisory Group Member for AIA Materials Working Group; Emerging Professional Regional Chair for USGBC; Membership Chair for the Cascadia Green Building Council. She is a 2020 Grist 50 Fixer, a 2019 ENR Top 25 Newsmaker, and shared a Living Building Challenge Hero award for her work on the Bertschi School Living Science Building.

[Return to Agenda](#)