

Speaker Biographies

Leslie Trainor
Deputy Director, Workforce and Economic Development
County of Riverside Economic Development Agency

Leslie Trainor is the Deputy Director of Workforce and Economic Development for the County of Riverside Economic Development Agency (EDA). She has worked for the EDA in various capacities since 2009, starting in the Housing Department and working on special projects, such as creating and operationalizing nonprofit affiliates of the Housing Authority, Workforce Development Department, Library System, and March Air Reserve Base. Of her undertakings, Leslie most enjoys efforts that help disadvantaged individuals and families to flourish. Leslie is a lover of learning and has been in school for almost the entirety of her time working for the County. She earned a Master's in Business Administration and is currently a fourth year doctoral student in Organizational Psychology at Claremont Graduate University. Her research areas are women in leadership and toxic leadership.

Michelle DeArmond
Economic Development Manager, Office of Foreign Trade
County of Riverside Economic Development Agency

Michelle DeArmond is the Economic Development Manager in charge of the Office of Foreign Trade for the County of Riverside Economic Development Agency. Michelle started working at EDA one year ago after serving as chief of staff to the late Riverside County Supervisor John J. Benoit for seven years. In that capacity, Michelle engaged in a variety of issues such as the EB-5 visa program, homelessness, health care, renewable energy and economic development. Prior to joining the County of Riverside, Michelle worked briefly in public affairs and, before that, had a lengthy career in journalism at The Associated Press and The Press-Enterprise, traveling around the country and working in Las Vegas, the Midwest and Los Angeles. Michelle enjoys finding ways to help Riverside County businesses grow and to encourage Foreign Direct Investment in our rapidly growing county. She has a Bachelor's of Journalism degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia and was a Pullium Fellow at the Indianapolis Star. She serves as guest lecturer at the Claremont Graduate University's Tribal Administration Certificate Program and is on the board of Susan G. Komen Inland Empire.

Natalie Rubalcava
Chief Operating Officer
Vice President of Investor Relations
Orange County Business Council

Natalie Rubalcava is Chief Operating Officer, for the Orange County Business Council. In her current role, Rubalcava oversees day-to-day operations of the organization and works closely with OCBC board of directors and the Orange County business community to develop strategic partnerships, increase investments in the organization, while providing maximum value to existing OCBC investors through innovative opportunities and programs.

With a degree in law and a comprehensive knowledge of the Orange County market, Rubalcava has held key advertising, research and audience-development positions with some of Southern California's largest media companies, including Southern California News Group where she most recently served as Associate Publisher of Custom Publishing. Rubalcava has led successful business development strategies for the media companies print and digital publications, served as Vice President of Sales Operations and executed innovative solutions for marketing and advertising, and developed creative sales opportunities.

Rubalcava has served on the City of Anaheim's Community Services Board, as well as, as board member on the University of La Verne College of Law National Hispanic Bar Association. She graduated with a B.A. in political science from California State University, Fullerton, and earned a J.D. from University La Verne College of Law.

Speaker Biographies

Ray Bowman

Director, Small Business Development Center
Economic Development Collaborative – Ventura County

Ray D. Bowman is the director of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in Camarillo, California providing business consultation to over 500 businesses per year at no cost to the client. At the SBDC, he coordinates all activities ensuring that small businesses follow guidelines and regulations. This SBDC, has been recognized by the U.S Small Business Administration as “top job creator of the year, top performing in business starts and capital investments,” and other excellence awards to the present date. In 2017, under Ray Bowman’s direction, this SBDC won the “National Association of Small Business Development Centers State Star Award.”

Mr. Bowman is a specialized consultant with international trade logistics, trade finance, vendor compliance, import and export compliance management, and with overseas vendor and buyer issues. Since 2012, he has been an international and national keynote speaker and presenter in logistics infrastructure, international marketing, import and export, non-tariff trade barriers, and international export economy.

Mr. Bowman is a doctoral candidate at Grenoble Ecole de Management researching small business growth and entrepreneurship. With three decades of experience with international trade, he teaches multiple business courses including trade finance, import/export, and international logistics at Santa Barbara City College and Cal Lutheran University. He authors and develops his own curriculum for online and in-person classes. In 2017, Mr. Bowman taught an international supply chain logistics course in Beijing, China at Beijing Wuzi University. He is a Certified Global Business Professional (CGBP) as well as a CGBP trainer. Mr. Bowman serves as a program chair for the District Export Council of Southern California by appointment of the United States Secretary of Commerce.

Michael A. Smith

**Director of International Trade
World Trade Center Los Angeles**

Michael Smith is the Director of International Trade at the World Trade Center Los Angeles (WTCLA), which attracts foreign direct investment into LA County, providing educational services while serving as the link between the region and international businesses looking to expand. All of which drives innovation, job creation and prosperity for the region’s communities and residents. WTCLA’s foreign direct investment (FDI) strategy is to attract, educate and connect foreign investors to ensure a smooth process for capital deployment. By combining robust research with deep institutional knowledge, WTCLA enhances the decision-making for foreign companies that has benefited the region by attracting over \$1 billion in FDI since 1988.

Michael was most recently the Research and Content Manager for OfferBoard Securities, a boutique investment bank in Princeton, New Jersey, where he identified competitive advantages for middle-market companies raising capital under the JOBS Act. Prior to OfferBoard, Michael served as a researcher for a federally funded study of a novel probation program (H.O.P.E.) that shaped state policy in Hawaii and Washington, and later received a \$4 million commitment from the Obama Administration’s Office of National Drug Control Policy. Upon finishing his undergraduate degree, Michael resided in South Korea for two years teaching English and enhancing his Korean language and cultural skills.

Michael grew up in Phoenix, Arizona and received his Bachelor of Arts in International Studies while running NCAA Division I cross country and track at Pepperdine University. He also received his Master of Public Policy with honors from the same institution. He currently serves on the Executive Board for the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Association for Business Economics.