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Speaker Biographies



ASA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Cassie Bladow – ASA Chair

President

United States Beet Sugar Association

Jack Pettus – ASA Vice Chair

Vice President of Government Relations

American Sugar Cane League

Luther Markwart – Secretary/Treasurer

Executive Vice President & CEO

American Sugarbeet Growers Association

Ryan Weston

Chief Executive Officer, Florida Sugar Cane League

Washington Representative, Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, Inc.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The American Sugar Alliance is a national coalition of sugarbeet and sugarcane producers, including sugar farmers, sugar processors, sugar refiners, sugar suppliers, sugar workers and others dedicated to preserving a strong U.S. sugar industry. The American Sugar Alliance works to ensure that sugar farmers and workers in the U.S. sugar industry survive in a world of heavily subsidized sugar. Only through a united effort can these dedicated Americans continue to offer a plentiful, secure and reasonably priced sugar supply. The American Sugar Alliance provides the backing and support to meet this national need. For information on the Symposium or membership in the American Sugar Alliance, please contact Vickie Myers, Executive Director, at 703-351-5055 or via email at info@sugaralliance.org.

www.sugaralliance.org

Cassie Bladow
President & CEO
U.S. Beet Sugar Association

Cassie Bladow is President & CEO of the U.S. Beet Sugar Association. She works to advance the unified objectives of America's sugarbeet cooperatives. Cassie provides leadership in navigating issues of importance to the nine manufacturers of beet sugar in the U.S., which operate 21 processing facilities. She previously served the association as director of government affairs, then vice president. She currently serves as Chair of the industry-wide American Sugar Alliance.

Cassie has served as an advocate for agriculture throughout her career. Prior to rejoining the U.S. Beet Sugar Association, she served as chief of staff for Senator John Hoeven. Through various roles on Senator Hoeven's staff, she worked to represent the interests of constituents in North Dakota. She played a crucial role in developing policy for farmers and ranchers through two Farm Bills and Senator Hoeven's role on the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee.

Cassie resides in northern Virginia with her husband, Shaun, and son, Theodore. She grew up on a sugarbeet farm in northwestern Minnesota, which her family still operates. She graduated from North Dakota State University.

Kevin Price
Vice President of Government Affairs
American Crystal Sugar Company

Kevin Price is vice president of government affairs for American Crystal Sugar Company. Since 1996, Kevin has been the primary liaison between American Crystal and the federal government, and he advises the Company on all matters of federal policy. Kevin also manages American Crystal Sugar's political action committee which is the largest PAC in U.S. agriculture. Kevin is a long-time member of USDA's Agricultural Trade Advisory Committee on Sweeteners, is former president of the New York Sugar Club, and is active in the American Sugar Alliance, the U.S. Beet Sugar Association, and the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. Before joining American Crystal, Kevin worked on Capitol Hill as a legislative advisor on agricultural and other issues for several members of Congress.

Kevin is a native of Stephen, MN, where he grew up on a family farm. He holds a degree in political science from North Dakota State University, and lives in McLean, VA, with his wife Autumn and sons Charlie and JJ.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4, 7:00 p.m. WELCOME RECEPTION

Rep. Rick Larsen (D-WA-02)
Ranking Member, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Member, New Democrat Coalition Trade Task Force

U.S. Representative Rick Larsen is in his twelfth term serving Washington's Second Congressional District, which includes portions of Snohomish County and all of Skagit, Whatcom, Island and San Juan counties.

As the lead Democrat on the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Rick is focused on making bold, long-term investments in infrastructure to create more jobs and build a cleaner, greener, safer and more accessible transportation network. Thanks to Rick's leadership, \$8.2 billion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding has been invested in Washington state infrastructure as of January 2024, with more than 600 specific projects identified for funding statewide.

Rick is focused on protecting Washington's environment. He leads efforts to preserve public lands, restore salmon habitat, protect Southern Resident killer whales and migratory birds, and combat climate change through investments in clean energy and green jobs. Larsen supported the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment to combat climate change in U.S. history.

The opioid epidemic is taking a devastating toll on Northwest Washington communities. Rick is working with local governments, law enforcement, health care providers and community groups to ensure they have the tools needed to combat the opioid epidemic and save lives. He supports increasing federal funding for successful local strategies and updating regulations that address prevention, interdiction, treatment and recovery initiatives.

Rick is a champion for global economic, diplomatic and security engagement. He is a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA), co-chair of the U.S.-China Working Group and a member of the New Democrat Coalition Trade Task Force – all actions that support U.S. leadership in the world.

Rick was born and raised in Arlington, WA, and attended Arlington public schools. Rick and his spouse, Tiia Karlén, live in Everett and are the proud parents of two sons: Robert, who works in national security, and Per, who serves as an ensign in the United States Navy.

MONDAY, AUGUST 5, 7:30 a.m. BREAKFAST

Cassie Bladow
President & CEO
U.S. Beet Sugar Association
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Luther Markwart
Executive Vice President & CEO
American Sugarbeet Growers Association

Raised on a family dairy farm in eastern Michigan and grew sugarbeets for 9 years as a 4-H project. His grandparents and parents raised sugarbeets beginning in 1933.

Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Michigan State University.

Executive Vice President of the Farmers and Manufacturers Beet Sugar Association in Saginaw, Michigan 1979-1982, representing all sugarbeet growers in Michigan and Ohio. Executive Vice President of the American Sugarbeet Growers Association in Washington, DC since 1982, representing all sugarbeet growers in 11 states.

Advisor to the U.S. Congress, the Department of Agriculture, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, and other federal agencies that have direct or indirect impact on the domestic sugar industry.

Directly involved in the formulation and passage of the sugar provisions of the last eight farm bills (1981, 1985, 1990, 1996, 2002, 2008, 2014 and 2018).

Advisor to USDA and USTR for international trade negotiations, beginning with the International Sugar Agreement in Geneva in 1982; the North American Free Trade Agreement; the Uruguay Round of the GATT; the Doha Round of the WTO, and pending and ongoing regional and bilateral free trade agreements. Served six years on the USDA Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) for Sweeteners, then served on the Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee as an advisor to Secretaries Ann Veneman and Mike Johanns and USTR Ambassador Zoellick. He was reappointed to the ATAC for Sweeteners in 2015 by USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack and USTR Michael Froman and currently serves on the committee. He was involved in the antidumping and countervailing cases against Mexico and the negotiated suspension agreements between the two countries.

Served eight terms as Chairman of the industry-wide American Sugar Alliance (1989/90, 1994/95, 2000/01, 2004/05, 2011/2012, 2015/16, 2017/18, 2021/22).

Served as Co-Chairman of the Sugar Industry Biotechnology Council since 2003 (20 years) leading the first successful introduction of sugar produced from genetically engineered sugarbeets or sugar cane in the world. 2017 recipient of the prestigious Savitsky Award for his leadership in introduction, adoption and defense of biotechnology in the beet sugar industry. The Savitsky award is the highest award given by the American Society of Sugar Beet Technologists.

Member of the Agriculture CEO Council (Washington, DC) 2018 – present.

Served as President of the Commodity Club of Washington, D.C., 1996/97

Served as President of the New York "Sugar Club," 2005/2006.

Contributing editor for sugarbeet trade magazines; The Sugar Producer and The Sugarbeet Grower.

He lives in McLean, VA, with his wife, Terri, and three children, Christian, Lauren and Megan.

David Wasserman

Senior Editor and Elections Analyst, the Cook Political Report
Political Analyst for NBC News

David Wasserman is Senior Editor & Elections Analyst for The Cook Political Report with Amy Walter, where he is responsible for analyzing U.S. House races and is recognized as one of the nation's top nonpartisan election forecasters. The Los Angeles Times has called David a "whip smart" and "scrupulously nonpartisan" analyst whose "numbers nerd-dom was foretold at a young age." In 2016, David drew praise for his accurate pre-election analysis, including his piece "How Trump Could Win the White House While Losing the Popular Vote," written two months before election day. In 2020, his forecast of Biden's win was correct in 49 of 50 states, missing only North Carolina. David has served as an analyst for the NBC News Election Night Decision Desk since 2008, and has also appeared on Fox News, CNN, C-SPAN and NPR. In May of 2024, David was awarded a Carnegie Fellowship to study ways to combat political polarization.

Rob Johansson, PhD
Director of Economics and Policy Analysis
American Sugar Alliance

Dr. Rob Johansson serves as the Director of Economics and Policy Analysis for the American Sugar Alliance, the national coalition of sugarbeet and sugarcane growers, processors, and refiners. There he analyzes sugar supply and demand fundamentals as well as domestic and foreign sugar and general agricultural policies, including Farm Bill topics and international trade negotiations. Dr. Johansson currently serves as the Chairman of USDA's Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Trade in Sweeteners and Sweetener Products. He also serves as Vice-president of the The Sugar Club.

Previously, Dr. Johansson was the Chief Economist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Dr. Johansson served in that role from January 2015 to January 2021. As Chief Economist, he was responsible for the Department's agricultural forecasts and for advising the Secretary of Agriculture on programs, regulations, and legislative proposals. During that period, Dr. Johansson was the Chairman of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation Board of Directors and also was responsible for setting up the Farm Production and Conservation (or FPAC) mission area in 2017 – combining NRCS, RMA, and FSA.

Dr. Johansson has held positions at the Office of Management and Budget, the Congressional Budget Office, and the White House Council of Economic Advisers. He received his B.A. in economics from Northwestern University and then served with the U.S. Peace Corps from 1990 to 1995. After returning to his home State of Minnesota in 1995, he received his Ph.D. in Agricultural & Applied Economics from the University of Minnesota in 2000.

Jeff Dobrydney
Senior Vice President, Head of Futures & Options
JSG Commodities

Jeff has been with JSG Commodities since 2005, when he started as an Assistant Trader. Born and raised in Milford, CT, and a graduate from Jesuit schools Fordham University and Fairfield Prep, Jeff has solidified his role within the Sugar trading community covering both the USMCA and World futures markets which includes penning a daily report. He is now the Sr. Vice President of JSG and Heads the Futures & Options desk that executes trades for Sugar, Cocoa, Coffee and Grains for a wide array of clientele. Jeff also served as the President of the Sugar Club of New York and is a featured speaker at the annual Datagro conference in New York. A resident of Trumbull, CT, with his wife and two girls, Jeff also serves as President and Head Coach of the Connecticut Timberwolves, a 501(c)3 travel softball program and is the principal trumpet player of a local church.

Elaine Trevino

Associate Administrator, Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs-
Foreign Agricultural Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Trevino most recently served on a detail to the Department of Transportation addressing bottlenecks and improving the movement of U.S. exports and imports with a focus on agriculture. In that role, Trevino's work was integral to the success of the White House Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force. Prior to working for the Biden-Harris Administration, Trevino was President of the Almond Alliance of California, a trade association for the almond industry while also serving on USDA's Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC). Trevino was Deputy Secretary at the California Department of Food and Agriculture for two governors overseeing international export and trade programs.

Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA-04)
Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture
Former Director of Agriculture for the State of Washington

Representative Dan Newhouse is a lifelong resident of Central Washington and is honored to represent the 4th District in Congress. A third-generation Yakima Valley farmer, Dan brings real-world experience to Congress as a businessman and former state legislator ready to work hard in support of conservative solutions that encourage job creation and economic opportunity in Central Washington. Dan understands that looking out for taxpayers means that Congress must stay on budget and make the government work efficiently to fulfill its responsibilities.

Dan serves on the Appropriations Committee, which exercises jurisdiction on critical legislative issues for the 4th District.

Dan served four terms as a legislator in the Washington State House of Representatives, representing the 15th Legislative District from 2003 to 2009. In the Legislature, Dan earned a reputation as a principled conservative willing to work with colleagues to support policies that foster economic growth.

From 2009 to 2013, Dan served as Director of Washington State's Department of Agriculture, where he listened to the concerns of Washington farmers and promoted the state's agricultural resources.

Dan attended Washington State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics. Dan is also a graduate of the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Leadership Program.

Dan lives in Sunnyside with his wife, Joan. He has two adult children: Jensen, Devon and his wife Halley. The Newhouse family continues to operate an 850-acre farm where they grow hops, tree fruit and grapes.

Carrie Vicenta Meadows
Vice President of Government Affairs
U.S. Beet Sugar Association

Carrie Vicenta Meadows serves as the Vice President of Government Affairs for the U.S. Beet Sugar Association. Carrie has spent her career working on agricultural policy. Prior to joining the U.S. Beet Sugar Association, Carrie served as the Agriculture Advisor to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler. As a senior advisor at EPA, Carrie led the office that served as the primary advocate and liaison for U.S. agriculture at EPA. Before joining EPA, Carrie was a 16-year veteran of Capitol Hill where she held positions including Chief of Staff to Congressman Dan Newhouse (WA-04), and Legislative Director and agricultural policy advisor to Congressman Bob Goodlatte (VA-06). Carrie is a native of Lynchburg, VA, and a graduate of James Madison University.

Kimberly Nesci
Director, Office of Pest Management Policy
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Kimberly Nesci serves as the Director of the Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP). In this role, she leads the development and coordination of USDA policy on pesticides, biotechnology, integrated pest management, and related topics.

Ms. Nesci joined USDA in January 2022 and brings over 25 years of experience in pesticide regulation to OPMP. Prior to her current position, Ms. Nesci most recently served as the Director of the Biological and Economic Analysis Division in EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP), where she oversaw the development of biological and economic impact analyses on the usage and benefits of pesticides to support the Federal regulatory process. During her time in OPP, Ms. Nesci led a number of high-profile policy, science, and regulatory initiatives and held multiple management positions, including Deputy Director of the Environmental Fate and Effects Division and Chief of the Microbial Pesticides Branch in the Biopesticides and Pollution Prevention Division. Prior to her career in the government, Ms. Nesci worked at a pesticide consulting firm.

Ms. Nesci earned a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from the University of Mary Washington and a Master's degree in Entomology from the University of Maryland, where she worked on tarnished plant bug in lima beans on the Eastern Shore and potatoes genetically engineered for resistance to the Colorado potato beetle.

Robert Cassidy
Partner
Cassidy Levy Kent LLP

Robert C. Cassidy is a founding partner of Cassidy Levy Kent (USA) LLP. Mr. Cassidy focuses on legal issues raised by cross-border business transactions, including antidumping and countervailing duty proceedings, economic sanctions, export controls and customs issues. He is experienced in devising strategies for using trade law procedures, such as the antidumping laws, to achieve business objectives and in resolving disputes between companies and the U.S. government arising from sanctions, export controls and customs laws.

Mr. Cassidy served as General Counsel of the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative from 1979-1981 and International Trade Counsel to the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance from 1975-1979. As General Counsel of USTR, Mr. Cassidy was the senior legal officer of the U.S. government responsible for issues arising under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. He oversaw U.S. implementation of the agreements reached in the Tokyo Round of Multinational Trade Negotiations and was the lead U.S. negotiator with Japan on market access issues, including procurement by Nippon Telegraph & Telephone Corporation. As International Trade Counsel to the Finance Committee, Mr. Cassidy was a creator of the procedures for consideration of legislation implementing trade agreements — procedures known today as the “fast track” or “trade promotion authority” procedures. He was also a primary architect of the modern antidumping and countervailing duty statutes enacted in the Trade Agreements Act of 1979.

Mr. Cassidy was a partner at WilmerHale until 2007, where he was leader of the firm’s International Practice Group and the Trade Group. Mr. Cassidy established Cassidy Levy Kent (USA) LLP in early 2009.

Education

LL.M., Georgetown University, 1977

J.D., University of Pennsylvania Law School, 1973

B.A., Johns Hopkins University, 1968

Ryan M. Majerus

Performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of Assistant Secretary, Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

Ryan Majerus is performing the non-exclusive duties of the Assistant Secretary for Enforcement and Compliance at the International Trade Administration. In this role, he leads the federal government's efforts to support economic growth by maintaining a fair and rules-based system of international trade. This includes enforcing U.S. antidumping and countervailing duty laws and holding trading partners accountable for their obligations under trade agreements.

Most recently, Majerus served as Senior Policy Advisor for Supply Chains at the White House National Economic Council. He also served as ITA's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Trade Policy and Negotiations, where he oversaw the formulation and implementation of policies governing U.S. trade remedy laws and subsidies enforcement statutes.

Prior to joining the Biden-Harris Administration, Majerus had a decade-long legal career in the federal government. This included service as Senior Counsel at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), where he helped lead the agency's nationwide advocacy efforts in appeals before the U.S. Supreme Court and every U.S. Court of Appeals, working with Department of Justice attorneys in the Office of the Solicitor General and the Civil Appellate Staff. Prior to USDA, Ryan spent nearly four years at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) as an Assistant General Counsel, where he litigated several disputes before the World Trade Organization involving U.S. trade remedies and government subsidies and advised on numerous policy portfolios, including agriculture. He also served for five years with the Civil Division of the Department of Justice, where he represented Commerce as lead counsel in numerous trade remedies cases before the U.S. Court of International Trade and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. He also clerked for the Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court of the Western District of Tennessee.

Ryan was born and raised in Billings, MT. He received his Bachelor of Arts in government from Georgetown University and his juris doctorate from Georgetown University Law Center. Ryan lives in Falls Church, VA, with his wife Samantha and daughter Juliette.

Cassie Bladow

President & CEO
U.S. Beet Sugar Association
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Jack Pettus
Vice President of Government Relations
American Sugar Cane League

Jack Pettus began his career on the legislative staff of the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture before staffing a federal commission to improve the risk management tools available to farmers. Jack has been an advocate and consultant for a number of commodity groups and commodity trading companies, has represented the Louisiana sugarcane industry since 2001, and has served as Vice President for Government Relations for the American Sugar Cane League and as a member of the Executive Committee of the American Sugar Alliance since 2006.

Jack resides in Alexandria, VA, with his wife, Laura, and their k9id, Dexter.

Josh Tonsager
Democratic Senior Professional Staff
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry

Josh Tonsager is the Senior Professional Staff for the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry under Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow. Previously he was the staff director of the General Farm Commodities and Risk Management Subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee under Chairman David Scott. Prior to his positions with the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, he served as the Vice President of Policy and Communications for the National Association of Wheat Growers and a Legislative Assistant to former U.S. Senator Tim Johnson of South Dakota. He began his career with the National Farmers Union after receiving his Bachelor of Business Administration in Economics and Political Science from the University of South Dakota. He comes from a family farm near Oldham, SD.

Carley Esser McLean
Republican Professional Staff
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry

Carley Esser McLean currently serves as professional staff for the U.S. Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee under Ranking Member John Boozman. She leads the Title I commodity programs, disaster programs, and crop insurance portfolios.

Formerly, she was the senior legislative assistant for Missouri Congresswoman Vicky Hartzler.

Other experience in the industry includes the U.S. Grains Council in their Global Strategies department, a stint with U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and extensive involvement with the National FFA Organization and Agriculture Future of America (AFA) organizations.

McLean graduated with a degree in Agricultural Education from the University of Missouri where she was able to work with agriculturalists across her home state.

Trevor White
Republican Professional Staff
House Committee on Agriculture

Trevor White serves as Senior Professional Staff on the House Agriculture Committee handling the commodity policy, crop insurance, disaster aid, and credit portfolio for Chairman Glenn ‘GT’ Thompson (PA-15). During the 2018 Farm Bill, he was the lead negotiator for House Republicans on the provisions in Titles 1 and 11. Prior to joining the Agriculture Committee in March of 2017, Trevor spent over 8 years working with Combest, Sell and Associates, an agriculture policy focused lobbying firm. Trevor was raised on a cotton farm in New Home, TX. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Agricultural Economics from Texas Tech University and a Master’s degree in Applied Economics from Johns Hopkins University.

Clark Ogilvie
Democratic Special Counsel
House Agriculture Committee

Clark Ogilvie is Special Counsel on the Democratic staff of the House Committee on Agriculture. This is his third return to the Committee having served from 2005—2014 and from 2018—2019. During that time, he has worked on the past three Farm Bills, the Dodd-Frank Act, and the 2008 reauthorization of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC). In addition to working on the Committee, Clark Ogilvie served for 2 ½ years as Chief of Staff of the CFTC and two years as General Counsel for the Farm Credit Administration. He has a law degree from George Washington University and a B.A. from Rhodes College.

Barbara Fecso, PhD

Branch Chief of the Commodity Analysis, Branch Economic and Policy Analysis Division
Farm Production and Conservation Business Center
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Title and Responsibilities: Barb has advised USDA top leadership on managing sugar supplies since 2002 including: the 1-month period in 2005 when Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma hit cane country, the Savannah refinery explosion in 2008; the massive undertaking to dispose of surplus sugar in 2013; advising Commerce in the preparation of the Suspension Agreement in 2014 and its revisions in 2017; how to react to Vermont's 2016 requirement to label all GM goods entering the state; the major beet losses in 2019 and the high world prices to date. While she has been trusted to provide sound advice, she is not the ultimate decision-maker.

She also oversees other senior economists responsible for the domestic sugar, dairy, livestock, cotton, peanuts, grains and oilseeds programs and provides guidance to the Secretary of Agriculture in the formulation and implementation of national policies and procedures, as well as economic and budgetary impact analysis of those programs.

Education: Barbara received a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Purdue University at West Lafayette, Indiana in 1994.

Background: She was born and raised in Chicago, IL, and lived for almost twenty years in central Illinois. She has three children, five grandchildren and now lives in Arlington, VA, with her husband.

Rob Johansson, PhD

Director of Economics and Policy Analysis
American Sugar Alliance
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Randy Green
Principal, Watson Green LLC
Consultant, Sweetener Users Association

Randy Green, the owner of Watson Green LLC, has seen food and agriculture policy from all sides, having served in both the executive and legislative branches of government and in the private sector. Over his career he has been closely involved in the development of several multi-year farm bills, as well as major legislation and regulations affecting derivatives, food safety, animal health and human nutrition.

Randy came to Washington in the 1980s to work for former Representative Charles Stenholm (D-TX) and later served the late Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN.) on the staff of the Senate Agriculture Committee. With the exception of a stint as a deputy under secretary of agriculture, Randy served on the agriculture committee staff continuously from 1989 to 1999. The last two years he was chief of staff.

In 1999, Randy entered the private sector to represent agricultural and food industry clients at the firm now known as Watkinson Miller. Earlier in his career, he managed government relations for the American Soybean Association and was director of the Wheat Export Trade Education Center.

In 2013, Randy and Lisa Watson formed Watson Green LLC, a firm centered on food and agriculture policy and public affairs. With Lisa's retirement at the end of 2022, Randy continues to operate the company.

Randy and his wife of 40 years, Mary, have five grown children and four grandchildren.

Ryan Weston

Chief Executive Officer, Florida Sugar Cane League
Washington Representative, Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, Inc.

Ryan joined the Florida, Texas and Hawaii Sugarcane Growers in 2006. He advises and provides strategic planning for his growers, mills and refineries (Domino, C&H and United Sugars) on domestic sugar policy, international trade, nutrition and other issues that impact the sugar industry and agriculture production. He represents the industry before Congress and the Administration and at trade ministerials in the U.S and abroad, specifically those that were held in Brussels, Singapore, Ho Chi Minh City and Geneva. He worked with the House and Senate Agriculture Committees and Leadership to ensure passage of the 2014 and 2018 Farm Bill and to defeat six votes that would have altered the sugar program.

He is a past Chairman of the American Sugar Alliance which represents all U.S. sugar production and most U.S. sugar refining interests. He serves on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission's Agriculture Advisory Committee and the Department of Agriculture and United States Trade Representative's Agricultural Trade Advisory Committee (ATAC) for Sweeteners. He is also the President of the Sugar Club.

Ryan worked for the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Agriculture for over 10 years and organized more than 50 hearings and completed two Farm Bills. He specialized in farm and conservation programs, trade agreements, derivatives trading, rural development, energy and specialty crops. He staffed Committee Members during negotiations for the Commodity Futures Modernization Act of 2000, the 2002 Energy Conference and the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 Conference in addition to the 1996 and 2002 Farm Bill Conferences.

Ryan and his wife, Carmen, live in Arlington, VA. Ryan was raised on a cattle ranch near Springview, NE, where his parents still live and where he enjoys working whenever possible. He graduated Magna Cum Laude from Nebraska Wesleyan University with a major in finance and a minor in political science. Carmen is an elementary school teacher in Virginia.

Rob Larew
President
National Farmers Union

Rob Larew is president of the National Farmers Union (NFU), a grassroots organization that represents more than 220,000 family farmers and ranchers and rural communities across the United States. Before being elected to lead the organization at NFU's 118th Anniversary Convention in 2020, Larew served as its Vice President of Public Policy and Communications.

Prior to joining NFU, Larew worked over 22 years in Congress and USDA crafting agriculture policy. Most recently he was the Staff Director of the House Committee on Agriculture where he oversaw the committee's efforts during the 2008 and 2014 Farm Bills. He previously served as the Director of Congressional and Public Affairs at the Food Safety and Inspection Service at USDA and worked as an agricultural aide to former Rep. Collin Peterson and the late Sen. Paul Wellstone.

Larew splits his time between the family farm in Greenville, WV, and the National Farmers Union office in Washington, D.C.

Joby Young
Executive Vice President
American Farm Bureau Federation

Joby Young became the Executive Vice President of the American Farm Bureau in July 2022. He leads the AFBF staff, managing across all departments to achieve the goals of the President and Board of Directors and fulfill AFBF's mission.

Joby has more than a decade of experience in food and agriculture policy, from the halls of Congress to the Executive Branch. He served as Chief of Staff to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue after serving in that same role for the Deputy Secretary and several USDA offices. He also previously served as Chief of Staff in the House of Representatives and as a consultant in the private sector.

Joby is a graduate of the University of Georgia, with degrees in History and Communications, and he holds a law degree from the UGA School of Law.

Rep. Lori Chavez-Deremer (R-OR-05)
House Agriculture Committee
House Education and the Workforce Committee
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Congresswoman Lori Chavez-DeRemer is proud to represent Oregon's 5th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, which covers Linn County, most of Clackamas County, Deschutes County, and parts of Multnomah and Marion Counties.

Prior to serving in Congress, Lori started her public service career in 2002 on the Happy Valley Parks Committee, where she helped build the Happy Valley 4th of July Festival that it is today. Later, she won a seat on the Happy Valley City Council and became city council president. She was elected mayor in 2010, becoming Happy Valley's first female and Latina elected mayor. She was re-elected in 2014. In 2022, she was elected the U.S. House of Representatives to represent Oregon's 5th Congressional District. She is one of the first Latinas and is the first Republican woman elected to Congress from the state of Oregon.

Lori is a mom and small businesswoman. She is married to her high school sweetheart, Dr. Shawn DeRemer, and supported the couple as he finished medical school. Later, they founded an anesthesia management company and opened several other medical clinics in the Pacific Northwest.

Lori and Shawn are parents of twin daughters who are making their own footprints in the world. Annie works as a senior recruiter for Anesthesia Associates Northwest, while Emilie is an assistant public defender in Michigan.

Luther Markwart
Executive Vice President & CEO
American Sugarbeet Growers Association
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Courtney Gaine, Ph.D., R.D.
President & CEO
The Sugar Association

Courtney Gaine, Ph.D., R.D., is the President and CEO of the Sugar Association in Washington, D.C. Prior to her appointment in January 2016, Dr. Gaine served as the Vice President of Scientific Affairs. Before her positions at the Sugar Association, Dr. Gaine served as senior science program manager at the North American branch of the International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI North America), a public, nonprofit scientific foundation that advances the understanding and application of science related to the nutritional quality and safety of the food supply. Prior to ILSI, Dr. Gaine held positions of project director, nutrition and wellness, at the nonprofit organization Convergence and science manager at FoodMinds, a public relations firm. She began her career in academia as an assistant professor at East Carolina University. A native Washingtonian, Dr. Gaine obtained her Ph.D. in nutritional sciences and biochemistry and bachelor's degree in dietetics from the University of Connecticut, where she was also a co-captain of the UConn women's basketball team.

Melissa San Miguel
President, Red Flag USA

Melissa leads Red Flag Global's strategic communications and public affairs practice in the Americas, advising some of the world's leading companies and trade associations on issues at the intersection of policy and perception. Melissa was previously Senior Director for Global Strategies at the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA is now the Consumer Brands Association). Prior to joining GMA, Melissa served in the U.S. diplomatic service handling trade policy in Latin America and Asia, most recently as Special Assistant to the Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment.

Humberto Jasso
Executive President
Mexican Sugar Chamber

Humberto Jasso is the Executive President of the Mexican Sugar Chamber, an organization that represents the sugar mill companies responsible for transforming cane into sugar in Mexico. In this role, he represents sugar mills before the government, cane growers and labor unions, and abroad.

Mr. Jasso is also the Vice President of the London-based World Sugar Research Organization. This organization is dedicated to objectively analyzing scientific studies on sugar and advocating for a science-based understanding of sugar's role in health.

In addition to these roles, Mr. Jasso serves as the Vice President for International Trade at the Mexican National Agricultural Council (CNA), the leading private sector organization encompassing farmers, ranchers, fisheries, forestry, and agroindustry.

Before his tenure at the Mexican Sugar Chamber, which began in 2011, Humberto Jasso had a 22-year career at Mexico's Trade Ministry, and was involved in the original negotiations of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Humberto Jasso resides in Mexico City with his wife and two sons. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from Yale University and a Master's Degree in Economic Development from Cambridge University.

Cassie Bladow
President & CEO
U.S. Beet Sugar Association
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The Honorable Gloria Montañó Greene
Deputy Under Secretary, Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC)
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Gloria Montañó Greene was appointed Deputy Under Secretary for USDA's Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) mission area on February 22, 2021. Her experience is focused on government and community work and includes federal policy, politics, advocacy, intergovernmental relations, communications, and management.

As the FPAC Deputy Undersecretary, Montañó Greene leads agencies that deliver farm programs and services to farmers, ranchers, and agricultural producers. These programs include farm loans, conservation, disaster assistance, crop insurance and price support.

Montañó Greene is a former State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency in Arizona from 2014-2017. With FSA in Arizona, Montañó Greene led implementation of the 2014 Farm Bill programs across the state.

She previously served as Deputy Chief of Staff and Chief of Staff to Congressman Raúl M. Grijalva of Arizona. Montañó Greene also served as Deputy Director for Chispa Arizona, a program of the League of Conservation Voters focused on the empowerment of Latino voices in Arizona on issues including energy, public lands, and democracy access. Montañó Greene is originally from rural Arizona. She is a proud graduate of the University of Arizona.