

About the Speakers:



**Brad Ebersole, Community and Government Relations Director,
Consolidated Cooperative / 2026 NREDA Regional Event Chairperson**

Brad Ebersole serves as Community & Government Relations Director at Consolidated Cooperative, where he leads key account management, economic development initiatives, community engagement, and government affairs at the local, regional, state, and federal levels. His work focuses on building strategic partnerships that strengthen communities and create opportunities for growth.

With a passion for rural development, Brad has played a pivotal role in advancing transformative projects. He was instrumental in creating a public-private partnership that delivered a \$7 million natural gas line expansion to support economic development and helped fund and coordinate a comprehensive economic development strategic plan for a rural county. His efforts reflect his guiding principle: “Economic development is about transforming the lives of people, not economies.”

Beyond his role at Consolidated Cooperative, Brad is deeply engaged in public service and industry leadership. He serves as a Township Trustee, is a Commission Member of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) and contributes nationally as a Board Member of the National Rural Economic Developers Association (NREDA) and a member of the Touchstone Energy Business Development Committee. He also sits on multiple local boards and organizations, championing initiatives that foster collaboration and community resilience.

Brad holds a Bachelor’s degree in Business and Marketing from The Ohio State University and is a Certified Key Account Executive (CKAE). His expertise spans economic development strategy, government relations, and community partnerships, making him a trusted voice in shaping the future of rural communities.

About the Speakers:



Jason Duff, Founder, Small Nation

Jason Duff is an entrepreneur, real estate developer, and nationally recognized leader in small-town revitalization. As the Founder and Chief Visionary Officer of Small Nation, Jason has built a proven model for transforming communities through real estate development, entrepreneurship, and placemaking.

Jason has led the acquisition and redevelopment of more than 60 historic buildings in Bellefontaine, Ohio, playing a central role in the transformation of the city's historic downtown into what is now recognized as one of Ohio's most vibrant small-town districts.

His work focuses on restoring underutilized and architecturally significant buildings into thriving, income-producing assets. Notable projects include the Historic Opera Block, the Rainbow Row Bellefontaine, and the Main Street Marketplace, reflecting a commitment to preserving history while introducing modern uses such as restaurants, retail, co-working, office space, and boutique lodging. Jason's approach emphasizes adaptive reuse, long-term investment, and creating spaces that support entrepreneurs, attract visitors, and enhance quality of life.



Matt Waldo, Managing Director of Strategy and Research, JobsOhio

Matt Waldo joined JobsOhio in 2014, and is the Managing Director of Strategy and Research, a position responsible for macroeconomic, sector, and company analysis and strategy. Before JobsOhio, Matt directed research at the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, and was an instructor in urban planning at Indiana University.

He won an unprecedented third national Best Research Project recognition from the Council for Community and Economic Research in 2023; and published his first book, *How to Do Grownup Stuff: A Guide for Teens in 2024* on Amazon.

Matt received his bachelors and masters from Indiana University, and is certified by the Ohio Economic Development Institute, IMPLAN Group, and Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.

About the Speakers:



Eric Phillips, Union County-Marysville Economic Development Director

Eric Phillips has served as the Union County-Marysville Economic Development Director since February 2001. In this role, he also serves as the Executive Director of the Community Improvement Corporation and the Marysville-Union County Port Authority. His primary roles are to retain and attract business growth and development and to build consensus between and among businesses, government and the community.

Mr. Phillips currently serves on the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), Mid-Ohio Development Exchange (MODE) Board of Directors, Ohio Council of Port Authorities (OCPA) Board of Directors serving as Secretary, NW 33 Innovation Corridor Council of Governments (COG) Board of Directors serving as Secretary, and Community Capital Development Corporation Board of Directors. Formerly, Mr. Phillips served as President of the MORPC Commission, President of the MODE Board of Directors, Secretary of the One Columbus Board of Directors, and President of the National Rural Economic Developer's Association.

Mr. Phillips has played a key role in the development and implementation of the 33 Smart Mobility Corridor within the Beta District. This project has realized over \$100M in public and private smart mobility infrastructure investments making this section of the 33 corridor one of the most advanced proving grounds for connected and autonomous vehicles. Additionally, Mr. Phillips has led the development of the 33 Innovation Park in Marysville leading to over \$50M of investment in the business park and the formation of the Automotive & Mobility Innovation Center (AMIC). Home to 20 Japanese companies, Mr. Phillips has been instrumental in the development of the Marysville-Yorii sister/friendship city relationship, the student exchange program, and promoting foreign direct investment.

Mr. Phillips earned his undergraduate degree from Muskingum University, and a Master's in City and Regional Planning and a Master's of Art in Public Policy and Management from The Ohio State University.

About the Speakers:



Tim Street, President and CEO, Logan County Electric Cooperative

Tim Street brings more than two decades of experience in the agriculture and electric cooperative industries. A graduate of The Ohio State University, Street is deeply committed to member engagement, financial stability, and community involvement. He has served the members of Logan County Electric Cooperative as President and CEO for over three years.



Ben Vollrath, President, Logan County Chamber of Commerce

Ben Vollrath is the President of the Logan County Chamber of Commerce where he serves as lead economic developer for the community. He is a lifelong Ohio resident, growing up in small towns in rural areas such as Logan County—located 60 minutes northwest of Columbus, Ohio. His career began in corporate banking in downtown Columbus, but the confines of cubicles and his love for working with people soon motivated him to switch to retail banking. After managing a PNC Bank branch near Ohio State University for several years, Ben and his family chose to make another career change that allowed them to live, work, worship, and serve all in one place back in his hometown of Marysville, Ohio. There, Ben worked for a public electric utility company doing community and economic development across the 24-county utility service territory.

These opportunities fostered Ben's love for helping communities grow and plan for the future, which ultimately led him to his current role as President of the Logan County Chamber of Commerce in 2018. In this seat, Ben focuses on working with existing industry, such as the large automotive sector in the area, attracting new industry, and developing strategies to bring more population to the county. Through this position, Ben also now serves as President of the Columbus Region's economic development professional organization known as the Mid-Ohio Development Exchange (MODE).

Ben, his wife Jacey (married 18 years), and their three kids, Blakely (15), Camden (13), and Kyler (12), live in Bellefontaine, Ohio. Outside of work, Ben loves hiking and trail running, coaching his boys' soccer teams, serving in his local church, and just staying active with his family. Ben would take a trip to the mountains over the ocean, dogs over cats, a Coke over a coffee, and generally just loves spending time with people.

About the Speakers:



Chip Hubbs, President and CEO, Memorial Health

Chip Hubbs became President/CEO of Memorial Health in March 2004. Prior to arriving in Marysville, he served for four years as CEO of Community Memorial Hospital in Defiance County, Ohio, just outside of Fort Wayne.

Before this, Chip's management experience spanned various Senior Management positions at the Lutheran Health Network in Fort Wayne. He also worked as the Evening Administrator for the University of Chicago Hospitals. In all, Chip has worked for nine different hospitals throughout his career in every facet from groundskeeper and maintenance to intern, fellow, Evening Administrator, Executive Director, and CEO.

After graduating Indiana University with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health and a Master of Health Administration, Chip earned a fellowship at the Sinai Health System in Chicago. He has been a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, and he has received several professional acknowledgments for his work, including receiving the Grassroots Champion Award from the American Hospital Association in 2016 for advocacy and leadership in the State of Ohio. He was listed by Becker's Hospital Review of Nonprofit Hospital and Health System CEOs to Know in 2017, 2016, and 2014; as well as awarded the 2014 Columbus Business First's C-Suite Award Honoree; 2013 Union County Business Leader of the Year; Columbus Business First's "Forty Under 40" in September 2005; and Modern Healthcare Magazine's Up and Comer Award in 2002.

Outside the hospital, Chip serves on the Union County Foundation Board of Trustees, where he chairs the Distribution Committee, and is a Board Member and past Board Chair of the Institute for Health Innovation of the Ohio Hospital Association. He is also a past delegate to the American Hospital Association's Regional Policy Board (Region V), as well as past Board President for the Ohio Hospital Association, the Fairbanks Local School District Board of Education, the Union County Chamber of Commerce, and the Union County Family YMCA.

Chip is married, has four adult children, and resides in Marysville. After more than two decades of exceptional leadership and service at Memorial, Chip will be retiring at the end of 2026.

About the Speakers:



Deborah Scherer, Executive Vice President, Global Development, One Columbus

Deborah Scherer is a transformational economic development leader with more than two decades of experience driving global investment, shaping regional competitiveness, and building high-impact public-private partnerships. Recognized as one of North America's Top 50 Economic Developers, she has spent her career positioning Central Ohio—and the State of Ohio—on the world stage as a premier destination for business expansion and innovation.

As Executive Vice President of Global Development at the Columbus Partnership, Deborah was recruited as one of the organization's first employees and charged with building its international strategy from the ground up.

She grew what began as a virtually non-existent pipeline into a globally competitive program that now accounts for more than 23 percent of all wins, with nearly half of recent projects coming from internationally owned companies. Her leadership at One Columbus has helped fuel more than \$4 billion in international investment, creating over 5,000 jobs for the region.

Before joining One Columbus, Deborah served as Deputy Director of the Global Markets Division for the State of Ohio, where she led statewide foreign direct investment and trade initiatives. Her efforts in that role resulted in \$2.75 billion in foreign-owned company investments and more than 8,400 new jobs. She also spearheaded a major restructuring of the state's international program, expanding global coverage while reducing costs by \$1 million.

Deborah began her career at Telesis Technologies, where she rose through three promotions to lead international sales and market expansion. She doubled the company's international revenue share—from 25% to 50%—by driving growth across Latin America, Europe, and Asia.

A champion of global engagement, Deborah serves as President of the Japan America Society of Central Ohio and sits on multiple boards, including the Greater Chinese Chamber and the Columbus Council on World Affairs. She holds a BBA in Marketing, International Business, and Spanish from Ohio University and is a NASBITE Certified Global Business Professional. Deborah is fluent in English and Spanish.