

2023 MARKETECH +AGRITOURISM & ADVENTURE TRAVEL WORKSHOP SPEAKERS



KEYNOTE: SARAH CALHOUN OF RED ANTS PANTS

Sarah Calhoun has two decades of leadership experience in both nonprofit and small business sectors, working in the outdoor education industry before founding Red Ants Pants in 2006. Tired of wearing men's work pants that didn't fit, she designed pants that would fit, function and flatter working women. Red Ants Pants is based out of White Sulphur Springs, Montana. In 2011, Calhoun created the first annual Red Ants Pants Music Festival, where 6,000 fans came to celebrate rural Montana in a cow pasture. The Festival is a program of the Red Ants Pants Foundation whose mission is to support women's leadership, working family farms and ranches, and rural communities. Calhoun's grit has brought national recognition to her enterprises over the years. She was named the 2012 National Women in Business Champion for the Small Business Administration and the 2011 Entrepreneur of the Year for the State of Montana. In 2018, the Festival was named the Event of the Year by the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development and Calhoun was inducted into the Montana Business Hall of Fame. In her spare time, Calhoun enjoys

the outdoors, cutting firewood, hunting and camping.



JENNA BARTJA OF NEBRASKA TOURISM

Jenna serves as the Adventure Travel Specialist for Nebraska Tourism. She consults with and provides support for nature-based tourism destinations throughout the state, helping communities and individuals identify, develop and promote new ventures, as well as fostering regional partnerships between existing assets. She spearheaded the pursuit of establishing Nebraska's first International Dark Sky Park, which was awarded to Merritt Reservoir State Recreation Area in 2022. Jenna received her bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Georgia College & State University. Prior to moving to Nebraska in 2018, she worked for the Grand Canyon Association Field Institute at Grand Canyon

National Park, where she helped coordinate and lead the organization's educational day tours. As her job title implies, Jenna has a love of travel and a strong adventurous streak. She enjoys pretty much any activity outside but can most often be found tending to her garden and playing with her two perfect dogs.

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JEFF BELL OF GLENN VALLEY FOODS AND GARY'S QUICKSTEAK®

Gary Rohwer opened his first Philly Cheese Steak restaurant in 1981, which led to the creation of the innovative and high-quality Glenn Valley Foods, later founded in 2009. He understood and knew the needs of restaurant owners and chefs when he created Gary's QuickSteak® Philly Meat. Today, Gary's QuickSteak offers a variety of beef, and chicken and products to a wide range of customers – from top restaurant chains to grocery stores, and even directly to the consumer. Jeff Bell serves as the Vice President of Marketing for Glenn Valley Foods and Gary's QuickSteak. Bell is an experienced marketing professional and customer experience champion with over 30 years in the industry.



JASON BUSS OF NEBRASKA TRAILS FOUNDATION

Jason has been building trails for 15 years, having helped plan of 100s miles of trails in that time. He is the President of the Nebraska Trails Foundation, board member of the Platte PEER group (including Bader Park and the Dark Island Trail) and previously President of Columbus Area Recreational Trails (CART). He helped found the MoPAC Alliance and Cowboy Trail Coalition. He has 15 years of experience directing and timing events (both running and cycling), raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for charity. His day job is HR Manager and Global EHS Leader for automotive seat manufacturer Camaco. He is married to Monica Lee-Buss (who started him running). They raise two kids in Central City.



NIC BIANCHI OF BIANCHI CANDLE CO AND YES YOU CANDLE

Nic Bianchi was 12-years old when he received a candle making kit for his birthday. He fell in love with the math and science that goes into making candles. Bianchi has used this passion to create many candle brands including Bianchi Candle Co and Yes You Candle over the last 8 years. Bianchi was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska to Dave and Nicole Bianchi. He is the youngest of two siblings, Joe and Morgen. As a busy family, they still find time for monthly cook offs and dance parties. While running a company at 20 years old is very time consuming, Nic still finds time for friends and family while raising his two rambunctious huskies: Leo and Zuko.

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JESSICA CAMPOS OF CENTER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS

Jessica was 5 years old when she moved to Grand Island, Nebraska, from Houston, Texas, and has called Nebraska home ever since. Rural America holds a special place in her heart because of the values she gained growing up in a small community; values she will share with her kids. Through her work at the Center, she strives to build relationships that will allow the organization to thrive throughout Nebraska. Her dream is to see the Center become the first option Nebraskans think of when it comes to training and developing business entrepreneurs and as a resource for existing business owners wanting additional training or consulting. Jessica has been married 12 years and has two amazing kids. As a family, they love to travel and spend time watching movies, playing board games, taking bike rides, and participating in 5k and 10k runs.



NEAL ELY OF ELY FARMS

Neal Ely is the owner of Ely Farms, specializing in creating the best pickled products in Nebraska. Neal started his business in high school as an FFA Entrepreneurship project. Now, the products they produce range from their famous pickled asparagus to their tasty Bloody Mary mix. As the years have gone by, Ely Farms has entered a variety of retail and grocery stores throughout the Midwest and built a very successful ecommerce presence.



MARIE GREGOIRE OF NEBRASKA TRAILS FOUNDATION | MOPAC TRAIL ALLIANCE | CASS COUNTY TOURISM

Marie has been a computer technology consultant for 40 years. In her spare time, she has worked passionately on rural economic development and strongly believes that trail and lodging alternatives are integrally important to saving small towns. She sits on the Board of Directors with Nebraska Trails Foundation and Cass County Tourism, is a founding leader of the MoPac Trail Alliance, and coordinates "The Pie Ride" to Elmwood Nebraska. Now in its third year, the Pie Ride invites bicyclists – and anyone – to head to Elmwood for pizza, pie and live music! Marie also runs the site BikeCassCounty.com promoting biking, walking, and riding on the local trails and roads and building local events. She lives with her husband, Tom, on 6 acres in a rebuilt 1905 country home near Elmwood and Murdock Nebraska. They are avid cyclists and travel widely to bike, including 5 countries and 10 states.

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CHEF BOB HANEY OF HEAVENLY WAFFLES

In 1989, a vision for revolutionizing breakfast formed in Bob's grandmother Gladys's kitchen. The original idea started as a pancake recipe and was later sold to select restaurants throughout the Omaha, Nebraska area. Gladys and Chef Bob's mom, Joanne, taught him how to develop flavors and cultivate his taste buds over the years. Joanne's creative side and risk-taking approach in the kitchen helped Bob think outside the box – key traits that would later become pivotal in the success of Heavenly Waffles®. In 2009, Chef Bob completed training at Le Cordon Bleu in Austin, Texas, and started working on transforming the initial pancake batter concept into a shelf-stable dry mix. Five years and four food scientists later, a revolutionary, high protein, yogurt-based waffle mix was born. Initially branded as Pancrepes, it would take three more years before the final recipe would come to fruition. In 2017, Chef Bob modified the mixing instructions and, instead of adding water, he began mixing club soda, egg and oil with his mix: finally Heavenly Waffles® was born. The name was trademarked in recognition of Grandma Gladys, now in heaven. Heavenly Waffles® can be found in restaurants, coffee shops, corporate restaurants and c-stores across the country.



JULIE TUTTLE HARRIS OF BIKE WALK NEBRASKA

Julie is a native of Scottsbluff and the founding Executive Director of Bike Walk Nebraska. She earned a Bachelors of Science in Political Science and Economics from the University of Nebraska at Kearney and a Masters in Public Administration from University of Nebraska at Omaha. Julie is a member of several local and state organizations, including the Board of Directors for Heartland Bikeshare, the former chair of the City of Omaha Mayor's Active Living Advisory Committee, and a certified bicycle safety instructor with the League of American Bicyclists. Although she has ridden many miles on her road bike and managed to crash her mountain bike into a tree on more than one occasion, Julie now enjoys going on epic bike adventures with girlfriends and escaping to the mountains to hike with husband, Jeff.

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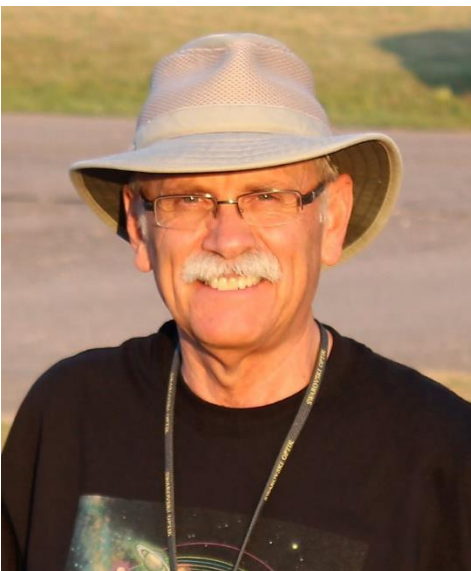
MICHAEL HOLTZMAN, CEO, PRESIDENT & FOUNDER OF PROFITABLE FOOD FACILITIES WORLDWIDE

Michael has 45 years of food and beverage industry experience. His focus has been on improving the sales, quality and profitability of food service operations. Mike is a hands-on operator with experience in all aspects of food service. He has worked with 775+ facilities in North America, Europe, Jamaica, Asia and the Middle East. Over the past 31 years, Mike and the Profitable Food Facilities Worldwide team have generated hundreds of millions of dollars in profits for their clients with services ranging from consulting engagements to kitchen design, to full implementation of designs and/or recommendations.



ODEE INGERSOLL OF NEBRASKA BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Odee Ingersoll is the Director of NBDC's Small Business Development Center at the University of Nebraska-Kearney and of the Nebraska Center for Business Value and Transition. Odee has 23 years of experience serving small businesses throughout Nebraska. He is also an experienced business owner, entrepreneur and has training in financial forensics. Odee is a credentialed business valuation analyst and exit planning advisor, having completed an estimated 500 valuation engagements. He has provided value and exit training at numerous national conferences and to other state programs and professionals. Odee regularly helps entrepreneurs and business owners with business plans, loan packages or funding requests and business valuation. He provides seminars or speaking engagements on a variety of business topics and has been a featured presenter for the Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank for a national session on business value and exit planning.



JOHN JOHNSON OF NEBRASKA STAR PARTY

John is a retired naval captain and astronomy enthusiast who has had a hand in planning the annual Nebraska Star Party since its inception 30 years ago. The nonprofit organization has made enormous contributions to educating the public about the night sky over the years and played a significant role in helping Merritt Reservoir SRA, the longstanding host-site of the Nebraska Star Party, secure its designation as the state's first International Dark Sky Park. John is passionate about educating newcomers to the realm of astronomy and provides outreach to youth groups throughout the year, including the Boy Scouts of America. He is a longtime member of the Omaha Astronomical Society and a frequent contributor to Explore Scientific's Global Star Party. John lives in Omaha with his wife, Robin.

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MADISON JOHNSON OF NEBRASKA TOURISM

Madison serves as the Passport Program Coordinator for Nebraska Tourism. She focuses on participation, program development and implementation, as well as training and educating selected program applicants regarding the benefits of the program. She compiles and analyzes data to prepare reports in regard to program statistics, impact, and participation. Madison also builds partnerships with state and local officials, visitor bureaus, and civic and tourism industry leaders. She received her bachelor's degree in Hospitality, Restaurant, and Tourism Management with a minor in Business, Leadership and Entrepreneurship from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Originally from Fairbury, Nebraska, Madison grew up on an acreage outside of town and has a passion for Nebraska and rural communities.



JESSICA KRAUS OF LOST WAY BREWERY

Jessica was born and raised in southeastern New Mexico. She and her husband, Mark, have two beautiful daughters, Oliva (5) and Ilyse (2). In 2014, they decided to make Holdrege, Nebraska their home and opened Lost Way Brewery just three years later. With a business degree from New Mexico State University, Jessica became the Executive Director of the Holdrege Area Chamber of Commerce in 2019. She is currently involved with the Holdrege Rotary Chapter as well as the Nebraska Pink Boots Society Chapter. Jessica's ultimate passion is growing relationships and using her experience as a business owner to help other businesses succeed in the community.



ADAM KROFT OF REDTHREAD

Adam is the founder and CEO of redthread: a 29-person creative advertising agency located in the Haymarket of Lincoln, Nebraska. Working with local and national brands from U-Stop to Google to #TeamTrees, redthread has built marketing campaigns and helped grow businesses of all shapes and sizes. Bootstrapping the business over the last 8-years, redthread has been recognized as the 2021 Inc. 5000 #100 Fastest Growing Company in the Midwest and the #1853 fastest growing company in America. Adam has personally been recognized as 2019 Lincoln's YPG 4 Under 40 Award and the Walter Scott Entrepreneurship Award. In his free time, Adam loves to study pop-culture, relive his athletic glory days through slow-pitch softball and take long walks along the Mopac Trail with his dog and girlfriend.

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ALISON LINDSEY OF HARVEST HOSTS

Alison is the senior Business Development Manager at Harvest Hosts and brings a background of sales, business development and hospitality to the team. Growing companies and coaching are her passions. Born and raised in the suburbs of Manhasset, New York just outside the "Big Apple", she fled to the Rocky Mountains the day she graduated college and has called Frisco, Colorado home ever since. Enjoying the great outdoors with her husband, Daric, and girls, Susie and Jojo, helps her stay motivated and successful.



STEVE MALY OF MALY MARKETING

Many times you can find Steve, Founder of Maly Marketing, speaking at conferences throughout the Midwest on relevant topics such as how tourism entities can stop lighting their marketing dollars on fire and get trackable results. In the office, he helps to set the vision for the organization and leads day-to-day operations. Steve and the team's work has resulted in Maly Marketing winning numerous American Marketing Awards and the Friend of Tourism award given out by the Nebraska Tourism. He also sits on the board for the Nebraska Travel Association along with numerous business boards in Lincoln. Away from the office, Steve likes to chase little white balls around the golf course and is passionate about continuing education.



ERIN MALZER OF FAT BOY

Erin Malzer has 20 years' experience in digital marketing. She earned her Communication and Business Administration degree from Nebraska Wesleyan University ('01) and her Webmaster Certification from Southeast Community College ('05). She has worked for MDS Pharma Services (now Celerion), Nebraska Digital, and GROW Nebraska in the web and marketing fields. In 2013, she and her husband, Kirk, purchased Bar B Que Specialties, Inc. which produces and markets the brands Fat Boy BBQ, Hickman's BBQ, Fat Boy Game Seasonings and Verdell's Vegan to grocery and specialty stores in 40 states. She also manages their Amazon, eBay, Etsy, and Walmart stores as well as multiple web sites. Erin was born and raised in Columbus, NE and was raised by two entrepreneurs. Her mom and sister own Barbara Jean's Fashions on the Square in downtown Columbus and her father ran a real estate business and consulting company.

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JOSH MOENNING, MAYOR OF NORFOLK | NORTH FORK RIVERFRONT PROJECT

Josh is the owner of Renew Nebraska LLC, a community developer and Mayor of Norfolk, Nebraska. He was elected to the Norfolk City Council in 2012, mayor in 2016, and re-elected in 2020, at which time he was selected to serve on the board of directors for the National League of Cities. He's worked as director of clean energy group New Power Nebraska and owns and operates a small business in the field of renewable energy development. He also assists his family's beef business and has two children, Molly and Henry. He's now putting his talents to use in the North Fork development project, which has the goal to create a recreational, residential, entertainment, and retail/business corridor along the North Fork River to enhance the

quality of life for the City of Norfolk and Northeast Nebraska.



HAYDEN PIGOTT OF MILES PARTNERSHIP

Hayden creates strategies for tourism and hospitality clients' organic and paid campaigns in vertical video, including Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts. When she isn't thinking about how DMOs can create viral videos, she is searching Charlotte for the best tacos, traveling to Austin to watch her Longhorns play or reading the latest mystery novel.



ALEC RAHE OF FROST MEDIA GROUP

Alec Rahe graduated from Saint Leo University with a degree in marketing in 2009. After starting his career in the marketing department at Camping World Corporate in Chicago, he worked his way to sales manager. Taking what he had learned from working in RV sales for 5 years, Rahe applied it to national sales at Dex Media. There, he was named Sales Rep of the year in 2015 in addition to receiving multiple other sales awards. He then applied his entrepreneurial spirit to other ventures, like starting the Omaha Coffee Truck (2016-2017) and becoming Co-Owner and Managing Partner of Frost Media Group in 2018. Frost Media Group's focus is the video story telling of businesses and nonprofits to help organization achieve their communication and fundraising goals. Alec currently works with

a team of 8 people at Frost Media Group's offices in Omaha and Kansas City.

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JIM REIFF OF NEBRASKA ENTERPRISE FUND

Executive Director of the Nebraska Enterprise Fund since 2013, Jim Reiff sets the strategy and develops funding sources that ultimately connect hard-working small business owners with capital, training and mentoring. He has a successful track record of turning-around struggling organizations while expanding product offerings and services leading to greater revenue, profitability and growth. Needless to say, he finds his role with Nebraska Enterprise Fund incredibly rewarding!



JACOB ROMSA OF LANDTRUST

Jacob serves as the Landowner Success Manager for Eastern Nebraska and Southern Iowa. His roots of growing up in small-town Nebraska instilled in him a passion for the outdoors and exploring. Those passions quickly grew to include hunting, fishing, farming, ranching and outdoor industries. A wish to share his love of outdoor recreation with others, coupled with a desire to help landowners diversify their income, led him to proudly join LandTrust to help grow their recreation access network.



CARSON ROWH OF KEARNEY WHITEWATER ASSOCIATION

Carson is a business and nonprofit leader living in Kearney, Nebraska. As co-owner of Hometrends LLC, he has built a people-first company culture, won national awards for Best Places and scored top of the industry marks in employee engagement and customer net promoters scores. His other entrepreneurial ventures include reinsurance, commercial and multifamily real estate and private investment partnerships. In 2010, Carson and a group of local paddling enthusiasts and community supporters formed the Kearney Whitewater Association, a nonprofit with the vision of promoting outdoor recreation, stewardship of natural resources, and community outreach and education. In 2016, the Kearney Water Trail's first phase was completed, adding public waterway access and entrance and exit landings. After hiring the top whitewater park design firm in the world and a leading fundraising firm, the Kearney Whitewater Park opened in 2022. These additions have attracted users from over 50 cities and 5 states to take part in these activities in the Kearney area.

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BRIANNE SCHULER OF NEBRASKA CRAFT BREWERS GUILD

Brianne (Bri) Schuler, MPA, is Executive Director of the Nebraska Craft Brewers Guild, a membership association tasked with protecting and promoting the craft brewing industry in Nebraska. With nearly 15 years in the nonprofit sector, she has worked with organizations of all sizes and causes. She is a lifelong Omahan and two-time graduate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Bri is a board member of the Nebraska Travel Association (NETA) and the Institute for Public Leadership (IPL). When she's not drinking beer, she can be found in the water, where she coaches both Special Olympics and Master swimming. Bri lives in Gretna with her husband, two teenage step kids and a boxer puppy.



JOE SOVA WITH IDEAL PAYROLL SERVICE

Joe Sova is a dynamic speaker, podcast host and award-winning entrepreneur. With almost 20 years' experience, Joe has helped hundreds of entrepreneurs create better systems, hire #1 employees and build their dream team! Years ago, while employed at a Fortune 500 company, Joe realized corporate life was not aligned with his core values. So, in 2011 he took the entrepreneurial leap, founded his own company and never looked back! Starting with zero income and zero employees, Joe went through the daily roller coaster of entrepreneurship while juggling family life. After you hear him speak, you'll discover the fastest way out of the "daily grind" of entrepreneurship and the best way to level-up your business! Today, Joe's company continues to grow while employing a full-time staff and helping hundreds of clients. When not talking business, Joe enjoys reading, exercising, bad 1980's action movies and quality time with his family!



CAROLE SPRUNK, MAGAZINE PUBLISHER | CLOUT COFFEE FOUNDER | AUTHOR | ENTREPRENEUR

Carole Sprunk currently lives in Omaha, Nebraska where she is the co-owner and publisher of two local niche magazines: Edge Magazine and Dine Magazine. Carole also founded Clout Coffee, a barrel-aged coffee company that is putting more "clout" in everyone's cup. When Carole isn't masterminding the next big business idea, she enjoys hanging out with her husband, Chad, and their four boys. She spends her days drinking coffee and evenings enjoying bourbon.

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JAMIE TREBEC OF TASTY TOPPINGS

Prior to becoming COO of Tasty-Toppings, Jamie had a wide variety of experiences. Most of his life was spent in the corporate world working as an electrical engineer before migrating to technical sales. He earned his business education the hard way: on the job, training as a business owner. He lived with his wife in Phoenix and Russia prior to settling down and raising a family in the Chicago suburbs. In 2021, with two kids in college and one entering high school, they picked up stakes and moved to Columbus, NE.



AMY WADSTROM OF HYVEE

Amy Wadstrom began her career with Hy-Vee Inc. in 1996 after graduating from Drake University. Since then, she has served in several positions, including pharmacy intern, registered pharmacist, pharmacy manager and pharmacy supervisor. During her many years in retail pharmacy supervision, she led and mentored over 60 retail pharmacy locations. She also led education and training programs along with many clinical initiatives. In October 2020, she was promoted to Vice President, Clinical Operations of Vivid Clear Rx, and currently serves as the Chief Operating Officer of Vivid Clear Rx and AVP, Hy-Vee Inc. Wadstrom has been widely recognized for her involvement with state pharmacy associations and also has continued involvement with Drake University's School of Pharmacy. She leads Vivid Clear Rx with a balance of achieving operational goals while maintaining an agile, proactive and strategic internal environment with a strong awareness of the ever-changing healthcare industry.



ALYSSA WINTZ OF ALLO COMMUNICATIONS

Alyssa Wintz graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a degree in Advertising and Public Relations in 2017. Shortly after, she began her career with the Social Media team at ALLO. Within her role, Wintz obsesses over creativity, organization, time management and relationship building. She loves teamwork, collaboration and brainstorming. Over the past 5 years, Wintz has specialized in Tier 1 social media customer support, content creation, social media analytics and PR/events. She's even had a hand in customer email communication. Two years ago, Wintz became the Digital Experience Supervisor at ALLO and now leads a team of nine exceptional customer advocates and creators.