



Aggie Square, Sacramento
October 13, 2026
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

California Creates: Golden State Manufacturing Forum Panelist Biographies



Stephen Baiter, Deputy Director, East Bay Economic Development Alliance (East Bay EDA). Panelist Manufacturer Success Stories, Navigating the Golden State. Stephen is the Executive Director of the East Bay Economic Development Alliance (East Bay EDA), a regional cross-sector economic development organization that supports strategic economic development across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. East Bay EDA has more than 150 members from business, education, labor, local governments, nonprofit organizations, philanthropy, research institutions, and other entities who work together to make the East Bay one of the most diverse, globally competitive and innovative business environments in the world. Stephen has more than two decades of experience leading and supporting successful multi-stakeholder public/private partnerships and projects and has an extensive track record with building and connecting regional networks to help businesses and organizations have greater impact. Stephen currently serves as a Vice Chair on the Board of Directors for the California Association of Local Economic Development (CALED). He is also a Past Chair of the California Workforce Association (CWA) and currently serves on a few local and regional nonprofit boards. He has a BA in Political Science from Boston College and a Master's in Public Administration from California State University – East Bay.



Sarah Harper, CEO, All Weather Architectural Aluminum. Speaker, Fireside Chat – Women in Manufacturing. Sarah Harper is President of All Weather Architectural Aluminum, a family-owned California manufacturer of custom aluminum windows and doors founded by her grandfather more than 50 years ago. Her career has included leadership roles in manufacturing, supply chain, and operations, including experience at E. & J. Gallo Winery and Cisco.

Sarah earned her bachelor's degree from Princeton University and an MBA in Supply Chain Management from Arizona State University. She is passionate about building strong teams, developing future leaders, and creating workplaces where people feel connected and valued.

Outside of work, Sarah is an active Rotarian, a frequent host of international exchange students, and most importantly, wife to Andy and mom to their 12-year-old son, Harold. As a family they love cooking, travel, being outdoors and spending time in Lake Tahoe.



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Tiffany Heisler, Business Banking Market Leader for Northern and Central California, US Bank.

Panelist, Support Structures, Financing, and Operations. Tiffany Heisler is the Business Banking Market Leader for North and Central California at U.S. Bank, leading teams that serve business clients from Sacramento and the Central Valley to Chico and Redding. In her 22 years with U.S. Bank, she has been recognized as a top performer known for her client-centric approach, strong credit and advisory expertise, and consistent market growth. She works closely with manufacturers and business owners on capital access, treasury management, and growth strategy. Tiffany holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Metropolitan State College of Denver and has served on boards including Habitat for Humanity Denver and A Precious Child. She now serves on the Board

of United Way California Capital Region.



Phillip Herrera, Managing Partner, Herrera & Company. Panelist, Emerging Industries –

Biotech, Life Sciences. Phillip Herrera helps California businesses secure government incentives that support workforce development, job creation, and capital investment. His clients range from mid-sized companies to Fortune 1000 corporations in advanced manufacturing sectors, including semiconductors, life sciences, and clean energy.

Phillip specializes in California's Employment Training Panel (ETP), the CAEATFA Sales and Use Tax Exclusion, and the California Competes Tax Credit. He has successfully negotiated more than 750 ETP awards and, in partnership with an associate firm, helped manufacturing and R&D companies

secure more than \$175 million in CAEATFA incentives. His work has supported thousands of California jobs and more than \$200 million in employer-funded workforce training.

Phillip holds a degree in accounting and an MBA. Before entering private practice, he served in government tax and workforce-development roles. Outside of work, he enjoys golf, yoga, surfing, and swimming from Alcatraz to Aquatic Park. He is a member of the Stockton Mexican Sports Hall of Fame and holds the Brookside Country Club scoring record with an 11-under-par 61.



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Kubilay Larul, Regional Manager, SA Recycling. Panelist, Manufacturer Success Stories: Navigating the Golden State. Kubilay “Kubi” Karul is Regional General Manager at SA Recycling, a California-founded company headquartered in the state and the nation’s largest metal recycler, with more than 170 locations and 24 metal shredders nationwide, including over 30 facilities in Southern California. Since joining the company in 2009, he has held a range of leadership positions across multiple regions, contributing to the company’s operational growth and expansion. His work centers on operational excellence, strategic development, and long-term competitiveness, with a particular focus on advancing the circular economy and strengthening resilient domestic supply chains for critical materials.

In addition to his role at SA Recycling, Kubi serves as President of the California Metals Coalition, where he works with industry leaders and policymakers on issues affecting California’s recycling and manufacturing sectors.

Originally from Istanbul, Turkey, Kubi holds a bachelor’s degree in Economics and pursued MBA studies in the United States. Before immigrating, he served as a commando in the Turkish military, attaining the ranks of Second Lieutenant and First Lieutenant.



Fiona Ma, California State Treasurer. Moderator, Fireside Chat – Women in Manufacturing. *Fiona Ma is California’s 34th State Treasurer. She was first elected on November 6, 2018, with more votes (7,825,587) than any other candidate for treasurer in the state’s history. She was reelected November 8, 2022. She is the first woman of color and the first woman Certified Public Accountant (CPA) elected to the position. The State Treasurer’s Office was created in the California Constitution in 1849. It provides financing for schools, roads, housing, recycling and waste management, hospitals, public facilities, and other crucial infrastructure projects that better the lives of residents. California is the world’s fifth-largest economy and Treasurer Ma is the state’s primary banker. Presently, her office processes more than \$3 trillion in banking transactions. She provides transparency and oversight for the government’s investment portfolio and accounts, as well as for the state’s surplus funds. Treasurer Ma oversees an investment portfolio that currently averages over \$200*

billion, a significant portion of which is beneficially owned by more than 2,200 local governments in California. She serves as agent of sales for all State bonds and is trustee of billions of dollars of state indebtedness.



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Dustin McDonald, Senior Business Development Specialist, GoBiz. Panelist, Funding Options – California’s Capital Stack. Now in his fourth year with GO-Biz, Dustin has dedicated his career to supporting a healthy California economy, having worked at the state and federal levels to secure funding and key policy reforms for critical California industries such as manufacturing, aerospace and defense, and bio/life sciences. In his current role Dustin works across the Los Angeles and Orange counties region, the largest manufacturing region in the entire country, helping businesses save money on everything from financing and site selection to permitting and energy, and connecting them with public and private partners to grow and thrive.



Molly Morse, CEO, Mango Materials. Speaker, Fireside Chat – Women in Manufacturing. Dr. Molly Morse is the CEO and co-founder of Mango Materials, a next generation biomanufacturing company that uses biology to make formulated pellets called YOPP/YOPP+ that are replacements for conventional plastics. YOPP+ is made by bacteria that are fed biogas methane and convert it into high-value biodegradable materials. She received her Ph.D. in Civil & Environmental Engineering from Stanford University, and her B.S. from Cornell.



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Khaim Morton, California Deputy Treasurer. Moderator, Creating a Manufacturing Ecosystem.

Khaim serves as State Treasurer Fiona Ma's Deputy Treasurer, with responsibility for public policy formation and overseeing several state financing authorities – focusing on healthcare, education, economic development, and sustainability.

Khaim brings nearly 20 years of government and public policy experience encompassing legislative staff work that span from policy to community field relations and advocating for local businesses. For two decades, he has worked on legislation and regulations from environmental policy, retirement, land use, economic development, cyber-security, government service delivery, and taxation.

Prior to joining the State Treasurer's Office, Khaim served as Managing Partner for NextGen Grant Funding at Portola Valley Partners, where he helped emerging technology companies capture market share through strategic relationships with governments. He is also the principal and founder of KRM Strategies, a public policy, advocacy, and strategic planning firm where he represents clients at the state and local government levels. Previously he held positions as Vice President for Public Policy and Economic Development at the Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce, Deputy Secretary for Legislation at the California Government Operations Agency, and held multiple positions in the California Legislature.



Andy Nakahata, Chief Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (IBank). Panelist, Bond Public Finance. Andy Nakahata was appointed by California Governor Gavin Newsom in 2025 as Chief Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (IBank).

Nakahata's experience includes more than 30 years working with state and local governments, public and private universities, public utilities and other entities developing financing solutions to fund infrastructure projects through the tax-exempt and taxable debt markets.

Prior to joining IBank, Nakahata worked at TD Securities as Director and Western Region Head, UBS Financial Services as Managing Director and Regional Head of Public Finance, West Region, and National Public Finance Guarantee Corporation as Managing Director and Head of West Region New Business.

Nakahata also served as a public finance investment banker with Citigroup, J.P. Morgan, and Goldman Sachs.

Nakahata is a graduate of Wesleyan University and the Yale School of Management.

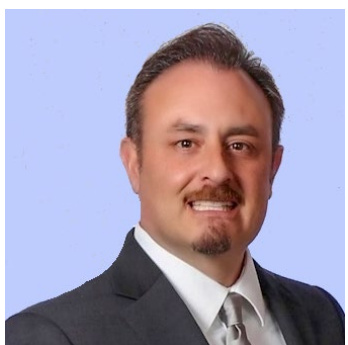


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John Sheldon, California Deputy Treasurer. Moderator, Bond Public Finance. John brings 34 years of public finance experience, primarily as a banker to many of the largest municipal debt issuers in the U.S., including the State of California, and has helped raise over \$100 billion of capital for state and local governments throughout his career. He spent the majority of his career at a national investment bank where he managed the infrastructure group and served as a lead banker to the State of California. His banking experience includes working on some of the State's largest and most complex bond issues for the State's General Obligation Bond Program, Public Works Board Lease Revenue Bond Program, Department of Water Resources and Water Resources Control Board. He has also worked closely with the State's bond issuing authorities and the IBank.

In addition to his work for the State, John has deep experience working with many types of western region state and local government issuers, including cities and counties; water, sewer and/or power utilities; transportation agencies; K-12 school districts; community college districts; redevelopment and successor agencies; assessment districts; and special districts.



James Simonelli, Executive Director, California Metals Coalition. Moderator, Manufacturer Success Stories – Navigating the Golden State. James Simonelli is the Executive Director of the California Metals Coalition. For 29 years he has represented the state's metalworking sector, which consists of nearly 4,000 businesses employing over 350,000 Californians. From 1997 to 2012 he served as the organization's chief lobbyist, authoring several pieces of legislation into law. He is co-Chair of Sacramento's WATER Coalition. and operates two metals industry storm water compliance groups. In 2006, Mr. Simonelli received a State Senate Certificate of Recognition for the state's first fuel cell generation system at an aluminum ingot manufacturer. • In 2009, he received a State Assembly Certificate of Recognition for achievements in energy efficiency within the metals sector. In 2012, he was project lead with UCLA and the Japan Industry Federation to find lead free alternatives for potable water system components. In 2015, he received the North American

Die Casting Association Distinguished Service Award. In 2019, he received the Los Angeles County and Mujeres de la Tierra "Alas al Futuro Award" for environmental achievements in storm water. In 2025, he received the Climate Conversations Award from Permacity



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Foundation for elevating voices across public policy, environmental law, and climate justice.



Gabrielle Stevenson, Gobiz. Moderator, Permitting, Regulatory, and Technical Assistance. *Gabrielle Stevenson is the Associate Deputy Director for the Regional Business Development team for the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development's CalBIS team. Stevenson first joined State service with IBank in 2019 and then spent three years with the State Treasurer's Office supporting the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), green financing programs and supervising the Development teams at the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee. Upon returning to GO-Biz, Stevenson spent two years on the Energy Unit, before joining CalBIS. Stevenson has worked on brand launches, national campaigns and niche marketing efforts to increase visibility, awareness, sales and more in both the private and public sectors. Highly adept at managing people and programs, developing communications, marketing and other strategic plans, Stevenson has worked with major organizations such as Harley-Davidson as well as nonprofits including United Way. Stevenson started out as a sportswriter for Bay Area newspapers before working in media relations and communications in motorsports prior to taking on sports facilities management roles in Texas and California.*



Shela Tobias-Daniel, Executive Director, CPCFA. Moderator, Funding Options – California's Capital Stack. *Shela Tobias-Daniel leads three very different programs as the Executive Director of CPCFA: risk management tools for small business lending as well as for zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure for small fleets; issuance of private activity bonds; and grants for community development organizations. The common thread is increasing access to capital, either to improve the growth and success of small business in CA, or to improve effects on climate—and sometimes both as in the CalCAP ZEHD program. As a Black woman with family ties to underserved communities throughout California, Ms. Tobias-Daniel is proud her agency is implementing half of the \$1.1 billion in credit enhancement for California's small businesses — including those which are very small businesses (VSB) with 9 or fewer employees, and those which are owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI) which includes underserved communities—from the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), part of the American Recovery Plan Act.*

Ms. Tobias-Daniel is a 26-year veteran of state service, having served 25 of those years in the State Treasurer's Office (STO). She earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of California Santa Cruz, UCSC, and a master's degree in business administration, MBA, from the Eberhardt School of Business at the University of the Pacific. Ms. Tobias-Daniel was also a Sloan fellow at the State

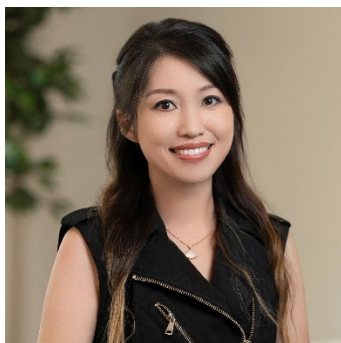


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University of New York at Stony Brook as part of the Public Policy and International Affairs program.



Mark Olson, Vice President, Mill Operations, Pacific Steel. Panelist, Manufacturer Success Stories. As vice president of mill operations at Pacific Steel Group, Mark Olson is leading the Mojave steel mill project in California from initial planning to full rebar production. He has more than 36 years of experience across all aspects of steel manufacturing, including operations, finance, quality, safety and environmental performance. Previously, he served as vice president of North American operations and as vice president/general manager with Gerdau North America in the U.S. and Canada. Olson earned both his civil engineering technology degree and M.B.A. from Purdue University and is known for building and managing high-performing teams across multiple facilities.



Jeannie Yu, Manager, CAEATFA. Panelist, Funding Options – California’s Capital Stack. Jeannie began her California state career in 2023 as a Program Analyst with the California Alternative Energy and Advanced Transportation Financing Authority (CAEATFA). Before joining state service, she worked in the banking, mortgage lending, and real estate industries, building a strong foundation in financial analysis, client engagement, and operational management. She holds a bachelor’s degree in managerial economics from the University of California, Davis.

Jeannie now serves as CAEATFA’s Program Manager, overseeing the agency’s core financial programs, including the Sales and Use Tax Exclusion Program and the PACE Loan Loss Reserve Program. She leads program development and implementation, manages complex clean-energy and advanced-manufacturing project approvals, and works closely with industry partners, state agencies, and local governments to support California’s climate and economic development goals. Her efforts focus on expanding program accessibility, strengthening operational processes, and supporting manufacturers and clean-energy companies that are driving innovation in California.



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Clair Whitmer, Deputy Director, Office of the Small Business Advocate. Panelist, Support Structures, Financing and Operations. Clair Whitmer is the Deputy Director for the Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA) within the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, appointed to three different positions by Governor Newsom over five years. Prior to joining CalOSBA, Whitmer served as a FUSE Corps Executive Fellow for the City of Fresno, supporting small businesses during the pandemic shut-downs while running her own small business, UpBay Express. Prior to being tapped as a FUSE Corps Fellow, Whitmer was Head of Consumer Experience for Maker Media, publisher of Make: and producers of Maker Faire. Whitmer has worked for major Silicon Valley brands, holding positions in product management and tech-focused journalism. While living in France, she served as Director of Voter Outreach for the Overseas Vote Foundation and wrote widely for the expat press. Whitmer graduated summa cum laude in Political

Science from San Francisco State University and is a dual citizen of France and the United States. Her mission is to help grow California's entrepreneurial ecosystem in pursuit of an economy that works for everybody.