

SPEAKERS
USGO Annual Meeting
The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs, CO
July 20-24, 2019

John Ashford

Once a country and western disc jockey, John Ashford is now Chairman and CEO of The Hawthorn Group, L.C., the international public affairs and public relations firm he co-founded in 1992. Drawing on communications and public affairs experience gained in hundreds of successful political and corporate campaigns, Ashford now provides senior counsel to Hawthorn clients across the country and around the world. Raised in a small farm community, Ashford first appeared on the political scene in his native Missouri. When he was only 26 years old, the Kansas City Star had already called him a “political kingmaker.” After staff work on Capitol Hill for members of the U.S. House and Senate, Ashford spent a decade with the legendary political consultant Matt Reese. Together they worked in more than 200 candidate and corporate campaigns around the world and pioneered the adaptation of political grassroots techniques to serve Fortune 500 companies. Attending Missouri Valley College, where his father was a Hall-of-Fame football coach, John instead studied classics and ancient Greek, earning a B.A. in philosophy. He received his Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. He is a member of the American Association of Political Consultants, The National Press Club, The Harvard Club, The International Churchill Society, the American Guild of Organists and the Scotch Malt Whisky Society. He lives in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia, and is the father of a 17-year old son and 15-year old daughter.

Dr. Murali Baggu

Murali Baggu is the Manager of the Power Systems Operations and Control Group at National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). He currently leads the NREL Grid Modernization Initiatives’ (GMI’) ADMS efforts at NREL. He also leads the US-China Climate Change Working Group’s Smart Grid efforts at NREL. He is the principal investigator of a recently announced DOE “Enabling Extreme Real-Time Grid Integration of Solar Energy” award to develop, validate, and deploy a unique and innovative data enhanced hierarchical control (DEHC) architecture that enables the efficient, reliable, resilient, and secure operation of future distribution systems with a high penetration of distributed energy resources like solar energy. He has extensive experience in advanced grid control and evaluation for future power systems with high penetrations of distributed energy resources. Earlier in his career, he worked as a Lead Power Systems Engineer at GE Global Research, Niskayuna, NY, where he developed advanced Volt/VAR control and DER management algorithms. At GE, he also led the technology development deployment of large-scale energy storage integration with photovoltaic systems for Department of Defense Marine Corps installations.

Christine Csizmadia

Christine is the Senior Manager for State Outreach at the Nuclear Energy Institute and has been with NEI for 9 years developing state, local and grassroots programs, including launching the Nuclear Advocacy Network. As a member of the state and local government affairs team at NEI, Christine manages grassroots mobilization, coalition building and state and local elected official outreach and education. Christine also runs advocacy campaigns related to nuclear issues such as nuclear plant funding, EPA regulations, and used nuclear fuel. She has also been active locally and nationally with both Women in Nuclear (WIN) and North American Young Generation in Nuclear (NAYGN), and served in various leadership positions including President of NAYGN. Christine completed undergraduate degree at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA in Communication and Persuasive Discourse and graduate studies at Johns Hopkins University in Political Communication.

John Hanselman

John Hanselman is a Managing Principal and Founder of Brightfields Development and Renova Partners as well as Executive Chairman of Vanguard Renewables. He has spent the last 30 years in environmental, energy and entrepreneurial companies. He came to renewable energy through finding creative ways to repurpose underutilized land. John has directed several of the nation's largest private acquisitions of contaminated properties from Fortune 500 companies. He was responsible for creating Renova's \$300 million joint venture that led to the cleanup of over 3 million square feet of contaminated buildings and land. He began his career working for two different prominent New England based developers, Carpenter & Company and New England Development, where he served as Director of Finance and Acquisitions. During his tenure with the two firms, he completed over \$2 billion worth of transactions in the retail, luxury residential and hotel sectors. Prior to joining Renova, John founded Active Impulse Systems, Inc., and served as President and CEO until Philips Electronics acquired the company. He then took over as President and CEO of LingoMotors, Inc. a natural language software company. He has been an invited speaker at Harvard Business School and both MIT's Sloan Business School and Center for Real Estate Development.

The Honorable Chris Hansen

Colorado State Representative Chris Hansen represents the 6th District. He is the product of a small farm town on the Colorado-Kansas border. He and his wife have been married for 14 years and have two sons, ages nine and seven. Throughout his career, Chris has benefited from opportunities to improve through education. He earned his undergraduate degree in Engineering from Kansas State University, a Master of Science from MIT, and then a PhD in Economic Geography from Oxford University. He was a Research Fellow at the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, and worked on solutions for bringing more renewable power to poor, rural areas of India. He has worked in the environmental and energy space for almost 20 years, working with renewable energy and electricity companies, as well as governments at every level to improve their operations. In the community, Chris has served on several boards and volunteered with a variety of organizations, including the Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation Board Executive Committee, the Colorado Energy Coalition as Co-Chair, the Central

City Opera Board Executive Committee, Denver Kids Mentoring Program, and the UC-Denver Business School Advisory Board.

Thomas Murray

Thomas Murray currently serves as the Vice President of Customers and Communities for Vermont Gas Systems, overseeing the company's Energy Service Team and External Relations. Tom is leading the company's innovation initiatives, which includes becoming the first gas utility in the nation to offer a Renewable Natural Gas program and other decarbonation efforts. Tom also handles legislative, community and key stakeholder relationships for the company. Prior to joining Vermont Gas, Tom served as the state of Vermont's Chief Information Officer and the Commissioner of Information and Innovation. He has also served as the state's Deputy Commissioner of Economic Development. Tom worked in the telecommunications industry for over fifteen years with TDS Telecom and Rural Cellular Corporation. Tom grew up in Montpelier, VT, graduated from Western New England University (BS/BA) and Champlain College (MS).

Rachel Nance

Rachel Nance is Regional Director of Government Affairs for Xcel Energy where she develops strategy and implements public policy solutions in the Legislative and Executive Branches. Rachel has worked in various public affairs capacities with the law firm of Lewis Roca Rothgerber, for trade associations and as Legislative Director for former Governor Bill Owens. In these roles, she has worked to spearhead many first-in-the-nation laws including providing the ACT test for all Colorado 10th graders, and legalizing Transportation Network Companies (like Lyft and uber), among others.

The Honorable Mark Schreiber

A lifelong Kansan, Mark and his wife Angie live in Emporia, Kansas. Mark represents the 60th District in the Kansas House of Representatives, having been elected in 2016 after deciding to retire from Westar Energy and run for office. Mark graduated from Emporia State University and worked 37 years for Westar, Kansas' largest electric utility, first at the Wolf Creek Generating Station and later in government affairs at the company's headquarters in Topeka. Angie operates the Cradle to Career Literacy Center. Mark is active on boards of organizations in his local community, at the state level and is active on various energy committees at the national level, including The Energy Council. He is vice chair of the House Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications committee in the Kansas Legislature. He and Angie have two grown children.

Kristine Telford

Kristine Esposito Telford serves as senior director of public affairs for The Edison Electric Institute (EEI), the association representing all U.S. investor-owned electric companies. In this role, she oversees EEI's public affairs practice and manages issue campaigns on state legislative and policy issues affecting the industry. Previously, she managed public affairs and issue advocacy campaigns for Fortune 500 clients, specializing in third party outreach and mobilization. Originally from Frederick, Maryland, Kristine graduated from The George Washington

University with a B.A. in Political Science and completed graduate coursework in International Commerce and Policy at George Mason University. She resides in Alexandria, Virginia with her husband and their two dogs.

Katie Tomarchio

Katie is manager of political programs for the American Gas Association where she manages and collaborates with leadership to map the course of AGA's political engagement over an election cycle. She coordinates with AGA members and other national trade associations in the energy industry on political activity and engagement through AGA's GASPAC. AGA represents more than 200 local energy companies committed to the safe and reliable delivery of clean natural gas to more than 70 million customers throughout the U.S. Katie has a history degree from Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, PA.