

ALDC

2024 SPRING CONFERENCE

AGENDA

MAY 28-31

OMNI VIKING LAKES HOTEL
2611 NORDIC WAY, EAGAN, MN 55121

HOSTED BY:



THINGS TO KNOW

- Attire is business casual.
- Dinner is on your own Tuesday and lunch is on your own Friday.
- Expo will be available Wednesday at 10 a.m. through Friday at 12:30 p.m.
- Registration is located in the following areas:
 - May 28 & 29: Gold Suite 1101 on floor 11 (follow signs)
 - May 30 & 31: Table at entrance to pre-function area.

Need help?

Look for workers with a yellow lanyard or stop by the registration table.

WORKGROUP LOCATION INFORMATION

CEO	Midnight	1 st floor
Continuous Improvement	Gale	1 st floor
Customer Service	Odins Lounge	2 nd floor
Engineering/Power Supply	Valhalla 3	1 st floor
Information Technology	North Shore	1 st floor
Vegetation Management	Hammond	1 st floor

**SCAN FOR INFO
ON OMNI**





2024 SPRING CONFERENCE

OMNI VIKING LAKES HOTEL
MAY 28-31, 2024

28
TUE

12:30 - 6:30 p.m.

REGISTRATION — GOLD SUITE 1101

2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

CEO MISO TOUR (OPTIONAL)

Meet in main lobby of hotel at 1:15 p.m. Bus departs at 1:30 p.m. and returns at 4:00 p.m.

1:30 p.m.

CEO MISO tour bus departs

Welcome

- *Sidney Jackson, President & CEO, Connexus Energy*

MISO Tour

- *Led by: Bruce Froyum, Advisor Client Services & Readiness*

4:00 p.m.

CEO MISO tour bus returns

4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

WELCOME RECEPTION

Join us in the pre-function area located on the first floor behind the lobby for drinks and light apps as we kick off this year's spring conference!

29
WED

7:00 a.m.

REGISTRATION — GOLD SUITE 1101

7:00 a.m.

BREAKFAST — KYNDRED HEARTH, 1ST FLOOR

GENERAL SESSION

8:30 a.m.

ALDC CHAIR WELCOME/REPORT

- *Denise Vidal, ALDC Chair/President & CEO, LCEC*

9:00 a.m.

MINNESOTA'S ENERGY LANDSCAPE

- *Connexus Energy – Sidney Jackson, President & CEO*
- *Dakota Electric Association – Ryan Hentges, President & CEO*
- *Minnesota Rural Electric Association – Darrick Moe, President & CEO*

10:00 a.m.

BREAK

Continued on next page

10:30 a.m.

DISTRIBUTED ENERGY MANAGEMENT PANEL

How are cooperatives developing capabilities to engage with their members to create distributed energy resources with market value?

- *Moderated by: Dan Lipschultz, former PUC Commissioner*
- *Dakota Electric Association – Ryan Hentges, President & CEO*
- *United Power – Mark Gabriel, President & CEO*
- *OATI – Linda Stevens, VP of Sales & Chief Strategy Officer*

11:15 a.m.

REGIONAL TRANSMISSION PANEL

What is happening with regional transmission build out? What are the opportunities and barriers? How are all parties working together?

- *Moderated by: Priti Patel, Chief Transmission Officer, Great River Energy*
- *MN PUC – Katie Sieben, Chair*
- *Clean Grid Alliance – Beth Soholt, Executive Director*
- *Heimdall Power Inc. – Jørgen Festervoll, CEO*
- *MISO – Brian Tulloh, Executive Director of External Affairs - North*

12:00 p.m.

LUNCH – KYNDRED HEARTH, 1ST FLOOR

1:15 - 2:45 p.m.

WORK GROUP MEETINGS

- *CEO*
- *Continuous Improvement*
- *Customer Service*
- *Engineering & Operations*
- *Information Technology*
- *Vegetation Management*

2:45 - 3:15 p.m.

BREAK

3:15 - 4:30 p.m.

WORK GROUP MEETINGS RESUME

6:00 p.m.

VIKINGS MUSEUM COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Enjoy dinner, drinks and the Minnesota Vikings Skol Team. See more information on page seven.

- 7:00 a.m. **REGISTRATION — TABLE AT ENTRANCE**
- 7:00 a.m. **BREAKFAST — KYNDRED HEARTH, 1ST FLOOR**
- GENERAL SESSION**
- 8:30 a.m. **ALDC CHAIR DAY 2 KICKOFF**
▪ *Denise Vidal, ALDC Chair/President & CEO, LCEC*
- 8:45 a.m. **LEGISLATIVE OVERVIEW**
▪ *Meguire Whitney – Elizabeth Whitney, President*
- 9:30 a.m. **LOAD GROWTH PANEL**
How to prepare for and attract load growth.
▪ *Moderated by: Sonja M. Cox, President & CEO – SMECO*
▪ *NextEra Energy – Chelsea Howard Robben, Executive Director of Origination*
▪ *NextEra Energy – Mary Pietrzyk, Director of Power Market Origination*
▪ *GridLiance – Elizabeth Solano, Director of Development, Central Region*
- 10:00 a.m. **BREAK**
- 10:30 a.m. **ECONOMIC OVERVIEW**
▪ *CoBank - Kiran Kini, SVP & Treasurer*
- 11:15 a.m. **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PANEL**
How are cooperatives either preparing for or integrating AI into their technology landscape?
▪ *Moderated by Matt Gilley, Great Co-ops*
▪ *Connexus Energy - Alison Miles, VP of Members*
▪ *SMECO – Ryan Edge, VP of Strategy & Innovation*
▪ *Invoke – Jimmy Patel, SVP, Head of Product & Solutions*
▪ *Tethr – Steve Trier, Chief of Operations & Product*
- 12:00 p.m. **LUNCH — KYNDRED HEARTH, 1ST FLOOR**

Continued on next page

30
THU

1:15 - 2:45 p.m.

WORK GROUP MEETINGS

- *CEO*
- *Continuous Improvement*
- *Customer Service*
- *Engineering & Operations*
- *Information Technology*
- *Vegetation Management*

2:45 - 3:15 p.m.

BREAK

3:15 - 4:30 p.m.

WORK GROUP MEETINGS RESUME

6:30 p.m.

TAILGATE PARTY AT OMNI HOTEL

Enjoy a laid back fun night of games, food and drinks in the Norse Hall & Terrace area! See more information on page seven.

31
FRI

7:00 a.m.

REGISTRATION — TABLE AT ENTRANCE

7:00 a.m.

BREAKFAST — KYNDRED HEARTH, 1ST FLOOR

8:30 a.m.

ALDC CHAIR DAY 3 KICKOFF

- *Denise Vidal, ALDC Chair/President & CEO, LCEC*

8:45 a.m.

WORK GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Report out on key topics discussed during the conference.

- *CEO*
- *Continuous Improvement*
- *Customer Service*
- *Engineering & Operations*
- *Information Technology*
- *Vegetation Management*

10:15 a.m.

BREAK

10:45 a.m.

JOHN KRIESEL: "STILL STANDING. STILL SMILING"

John Kriesel, a former soldier, survived losing his legs and three friends in Iraq. Despite this, he emerged with a message of hope and resilience!

**DON'T
MISS THIS
INSPIRATIONAL
SPEAKER!**



11:45 a.m.

FALL CONFERENCE PREVIEW

- *Denise Vidal, ALDC Chair/President & CEO, LCEC*

VIKINGS MUSEUM EVENT



REPLAY THE MEMORIES AND DISCOVER THE UNTOLD STORIES!

Experience a comprehensive history of the Minnesota Vikings and football in Minnesota. With a 360-degree video theater, multiple interactive exhibits and hundreds of historical artifacts, visitors can learn the fascinating stories and insider details of the franchise's first six decades in fun and unique ways at this 14,000 square foot museum.

DON'T MISS THIS EVENT!



Wednesday,
May 29



6:00 p.m.



Vikings
Museum

Meet in the pre-function area located on the first floor behind the main lobby at 5:40 p.m. Plan for a five minute walk outside to the museum located next to the hotel at TCO.

TAILGATE PARTY

THU, MAY 30 | 6:30 - 8:30 P.M. | NORSE HALL & TERRACE

Enjoy a laid back fun night of drinks, pizza, wings, street tacos, pretzels, darts, golden tee, buck hunter, foosball, bags, giant jenga, sno-cones (add your choice of alcohol), ice cream station and more!

SPEAKER BIOS

**Sidney Jackson, President & CEO – Connexus**

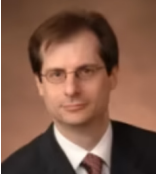
As President and CEO of Connexus® Energy, Sidney Jackson has dedicated 30 years to Minnesota utilities. With over a decade of executive leadership in public power, Jackson’s experience includes roles at Pasadena Water and Power, Austin Energy, and Rochester Public Utilities. He has also contributed to the operations and strategic development of MISO and Xcel Energy. Jackson has been actively involved in ensuring power system reliability, serving on the board of directors for the Midwest Reliability Organization (MRO) and NERC committees. He holds a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from Kansas State University and an MBA from the University of Missouri.

**Ryan Hentges, President & CEO – Dakota Electric Association**

As President and CEO of Dakota Electric Association, Ryan is an experienced leader in the electric utility industry, known for his forward-thinking approach and commitment to cooperative management. Prior to leading Dakota Electric, Ryan served as CEO of Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative (MVEC) for seven years, following a decade as Vice President of Corporate Services. With a Bachelor’s in Business Computer Information Systems from St. Cloud State University, an MBA from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and a JD from the University of St. Thomas School of Law, Ryan’s educational foundation complements his extensive industry experience. Committed to fostering excellence and collaboration, Ryan leads Dakota Electric with a focus on member service and positive change.

**Darrick Moe, President & CEO – Minnesota Rural Electric Association**

As President & CEO of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA), Darrick Moe has led the statewide association since 2014. MREA provides vital services including safety support, education, political leadership, and strategic communications to all 50 of Minnesota’s rural electric cooperatives. With over 30 years in the electric utility industry, Moe’s experience includes positions such as Washington Liaison, Operations Support Manager, and Regional Manager of Western Area Power Administration’s Desert Southwest Region. He has actively contributed to national and regional power system operations and reliability committees. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota, University of Idaho, and California State University, holding master’s degrees in electrical engineering and the Humanities.

**Dan Lipschultz – Attorney & Energy Consultant/Former MN PUC Commissioner**

As Executive Director of External Affairs for Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), Brian Tulloh has directed engagement and communications within MISO's upper Midwest footprint since 2017. With over 35 years of leadership in the energy sector, Tulloh previously held executive roles at TXU Energy, shaping public policy and retail strategy. His experience extends to McKinsey and Company's energy practice and positions within the ARCO Oil and Gas family. He previously served on the board of the North Texas Commission, the Texas Association of Businesses, the Center for Commercialization of Electric Technologies (CCET) in Austin, TX; and a University of Texas – Dallas Advisory Board for the Energy Management program. Tulloh earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Purdue University and is a registered professional engineer in Texas. He holds an MBA from Southern Methodist University.

**Mark A. Gabriel, President & CEO – United Power**

As President and CEO of United Power, Mark A. Gabriel oversees Colorado's largest cooperative, celebrated for milestones like serving 100,000 meters and interconnecting its 10,000th rooftop solar system. Recognized as a Solar and Storage Champion by the Colorado Solar and Storage Association, Gabriel champions United Power's long-term action plan, Our Cooperative Roadmap. He leads grid modernization efforts as Chair of the GridWise Alliance Board of Directors. Previously, as Administrator and CEO of the Western Area Power Administration, Gabriel managed federal hydropower delivery to 700 wholesale customers across 15 states. With executive roles at Black & Veatch Management Consulting and the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), he led initiatives shaping the future of the electricity sector. Gabriel holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science from Fordham University and pursued a Master of Science in administration and management from St. Michael's College.

**Linda Stevens, OATI's SVP of Sales & Chief Strategy Officer for Smart Grid & Smart City - OATI's**

As OATI's Senior VP of Sales and Chief Strategy Officer - Smart Grid and Smart City, Linda Stevens has dedicated her career to the energy industry since joining in 2011. Stevens collaboratively develops and executes business initiatives, sets go-to-market strategies, and provides strategic input for product roadmaps. Stevens shapes OATI's strategies with insights into energy transition, decarbonization, and IoT. Engaging with industry events, she has facilitated panels, delivered keynotes, and led workshops. Stevens has also contributed to OATI publications focusing on topics like demand response management systems and distributed energy resources. Steven's holds a bachelor's degree in organizational management and leadership from Concordia University, St. Paul, MN.

**Priti Patel, VP & Chief Transmission Officer – Great River Energy**

As VP and Chief Transmission Officer at Great River Energy, Priti Patel is responsible for overseeing of all aspects of transmission, including investment strategy, planning, construction, engineering, and field and system operations. Patel has over 25 years of experience in the electric utility experience, previously serving in management roles at the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) in the areas of transmission system planning, competitive transmission development, and regulatory and member relations. Prior to MISO, Patel served in management roles at Xcel Energy in the areas of transmission development, corporate strategy and planning, and as an assistant general counsel. She began her career as an attorney at the Minnesota Attorney General's Office and in a private law practice. Patel currently serves on the boards of directors for Great Plains Institute, an organization dedicated to transforming the energy system to benefit the economy and environment, and the Midwest Reliability Organization, a regional electric reliability council under North American Electric Reliability Corporation.

**Katie Sieben, Chair - Minnesota Public Utilities Commission**

Katie Sieben has served as a Minnesota Public Utility Commissioner since January of 2017 and was appointed to serve as Chair by Governor Tim Walz and Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan in 2019. Commissioner Sieben is a member of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), serves as the President of the Mid-America Regulatory Conference (MARC) and is the Commission's representative for the Executive Committee of the Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition (NWSC). Sieben previously served as a Minnesota legislator, championing causes related to the environment, public education and infrastructure. She served as the Assistant Majority Leader and chaired the Election committee. She earned her B.A. from Colorado College, was a Policy Fellow at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, and earned a Masters degree in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School.

**Beth Soholt, Executive Director – Clean Grid Alliance**

As Executive Director of Clean Grid Alliance (CGA), Beth Soholt brings more than 20 years' experience working with the electric industry in various capacities. At CGA, she spearheads initiatives in technical/transmission planning, state regulatory proceedings, and legislative outreach. Soholt holds a seat on the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) Advisory Committee, representing the Environmental Sector. Additionally, she serves as one of three NGO representatives on the Stakeholder Steering Committee of the Eastern Interconnection Planning Collaborative. Soholt earned her law degree from Hamline University Law School, St. Paul, Minnesota, and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa.

**Jørgen Festervoll, CEO – Heimdall Power Inc.**

As CEO of Heimdall Power Inc., Jørgen Festervoll, brings over 20 years of experience in the power sector, encompassing power production, power-intensive industries, and the power grid. Festervoll has a board background in sales, including at the Swedish SaaS company Wide Narrow. Previously, he spent two years at Saga Pure, a listed investment company, gaining comprehensive knowledge of capital markets. Festervoll holds an MSc in

Business Administration (Siviløkonom) from NHH Norwegian School of Economics.

**Brian Tulloh, Executive Director of External Affairs - North – MISO**

As Executive Director of External Affairs for Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), Brian Tulloh has directed engagement and communications within MISO's upper Midwest footprint since 2017. With over 35 years of leadership in the energy sector, Tulloh previously held executive roles at TXU Energy, shaping public policy and retail strategy.

His experience extends to McKinsey and Company's energy practice and positions within the ARCO Oil and Gas family. He previously served on the board of the North Texas Commission, the Texas Association of Businesses, the Center for Commercialization of Electric Technologies (CCET) in Austin, TX; and a University of Texas – Dallas Advisory Board for the Energy Management program. Tulloh earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Purdue University and is a registered professional engineer in Texas. He holds an MBA from Southern Methodist University.

**Elizabeth K. Whitney, President – Meguire Whitney**

As President of Meguire Whitney, Elizabeth K. Whitney has dedicated nearly two decades to energy policy. Formerly at Morgan Meguire, she co-founded the Women's Congressional Staff Association and was named "Congressional Staffer of the Year." As a lobbyist, Whitney represents clients before Congress, EPA, DOE, and FERC. Formerly Senior Legislative Assistant to Rep. Bart Gordon, she advised on energy and environmental

issues. With a B.A. in Communication from Muhlenberg College, an M.A. in Political Management from George Washington University, and a J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center, she's a member of the Maryland State Bar. Whitney resides in Arlington, VA, and serves on the Arlington County Commission on Climate Change, Energy & the Environment since 2023.

**Sonja M. Cox, President & CEO – SMECO**

As President and CEO, Sonja M. Cox draws on her extensive background, previously serving as Sr. Vice President and CFO at SMECO from 2006 to 2020. Cox's experience encompasses her time as a Cost Control Specialist at Carolina Power & Light Company's Robinson Nuclear Project. Holding an MBA in Finance from Johns Hopkins University and a BS in Accounting from the University of Maryland University College. She serves as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees at the College of Southern Maryland and holds board membership at ACES Power Marketing and the National Renewables Cooperative Organization (NRCO). Recognized as one of the Daily Record's 2016 Top 100 Women of Maryland, Cox has held prominent positions such as Chair of the Calvert County Chamber of Commerce and Treasurer of the Southern Maryland Community Resources Board.

**Chelsea Howard Robben, Executive Director of Origination – NextEra Energy Resources**

As Executive Director of Origination at NextEra Energy Resources, Chelsea Robben focuses her efforts to decarbonize the power sector and the US economy through large-scale infrastructure projects in solar, wind, and energy storage. Leading the world's premier sales team for wind and solar, Robben collaborates with Fortune 500 companies, utilities, and public entities to transact long-term agreements to finance and operate renewables. With a background spanning nearly a decade on a trading floor, she was responsible for the asset management, trading, and origination of natural gas, power, and commodity options. During her tenure she also held several positions partnering with utilities, FERC, and RTOs to develop newly formed markets (SPP and MISO South) and to effect market design changes (PJM) to enable more efficient and reliable markets.

**Mary Pietrzyk, Director of Power Market Origination – NextEra Energy**

As Director of Power Market Origination for NextEra Energy, Mary Pietrzyk is a strategic communicator, project manager, and relationship builder, with experience in policy development, public affairs, and business development. Prior to her role at NextEra Energy, Mary worked at the Nuclear Energy Institute in various roles for almost 15 years. While based in Washington D.C., Mary leveraged stakeholder networks to push policy initiatives at the state and federal levels, led public relations campaigns, and played an instrumental role in shaping national and global nuclear industry policy. Mary earned her bachelor's degree from Loyola University Chicago in History and International Affairs and spent a year studying at Loyola's John Felice Rome Center in Rome, Italy. She obtained a Master's Degree in International Affairs with a focus in Energy and Natural Resources Development from The George Washington University in D.C.

**Elizabeth Solano, Director of Development, Central Region**

As Director of Development, Central Region at GridLiance, Elizabeth Solano brings over 18 years of energy industry experience. Her roles span risk and asset management, strategic planning, project management, and external affairs, benefiting organizations like Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, MISO, Entergy, and Southwest Power Pool. Recognizing the importance of enhancing the nation's transmission infrastructure, Solano leads a team at GridLiance collaborating with rural electric cooperatives and municipal utilities in the central region to plan for the future grid. She holds a BBA in Accounting & Economics, an MBA from Harding University, and certifications including Project Management Professional (PMP), COSO Enterprise Risk Management, and Risk Management Professional (RIMS-CRMP).

**Kiran Kini, SVP & Treasurer – CoBank**

As Sr. Vice President and Treasurer of CoBank, Kiran Kini oversees all treasury functions including funding, liquidity, derivatives, asset liability management, and funds transfer pricing. Prior to joining CoBank in 2019, Mr. Kini was Vice President and Assistant Treasurer at Fannie Mae responsible for Fannie Mae's Treasury functions. Mr. Kini has over 25 years of experience in Treasury and Financial Services. Mr. Kini earned an MBA from George Washington University, MS in Finance from Texas A&M University and bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from PSG College of Technology in India. Mr. Kini also holds the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) designation.

**Matt Gilley, Ph.D., Founder & CEO – GreatCo-Ops**

As Founder & CEO of GreatCo-ops, Matt Gilley has nearly 25 years of experience as a trusted advisor to directors and senior leaders of electric cooperatives. He has worked with co-ops on matters related to strategic planning, risk management, governance, executive search, leadership development, member satisfaction, and more. Matt's writings and empirical studies on strategy and management have appeared in the Academy of Management Journal, Strategic Management Journal, Journal of Management, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Business Ethics, and mroe. Prior to completing his Ph.D. in management with a specialty in business strategy, Matt leveraged his M.B.A. in corporate finance as a financial analyst for a global aerospace firm.

**Alison Miles, VP of Members – Connexus Energy**

Alison Miles, serves as the Vice President of Members at Connexus Energy, the largest electric cooperative in the Midwest, catering to over 145,000 members in suburban and rural regions north of Minneapolis/ St. Paul. With nearly two decades of experience in member and customer experience administration and leadership, Miles' expertise includes customer experience and engagement, team member training and development, call center management, and process improvement. Committed to the cooperative model, she focuses on member-owner interests and finding new ways to articulate the value of the cooperative to its members.

**Ryan Edge, VP of Strategy & Innovation – SMECO**

As Vice President of Strategy and Innovation at Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO), Ryan Edge brings a diverse background spanning various industries. Beginning as a Faculty Assistant at Western Kentucky University, Edge progressed through roles such as Regulatory Compliance Specialist at Midland Powder Company and Intern at the Office of US Senator Ron Wyden, focusing on policy development. They later transitioned to roles at Portland General Electric, the Smart Electric Power Alliance, and Booz Allen Hamilton. With a Bachelor's in Interdisciplinary Studies and an M.P.A. in Energy and Natural Resources Policy, coupled with a PMP certification, Edge excels in strategy, innovation, program management, research, and policy development.

**Jimmy Patel, SVP, Head of Product & Solutions – Invoke Inc.**

As SVP, Head of Product and Solutions at Invoke Inc, Jimmy Patel boasts over 20 years of experience as a thought leader and innovator. He's been instrumental in driving growth and success across multiple areas, showcasing strategic leadership. Patel's entrepreneurial spirit led to co-founding Invoke Labs and Venture Studio, translating ideas into reality. Holding an undergraduate degree in Computer Engineering and an MBA from Georgia Tech, he's also an inventor with two patents and a proven track record for innovation. Patel dedicates time to mentoring startup founders and enjoys traveling to culturally rich destinations with family and friends.



Steve Trier, Chief of Operations & Product – Tethr

As Chief of Operations and Product at Tethr, Steve Trier spearheads product strategy and ensures customer success. A seasoned entrepreneur and Fortune 100 executive, Trier brings vast retail, B2C/B2B, and SaaS experience to the table.



John Kriesel, Still Standing. Still Smiling.

John Kriesel, a former soldier, survived losing his legs and three friends in Iraq. Despite this, he emerged with a message of hope and resilience. He served in Kosovo before volunteering for Iraq, where he was severely injured by an IED in 2006. After numerous surgeries, he left the military and later served in the Minnesota House of Representatives. Now, he works in veterans' services, is a part-time personality on KFAN radio and co-authored a book about his experiences, which won eight national book awards.

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