

# SCDN POLICY CONNECTION:

## CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING - RESOURCES AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



— SUSTAINABLE —  
**COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT**  
— NETWORK —  
*of Southwestern Pennsylvania*



**Sustainable PGH**

TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2024  
12:00 PM - 1:15 PM

## **Speaker Bios**

*(listed alphabetically)*

August 6, 2024

## Presenter:



### **Matt Mahoney (he/him)** **Director of Government Affairs** **Sustainable Pittsburgh**

Matt Mahoney is the Director of Government Affairs for Sustainable Pittsburgh. Before joining Sustainable Pittsburgh, Mahoney worked with Plug Smart, a regional energy services and building automation company, to develop Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) opportunities throughout the Midwest. Prior to Plug Smart, Mahoney served as the Western Pennsylvania Program Manager for the Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance (KEEA), a Pennsylvania-based trade association for the energy efficiency industry. During his time with KEEA, he successfully advocated for the adoption of C-PACE among county governments in Western Pennsylvania. Before KEEA, Mahoney worked with the Center for Responsible Shale Development where he served the inaugural President and Board of Directors to mitigate air emissions and protect water systems related to natural gas development in the Appalachian Basin.

Mahoney earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Anthropology from Slippery Rock University and a master's degree in Renewable Energy and Sustainability Systems from Penn State University. Mahoney is also an adjunct professor teaching Energy Policy at Chatham University, a military veteran that served honorably, and a proud husband and father of two.

**Presenter:**



## **Christopher Nafe (he/him)**

**Energy Program Specialist  
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection,  
Energy Programs Office**

Christopher Nafe is an Energy Program Specialist with the Energy Programs Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. He manages the local climate action programs for the Energy Programs Office, assisting local governments to complete greenhouse gas inventories and climate action plans to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Prior to working for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Nafe worked as the Sustainability Coordinator for the City of Harrisburg. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Environmental Studies from Washington and Jefferson College in 2004, a Master of Arts in Community Psychology and Social Change with a focus on Environmental Issues in 2012, and a Ph.D. in Environmental Social Science from Arizona State University in 2024.

## Presenter:



### **Sarah Pinter (she/her)**

**Energy Program Specialist  
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection,  
Energy Programs Office**

Sarah Pinter is an Energy Programs Specialist focusing on energy equity, environmental justice, and workforce initiatives in the Energy Programs Office (EPO) of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP). In this work, Pinter leads and supports public engagement for energy and climate change topics, connects communities with energy funding opportunities, and collaborates with the broader EPO team and institutional partners to create opportunities in the energy workforce. Prior to joining the EPO in 2022, she came to the PA DEP on the William Penn Fellowship Program in 2019. Here she focused on community outreach for Chesapeake Bay Watershed initiatives before transitioning to work on air quality and energy as an Executive Policy Specialist. Pinter holds a Master of Science in Sustainability Management from American University.



## Presenter:



### **Brandi Robinson (she/her)**

**Associate Teaching Professor and Co-Director for the  
Local Climate Action Program  
Penn State University**

Brandi Robinson is an Associate Teaching Professor in the Department of Energy and Mineral Engineering at Penn State University. Her background is in geography with an emphasis on local scale solutions to climate challenges. She teaches in the fully online Energy and Sustainability Policy bachelor's program, working with returning adult learners. Robinson also co-directs Penn State's Local Climate Action Program which partners students with representatives of local governments around Pennsylvania to conduct greenhouse gas emissions and draft climate action plans. She has served as the Chair of the Centre Region Planning Agency's Technical Advisory Group which supported the development and implementation of a regional climate action and adaptation plan. She has conducted greenhouse gas emissions inventories and reduction strategy planning for the Penn State Commonwealth Campus system as well as University Park.

**Presenter:**



## **Alayna Schmeider (she/her)**

**Energy Programs Specialist**

**Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection**

Alayna Schmeider has been with the Department of Environmental Protection for five years. She has primarily been working for the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority (PEDA) overseeing energy efficiency financing programs through the Energy Accelerator Program (EAP), which functions as Pennsylvania's green bank.

## Presenter:



### **Sawyer Sidelinger (they/them)** **Program Manager and Systems Administrator** **Sustainable Pittsburgh**

Sawyer Sidelinger is Systems Administrator at Sustainable Pittsburgh. Before coming to Sustainable Pittsburgh, Sidelinger worked to integrate sustainable systems into contract food service at both the elementary and university level. Their passion for nutrition, wellness, and social justice, allowed them to develop impactful sustainability programs that aimed to provide a low impact, nutritionally balanced, and socially equitable meal service.

Sidelinger earned a master's degree in Sustainability and a Master of Business Administration degree from Chatham University. They also earned the LEED GA credential expanding their experience into built spaces.

Sidelinger works to support organizations and individuals to help bring lasting systemic change that uplifts communities with the hope of achieving a sustainable future for all.