



SCDN POLICY CONNECTION: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION: PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITIES

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



Sustainable PGH

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2025
12:00 PM - 1:15 PM

Speaker Bios
(listed alphabetically)



Joshua Ash (he/him)

Assistant Clinical Professor
Director, Environmental Law & Policy Clinic
University of Pittsburgh School of Law

Joshua Ash is the Director of the Environmental Law & Policy Clinic at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, where he leads the clinic's work supporting municipalities, individuals, community groups, and businesses with a variety of sustainability efforts involving policy, litigation, and sustainable business. The clinic also collaborates with partner entities across the university such as the Center for Civil Rights and Racial Justice to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles into its work and educate the next generation of lawyers and changemakers.

In addition to his role at the university, Ash serves as a council member of the American Bar Association Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources, a leading forum for environment, energy, and natural resources law professionals. Previously, he co-chaired the section's Membership Diversity Enhancement Program, which aims to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within membership, committees, leadership, programs, and publications.



Janine Christiano (she/her)

**Director of Strategic Partnerships
Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)**

Janine Christiano currently serves as the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) Director of Strategic Partnerships at Race Forward. In this role, she strengthens and develops relationships with collaborators across various sectors to co-create community-level impact and expand resources that help racial equity practitioners transform the institution of government. She currently leads the GARE Economic Mobility Initiative, a collaborative effort with other nationally focused organizations, to refine and disseminate evidence-based tools and strategies aimed at closing the race-wealth gap and fostering more just communities. She also oversees the Bloomberg Sustainable Cities Project and serves on the State Strategies team, the Cultural Week of Action on Race and Democracy Committee, and the GARE Culture Committee.

Christiano has over sixteen years of experience in nonprofit and government settings, leading initiatives focused on racial equity, economic justice, the arts, youth development, place-making, restorative justice, and leadership development. As an arts and culture government administrator focused on grantmaking and racial equity in Nashville, she collaborated with individuals, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and government agencies to support individuals and communities through innovative programming, policy development, training, relationship-building, and strategic investments.

She has an M.Ed. in community development and action from Vanderbilt University, a B.A. in theater arts with a minor in art history from the University of California, Irvine, and certificates in college teaching, change management, and diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.



Sawyer Sidelinger (they/them)

**Program Manager and Systems Administrator
Sustainable Pittsburgh**

Sawyer Sidelinger is Program Manager and 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 collaborates with organizations and individuals to drive meaningful systemic change, empowering communities and working toward a sustainable future for all.



John Ukenye, J.D. (he/him)

**Senior Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives
Sustainable Pittsburgh**

John Ukenye is the Senior Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives at Sustainable Pittsburgh. Originally from Florida, Ukenye has lived in Pittsburgh for the past five years and has become fully immersed in the community. He earned two bachelor's degrees in political science and international relations, as well as a Juris Doctor from Washington University School of Law. In his previous role as the Advocacy and Policy Officer with the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh, he interfaced with elected officials and governmental bodies on the local, state, and national level to advocate for the Urban League's policy priorities.



Matthew Yohe (he/him)

**Programs and Services Manager
Vibrant Pittsburgh**

Matthew Yohe is a dedicated diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practitioner and serves as the Programs and Services Manager at Vibrant Pittsburgh. In this role, he facilitates program and event workflow for all aspects of Vibrant Pittsburgh's annual cycle of member and talent community programming and events. Yohe also facilitates training sessions for organizations, equipping them with strategies to cultivate equitable, inclusive, and diverse workplaces.