



2023

# connect

ANNUAL ONE-DAY CONFERENCE | NOVEMBER 15, 2023 | 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.



International Association  
of Business Communicators  
South Carolina

South Carolina Chapter



# AGENDA

**8:30-9 A.M.**

**BREAKFAST/REGISTRATION/NETWORKING**

**FREE PROFESSIONAL HEAD SHOTS**

Jeff Blake – Photographer

**9-9:15 A.M.**

Auditorium

**WELCOME AND CHAPTER GREETINGS**

Mary-Kathryn Craft – IABC/SC President Elect

Kaytee Watson – SCPRSA President

**9:15-10 A.M.**

Auditorium

**HOW COMMUNICATION PROS AND JOURNALISTS  
CAN HELP EACH OTHER EFFECTIVELY DO OUR JOBS**

Meg Kinnard – Associated Press

**10-10:15 A.M.**

**BREAK**

**10:15-11:15 A.M.**

Room E177

**ATTORNEYS AND COMMUNICATORS AS CRISIS MANAGERS:  
NAVIGATING AROUND THE APPROACHING ICEBERG**

Warren Ganjehsani – S.C. Technical College System

When an organization finds itself at the center of attention, attorneys and communicators are often called upon to jointly develop appropriate messaging for the situation. Learn practical tips on how these roles can function together to help your team steer through the stages of a crisis.

Room E169

**BECOME A DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY ALLY WITH DISABILITY-FRIENDLY  
WEBSITE COMMUNICATIONS**

Bailey Lewis – Words First Content Strategy

Did you know that one in every three adults in South Carolina has some form of disability? That means, on average, every third person who interacts with your organization online may need content that's been created with digital accessibility in mind.

We all want our communications to inclusively serve every one of our audience members. But maybe you're not too sure where to start when it comes to creating site content and other digital communications that work for those with disabilities.

In this session, Bailey Lewis will talk about why the disability community remains woefully underserved in digital spaces, and what you can do to become an ally for more inclusive web experiences. Before you leave, you will understand the concrete areas of your own website and related communications where you can make daily decisions that support digital accessibility, helping to create a better internet for all.

**11:15-11:30 A.M.**

**BREAK**

**11:30-12:30 P.M.**

Auditorium

**SOCIAL MEDIA. WHERE TO POST? WHY DO WE POST? HOW DO WE POST?**

Patrick Osborne – University of South Carolina Athletics

Get inside tips and tricks from the University of South Carolina Athletics director of social media on how their process works from the initial idea to the execution of their strategy. Learn how they determine what content to post, where it will live, and what social media platforms it will run on.

# AGENDA

**12:30-1:45 P.M.**

Terrace Cafe, Lower Level

## **NETWORKING LUNCH AND SCPRSSA 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

### **PROFESSIONAL HEAD SHOTS**

**Jeff Blake – Photographer**

**1:45-2:45 P.M.**

Room E177

### **HOW TO LAND AND KEEP A COMMUNICATIONS JOB**

**Amanda DeWeese, APR – Chernoff Newman**

**Ansley Welchel, APR – North Greenville University**

**Karen York – Richland County School District One**

**Alice Grey Harrison, APR – AGH Consulting Group (moderator)**

Ever wonder what your manager is looking for in a quality employee? Here's your opportunity to ask yourself. The panel moderated by Alice Grey Harrison, APR will offer advice on how to differentiate yourself in a crowded communications field and tips that can help get your foot in the door or move to the next step in your career.

Room E169

### **USING EXTERNAL BRAND CAMPAIGNS TO HELP DRIVE REALIGNMENT INTERNALLY**

**Ami Coats – BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina**

In this session, Ami Coats will share how an external brand campaign and internal communications strategy can work together to reenergize and realign your employees with your brand post-pandemic.

**2:45-3 P.M.**

### **BREAK**

**3-4 P.M.**

Auditorium

### **RESPONSIBLE AI FOR TODAY'S MARKETS – HARNESSING THE AI REVOLUTION WITH BRAND INTEGRITY AND DATA SECURITY**

**Tim Sebold – soolisAI**

Artificial intelligence (AI) technology is evolving at the speed of light and Generative, Large Language Model (LLM) AI has disrupted markets worldwide. Learn how to harness the competitive advantages of AI while mitigating the sophisticated pervasive risk open model Generative AI, like ChatGPT, has empowered. Tim Sebold, CEO of soolisAI explains why experts recommend Hybrid Model AI. From streamlined operations to real-time sales conversion strategy and personalized customer engagement, learn how to navigate the AI market like a pro.

**4-4:15 P.M.**

### **CLOSING AND THANK YOU**

**4:30-6 P.M.**

### **HAPPY HOUR NETWORKING MEET UP**

Join your colleagues for happy hour at Steel Hands Brewery following today's conference. Participants will be responsible for purchasing their own drinks.

Steel Hands Brewery  
2350 Foreman St.  
Cayce, SC 29033

# MEET THE SPEAKERS



## **AMI TADLOCK COATS**

### **Assistant Vice President – BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina**

Ami Tadlock Coats has 27 years of public relations, advertising and integrated marketing communications experience. At BlueCross, she oversees the in-house agency account management, content creation, print and digital design, media buying, videography, brand strategy and compliance, and internal communications. Coats is a graduate of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and earned her master's from the University of South Carolina. She is a long-time volunteer and supporter of Special Olympics South Carolina. She served on the Columbia Chamber's Leadership Columbia Committee for more than 10 years and graduated from Leadership South Carolina in 2015.



## **AMANDA DEWEESE, APR**

### **Vice President of Public Relations – Chernoff Newman**

Amanda DeWeese, APR, leads Chernoff Newman's public relations and social media teams. She is right at home working with some of the most recognizable companies in the Carolinas, including Charlotte Water, Deloitte, Arts & Science Council, 7-Eleven, Inc., Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT) and S&D Coffee and Tea. These companies put their trust in her for strategic counsel, branding, advocacy, public affairs and media relations, whether that's on a local, regional or national level. DeWeese's work has garnered industry recognition, including awards for best integrated campaign, social media presence and creative strategy. She was named Charlotte Agenda's "12 already successful PR agency executives to watch," and recently completed a six-year term on the board of directors of DreamKey Partners, a nonprofit organization that develops affordable housing for low-income families.



## **WARREN GANJEHSANI**

### **Chief Legal Counsel – S.C. Technical College System**

Warren Ganjehsani has been chief legal counsel for the S.C. Technical College System since 2018, and in this role he furnishes guidance to the System's 16 institutions on personnel matters, student affairs, contracts, and a wide array of higher education issues. He spent five years as an assistant attorney general for the S.C. Attorney General's Office, where his duties included pursuing consumer protection actions and representing government officials in court proceedings. Ganjehsani has also served as general counsel for the S.C. Department of Public Safety and as a labor attorney with the U.S. Army at Fort Jackson. Previously, he handled a variety of civil litigation as an associate with law firms in Atlanta and Charleston, South Carolina.

Ganjehsani is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of South Carolina School of Law. He was admitted to the S.C. Bar in 1999 and the State Bar of Georgia in 2002. He is a member of the S.C. Bar's House of Delegates and the National Association of College and University Attorneys.

# MEET THE SPEAKERS



## **ALICE GREY HARRISON, APR**

### **Managing Partner – AGH Consulting Group**

With 25 years of experience, Alice Grey Harrison brings a fresh approach to corporate communications. She thrives in a highly creative environment that requires a dynamic approach to lead change and implement highly sophisticated communications strategies. Her work has resulted in nationally recognized communications and branding campaigns.

Harrison is the managing partner of AGH Communications Group, a boutique communications and public relations consultancy primarily serving professional services firms. She helps firms develop a strategy that informs and inspires, drives culture, and uses change as a catalyst for alignment and growth.

A graduate of Sewanee, the University of the South, Harrison is accredited in public relations by the Public Relations Society of America. For fun, she enjoys keeping up with a nine-year-old, traveling, hiking, Pilates, and getting creative with acrylics and canvas.



## **MEG KINNARD**

### **Reporter – Associated Press**

Meg Kinnard is a national political reporter for the Associated Press (AP). Kinnard lives in South Carolina and focuses the bulk of her attention on the politics of the U.S. South for the AP's Washington, D.C. bureau. She is in her 19th year at the AP and last year received an Oliver S. Gramling Award - AP's highest internal honor. She is currently covering the 2024 nationwide Republican GOP primary.



## **BAILEY LEWIS**

### **Founder – Words First Content Strategy**

Bailey Lewis is the founder of Words First, where she teaches her signature digital content strategy to help organizations, teams and professional communicators advance their business and careers through more human, intentional communications online.

Nearly 1,000 case studies inform Lewis' expertise, collected from more than a decade leading content technology projects that focus on human-to-human communications in digital spaces. As communicators, we hold the key to human, inclusive, authentic experiences online. It's time, Lewis believes, for us to take our seat at the digital table.



## **PATRICK OSBORNE**

### **Director of Social Media – University of South Carolina Athletics**

A native of Mustang, Oklahoma, Patrick Osborne is in his ninth year working in college athletics and his first as director of social media for the athletics department at the University of South Carolina. Osborne has previously served as the director of communications for Oklahoma State men's basketball and women's golf. Prior to that, he spent four years at South Carolina as the director of communications for men's soccer and softball, while taking on duties as the director of social media on an interim basis.

An Oklahoma State University (OSU) graduate, he served on the College Football Playoff Committee's social media team for the 2019 National Championship game and has worked with more than a dozen teams throughout his career. He earned a degree in sports media with an emphasis in multimedia journalism from OSU in 2017.

# MEET THE SPEAKERS



## **TIM SEBOLD**

### **Founder and CEO – soolisAI**

Tim Sebold is the founder and CEO of soolisAI, a digital marketing and technologies company specializing in real-time, results-driven, AI solutions. As a fitness industry professional, Sebold understood the marketing challenges gym owners faced in a fast-paced digital market, so he built a team of AI engineers to find solutions. Together the team developed AI technology tools to meet competitive engagement & operational challenges across industries and markets. Today, soolisAI has evolved into one of the country's most advanced conversational AI providers specializing in Hybrid AI tools that include: 3D conversational AI, voice automation integration, customizable operation efficiencies and cutting-edge data-driven strategy. As CEO, Sebold's goal is to provide his clients with the Hybrid AI tools they need to succeed in today's digital age while putting their corporate integrity front & center by providing secure first-party data that protects them & their clientele.



## **ANSLEY WELCHEL, APR**

### **Communication Instructor – North Greenville University**

Ansley Welchel, APR, is an experienced public relations practitioner who now mentors and trains future professionals as a member of the faculty at North Greenville University in the Upstate. Currently serving as program coordinator for the School of Communication's strategic communication major and adviser to the new student-led public relations agency, she brings more than 20 years of professional experience into her collaborative and creative courses. With a background in full-service marketing communications firms, as well as her independent consultancy, Welchel has worked with clients managing the public relations and strategic communication efforts for national, regional and local brands spanning a variety of markets and not-for-profit sectors.



## **KAREN E. YORK**

### **Executive Director of Communications – Richland County School District One**

Karen E. York is the executive director of communications for Richland County School District One in Columbia, South Carolina. Now in her 23rd year in school public relations, York started her career as a newspaper reporter and editor. She worked for seven years at her hometown newspaper, The Times and Democrat in Orangeburg, South Carolina, before she joined the education reporting team at The State newspaper in Columbia, where she spent three years.

York began leading internal and external communications for Richland One in 2001. As executive director of communications, she heads a seven-member team that has won numerous state and national honors and awards for excellence in publications, video production, marketing, writing, website design and photography.

She holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Georgia and she did post-graduate study at the University of South Carolina.



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## VOLUNTEERS

Special thanks to the Joint Professional Development Conference co-Chairs Matthew Long and Alison Shuman and our hard-working and much appreciated committee members Brooks Hearn, Haley Kellner, Charnita Mack, Libby Roof, Savannah Scott and Kaytee Watson.

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## DOMINION ENERGY LAYOUT

