

UIC Workshops on Beneficial Electrification of Transportation

August 3 UIC EV Workshop on Pilots, Programs & Partnerships to Advance Transportation Electrification

1:00-3:00 PM on Monday, August 3, 2020

[Eventbrite Link](#) | [Detailed Program Link](#)

SPEAKER BIOS



Sara Rafalson

Senior Director, Market Development
EVgo
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Sara Rafalson is a Senior Director of Market Development at EVgo, America's largest public EV fast charging network, with over 800 locations in 66 metropolitan markets and 34 states. Prior to joining the EVgo team, Ms. Rafalson led public policy and market strategy efforts for Sol Systems, a national solar energy development firm based in Washington, D.C.



Prashanthi Rao Raman

Director, Global Government Affairs
Cruise, LLC
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Prior to joining Cruise as the Head of Global Government Affairs, Prashanthi served as Director of State and Local Government Relations at Lyft, where, for 5.5 years, she was a critical voice in creating and expanding the ridesharing industry across North America. Before she moved to tech and the transportation industries, Prashanthi was appointed as associate chief-of-staff for healthcare and human services by Illinois Governor Quinn's administration, where she worked with a diverse set of decision-makers to advance the Governor's agenda. Prashanthi bleeds purple as a graduate of Northwestern University and received her joint Juris Doctorate and Master of Public Health degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

For more information about the UIC EV Workshops, please contact the organizer, Dr. Elizabeth A. Kócs at ekocs@uic.edu or 708.267.4097.

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Adam Gromis
Public Policy Manager, Sustainability & Environmental Impact
Uber
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Sustainability and cross-disciplinary engagement are running themes throughout his work experience in the nonprofit, government, and for-profit sectors. Prior to joining Uber, he worked for five years helping investors build impact investing portfolios with positions at Goldman Sachs Wealth Management, Imprint Capital (a boutique investment advisory firm acquired by Goldman), and the Global Impact Investing Network (a research and advocacy nonprofit). Before impact investing, he spent seven years engaged in efforts to commercialize zero emission vehicle technologies with positions at the California Fuel Cell Partnership (a public-private partnership), the California Air Resources Board, and UTC Fuel Cells (a United Technologies Company). He holds an MBA from NYU Stern, an MPA from NYU Wagner, and a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and materials science from UC Davis. Adam is proud to sit on the board of Veloz, a nonprofit dedicated to accelerating the shift to electric cars through public-private collaboration, public engagement and policy education innovation.



Samantha Bingham
Clean Transportation Program Director
Chicago Department of Transportation
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312-744-8096

As the Clean Transportation Program Director for the City of Chicago's Department of Transportation, Samantha is responsible for developing and implementing policies, programs and projects that reduce emissions from the transportation sector and assist in achieving the City's sustainability goals. During her 13 year tenure at the City, Sam has leveraged over \$70 million in local and federal grant funding for clean vehicle incentive programs in the Chicago region, including the deployment of electric vehicle charging stations and medium- and heavy-duty hybrid and electric trucks and buses. Samantha also serves as the U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities coordinator for the local Chicago Area Clean Cities coalitions whose goal is to reduce petroleum in the transportation sector primarily through education and technical assistance.

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Josh Cohen
Director, Policy
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Josh Cohen leads policy and regulatory engagement in Illinois and other states for Greenlots. Before joining Greenlots, Josh worked in policy and communications roles at SemaConnect and the Business Network for Offshore Wind and hosted the clean energy podcasts *More Power To You* and *Offshore Wind Insider*. He previously served in a number of public sector leadership positions including as Mayor of Annapolis, Maryland and as Deputy Administrator of the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) during the Obama Administration.



Alan Westenskow
Director, Business Development
Proterra
awestenskow@proterra.com

Alan Westenskow is the Director of Business Development for Proterra where he identifies and develops financing options and procurement solutions for Proterra electric buses. Prior to Proterra, Alan spent 16 years as a public finance municipal advisor providing financing solutions to local governments for energy, transportation and other public infrastructure projects. Alan developed Proterra's battery leasing program and leads Proterra Energy where he helps customers with their charging and infrastructure needs. Alan attended Brigham Young University and Wharton.

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Closing Remarks



Maria S. Bocanegra, Commissioner
Illinois Commerce Commission
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Maria S. Bocanegra is a Commissioner with the Illinois Commerce Commission, where she regulates public utilities, transportation and telecommunications entities in complex and technical matters, affecting Illinois workers and legal matters, including those laws enforced by the Department of Labor. She also formerly worked as an attorney litigating workers' compensation, employment and personal injury claims.

Commissioner Bocanegra currently services as the Illinois member and Co-Vice Chair for NARUC's Committee on Water. In addition, she was recently selected as National Chair for NARUC's Center for Partnerships & Innovation's EV Working Group, where she assists in advancing understanding of transportation electrification amongst public utility commissions..

Commissioner Bocanegra was recently selected to Fortnightly's Under 40, Negocios Now's 40 Under 40, to Negocios Now's Who's Who In Hispanic Chicago and by the Chicago City Council Latino Caucus as a 2019-2020 Fellow. As a Fellow, she is committed to bringing innovate housing solutions to the Caucus, where she is currently working closely with several Alderman on a Resolution addressing Chicago's historic 2-4 flats. She is only the second Latina to be appointed to the Commission.

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Moderator



Elizabeth A. Kócs, PhD

Director, Partnerships & Strategy, UIC Energy Initiative
Co-Founder, Center for Urban Resilience and Environmental Sustainability
NREL Energy Executive, National Renewable Energy Laboratory
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Dr. Elizabeth A. Kócs is an environment-behavior scientist and planning strategist at the intersection of social, economic, policy, and technological advances in energy, sustainability and urban resilience. At the UIC Energy Initiative, she has a strong focus on energy and technology for transportation, the electrical grid and smart cities. She brings years of expertise in relationship building and partnership engagement to grow the UIC energy and sustainability network, programs and impact, and to cultivate local, regional, national and international initiatives to support collaborative efforts fostering Chicago's growing energy, mobility, and urban sustainability ecosystems. Dr. Kócs is a founding leader of the Center for Urban Resilience and Environmental Sustainability (CURES), a University of Illinois collaborative focused on providing cities with knowledge and pathways for achieving climate resilience. As a National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Energy Executive Leader, she works with academia, national laboratories, public sector and private industry to leverage expertise, tools and resources to develop benchmarking and strategic planning, analytic, and strategic pathways for addressing climate-related energy and transportation challenges. She continues to serve on the Materials Research Society *MRS Bulletin Energy Quarterly* Board and the MRS Focus on Sustainability Subcommittee, leveraging her knowledge and network to strengthen the energy and sustainability dialogue in the materials community, and connecting industry with materials research community. Dr. Kócs earned a Bachelor of Architecture from Pratt Institute, an Executive MBA from the University of Illinois, and a PhD from the City University of New York.

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