

# Iowa Communications Alliance 10th Anniversary 2023 Annual Meeting & Expo CONFERENCE BROCHURE



## Monday, March 20th

11:00 am-3:00 pm | Registration  
GRAND CONCOURSE

### 11:15 am-12:30 pm | Luncheons

- **Leadership Academy and Alumni Luncheon** (*Invite Only*) ROOM 319-320

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- **New Telco and Attendee Luncheon** (*Members Only*) ROOM 312-313

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### 12:45-5:00 pm | Keynote & General Sessions

ROOM 302-310

- **Presidents Opening, Annual Meeting of the Membership and Awards Ceremony**  
Marcie Boerner (Webster-Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association)
- **Championing Your Highest Potential and Finding Your Edge** Alex Weber  
Alex Weber is an American Ninja Warrior, award-winning leader & entertainer positively inspiring millions to achieve breakthrough success! Alex's greatest passion is championing your highest potential by helping you find your Edge, because success is about more than just knowing what to do, it's knowing how to do it. Alex shows top professionals and leaders how to bring their very best everyday, and to the most high-stakes situations that can make or break your success.

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### 3:00-3:30 pm | Coffee and Beverage Break

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- **Low Earth Orbit Satellite Broadband and its Potential Effect on Rural LECs**

Robert Gnapp (NECA)

LEO satellite-based broadband technology. What is it? Why should you care? During this session you'll learn about LEO satellite-based broadband technology and deployments and its potential impact on rural providers. Topics include an overview of LEO satellite technology, features, limitations and deployments and potential impacts on rural providers in the near and long term.

- **Company Culture Choose Your Own Journey**  
Steve Riat (Nex-Tech)

There is not a map to company culture and definitely no easy button, but the good news is there are multiple ways to get to a great company culture. Just as there is no simple map to great culture this presentation is

a "choose your own journey." The audience will pick its own path and while we won't know the exact order, one thing is guaranteed - laughs, fun and we will learn together through real life stories that you can take back to your company to immediately impact change in your organization.

### 5:00-6:30 pm | Networking Reception

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Cheers to 10 years! We will have a special performance by musician Damon Dotson during the Monday evening networking reception to help us celebrate this milestone!

## Tuesday, March 21st

7:00 am-2:00 pm | Registration

### 7:15-9:00 am | Breakfast

- **Networking Breakfast** ROOM 312-318

SPONSORED BY:  Olsson

- **Women in Telcom Breakfast - Challenges and Wins of Women in Telcom** (*Members Only*)  
ROOM 319-320

Martha Galley (Calix), Marcie Boerner (WCCTA), Deb Lucht (Minburn communications), Andrea Hansen (Butler-Bremer)

It's no secret that broadband has historically been a male dominated field. Women working in the space face unique challenges working and thriving but bring diversity and perspectives that benefit the industry as a whole. Martha Galley, Chief Customer Success Officer, Calix will share the challenges and wins she's experienced along the way, not only her current leadership roles but also during her time at Microsoft and Salesforce. She will discuss her views on how women in the industry can set themselves up for success as they navigate their own career. Martha will then host an interactive panel of female leaders from the broadband industry in Iowa. The discussion will focus on the state of women in the industry in Iowa, their own challenges and successes, and an interactive Q&A with the audience.

### 9:00-9:40 am | Breakout Sessions 1

**MARKETING Know What Your Market Does Not Know About Fiber** ROOM 302-303

Cheryl O'Hern (Spin Markket)

Frequently, telecommunications providers are just too close to their products and services to really understand their true market. The first step to effective marketing is to know and understand your market as well as what your market does not know about you. Developing strategic marketing plans that takes you from perception to reality will point you in the right direction to become effective with your marketing dollars and use your resources for the best ROI.

## **TECHNICAL** 10G Case Studies: Traditional and Progressive Fiber Deployments

Greg Luhman (Adtran) [ROOM 304-306](#)

Growing bandwidth demands from households and businesses are now at a tipping point that exceeds today's GPON network capacity levels. Next-generation 10G PON architectures with Combo PON technology offer the ability to address bandwidth demands well into the future because they can support 100Mbps and Gigabit services to residential subscribers while scaling to multi-gigabit services for business customers and Nx10G services for mobile backhaul applications -- all over a single, common infrastructure. In this session, Adtran will explore several real-world examples of service providers that are leveraging Combo PON to future-proof their network. Each example reviews how they added the network capacity needed to extend the life span of their active fiber access equipment while benefiting from the broad device flexibility needed to streamline their operations.

## **GENERAL** Build Relationships & Speak the Language Community Leaders Understand

Brittany Morales (ICA) [ROOM 307-308](#)

Broadband funding opportunities are beginning to require participation from community leaders and decision makers. Whether it's state and federal programs or forming public-private partnerships. Building successful relationships with community groups is more important now than ever. In this session you will learn how to work with community groups and communicate the benefits of your service in a way they understand.

## **LEADERSHIP** Leadership Development for Changing Times [ROOM 309-310](#)

Justin Stinson (Liberty Communications)

We work in an industry that is going through massive changes. Strong leadership is becoming increasingly more important to not only understand how to maneuver these new obstacles but also capture the opportunities that are arising from them. Doing the same thing you have always done poses a risk to being left behind. Developing the leadership of the organization becomes a critical aspect of protecting the company and thriving when others are dying. Leaders and Boards must understand how to use competition to their advantage and not continue to rely on the same mindset that's been in place for the last 100 years. In this session we will focus on some of the most important aspects of leadership needed to help your organization thrive and grow in times of chaos and change.

## **9:45-10:25 am | Breakout Sessions 2**

### **TECHNICAL** Wi-Fi 6 Whole Home and Cloud Management [ROOM 302-303](#)

Andrew Cuellar (Zyxxel Communications)

Consumer wireless demands have skyrocketed, especially as many continue to work from home, reliable wireless coverage is now essential throughout the home. Managing those support needs can get discouraging, offering a managed Wi-Fi solution can allow you to provide your support teams with some relief. Cloud managed Wi-Fi and industry standard TR069 bring the ability to manage and upgrade subscriber networks with ease and brings the capability to remotely monitor and improve the customer experience instantly. You can ensure your subscribers have the speed and coverage necessary for any task.

## **CYBER** Cybersecurity Compliance and Planning Panel

[ROOM 304-306](#)

Chris Danielson (UNITEL Insurance)

A risk and security assessment enables a company to identify required cybersecurity policies, process controls, and procedures for mitigating detected cyber risks. At the same time, a compliance team can update existing policies in line with the mitigations done to address known risks. You'll hear from a panel of industry members who are dealing with cyber threats presented by Unitel Insurance. The session will focus on what we are seeing from tech errors and omissions, providers losses, compliance questions, and a walkthrough of a cyber claim.

## **GENERAL** An ESG Framework for Community Based Broadband Providers [ROOM 307-308](#)

John Pietila (Dentons Davis Brown)

During this session John will recap environmental, social and governance (ESG) framework and its applicability to community based broadband providers. Discussion of how paying attention to ESG concerns can drive strategic decisions and contribute to value creation.

## **MARKETING** Super-Charged Broadband Marketing with AI-Driven Analytics

[ROOM 309-310](#)

Amanda Scherer (Adtran)

Broadband competitors are entering the market more frequently, so a marketing team equipped with analytics-driven intelligence is essential to delivering a message that stands out. How empowered is your marketing team? Service providers can now super-charge their marketing team with automated intelligence that gives insight into where the best sales opportunities exist. With the right tools, you can empower your marketers to easily execute the right campaign at the right time and increase competitiveness and revenue. This session will explore new AI-driven approaches to broadband marketing where customers are engaged, and your brand is elevated. Attendees will learn about the latest tools that can enable marketers with user behavior data and customer insights to simplify and maximize marketing campaigns.

## **10:25-10:45 am | Coffee & Beverage Break**

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## **10:45-11:25 am | Breakout Sessions 3**

### **TECHNICAL** Technican Roundtable

[ROOM 319-320](#)

Moderated by Brad Crot (Vermeer)

Technicians: let's talk trends, forecasts for 2023, new technology, opportunities within your field. Join us for a roundtable discussion session with other technical industry professionals.

## **MARKETING** How to Make Your Website Your Hardest Working Employee [ROOM 304-306](#)

Sarah Pieper (Pinnacle Marketing)

Leverage simple effective changes on your website to unleash its full potential. Your website is available to work around the clock so make sure it meets your customer's needs. Learn industry tips and tricks to help your website stand out from the competition and be your hardest working employees.

## **LEADERSHIP** Executive Leadership Panel

**ROOM 307-308**

Brian Weis (Innovative Systems), Kevin Cabbage (FMTC), Rachel Hamilton (Marne Elk Horn), and Andrea Hansen (Butler-Bremer)

Join our panel of leading Iowa telcom executives as they share their thoughts and ideas on driving innovation, new revenue opportunities and creative cost management in the face of eroding support dollars. Hear these leaders discuss the challenges and opportunities they are facing.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** The Challenges of General Manager Transitions: Best Practices for Success **ROOM 309-310**

Brian Blahnik (B Squared Consulting)

Small employers must move away from the "replacement" mindset to that of defining success long term. As labor shortages increase, succession planning and replacement activities require strategic initiatives requiring rigorous consideration. We'll explore: how to broach the subject of CEO/GM succession with your board; the most common hiring mistakes for the executive level; how to develop a CEO/GM success profile.

## **11:30-12:15 pm | Breakout Sessions 4**

### **TECHNICAL** Wireless Alternatives

Terry Jones (Tarana) **ROOM 302-303**

Large portions of both developed and especially developing economies remain underserved in an ongoing pandemic that makes real broadband more essential than ever. Copper-based fixed access networks are increasingly exhausted. Efforts to improve supply with fiber have been throttled by prohibitively high costs and installation complications. Wireless alternatives continue to fail in the face of the significant technical challenges in fiber class fixed access, including pervasive obstructions, spectrum scarcity, interference, changing conditions, and unworkable deployment model. Tune into this presentation to learn more about other avenues and alternative solutions for wireless providers.

### **GENERAL** Drones in Telecom and Utilities

Zach Nemeth (ISG) **ROOM 304-306**

Overall utilization of drones has exploded since the FAA's implementation of the Part 107 Commercial Operator Certificate and, use in the utility and telecommunications industries followed suit. The presentation will provide an overview of what it takes to be a commercial drone pilot, various drone/UAS systems Telecommunications and Utility use cases, and cutting edge use cases (through various AEC industry applications).

### **LEADERSHIP** The Importance of Staying Sharp

Dave Lewis (JSI) **ROOM 307-308**

Things seem rosy for rural broadband providers. Broadband funding programs are beyond plentiful. Consumer appreciation and demand for broadband service has never been higher. What a great business to be in! But practicing good business fundamentals is still key to future success. This session will take a sober look at the most important issues facing broadband providers and talk about the challenges of managing businesses as the good times roll.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** Governance vs. Management: Balancing the Roles of the Board and Executive Leadership

**ROOM 309-310**

James Farstad (WIN Technology)

A board should play a very different role in an organization than that of the CEO or executive leader, but often the lines are blurred. A board's purpose is governance, not management. In this presentation, James will share strategies and practices that help boards to fulfill their role in driving the organization to realize stated goals and meet its obligations to all stakeholders, while holding the CEO accountable for management of the organization.

## **12:15-1:00 pm | Networking Lunch** **ROOM 312-320**

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## **1:00 - 5:00 pm | Expo Hall** **EXHIBIT HALL A**

## **2:30 - 3:00 pm | 10th Anniversary Celebration**

**EXHIBIT HALL A**

Join us in celebrating the 10th anniversary in the expo hall with cupcakes!

## **3:45 - 5:00 pm | Managers Meetings**

### **GENERAL MANAGERS** General Managers Policy Update (for General Managers and key personnel)

**ROOM 302-303**

Dave Duncan (ICA), John Pietila (Dentons Davis Brown), and Mike St Clair (Capitol Edge)

Join ICA General Counsel John Pietila, Lobbyist Mike St. Clair, and CEO Dave Duncan for an open discussion that centers around your questions regarding all state and federal legislative, regulatory and industry trends as well as the latest on all the broadband funding programs. They will highlight the impact of all these developments on your business and will be available to answer any questions you may have regarding a variety of topics that impact your company.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** Board of Directors Roundtable (for Directors) **ROOM 304-306**

Moderator Doug Eidahl (Vantage Point Solutions)

Join your fellow Iowa Board Members for an opportunity to engage in open round table discussions. Hear about current and future opportunities, challenges and issues other ICA member companies are dealing with. Items of discussion will include increasing demand for broadband, changes in technology, financial challenges and opportunities, competitive threats, video and OTT trends, impacts of various funding programs on Iowa companies just to name a few items!

## **5:00 - 6:00 pm | Expo Hall Networking Reception**

**SPONSORED BY:**  **DAVID BROWN**

## **Wednesday, March 22nd**

### **7:00-10:00 am | Registration**

## **7:30-8:30 am | Networking Breakfast** **ROOM 312-316**

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## 8:30-9:15 am | Breakout Sessions

### **CYBER** Developing a Cybersecurity Program

Ryan Pieken (OXEN Technology) [ROOM 302-303](#)

Cybersecurity is a process, not a project. The role of the network assessment in a cybersecurity program, how it can help and provide guidance. This program will cover: how automation and systems can bring efficiency and consistency to your cybersecurity program. How a cybersecurity program can help ease insurance renewals.

### **FINANCIAL** Budgeting and Planning for WISPS – What

**Don't you Know?** [ROOM 304-306](#)

Jessica Richter (FORVIS)

Wireless internet deployment has become more viable with improved technology in recent years. Due to this, many companies are leveraging wireless options to augment networks to deploy broadband in areas that may be trickier to serve via traditional fiber to the home or it just may be more cost effective. When you plan these kinds of networks, there many different things to consider and it can greatly affect your budget and future plans. Join me as we discuss what that looks like and how to approach the budgeting and planning process as you deploy a wireless internet network.

### **MARKETING** Where Do We Go With Video?

Jean Edhlund (CNS) [ROOM 307-308](#)

Many operators are at a crossroads with their video product. 2023 will see another cycle of retransmission consent negotiations and more and more content shifting to streaming services. Whether you are considering shutting down your video, or if you are committed to providing a high-quality, competitive, pay-tv service, you'll want to have the most up to date information where the industry is headed and what other companies (large and small) are doing.

### **TECHNICAL** What's Your Wish List? [ROOM 309-310](#)

Brad Penney (Vantage Point Solutions)

Every technician and plant manager we know has a mile-long wish list of improvements, upgrades, and expansions they'd like to see in their networks. But then budget time comes, and the improvements don't. What's missing? Is there a better way? YES! And it's easier than you think. By putting technical improvements into the context of a broader business plan, you can make it easier to show the value of the upgrades (and not just the costs). We'll walk through step-by-step, from a manager's view, to make the case for your wish list.

### 9:15-11:00 am | Expo Hall [EXHIBIT HALL A](#)

**Coffee and Beverages in Expo Hall**

**SPONSORED BY:** [metaswitch](#)

### 11:00 am-12:00 pm | Keynote & Closing

**Five Ways to Craft an Incredible Company Culture That Makes Mondays Feel Like Fridays** [ROOM 302-308](#)

Drew Harden (Blue Compass)

Maintaining a welcoming, positive work culture can be difficult with all the demands and stressors of the modern workplace. Hear how embracing an unapologetically fun culture helped Drew Harden's company power through struggles and flourish from a small, two-person start-up to an industry-leading digital marketing agency. Discover how embracing company culture creates space for growth and productivity. Walk away with five eye-opening action items to help your team become more energetic, supportive and motivated—on Mondays, Fridays and all the days between.

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**Closing Remarks** [ROOM 302-308](#)

Tim Fencil (Danville Mutual Telephone)

		<b>Welcome Bags</b> 	<b>Lanyards</b> 
		<b>Tuesday Lunch</b> 	<b>Name Badges</b> 

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