

## 2015 FALL CONFERENCE LUNCHEON KEYNOTE



Eric was born and raised in Missouri. The oldest of three boys, Eric's mother worked as a special education teacher and his father worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Proud to have been educated in Missouri public schools, Eric earned an Angier B. Duke Scholarship to attend Duke University where he studied ethics, philosophy, and public policy. Selected as a Rhodes and a Truman Scholar, he attended the University of Oxford, earning a master's degree in 1998 and a Ph.D. in 2000. His doctoral thesis, *Children First*, investigated how international humanitarian organizations can best serve war-affected children. He has worked as a humanitarian volunteer, documentary photographer, and researcher in Rwanda, Cambodia, Albania, Mexico, India, Bosnia, and Bolivia.

Eric served as a United States Navy SEAL officer and deployed four times during the Global War on Terrorism to Afghanistan, Southeast Asia, the Horn of Africa, and Iraq. He served as the Commander of a Mark V Special Operations Craft Detachment, Commander of a Joint Special Operations Task Unit, and as Commander of an al Qaeda Targeting Cell. In 2005, Eric was appointed by President George W. Bush to serve as a White House Fellow, and in 2011 the Association of the United States Navy named him the Navy Reserve Junior Line Officer of the Year. His military awards include the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, the Navy Achievement Medal, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, the Navy Commendation Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, the Purple Heart, and the Bronze Star.

After returning from Iraq in 2007, Eric donated his combat pay to found The Mission Continues, a national nonprofit organization headquartered in Missouri that challenges veterans to serve and inspire in communities across America. As CEO, Eric was frequently recognized as one of the most innovative leaders in America. Major League Baseball and PEOPLE Magazine named Eric an "All-Star Among Us," and the National Conference on Citizenship named him its "Citizen Soldier of the Year." In 2008 President Bush personally presented Eric with the President's Volunteer Service Award, and in 2012 Eric was awarded the Charles Bronfman Prize, recognizing him as a leader whose work is of universal benefit and inspires future generations. Eric was named to TIME magazine's 100 most influential people in the world for 2013. Most recently in 2014, Fortune magazine recognized him as one of 50 greatest leaders in the world.

A photographer and writer, Eric is the author of four books. His first book, *Strength & Compassion*, was recognized as ForeWord Magazine's Photography Book of the Year, and was the Grand Prize Winner of the New York Book Festival. Eric's second book, *The Heart and the Fist: The Education of a Humanitarian, the Making of a Navy SEAL*, was a New York Times Bestseller. His third book, *The Warrior's Heart*, was recognized as one of the Best Teen Books of 2012 by Barnes & Noble and Kirkus Reviews. Eric's fourth book, *Resilience*, will be released on March 10, 2015. In the book, Eric describes how we can all build resilience. "There is a path through pain to wisdom, through suffering to strength, and through fear to courage — if we have the virtue of resilience."

Eric teaches as a Senior Fellow at the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and at the Olin School of Business at Washington University. His work has been covered by local and national media outlets including Fox News, NBC Nightly News, CNN, CBS, ABC, NPR, the TODAY Show, The Colbert Report, the New York Times, and the Wall Street Journal.

Eric is a sub-3 hour marathon runner and the winner of the Shamrock Marathon at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. As a boxer, he won two Oxford Boxing Blues and the Gold Medal at the BUSA National Boxing Championships. He holds a 2nd Dan Black Belt in Taekwondo.

In 2014, Eric stepped down as CEO of The Mission Continues to focus on his small business, The Greitens Group, and his family. He continues to serve as an ambassador and member of the Board of The Mission Continues. Eric lives in St. Louis with his wife, Sheena. They welcomed their first child, Joshua, in 2014.

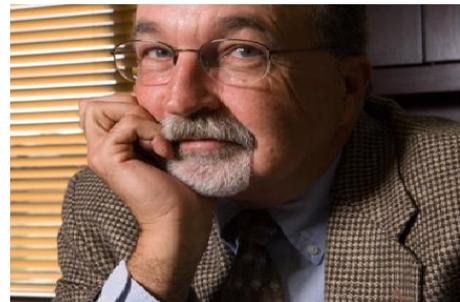
## 2015 FALL CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



**JEFF BARROW** serves as Director of Missouri River Relief, an action-oriented, nonprofit organization headquartered in Columbia, Missouri. He has been involved with clean water issues since the early 1990s and has worked on a range of activities. He was a founding member of Show-Me Clean Streams and Greenbelt Land Trust of Mid-Missouri and served on the City of Columbia's Stormwater Task force and Planning & Zoning Commission. He also co-authored with Chad Pregracke a non-fiction book titled "From the

Bottom Up: One Man's Crusade to Clean America's Rivers" published by the National Geographic Society.

**JERRY CROWNOVER** was raised on a diversified livestock farm, deep in the heart of the Missouri Ozarks. For the first few years of his life, he did without the luxuries of electricity or running water and received his early education in one of the many one-room schoolhouses of that time. After graduation from Gainesville High School, he enrolled at the University of Missouri in their College of Agriculture, where he received a BS degree in 1974 and a Masters of Education Degree in 1977.



After teaching high school Vocational Agriculture for five years, Jerry enrolled at Mississippi State University where he received a Doctorate in Agricultural and Extension Education. Dr. Crossover then served as a Professor of Agricultural Education at Missouri State University for 17 years. In 1997, Dr. Crossover resigned his position as MSU to do what he originally intended to after he got out of high school—raise cattle.

Jerry now works and lives on a beef cattle ranch in Lawrence County, Missouri with his wife, Judy and sons, Seth and Zach. In addition to ranching, Jerry writes a bi-monthly column dealing with agriculture and life that appears in man magazines and newspapers throughout the Midwest. He has also appeared many time on Public Television as an original Ozarks Storyteller and travels throughout the U.S., presenting both humorous and motivational talks to farm and youth groups.

**BRETT DINKINS** serves as the President of the Missouri Community Betterment Board of Directors. Dinkins grew up in Annapolis, Mo before attending the University of Missouri majoring in Organizational Communication, Political Science, and minoring in Sociology. While attending school at the University of Missouri, Dinkins was awarded several accolades for his leadership. Dinkins was named one of Mizzou's "Top Fourteen Freshmen" for his service and leadership work throughout his first year and as a Junior was "tapped" into one of Mizzou's Six Secret Honor Societies for his commitment to scholarship, leadership. While at the University of Missouri, Dinkins served as the Director of Fiscal Affairs for the largest student-led philanthropy on campus and raised more than \$70,000 for the local children's hospital. Dinkins is a volunteer staff member with the American Legion Missouri Boys State Program, a Missouri Freemason, and currently works as a Legislative Assistant for the Missouri House of Representatives.



**MIKE DOWNING** is the Director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development and a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) authorized by the International Economic Development Council. In this position, Mike collaborates with local and regional economic developers in Missouri to facilitate the expansion and retention of existing businesses, promote international trade, promote Missouri's favorable business climate. Mike has a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a Bachelor's degree from Arkansas State University. A native Missourian from the Kennett area, Mike has been with DED from 1982, except for nearly two years as Executive Director for the Missouri CORE Partnership.

LISA FRANKLIN, CEcD, EDFP, is a recognized leader in the economic development profession. With more than 28 years of experience providing value to economic development organizations and communities as both a practitioner and consultant, she is frequently called upon to provide innovative solutions for economic development organizations to improve the overall effectiveness of technology-led initiatives.



As Manager of Economic Development for KCP&L, Lisa's primary responsibility is to administer and manage KCP&L's Economic Development Local Partner Programs and LocationOne Information System (LOIS), an economic development site selection application that has grown rapidly over the last few years and now serves more than 10,000 communities across the United States.

Prior to joining KCP&L, Lisa held positions with the Missouri Department of Economic Development, Jackson County, MO Economic Development and Real-Info, an economic development consulting company. Lisa is an active member of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER), Utility Economic Development Association (UEDA), National Rural Economic Development Association (NREDA), the Missouri Economic Development (Past President) and has held numerous board positions with economic development organizations over her tenure as an economic development professional.

Lisa received the designation "Certified Economic Developer" (CEcD) from IEDC in 1995 and her "Economic Development Financial Professional" (EDFP) certification in 1997. She has received the MEDC Professional Economic Development of the Year in 1998, MEDC President's Marketing Award in 2005, MEDC President's Award in 2006, MEDC Counselor Designation in 2009, and MEDC Affiliate Member of the Year in 2012. She holds a bachelor's degree in marketing and management from Missouri Southern State University in Joplin, Missouri.

LUKE HOLTSCHEIDER For the past 7 years, Luke Holschneider has worked as a Project Manager for the Missouri Dept. of Economic Development (MoDED) covering 40 counties in Southwest Missouri. In that time, he has assisted businesses in locating, expanding and starting up operations, as well as assisted communities in making the necessary accommodations for these opportunities. Luke is transitioning into a new role for the MoDED which will have a direct focus on rural business and community development. His experience working in rural Missouri, along with his established network of resources and affiliates made him a great fit for this exciting new position. Luke currently serves on the Board of Directors for Missouri Community Betterment, Missouri Rural Development Partners and as a District Director for the Missouri Economic Development Council.



DAN LENNON is the Director of the Missouri Division of Tourism, bringing more than 20 years of successful strategic tourism marketing and brand management experience in both the private and public sectors in Missouri. He is responsible for shaping a marketing strategy that enhances the image of Missouri and entices more tourists – and the spending and tax revenue they generate -- to visit the State. Dan manages the daily operations of the Division and, working with staff and consultants, leads the development of marketing and public relations programs, manages the implementation of the strategic marketing plan, provides direction for annual domestic, international, and group tour work plans, consults widely with statewide industry partners, and is a frequent speaker on Missouri tourism topics, representing the Division of Tourism at regional and national tourism and economic development conferences on a regular basis.

From 2003-2013, Dan served as Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations for the Branson Convention & Visitors Bureau, where he directed Branson's advertising, brand development, publications, website development, and public relations. A member of the singing Lennon Family, he was also co-producer and featured vocalist in the popular Lennon Brothers Swing Music Show at the Lawrence Welk Resort Theatre in Branson from 1994-2002.

A 2006 graduate of the Leadership Missouri Program of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Dan has degrees in English and Applied Linguistics from UCLA. In July 2010, he earned his Certified Destination Marketing Executive designation (CDME), completing an advanced educational program for tourism marketing professionals designed by Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) and Purdue University.

MICAH MELLING is a digital marketing professional based in Washington, DC. Micah currently works in analytics and insights for the digital department at Edelman, the world's largest marketing communications firm. At Edelman, he contributes to a variety of consulting projects for Fortune 100 companies. Micah graduated summa cum laude from the University of Central Missouri in the spring of 2015, where he majored in economics and business management. A native of Clinton, MO, he was highly active in community projects throughout high school and college. Most notably, he led a committee that successfully supported passage of a \$24 million school bond in 2013. Additionally, Micah served as a National Officer for DECA, a 200,000-member association of business students, where he worked with student groups across the country on community-development projects. After serving as an MCB judge in 2014, Micah is excited to be back with the organization for this conference.



RANDY RAILSBACK has served as Executive Director to the Green Hills Regional Planning Commission for 12 years. He was Executive Director of the Northwest Regional Council of Governments in Maryville, Missouri for 11 years prior to providing directorship to Green Hills RPC.

Randy's professional accomplishments have received nationwide attention for innovative community development practices.

His career experiences have encompassed all areas of community development including grant writing and community/economic development activities for multiple counties and communities.

JASON RAY, AICP – Jason grew up as a military brat and graduated High School in the small town of Knob Noster, MO; he received a degree in Community and Regional Planning from Missouri State University in 2010. Since then, he has worked in the Joplin, MO region as Deputy Director of the Harry S Truman Coordinating Council (HSTCC) specializing in comprehensive planning, transportation planning, economic development, land use, disaster recovery, grant writing and management, and program development. Jason recently gained credentials from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and accepted a position with Missouri State University in Springfield.



Additionally, Jason has served on the Planning and Zoning Commission for Springfield, MO for 4 years, has been a community judge for MCB 4 years in a row, is President of the American Planning Association's Ozark Mountain Section, and is involved in a number of other community and charitable organizations throughout SW Missouri.



SEAN SIEBERT - Dr. Sean Siebert is a passionate innovator with a focus on job creation through entrepreneurship and the acceleration of existing business. Through his efforts, Siebert has created an economic development model that binds education and economic development through entrepreneurship and innovation. Currently, Siebert serves as the Founder and C.E.O. of the strategic management firm Invent Yourself, LLC, and the Creator of the "Adopt An Innovator" Business Model for rural community re-development.

ROBIN SIMPSON is the director of the Mark Twain Regional Council of Government and has been employed by the COG since 1978. She has held virtually every position at the Council since her employment. The Council is a regional planning organization which serves eight counties in Northeast Missouri. She is the MCB Vice President.



ALAN SPELL manages a research team at the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC), in the state's economic development department. Alan and his staff provide economic, industry, and workforce analysis to policymakers and the public. Alan has worked in economic development since 1995 in various roles and holds degrees in Economics and Landscape Architecture, as well as certification as a Community Researcher.

CHERI TUNE Cheri Tune is the Director of the Certified Work Ready Communities initiative with the Missouri Division of Workforce Development. She began this role July 1, but prior to that spent 8 years as a Regional Workforce Coordinator with DED & worked closely with project managers, local economic developers, community colleges, & other partner agencies to promote workforce development programs & services. In addition, she was responsible for providing Employment Transition support to businesses throughout the mid-Mo region. Cheri has held many positions throughout her career with the state...dedicating nearly 30 years with DED and DWD. She resides in Rolla & in her "spare time" helps to manage a large cattle operation.



BONDI WOOD is the Director of the Graduate Grantsmanship Certificate at the University of Missouri's Truman School of Public Affairs, where she is also an adjunct instructor for the on-line, four-course graduate certificate program. Bondi has also been an instructor for MU's Faculty Grant Writing Institute. A free-lance writer and writing consultant for more than 20 years, Bondi began her grant writing career working primarily for nonprofits delivering humanitarian aid. Most recently Bondi served as the grant writing consulting for MU's Thompson Center for Autism. Bondi has written more than 200 articles for business, consumer, and women's publications, in addition to being among the MU grant writers who authored, "Grant Seeking in Higher Education: Strategies and Tools for College Faculty". Bondi has a bachelor's in English education and a master's in composition and rhetoric, both from MU.