



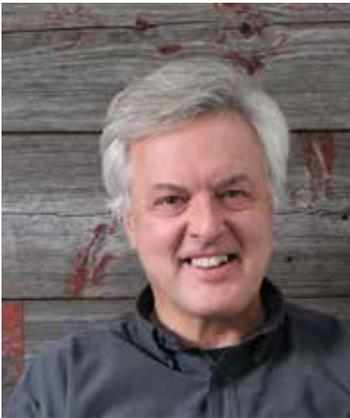
# Biographies



## Lance Armstrong

In 1996, as one of the top ranked cyclists in the world, Lance Armstrong was diagnosed with advanced testicular cancer. With the help of his medical team, family and friends, Armstrong recovered and went on to win the Tour de France a record seven consecutive times, from 1999 to 2005.

Armstrong has also become a leading advocate in the fight against cancer. Armstrong founded The Lance Armstrong Foundation after his diagnosis. The LAF became LIVESTRONG and to date, it has raised more than \$500 million for the fight against cancer. He has five children and splits his time between Austin, Texas and Aspen, Colorado.



## Tim Blumenthal

Tim Blumenthal is president of PeopleForBikes, the largest U.S. bicycle advocacy group that represents the bike industry and more than one million individuals. During his 37-year career in bicycling, he's served as an editor for VeloNews, Bicycling and Mountain Bike Magazines, and as the first full-time executive director of the International Mountain Bicycling Association. His TV writing and commentary resume includes seven Olympic Games for ABC and NBC, and 35 shows on ESPN and the Outdoor Life Network. He was inducted into the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame.



## Scott Bricker

Scott Bricker joined Travel Oregon as a Destination Development Manager in March 2016. Scott is spearheading Travel Oregon's bicycle tourism, outdoor recreation, and visitor transportation options programs. Prior to Travel Oregon, Scott worked as a contractor, delivering 18 Bicycle Tourism Studios and helped develop the Bike Friendly Business Program. A former non-profit leader, he worked at the Bicycle Transportation Alliance for 11 years and America Walks for six years. Scott earned a Master's Degree of Urban and Regional Planning and Bachelors of Political Science. Scott lives on an urban farm with wife, daughters, chickens, bees, and various pets.



# Biographies



## Laura Crawford

Since 2009, Laura Crawford and Russ Roca of The Path Less Pedaled have championed rural bicycle tourism, blending storytelling and community development to bridge the gap between traveling cyclists, bike advocates, and tourism professionals. Currently based in Portland, Oregon, Roca and Crawford have worked with communities and tourism agencies across the US and Canada.



## Jim Cummins

Jim is one of two original Co-Founders of Dirty Kanza 200. (Along with the late Joel Dyke.) Born and raised in Kansas, Jim has spent the bulk of his life living, working, and playing in the Flint Hills. Much of his formative teenage years were spent on the back of a Yamaha YZ. When he wasn't racing in local motocross and hare scrambles events, he was exploring the backroads around his hometown of El Dorado. His love of racing also provided the opportunity to explore the world of race promoting. While a Junior in High School, he helped to organize the first-ever Kansas High School Motocross State Championship.

Jim's early adult years brought marriage (to the love of his life, Susie) and parenthood (to two sons, Danny and Joe). It also brought a 30-year career in manufacturing, the bulk of which was spent honing his skills as a Packaging Engineer. This period also brought a transition from motorcycles to mountain bikes, which in turn, led to organizing and promoting various mountain bike events. Then in 2006, inspired by some of the very early "gravel grinder" events, Jim created Dirty Kanza 200. And the rest, as they say, "Is history..."



## Dave Edwards

After a 12 year break from riding after getting his driver's license at 16, Dave went on a 4th of July mountain biking trip in Colorado and was completely hooked. He began racing both mountain and road, and with thoughts of biking always on his mind this led to the start of Primal 3 years later in 1992. Dave is still equally as passionate about biking and its benefits today as he was back then. Dave lives in Denver, CO, still loves to ride as much as he can and is heavily involved in new product development at Primal. Dave has a strong background in systems and software, database management and accounting, which all helped immensely in the success of Primal over the years. The most fun thing I do every year? RAGBRAI!



### **Robyn Elliott**

Robyn is the owner operator of Bicycle Tours of Atlanta, an urban bicycle tour company that has been rolling visitors through the history, art and culture of Atlanta for six years. With a strong focus on staff training, unique experiences through story-telling and guest safety, Bicycle Tours of Atlanta has maintained the #1 ranking with Trip Advisor for Outdoor Activities in Atlanta for 5 years.



### **Timmy Finch**

Timmy Finch is a South Carolina lawyer in the Bike Law Network, a network of independent lawyers and law firms who share a common approach to the law and to helping cyclists. Timmy is a 2009 graduate of the Charleston School of Law. For the past five years he has worked as a prosecutor in the Ninth Circuit Solicitor's Office. He has extensive trial experience as a lead attorney and has handled thousands of complex cases of violent crime and sexual assault.

As a cyclist and lawyer, Timmy feels a responsibility to help injured bicyclists. His life-long love affair with the bike and sense of justice are what brought him to Bike Law. A former bicycle messenger in Washington, D.C. and Seattle, Washington, Timmy has also raced on the road and track. Timmy still uses a track bike to get around Charleston, SC where he lives with his wife and son. Road riding is a passion and a release and Timmy rides every chance he gets.



### **Jason Hackett**

Jason Hackett is the CEO and Founder of New York City based Brier Katama. He founded Brier Katama as a movement to advance the tourism industry worldwide. Tourism creates joy, jobs and understanding. It breaks down barriers and exposes travelers to new worlds, experiences and ideas. It makes the "other" familiar and distant places into the new local. Brier Katama works to help tourism businesses: the DMOs, hotels, operators and attractions eliminate obstacles and improve the traveler's experience.

Jason Hackett has been leading digital and design transformations for consumer brands for 15+ years. His work has included the development of interactive TV applications, bringing magazine publication online, digital advertising development, interactive innovation centers, social media, content and sales strategies for travel and hospitality. The foundation for all Jason's work has been a relentless championing of the user experience and a deep commitment to using data to test results. Creatively he draw on the elements of narrative and storytelling to help weave a compelling landscape for my users and customers to explore and fashion their own stories.



# Biographies



## Arlen Hall

Arlen is the Director of Tours at Adventure Cycling Association and resides in Missoula, Montana, the mecca of bicycle travel. He is responsible for overseeing the execution of more than 100 bicycle tours for Adventure Cycling on an annual basis. Arlen is also a board member of the Bicycle Tour Network. When he is not planning tours for Adventure Cycling, you can find him cycling around the country on his 50-state cycling quest, his quest to find the best coconut cream pie in America via bicycle or perhaps riding with the “Old Guys”. Arlen loves the open road, meeting interesting people in small town America, and sharing his passion for cycling and pies!



## Zack Ham

Zack Ham (pictured left) and Cullen King are the founders of Ride With GPS, one of the premier bike route planning and ride analysis tools available via the web, iOS and Android. They have a combined 18 years of direct experience running a company aimed at providing software solutions for all bicyclists, and have extensive knowledge of what real, everyday cyclists want, as well as the changing trends in recreational cycling. Both graduated with degrees in Computer Science, Zack from the University of Oregon and Cullen from Oregon State University. After 7 years of road cycling, they have spent the last two years enjoying more adventure, gravel and mountain biking.



## Joy Hancock

Joy joined Bike Florida's staff mid-September 2014, after serving as the Executive Director of Freewheel, Inc since October 2011. During her tenure with Freewheel she directed an annual cross state bicycle tour in Oklahoma as well as served on the organizing committee of the 2nd Oklahoma Bicycle Summit. She also served on the Board of Directors of the Bicycle Tour Network, a national organization dedicated to promoting and raising awareness of the vast economic impact of bicycle tourism worldwide.

As an avid cyclist and runner, Joy believes there is nothing better than experiencing the world through active travel. When she's not cycling, or running, Joy enjoys great books, traveling the world with her wonderful husband, and learning other languages. At the moment she is exploring all the great things her new home in Florida has to offer, especially the beach!



### **Doug Haney**

Husband, dad of girls, optimist, storyteller, water lover, cyclist, volunteer, five Olympics, 48 states, 32 countries, genuinely happy

Doug is communicator and an expert in bringing people together. Originally from Michigan, Doug worked with the Women's Sports Foundation and U.S. Olympic Committee before landing in the Adirondacks with USA Canoe/Kayak in 2001. That experience led to 12 years in major event management and elite athlete communications with the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association, a career that included five Olympic Games.

He founded GreatRange in 2014 as a way to continue working in amateur sports while focusing on projects that directly impact the Adirondack community. GreatRange's first major collaboration was with the global non-profit Wildlife Conservation Society to produce and execute Cycle Adirondacks, a now annual fully supported road cycling tour of the Adirondacks and surrounding region.



### **Justin Hanneken**

Justin Hanneken is husband to Karena and dad to 5 kids. They live in Fort Myers, Florida. Justin earned his Bachelor's degree from University of Maryland Baltimore County and his Master's degree from Huntington University. The Hannekens founded Ends of the Earth Cycling, a ministry of New Mission Systems Int'l in 2012. Ends Cycling ([www.endscycling.com](http://www.endscycling.com)) promotes and resources global youth ministries. Since its inception, Ends Cycling has hosted 16 long-distance tours in states such as FL, MI, KY, NJ and more! Ends Cycling has raised over \$350,000 for youth projects in 11 countries. Justin is so excited to be back at the National Bicycle Tourism Conference for the 2nd time! He rides a Bianchi road bike and commutes on a Bike Friday bike. He enjoys board games, chicken wings, the beach and drinking all types of tea. Justin also serves as Associate Pastor at C3 Church in Naples, FL.



### **Joan Hanscom**

Named one of the Top 50 Most Influential Women in the Cycling Industry by Bicycle Retailer, Joan has been working with bikes professionally since 2002. Prior to joining USA Cycling she owned and operated the US Gran Prix of Cyclocross; was the Race Director for the 2013 UCI Cyclo-cross World Champions in Louisville, KY and served as Marketing Manager for ABUS Mobile Security, Inc. She is also an enthusiastic amateur racer and has traveled extensively to race and ride her bike.



# Biographies



## **Andy Hanshaw**

Andy Hanshaw is Executive Director of The San Diego County Bicycle Coalition. He also is the Founder and Event Director for the annual Bike the Bay Community Bike Ride held in August. He has worked in San Diego for the past thirteen years in the areas of community development and fund raising. As a cyclist, advocate and cycling instructor, he has been leading efforts to make San Diego a top bike friendly region and destination for bicycle travel. He currently serves on the board of the Bicycle Tourism Network and is Chair of the City of San Diego's Bicycle Advisory Committee.

While not pedaling, Andy and his wife Sandy own and operate The Wine Pub, a local, bike and dog friendly wine bar and restaurant located in Point Loma. He holds a bachelor's degree in communication from Arizona State University and a Masters of Public Administration from Portland State University.



## **Aaron Hautala**

Aaron Hautala is the volunteer president of the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Crew, a chapter of the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA). Through the past 4 years Aaron has helped guide Cuyuna in becoming an international mountain bicycling destination and a purpose-built community emphasizing quality-of-life investments to first increase tourism economics and second recruit and retain the 21st century workforce and business entrepreneurs. When not volunteering Aaron owns an advertising/public relations agency and enjoys every moment spent on his East Yawkey Farm with wife Beth and their four fully energetic children.



## **Franklin Johnson**

Franklin Johnson is an Atlanta native who saw an opportunity to revive a southern jewel, the Bicycle Ride Across Georgia (BRAG). After graduating from Emory University's Goizueta Business School, he went into finance but had a hunger for something more fulfilling. Following his passion for event planning he began hosting festivals in his spare time. After starting and growing several events to success, he took an opportunity to lead the Bicycle Ride Across Georgia from its storied past, into the future. With his fresh perspective and ideas, Franklin was able to grow BRAG attendance 83% within the first year.



### **T.J. Juskiwicz**

T.J. Juskiwicz is the director of the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa-RAGBRAI™. RAGBRAI is the oldest, longest and largest recreational bicycle tour in the world. Juskiwicz has worked with RAGBRAI since 2003.

Juskiwicz brings with him more than 20 years of athletic event experience and a love of cycling. Prior to RAGBRAI, he served as director of Florida's cross-state ride, Bike Florida, and has been involved with the event since its inaugural ride in 1992. Juskiwicz was also one of the coordinators of Bike South 2000, a 2,000-mile, 30-day, bicycle tour of six southern states.

Prior to his work in the cycling industry, Juskiwicz served as director of Florida's Sunshine State Games, the state's Olympic-style multi-sport festival. He also worked in the marketing department of the University of Florida athletic department and at the Olympic Games in Atlanta. He also helped with the founding of the United States Track Coaches Association (now the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association)

He is currently the National President of the Bicycle Tour Network (previously called the National Bicycle Tour Directors Association), an advisory board member of the Iowa Bicycle Coalition, a board member of the Iowa Sports Foundation and former National President of National Association of Governor's Councils on Physical Fitness & Sports (Now called the National Association for Health & Fitness)

He is a proud graduate of the University of Florida in Gainesville with a Masters in Sport Management and a Bachelors in Telecommunications.

He and his wife, Jodi, have been married for 17 years and have one son (Chase, 15) and a daughter (Cami, 13).



### **Cullen King**

Cullen King (pictured right) and Zack Ham are the founders of Ride With GPS, one of the premier bike route planning and ride analysis tools available via the web, iOS and Android. They have a combined 18 years of direct experience running a company aimed at providing software solutions for all bicyclists, and have extensive knowledge of what real, everyday cyclists want, as well as the changing trends in recreational cycling. Both graduated with degrees in Computer Science, Zack from the University of Oregon and Cullen from Oregon State University. After 7 years of road cycling, they have spent the last two years enjoying more adventure, gravel and mountain biking.



# Biographies



## **Stefanie Larson**

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Stefanie worked for Paramount Pictures for 7 years. After riding her bike through the crazy streets of Hollywood for many years, she decided it was time for a change and moved to beautiful Colorado Springs to join USA Cycling. Her main responsibility is to serve event directors throughout the nation by providing customized support. She believes creating sustainable infrastructures for cycling advocacy groups, tourism companies, communities, events, and clubs will foster the growth of the sport.



## **Bob Lincoln**

Bob Lincoln has been training to be a ride director all his life. He rode his first week-long bicycle camping trip at age 14 and rode 26 more Jaunt with Jim Klobuchar Bike Rides (1974-2013). He has been around this ride all his life and in 2013, Jim Klobuchar asked him to take over the leadership. Renamed the Tour of Minnesota Formerly the Klobuchar Trip in 2014, we are now in our 43rd edition.

In addition to leading the tour, Bob has also been active as a volunteer with the Multiple Sclerosis Ride Around Minnesota (MS TRAM), the St. Paul Classic and the Minneapolis Bike Tour.

In 2013, Bob became a League Cycling Instructor (LCI). When he is not leading bicycle tours he is teaching full time as a media specialist at Sun Path Elementary School in Shakopee, Minnesota where he plays drums in the library, writes songs about children's books and produces videos for the kids.



### **Steve Mathews**

Steve is a lifelong bicycle rider, riding to grade school and later longer distances in high school and college. During college his bicycle was his primary or only mode of transportation. He bicycle toured in Kansas, Arkansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and Montana during and shortly after college.

Steve participated in multiple competitive sports in high school and crew in college. He participated in duathlons and triathlons in the early 80's. He began USCF racing in the early 80's and continued through 1990, in the central US. He participated in rider development and soigneur camps at the OTC in Colorado Springs during that time. Steve continues to ride road, cyclocross and mountain bikes recreationally.

He developed Chamois Butt'r, with much input from racers and medical professional friends, during the late 80's and early 90's. Steve is a registered Physical Therapist, (BS University of Kansas 1982). With a bicycle shop partner, he incorporated Paceline Products, Inc. in 1993 to market Chamois Butt'r. In 2004 Steve purchased all the outstanding shares of Paceline Products for the opportunity to grow the company further. Chamois Butt'r is distributed extensively throughout the US and Canada, and is growing internationally with distribution in Mexico, South America, Asia, Europe and Australia.



### **Gene McGee**

Mayor Gene McGee of the City of Ridgeland, Mississippi started cycling about 20 years ago. He has served as Mayor since 1989. Under his leadership, he has overseen the construction of 20 miles of multi-use trails and 4 miles of bike lanes; the passage of one of the first helmet laws in Mississippi; and the title of Bicycle Friendly Community. Ridgeland was named Mississippi's Healthiest Hometown, due in part to McGee's leadership as a cycling advocate.

Ridgeland's trail network spans across the city and connects with five parks including a national park and a large recreational lake. The city has built trail connections to local bicycle shops, City Hall, schools, hotels, shopping areas, and a state cultural attraction, the Mississippi Craft Center. There are 24 miles of designated bike routes, a BMX Park, and a mountain bike trail park.

McGee promotes cycling in the community and educates citizens of all ages about cycling's benefits and about bicycling safety. Early on most mornings, he can be found cycling along the Natchez Trace Parkway and on the city's trails or bike routes. He rides centuries several times a year and enjoys charity rides such as the MS-150 for multiple sclerosis as well as cancer rides.



# Biographies



## Rudy Miller

Rudy started “off road bicycling” in 1992. Soon he was riding with the Suwannee Bicycle Association (SBA) where he eventually became the lead Ride Guide, Director of the Suwannee Bike Festival for 2 years (about 700 attendees each year) and the club president for 2 years. Rudy road BRAG in 1994, the Hut-to-Hut trail from Telluride, CO to Moab, UT twice, has attended and volunteered at multiple off road bicycle festivals and participated in numerous South West Association of Mountainbike Pedalers (SWAMP Club) out of state trips. He has mountain biked in many of this country’s States, across Europe and in Africa. Rudy has a MA in management, was in charge of feeding 600,000 Rwandan refugees during the genocide crisis, has authored many off road biking articles and co-authored “Fat Tire Favorites” a guide to West-Central Florida Off-Road Bicycling.



## Marian Mithani

At Eco-Counter, Marian Mithani works with cities across the United States and Canada to measure the value of cycling. Eco-Counter is a world leader in counting cyclist as well as pedestrians along greenways, in downtowns, parks and trails in both urban and rural landscapes. In her role, Marian is able to share Eco-Counter’s pioneering expertise: current practices in collecting bike count data, the latest trends, innovative partnerships and connections to other champions in the field. She advises communities on the technologies, data management tools and strategies to monitoring cyclists. Her favorite recent project favorite is an environmental scan of bike monitoring practices in Bicycle Friendly Communities where she reached out to over 150 communities.

In a prior life, Marian has worked in consulting to help cities plan their cycling network, design their bikeways and create their Bike and Trail Master Plan representing low-cost to over \$50M of cycling investment. Marian is a licensed engineer, a member of the Association for Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals as well as the Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers.



## Louisa Mursell

As Executive Director of Transportation Options, a not for profit organization in Ontario, Canada, Louisa manages and actively contributes to a number of innovative programs including those focussed on developing and promoting cycle tourism across the province. Working with a wide array of partners, Ontario By Bike coordinates workshops, conferences, tours, marketing campaigns and a bicycle friendly certification program for tourism businesses. Providing consulting services on regional and provincial level projects, Louisa recognizes the value of capturing the metrics to support further cycle tourism destination development.

Louisa holds a business degree and has considerable experience working in the tourism industry having worked for a tour operator at international destinations and run programs for tourism organizations in Ontario. A keen cyclist and outdoor enthusiast, she commutes to work by bike, and likes to bike on weekends for fun with her family.



### **Dr. Sarah Nicholls**

Dr. Sarah Nicholls is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Community Sustainability and Geography at Michigan State University. She holds a BSc in Geography from University College London and her MS and PhD degrees in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Sciences from Texas A&M University. Her work focuses on the role of tourism, recreation and parks in the creation of active, vibrant and sustainable communities in Michigan, the US and beyond.

During 2012, Sarah facilitated the development of the 2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan, the document that now guides the direction and growth of one of the largest industries in the state. Over the course of 2013-2017 she is coordinating implementation of that plan on behalf of the Michigan Travel Commission and Travel Michigan. In recognition of these efforts, Sarah received the Outstanding Achievement in Michigan Tourism Award from Governor Rick Snyder at the Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism in 2013.

Sarah also serves as Chair of the Ingham County Parks and Recreation Commission and as the representative for state tourism on the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Michigan Trails Advisory Council.



### **Adam Robbins**

Adam Robbins is the National Director of Event & Sports Sponsorship at USA TODAY. The USA TODAY Network delivers high-quality and engaging content across print, digital, social and experiential platforms with a reach of 110 million monthly unique visitors across the U.S. and 52 million monthly unique visitors across USA TODAY Sports Media Group products. Prior, Adam was Senior Vice President of Corporate Partnerships with the Arena Football League where he led all national sponsorship sales and corporate partnership marketing efforts for the AFL. Robbins was also previously the President and Founder of RSM International, a full service sports management and marketing agency specializing in the representation of professional athletes. He was an NFLPA Certified Contract Advisor.



### **Russ Roca**

Since 2009, Russ Roca and Laura Crawford of The Path Less Pedaled have championed rural bicycle tourism, blending storytelling and community development to bridge the gap between traveling cyclists, bike advocates, and tourism professionals. Currently based in Portland, Oregon, Roca and Crawford have worked with communities and tourism agencies across the US and Canada.



# Biographies



## Blake Sanders

Blake Sanders is the Mayor the Town of West Pelzer (Population 980) and is the second youngest Mayor in South Carolina. Blake is a graduate of Clemson University, serves as a member of the Greenville Pickens Area Transportation Study Team, Past President of the Anderson County Municipal Association, Board Members of Anderson Complete Streets, and is active in subcommittee boards of the United Way and Innovate Anderson.

In addition to serving as Mayor, Blake is an Associate Landscape Architect leading Alta Planning and Design's Greenville, South Carolina office. He has over 10 years of professional experience as a Landscape Architect, focusing on guiding municipalities from conceptual planning through construction administration. His experience includes streetscape improvements, corridor planning, bike and greenway planning, as well as municipal, campus, park and recreation design. In addition to ensuring that West Pelzer had designated bike lanes connecting Chapman Park to West Pelzer Elementary School, Blake has designed and provided construction administration for over 100 miles of bicycle lanes and greenways in South Carolina.



## Jim Sayer

Jim Sayer is Executive Director of Adventure Cycling Association, the largest cycling membership organization in North America, and dedicated to inspiring and empowering people to travel by bicycle. He has served in many non-profit and public service capacities during his career, including as President of the Sierra Business Council, Director of Public Affairs at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Executive Director of Greenbelt Alliance in the San Francisco Bay Area, and as a legislative staffer in the U.S. Congress (for Senator Tim Wirth from Colorado). He has also served on many boards, including America Bikes and Amnesty International USA. Of course, he greatly enjoys traveling by bike; among his adventures last year: a mountain bike journey into Australia's outback and a triangular trip with his teen daughter for her high school senior project, riding self-supported from Missoula, Montana to Jasper National Park in Canada, taking the overnight train to Vancouver, BC, and riding back to Missoula.



## Zach Schmesser

Zach Schmesser is the Ride Director for BikeMaine, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine's week long, 350-mile bicycle tour celebrating Maine's people, places, culture and food. BikeMaine began in 2013 with 250 riders. In 2016, the sold-out ride hosted 400 riders from 36 states and provinces. The event has pumped more than \$1 million into the local economies along the route, which changes every year. The goal of the event is to promote bicycle tourism and to advance the Coalition's mission of making Maine better for biking and walking.



### **Steve Schulz**

Steve is the Executive Director for Cycle Oregon. Cycle Oregon - celebrating its 29th year - is a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming individuals and communities through bicycling. With more than \$2 million in the Cycle Oregon Fund, they are able to directly contribute \$250,000 each year to the communities through which they ride in the form of direct payments and grants. Growing up in a small town in Wyoming, Steve understands the challenges of rural communities and the opportunity for events to not only provide economic impact, but to help facilitate constructive change within these communities for years to come. Prior to joining Cycle Oregon Steve was in the fitness and adventure industry for over 20 years as the founder and owner of STRADA, in Portland, OR. Steve's greatest reward in his professional career has been being able to help transform people's lives.



### **Burkhard Stork**

Burkhard Stork (\*1972) is the national director of the German National Cyclists' Association, ADFC e.V., with more than 155.000 members one of the largest Cyclist organizations worldwide. As head of the level of operation he is inter alia responsible for advocacy, research, cooperation with administration, development of cycling tourism. Stork particular focus on international exchange of experiences: What can we learn from each other, what will bring us forward? He lives and works in Berlin.



### **Mina Thorgeson**

Mina has been the Director of Sales and Event Partnership with the Ridgeland Tourism Commission in Mississippi since 2010.

In this role, Mina is focused on leading Tourism and Meeting Sales initiatives; establishing and monitoring metrics; honing the deployment of the sales efforts; delivering customer and industry presentations; guiding cooperative sales opportunities with stakeholders and working to further establish the destination within targeted markets.

The Commission, working in accord with the City of Ridgeland and utilizing Mina's expertise, is focused on enhancing and marketing Ridgeland as a premier sports destination with significant emphasis on cycling. The cycling tourism opportunities and initiatives such as the Natchez Trace Century Ride, McGee Lungbuster Fat Tire Festival, Race at Renaissance Criterium, BMX State Games and the newly created Ridgeland OBO ( One Behind the Other) Tandem Rally showcase the city's cycling attributes. Mina's cultivation of stakeholder engagement and partner commitment are essential to the success of cycling tourism in Ridgeland. Ridgeland is a Bronze Level Bicycling Friendly Community and the Bicycling Capital of Mississippi!

Becoming an avid cyclist in the last few years, being a longtime sports enthusiast and a tireless sales personality, make Mina's role at Ridgeland Tourism Commission a natural and successful fit.



# Biographies



## Coach David B. Thorpe

David Thorpe is the Executive Director of the Pro Training Center in Clearwater, Florida. Thorpe also works for Scouts Inc. as a part of ESPN's NBA coverage and is a regular contributor to the TrueHoop blog along with Henry Abbott.

Thorpe got his start as a high school assistant coach. He then went into personal training in the early-to-mid 1990s, training some of Florida's top high schoolers. As his work began to include more collegiate and professional players, he started the Pro Training Center.

His students over the years have included: Udonis Haslem (Miami Heat), Luol Deng (Los Angeles Lakers), Corey Brewer (Houston Rockets) and Joakim Noah (New York Knicks), Thorpe has been married since 1990 and is the father of twins. He is a graduate of the University of Florida and owns a vizsladog.



## Patrick Tuttle

Patrick Tuttle has served the tourism market of Joplin, Missouri for the past 6 years. Starting in 2009 he was the Director of the Joplin Sports Authority and in early 2011 became the Director for the Joplin Convention & Visitors Bureau where he serves today. A Texas native, he was raised in Joplin but spent 20 years away serving in the United States Air Force. 11 of those years he served in various levels of International Protocol, returning to Joplin following his military career. Before entering tourism fulltime Patrick taught in a junior college, held administrative positions in both the not-for-profit and corporate worlds, as well as a festival manager. With Joplin's location in western Missouri, on the Kansas and Oklahoma borders, regional tourism partnerships are vital. Under Patrick's leadership he has nurtured several borderless relationship into strong tourism alliances. Many of these community partnerships date back to the mid-1800s when the Tri-State region was known for its mineral deposits. Today the focus is to build the heritage into a multi-faceted cultural destination. The primary connectivity for this; the Mother Road – Historic Route 66 offers an assembly of Americana which produces a sustained global appeal.



## Nelson Vails

The road began in Harlem, NYC for "The Cheetah", Nelson Beasley Vails. Harlem may seem an unlikely beginning for a cycling legend, but it was there that Nelson started on the path to become the first African-American to win an Olympic medal in cycling. His silver medal from the 1984 Los Angeles Games is the crowning jewel to a prolific and successful career on both the track and road. Cycling has taken him down many roads around the world, and Nelson's contribution to cycling's history was recognized with his induction into the US Bicycling Hall of Fame in 2009.



### **Matt VanSlyke**

Matt is a husband, father of two boys and professional transportation planner who has spent the better part of the last decade working with local communities on a wide variety of programs and projects. This experience ranges from administering federal and state-funded transportation and community planning programs, conducting training for elected officials, creating local trail and infrastructure projects and the administration of complex community development projects. He is a recognized leader in local, regional and statewide bicycle and pedestrian advocacy, the promotion of bicycle tourism, trail assessment, construction and maintenance.

Matt is Event Manager of Cycle Adirondacks, a fully-supported annual bicycle tour that has welcomed bicycle tourists from more than 40 states and Canada to experience the Adirondack Park from the saddle. He is also the owner/operator of Leatherstocking Bicycle Adventures and founder of Utica Bike Rescue, a non-profit community bike in his hometown.

He is always looking for new ways to provide people with a fresh look at the way they interact with the natural and built environments. The most exciting and interesting thing for him professionally is having the opportunity to create innovative projects and events that showcase the unique, and often unrecognized, beauty of upstate New York.



### **Renee Wheelock**

Renee Wheelock is the Community Relations Manager for The Denver Post Ride The Rockies & Pedal The Plains Bicycle Tours. Renee leads the charge with host communities to ensure all parties know what to expect when thousands of cyclists pass through town. Responsible for all communications pre and post tour; she organizes materials, arranges planning meetings and facilitates day of activities.

In addition to logistical responsibilities, Renee manages the charitable side of both events working closely with The Denver Post Community Foundation. Sizable grants are left in each host community and she manages the process in which organizations are granted money through a Grant Advisory Committee and working directly with nonprofit organizations to guarantee they are the right fit for the Foundation.

Renee found her love for cycling prior to her work with The Denver Post when she participated in a cross country cycling trip with a nonprofit organization called Bike & Build. In addition to riding as a participant, she also led a two week trip with the same organization and has been hooked on bicycle tours ever since.

Renee will be promoted to ride director in November.



# Biographies



## **Darryll White**

Darryll has 18 years experience in the urban bicycle tour and rental industry as both a leading operator and a designer / facilitator of economies of scale platforms for the industry. Darryll was instrumental in the development of bicycle tourism in New York City and San Francisco and currently directs the North American division of Cycle Cities. Cycle Cities is a global referral and economies of scale platform for the bicycle tour and rental industry with a membership representing 50 different tourism markets across 18 countries.



## **Brooke Wissler**

Brooke Wissler is the Founder and CEO of Moxie Cycling, a women's specific cycling apparel brand with over 400 national retailers including REI, Performance Bikes and Backcountry.com. Brooke has over 10 years of strategic planning, marketing and brand management experience and has worked at consumer and B2B agencies managing an annual portfolio of \$38MM. Her industry experience includes an array of clients including SHAPE magazine, Seattle's Best Coffee, Menchie's Frozen Yogurt, and Budget Blinds. Brooke is recognized for her "can-do", imagine the possibilities approach to creatively accomplishing business objectives.



## **Casey Woods**

Casey Woods is the Executive Director of Emporia Main Street in Emporia, Kansas. Before accepting the director position in March of 2009, Casey worked in both retail and agricultural jobs with his family. A lifelong resident of the Emporia Area, Casey was a ten year volunteer for Emporia Main Street prior to his appointment as director. During that time, he served as the organizations President and chair of the Business Enhancement Committee, among other posts.

Casey serves as a partner in PlaceMakers, LLC, a consulting firm that routinely works with both large and small communities, and their businesses, to promote sustainable economic growth through community and economic development practices throughout United States.

As part of Casey's Main Street duties, he routinely discusses techniques to improve businesses, organizations and communities through organization, design, promotion and other business enhancement activities.