



**2024  
IAMMA**

**Annual  
Conference**

**Leading  
For Tomorrow:**

A Sustainable  
Vision of Local  
Governance

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- Financial Controls
  - Teams
  - Branding
  - Data
  - Community Engagement
  - Leadership
- 

April 19  
NIU Naperville

# Introduction

or: well, this is awkward...

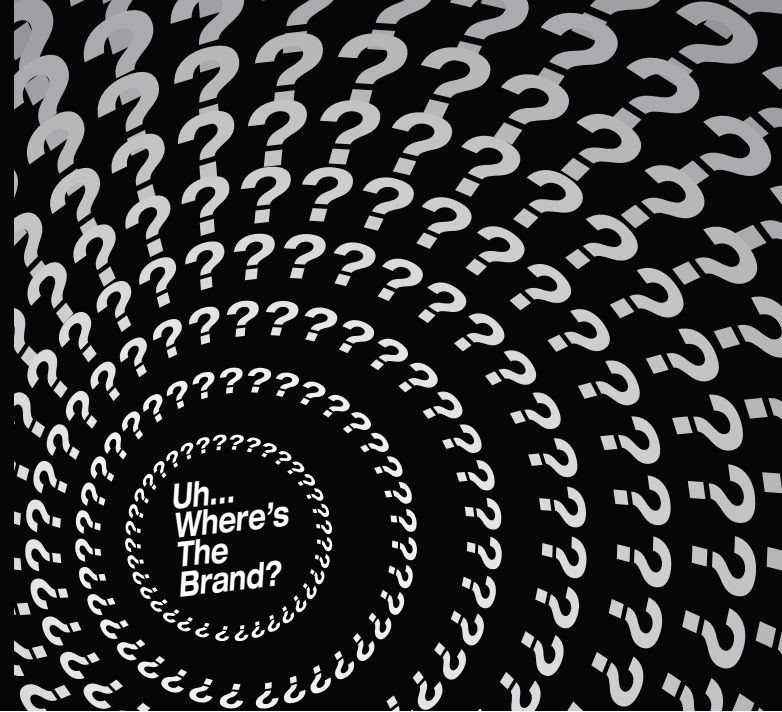
You may have noticed the distinct lack of branding or color in this year's Conference Program. Your eyes do not deceive you; we did not run out of ink.

It turns out, when we said we were finally going to "rebrand" in 2024, doing so led to two very important, entirely foreseeable consequences:

1. We wouldn't be launching our new brand in this program. (Although you'll see it on Friday!)
2. We couldn't use the old brand for this program.

# Oops!

The result is this, the most original Annual Conference program yet: one completely devoid of branding. Right..?



## Schedule at a Glance

8:30 - 9:30 a.m.	Opening Plenary Session		Auditorium
9:45 - 10:45 a.m.	Building Sustainable Teams Room 162	Leadership & Internal Controls Room 101C	
11:00 a.m. - noon	Municipal Branding Room 162	Networking & Connections Room 101C	
12:15 - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch & Awards Presentation		Room 101 A+B
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	Community Engagement Room 162	Sustainability Through Data Standardization Room 101C	
2:45 - 4:00 p.m.	Closing Plenary Session Panel Discussion on Sustainable Leadership		Auditorium

# Morning

## Opening Plenary Session

**8:30 a.m.**  
**Auditorium**

The 2024 IAMMA Conference starts with an electrifying morning plenary session. We will kick off a new era of transformation and innovation for the Association with the unveiling of our exciting new brand.

IAMMA and a5 Branding have worked to create a new design language that embodies how we enhance the experience and careers of our members. From our own example, we'll show how organizations can embrace and embody a new brand, spread the word, and engage with their platforms.



## Building Sustainable Teams as an Individual or Mid-Level Leader

**9:45 a.m.**  
**Room 162**

*Andrew Buckwinkler  
Jarrell Blakey  
Riley Lynch*

Individual contributors are professionals who contribute to a team or organization but do not manage others. They often collaborate across teams and departments, influencing others and organizational change without having positional authority. Great individual contributors and mid-level managers are just as valuable as executive level leadership. This session will feature a panel of three professionals who have made significant contributions to organizational success in their respective roles as they discuss opportunities, challenges, and strategies to maximize impact and influence.



## Government Leadership & Responsibility for Internal Controls

**9:45 a.m.**  
**Room 101C**

*Michael Malatt*

Do you know what role you play in your local government's internal control processes? Learn about your responsibility for internal controls vs. the responsibility of independent auditors. Speakers will share best practices on what role elected officials, administrators, and others within your government should have to ensure that your government's assets are secure. The agenda includes real-life examples of how things can go wrong without proper administrative due diligence at all levels.



## Municipal Branding

**11:00 a.m.**  
**Room 162**

*John Harris*

How can your community's brand contribute to economic sustainability? We'll explore how a community's brand can tell a unique story and contribute to a community's economic growth.



## Networking & Connections

**11:00 a.m.**  
**Room 101C**

New to the profession?  
Just moved to Illinois?  
Want to catch up with previous colleagues?

Join us in a low-pressure environment designed to foster meaningful connections and expand your professional network. Don't miss this opportunity to build relationships and exchange insights with fellow local government professionals.



# Afternoon

## Lunch & Awards Presentation

**12:15 p.m.**  
**Room 101A+B**

Join us for a satisfying lunch and brief remarks from the Association's incoming Executive Board. After lunch, we will celebrate excellence in our community with the presentation of the Association's annual awards:

- Gregory F. Ford Outstanding Member
- Future Leader
- Innovative Community Program
- Distinguished Mentor



## Community Engagement Initiatives: How Organizations Use Their Platforms

**1:30 p.m.**  
**Room 162**

*Melanie Santostefano*

When a new development or project is happening, leaders have a responsibility to ensure all stakeholders – including residents, property owners and businesses – are not only aware of potential changes, but also are educating citizens why changes are happening. Through this session, attendees will learn how to utilize a multi-channel, multimedia approach to marketing, PR and public information campaigns, so that citizens trust in the organization and believe it is doing all it can to keep them educated and informed.



## Sustainability Through Data Standardization

**1:30 p.m.**  
**Room 101C**

*Martín Salmón*  
*Andrew Schuman*

Transform the future of local government by overcoming the challenges of data management in your organization. Join us to discover how data consistency is the cornerstone of system integration and how the impact of standardizing processes will influence your long-term success and build sustainability. Data is one of the most valuable assets at your fingertips; learn how to leverage data standardization to improve processes, ensure consistency, and increase resilience in the face of challenges.



## Closing Plenary Session Panel Discussion on Sustainable Leadership

**2:45 p.m.**  
**Auditorium**

*Sarah Schillerstrom*  
*Robin Weaver*

Two senior leaders will lead a whole-group discussion exploring the core of sustainable leadership. From navigating the complexities of mental health to fostering resilience and facing denial head-on, this session delves into vital topics for modern leaders. Discover the importance of values assessments and evaluations, and gain insights into assessing whether you're in the right culture and work environment. By the end of this session, participants will have actionable strategies for enduring leadership success.





# About The Speakers

**Jarrell  
Blakey**



Jarell's career kicked off with an internship in the City Manager's Office at the City of DeKalb, where he gained a broad insight into municipal operations. In this position he played a pivotal role in helping to prepare the city budget and apply for grant funding to assist with the implementation of a development plan. Shortly after beginning his internship he moved on to become a Management Analyst with the Village of Tinley Park in the Community Development Department, where he worked on a multitude of projects ranging from RFP development, process improvement, performance management, and land acquisition to name a few. Jarell completed both his Bachelor's degree and Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree at Northern Illinois University. Currently, Jarell holds the position of Economic Development and Special Projects Manager with the Village of South Holland. In this role, he works on economic development initiatives and special projects for the village, contributing to the community's growth.

**John  
Harris**



John Harris is CEO and co-founder of a5 Branding & Digital, a consultancy focused on creating healthy, sustainable communities.

A writer and strategic by trade, Harris leads the a5 team in branding, marketing and communications for communities, non-profits, affordable housing and more. a5 clients include Crystal Lake, Niles, Northbrook, Illinois Park and Recreation Association, St. Charles and Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce.

Prior to co-founding a5 in 2001, Harris was a reporter for Forbes Magazine, where he wrote the first national story on Starbucks. He began his career in Rockford, Illinois as editor of Rockford Magazine at a time when unemployment was the highest in the nation at 27 percent. It was in Rockford that Harris first became involved in helping make stronger, more vibrant communities, a passion that continues and drives a5's mission.

**Andrew  
Buckwinkler**



Andrew's career in local government started as an intern in the Village of Schaumburg, where he: transitioned all village Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to an automated PowerBI format; implemented several procedure changes throughout the village; and conducted policy research. After eight months, Andrew was brought on full-time by the village as their Management Analyst in the Village Manager's Office.

Current responsibilities include management of the village's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), assisting in drafting the village's Annual Budget Proposal, monitoring legislative priorities of the village including outreach when needed, and continued oversight of the village's KPIs. Andrew attained his master's in public administration (MPA) from Northern Illinois University in 2023.

**Riley  
Lynch**



Riley began his municipal career in 2020 as an intern for the Village of Gilberts while pursuing his master of public administration (MPA) from Northern Illinois University. A few months later, he was hired on full time as the Village's very first Management Analyst. Since then, he attained his MPA, and has assumed more responsibilities to better serve the people of Gilberts. Riley is primarily responsible for heading up the Village's zoning and development review, but he is also the lead on other projects including construction of a brand new Village park, comparative salary and utility rate analyses, and the Village's annual music festival.

## Conference Committee

Thank you to the members of IAMMA's Events and Education Committee this year who organized our Annual Conference

- Ashley Monroe, Riverside (IAMMA Board)
- Jodi Luka, Fox Lake (Co-Chair)
- Emily Shaw, Des Plaines (Co-Chair)
- Greg Anderson, Mokena
- Nicole Aranas, Lombard
- Daniel Langguth, Indian Head Park
- Kyle Legge, Fox Lake
- Jim Moran, Antioch
- Sam Reiss, Northbrook
- Jessica Sciarretta, Deerfield

**Michael  
Malatt**



Michael is a Partner with Baker Tilly and has been a member of the firm's Public Sector Practice Group since 2007. Michael has extensive experience providing financial and compliance audits, accounting services, and consulting services to state and local government organizations. Michael is also responsible for assisting in the implementation of GASB standards, including the development of practical implementation tools to providing in-depth training to firm staff and clients. Michael is a member of the Illinois CPA Society, AICPA, GFOA Special Review Committee, and IGFOA Professional Education Committee. Michael obtained a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accountancy and Mathematics and a Master of Science in Accountancy from the University of Notre Dame. Michael received the 2008 Excel Award from the Illinois CPA Society for outstanding achievement on the Uniform CPA Examination in Illinois.

**Martín Salmón**



Prior to joining MGP, Martín worked as an urban planner for the City of Takoma Park and the Maryland National-Capital Park and Planning Commission. Martín has also worked as a GIS analyst at the Center for Research and teaching of Economics (CIDE- in Spanish) located in Mexico. Martín holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Loyola University, New Orleans. He earned a Master of Arts in Community Planning and a Master's degree in GIS from the University of Maryland, College Park.

**Sarah Schillerstrom**



With a successful career in local government spanning over nearly two decades, Sarah quickly rose through the ranks and held multiple positions across various departments, including Public Works, Administrative Services, Human Resources and the Village Manager's Office. During her tenure, she served as the Human Resources Director for almost a decade and concluded her service as the Deputy Village Manager. She started her career as a L.P. Cookingham-Noll Fellow and Budget Analyst with the City of Kansas City, MO.

Sarah's true passion is to support the creation of positive and healthy work cultures in local government by helping leaders reach their full potential and attracting and retaining top talent. She has established SRSD Consulting, LLC, with the mission to normalize professional coaching within local government. Sarah is also a certified professional coach, bringing her expertise to help build a leadership pipeline for the future.



**Robin Weaver**



Robin Weaver is a retired city manager and a Senior Advisor with ICMA and ILCMA (Illinois City/County Management Assoc.) providing support services to members in a voluntary capacity. She has more than 35 years of local government experience including post-retirement consulting services and international work in Jordan and Kosovo. Robin's career path includes time as a Member in Career Transition (MICT). She is particularly experienced and focused on sustainability, citizen engagement, public works, coalition building and the recruitment/retention of talented people in the local government profession.

Robin actively serves with the ICMA International Committee, serves on the ICMA Awards Committee and also served on the ICMA Task Force to Guide Veterans transitioning to Local Government. She is an ICMA Coach and an ILCMA mentor. She has served as President and on many committees of both ILCMA and IAMMA. Additionally, she is a Board Director and Membership chair on the Legacy Project. The Legacy Project encourages women in local government. Awards include IAMMA's Outstanding Mentor Award (first recipient), the ILCMA Lifetime Achievement Award and she is an ICMA Life Member. In 2020 Robin received the Outstanding Service to the Profession Award from NIU.

Robin is married with three grown children and six grandchildren. She is active with family and friends and is an avid traveler. Volunteer community activities have been broad but now center on environmental advocacy, racial justice, settlement of asylum seekers, voter registration and multiple myeloma coaching. Robin earned both her B.A. in Political Science and her MPA from Northern Illinois University. She teaches an Ethics course in the MPA program there.

**Melanie Santostefano**



Melanie Santostefano is the founder and President of Arlington Heights-based Vicarious Multimedia, a marketing communications firm, and St. Steven Public Relations, which manages, public relations (PR), public information, and crisis communications projects. Serving local government leaders and elected officials since 2015, Melanie and her teams become partners and trusted advisors to local government leaders through the development of custom-tailored communication strategies through ongoing retainers and special projects. She is a former news journalist, editor and broadcaster, who leverages her nearly 25 years working in communications to guide organizational leaders on overall messaging and narratives, including how to reach their stakeholders in a process-driven way that is both meaningful, and comprehensive. Melanie's overarching goal through her two firms is to assist organizations in telling their unique stories, including how they provide value to their target demographic(s). Additionally, her firms support organizations through a wide range of crises and other challenging situations.

**Andrew Shuman**



Andrew began his career with MGP in 2013. Prior to joining MGP, Andrew worked for the Sequoia Riverlands Trust in Visalia California. He has a BS with a dual major in Forestry and Biological Conservation and a certificate in Environmental Studies from the University of Wisconsin - Madison, as well as a Masters in Geographical Information Science from the University of Denver. A fun fact about Andrew is that he has dressed up as Smokey the Bear on more than one occasion.

## Dress Code

For 2024, we are fully embracing a *“smart casual”* business dress code. Please, consider leaving the tie at home and trying these items of attire:

- Blazers
- Blouses
- Cardigans
- Dresses
- Polos
- Midi skirts
- Chinos
- Culottes
- Jeans, nice
- Khakis
- Sneakers, nice
- Flats
- Boat shoes
- Sandals, nice



# Thanks to our Sponsors

**a5 Branding  
& Digital**



## Afterparty

You are cordially invited to join our after-conference networking social for some complimentary refreshments, courtesy of our sponsors:

**4:30 - 6:00 p.m.**

**Rock Bottom Brewery**

28256 Diehl Road  
Warrenville, IL 60555