

Leeds Grenville Economic Development Summit

Presenter Biographies

November 18, 2022



Keynote Session: Building Ontario in Uncertain Economic Times

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy | Minister of Finance



Peter was elected as MPP for Pickering—Uxbridge in 2018 and was re-elected in 2022. As Minister of Finance, he is responsible for the management of the province's finances and building the environment for long-term economic prosperity. Throughout COVID-19, Minister Bethlenfalvy provided the supports Ontario families, workers, and businesses needed through the pandemic. Now, with Premier Ford, he is working to Get It Done for our health care system, communities, and economy to ensure they are stronger than ever before.

Prior to entering public service, Minister Bethlenfalvy served in senior leadership roles for several financial institutions including as President and Chief Operating Officer of TD Securities (USA) and Co-President of DBRS.

He has served on the Board of Directors for many charitable organizations. In 2014, he joined the True Patriot Love Expedition to the magnetic North Pole in support of Canadian military families.

He holds both a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Business Administration from McGill University which included a year at the HEC School of Management, Paris, and a Master of Arts in Political Science from the University of Toronto.

Keynote Session: BDC Economic Outlook

Pierre Cl  roux | Vice President, Research and Chief Economist, BDC



Pierre Cl  roux was appointed Vice President, Research and Chief Economist at BDC in 2012. Pierre leads a team of experts who analyze economic data to identify business and sector trends impacting Canadian entrepreneurs. Mr. Cl  roux is responsible for providing economic analysis and advice to the Bank's senior management team, and supervises all marketing and industry research activities.

Over his 25-year career as an economist, he has held several influential positions that had a direct impact on entrepreneurs in Canada and abroad.

Before joining BDC, Pierre worked for the Government of Saudi Arabia as Vice President, Business Analysis in the National Industry Clusters Development Program. His role was to create program strategies, define sector policies and conduct financial and economic analyses of industrial projects. Previously, Mr. Cl  roux was the Quebec Assistant Deputy Minister for Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade, a strategic advisor for Montreal International and worked for 12 years at the Canadian Federation of Independent Business in various roles, including economist and Quebec Vice President.

Pierre is President of the Financial Services, Capital and Economy Committee of the F  d  ration des chambres de commerce du Qu  bec (FCCQ). He holds a Bachelor of Arts and a master's degree in Economics from Laval University, as well as an MBA from the MIT Sloan School of Management.

Shelbi McFarlane | Business Development Officer, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville



Shelbi McFarlane is the Business Development Officer for Leeds Grenville and joins the team in promoting regional economic development. Shelbi's primary role is to help businesses of all sizes flourish in Leeds Grenville. With her background in municipal planning and investment attraction, Shelbi brings a helpful set of skills to those looking to expand or relocate their business into Leeds Grenville.

Shelbi attended Carleton University, where she obtained her Bachelor of Public Affairs and Policy Management, specializing in Development Studies and minoring in Economics.

Norma Banford | Golden Moment Farm



Norma is co-owner of Golden Moment Farm, producing quality maple syrup and related products. With a background in federal government she started the farm with her husband John in 1997. They have grown from 150 buckets to 5000 taps on pipeline. Their equipment is the latest in technology while maintaining traditional taste and meets federal, provincial and organic standards for food safety. Norma handles the administrative / marketing side of the business and used the Digital Main Street program to move forward in the digital age.

Shelley Mitchell | To Be Continued



Shelley Mitchell has been the owner operator of To Be Continued for the past 13 years. To Be Continued has grown and expanded many times over those years. It started off as a consignment shop for women and children in a 1000 square foot space and is now Kemptville's one stop shop for families. TBC occupies 4000 square feet with consignment clothing and footwear for the whole family, creates quality helium balloons and offers all the latest and greatest in children's toys and baby items. TBC's digital presence has been integral to its success.

Nicole Hudson | Katarina's Coffee Shop



Since June 2020, Nicole is part owner of Katarina's Coffee Shop in Prescott. They offer breakfast and lunch menus along with an array of baked good and speciality custom cakes made in-house. You can order online and pick up in store. Born and raised in the Philippines, she completed university education in Hotel and Restaurant Management and moved to Canada in late 2015.

Growing our Logistics and Leveraging Opportunities

Clayton Jones | President / CEO, CREWS

Canadian Rail Equipment Works & Services Inc.



President of CREWS and Jones Rail Industries. With over 33 years' experience in the rail industry, Clayton began his career at St. Luc Diesel Shop in Montreal for CP Rail and from then became Mechanical Supervisor with Ottawa Central Railway. His passion for rail and supply chain logistics ultimately led him toward business ownership when he saw the significant potential that a service and storage site could offer a rapidly growing supply chain. With the purchase of 96 acres of land in 2016 in Johnstown, CREWS and Jones Rail Industries began its journey.

As President and CEO, Clayton now employs over 65 people directly and indirectly supports hundreds of other supply chain jobs across Canada. With the Johnstown terminal approaching full capacity, Clayton is focused on service excellence by complimenting the class 1 railroads in a safe and efficient manner. With a vision for growth and building connections for customers in key sites across Canada, future plans include additional yards in Ontario, Quebec, and the United States. Known for his industry knowledge and a commitment to long-term business relationships, Clayton is proud of the work his employees at CREWS and Jones Rail Industries do in support of Canadian trade, jobs, and as contributing members of their communities across Canada.

Understanding RTO9 and the Opportunities

Bonnie Ruddock | Executive Director, Region 9 Regional Tourism Organization



Bonnie has been with the RTO9 since the inception of the Regional Tourism Organization in 2011. Bonnie was appointed to Executive Director in 2017 after 6 years as Operations Manager. With a background in finance and a passion for the tourism industry, Bonnie is a true leader. In 2020 Bonnie completed her MBA in Community Economic Development.

Prior to her career with RTO9, Bonnie was Executive Director for the 1000 Islands Gananoque Chamber of Commerce where she was instrumental in growing membership and launching the official bilingual visitor guide for the destination.

Welcoming a Diversified Workforce

Melissa Francis | Program Manager, St. Lawrence-Rideau Immigration Partnership



Melissa Francis is the Program Manager for the St. Lawrence – Rideau Immigration Partnership. With twenty years of experience in community development and stakeholder engagement, she strives to ensure immigrant needs and perspectives are integrated into local communities, programs, and policies. Melissa is a lifelong resident of Leeds Grenville with extensive international travel experience which has made her passionate about local and international issues.

Damian Ford | HR Coordinator, Southbridge Care Homes



Originally from Toronto, Damian Ford and his family moved to Kemptonville 4 years ago. Previous to working at Southbridge Kemptonville, Damian worked at JL Woodworking in the old North Grenville District High School. Damian is a graduate from St. Lawrence College's HR Management program and Brock University's Sport Management program.

Andrew Melchers | President, IN Engineering + Surveying



Andrew is a Civil/Structural Engineer and President of IN Engineering + Surveying. Since merging with Collett Surveying in 2020, the firm has quintupled in size. He was born and raised in Brockville and wishes to use his profession to ensure the community grows sustainably, aesthetically and responsibly. Andrew was the recent recipient of the Ben TeKamp Memorial Award at the Brockville and District Chamber of Commerce Awards Gala.

Richard Webster | International Education Manager, St. Lawrence College



Richard Webster is St. Lawrence College's (SLC) first International Education Manager of Community Development. He leads the new Global Engagement Community Development Program focused on community connections for international students. Richard is also a part-time faculty with the School of Business and School of Community Services.

Richard has over 15 years with various levels of government, public agencies and international organizations such as Ontario's Office of the Fairness Commission, UNICEF and Finland's Institute of Migration. He has lived, worked and studied in 5 countries and holds a BA (Hons) in Political Studies and International Political Economy and Graduate Diploma in Public Administration, three European Masters (cum laude) in such concentrations as migration, social cohesion and ethnic studies as well as a Leadership Certificate in Leadership and Inclusion from the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion. Richard was born and raised in Rideau Lakes, and now calls Kingston home.

Tracy McDonald | Employment Services Supervisor, CSE Consulting



Prior to becoming a Certified Career Development Practitioner, Tracy was a Retail Manager for over 20 years. After relocating to North Grenville 10 years ago, she decided to follow her passion of helping others and works with CSE Consulting, the North Grenville Employment Resource Centre in Kemptville, ON.

As an Employment Consultant and Job Developer with CSE, she is well versed in working with many marginalized populations; providing tools for their toolbox in their job search and become better equipped to achieve their goals. She has been recognized as a cheerleader for promoting inclusive communities. She joined the St. Lawrence-Rideau Immigration Partnership in 2015 as an advocate to assist Newcomers in the area to achieve everything they can be upon immigrating to Canada.

Local Economic Snapshot

Ann Weir | Economic Development Manager, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville



Ann Weir works regionally on behalf of the Counties and its 10 member municipalities while collaborating with the region's many partners. In September 2017, Ontario East Economic Development recognized her as the Economic Developer of the Year and in 2021 she was recognized by the Small Business Centre for her leadership.

In her role, she has strategically developed a framework for regional economic development to create an environment for communities to work together while maintaining their individual priorities and advancing their goals. She has positively influenced many new investments while supporting business expansions in the region.