

# **Women Leaders in Energy Opportunities & Challenges**

## **28<sup>th</sup> Annual Ohio Energy Savings & Management Conference**

**February 27, 2024**

**Women's Energy Network, Ohio Chapter**

# Agenda

- **What is the Women's Energy Network?**
- **Introduction of Panelists**
- **Strategies for a Successful Career in Energy**
- **Questions**

# MISSION AND VISION



**OUR MISSION** is to provide networking opportunities and foster career and leadership development of women who work in the energy industry.



**OUR VISION** is to be the premier global organization that educates, attracts, retains, and develops professional women working across the energy value chain.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

- We're a one-stop shop for women in the energy industry, from student programs to executive forums
- We provide services to thousands of members across 23 chapters with more inquiries in process

- Networking Opportunities
- Educational Events
- Career Center
- Biennial Conference
- Membership Directory
- Cross-Chapter Events
- Thought Leadership
- DEI Resources
- Speakers Database
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Community Outreach

# Women Leaders in Energy – Opportunities & Challenges

## PANELISTS

- Sheryl R. Smith, and Vice President, National Market Director, Power, TRC Companies, and Immediate Past President, Women’s Energy Network (WEN) of Ohio, Columbus
- Rebecca Karason, CEM, Senior Vice President, Environmental Strategy & Sustainability Director, The Huntington National Bank, Columbus
- Jackie Oostman, PE, President WEN Ohio and Team Lead – Facility Safety, TC Energy, Columbus
- Sommer L. Sheely, Partner, Bricker Graydon LLC, former WEN Ohio Treasurer and current Member, Columbus
- Melissa L. Thompson, Director of Regulatory Policy, Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc., Columbus



# Topics for Today's Conversation

- Getting started in the Energy Market.
- What we enjoy about our jobs.
- Best degrees for a career in Energy.
- Helpful skills for advancing your career.
- Key tips for getting promoted.
- Skirting the glass ceiling in a predominantly male business.
- Overcoming bias in the boardroom.
- Regulatory, market and collaboration challenges in the industry.
- Staying current and foreseeing future trends in the industry.
- Uplifting other women in your organization (We all rise together).
- Influencing internal and external clients.

# Thank You!

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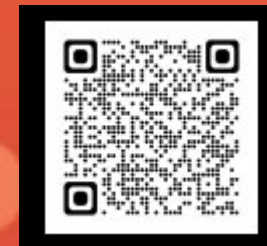
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Women's Energy Network, Ohio Chapter:

<https://www.womensenergynetwork.org/ohio>



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**WEN Ohio Immediate Past President: Sheryl Smith, National Market Director, Power, TRC**



Ms. Smith is the National Market Director for Power in the Environmental Sector at TRC, with 40 years of technical, financial and market analysis experience in the development and management of solid waste and power projects. She develops and executes market strategies for growth for utility and energy clients, leading TRC's Environmental Sector account managers in proposal and presentation development, contracting, technical collateral development, and client interface strategies. Her expertise is in coal ash beneficial reuse and borrow material benchmark studies, solid and industrial waste market analysis, industry data research, and biomass sourcing studies.

She has a Master of Engineering (Civil) from Cornell University and a BS in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. In her free time she enjoys working out, travel, cooking, hanging with friends and spending time with her adult children and their families. She loves theater, dance and the Columbus Jazz Orchestra. She is on the Advisory Committee of the Short North Stage, a local theater in Columbus, a Board of Directors member of New Vision Dance Company and the Immediate Past President of the Women's Energy Network of Ohio.

**WEH Ohio President: Jackie Oostman, PE, Team Lead – Facility Safety, TC Energy**



Jackie Oostman has been in the oil and gas industry for over 18 years assuming various technical roles in metallurgy and materials engineering. She received her Metallurgical and Materials Engineering BS degree at the University of Texas at El Paso in 2006 and started her career at El Paso Corporation in Houston, TX, primarily performing material failure investigations. She then worked as a consultant for Stress Engineering Services where she gained experience in multiple areas of the industry such as offshore/onshore drilling, refinery, fabrication/manufacturing and design. Currently, she leads a team of technical experts at TC Energy and reliability of fixed equipment in US Natural Gas facilities and pipelines.

She is a Subject Matter Expert of all aspects of materials from procurement to root cause analysis. Outside of work, she loves to sing, travel, explore food and drinks, and if self-care is a hobby that would be one too. She is a registered Professional Engineer living in Columbus, Ohio, with her husband, one year old daughter and labradoodle son.

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**Rebecca Karason, CEM. Senior Vice President, Environmental Strategy & Sustainability Director, The Huntington National Bank**



Rebecca Karason is the Senior Vice President, Environmental Strategy & Sustainability Director for The Huntington National Bank and oversees environmental strategy across Huntington's eleven state footprint. An environmental expert with over fifteen years of decarbonization experience, Rebecca has a diverse background in sales, account management, program outreach and project management. Prior to joining Huntington, she served in various capacities with American Electric Power including Program Manager for their Business Incentive Program. Throughout her career, Rebecca has worked with customers, helping them develop decarbonization strategies to lower their carbon footprint.

Committed to connecting colleagues to environmental sustainability, Rebecca created the first-ever Green Team at Huntington, a cross functional group of colleagues that generates, exchanges, and evaluates ideas to increase Huntington's environmental performance.

Rebecca earned her master's degree from the University of Cincinnati and a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is a certified Energy Manager and serves on the board for the Epilepsy Foundation of Ohio, Equitas Health, the Ohio Capital City Chapter of the Association of Energy Engineers, and the Ohio Environmental Council.

**Sommer Sheely, Bricker Graydon, Partner**



Sommer is an energy and litigation attorney with more than two decades' experience. She serves as Vice Chair - Litigation of Bricker Graydon's Energy, Environmental and Utility practice. She focuses her practice on utility-scale energy project development and permitting and complex commercial litigation, including energy and environmental disputes and business and partnership disputes. She serves clients as lead trial counsel before federal and state regulatory bodies and courts. Over her career, she has served as lead counsel in numerous contested permitting proceedings, jury and bench trials, , and arbitrations and mediations.

Sommer believes in partnering with clients to achieve effective, efficient outcomes and in knowing her clients and their businesses. She delivers and encourages prompt and open communication. An active member of her legal and business community, Sommer focuses on strategic collaboration and representing her clients in a positive and professional manner before regulatory bodies and courts. Some of her accomplishments for clients include assisting The Ohio State University and Ohio State Energy Partners to obtain certificate permitting construction of utility-scale combined heat and power facility in contested proceedings, and successfully guiding a number of large-scale solar developers through state-level permitting in Ohio and Kentucky.

She lives in Columbus with her husband and two sons. She is a board member of the Bexley Education Foundation and enjoys camping, traveling, and fostering dogs through Stop the Suffering. She is a former board member of the Women's Energy Network Ohio Chapter and Columbus Children's Theatre, and a



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former President of both the Federal Bar Association Columbus Chapter and Ohio Women's Bar Foundation.

**Melissa Thompson, Director of Regulatory Policy, Columbia Gas of Ohio**



Melissa is the director of regulatory policy for Columbia Gas of Ohio. She is responsible for preparing and leading regulatory filings, audits and proceedings; supervising Columbia's energy efficiency and energy assistance programs; and providing regulatory and compliance guidance to the company's various business units.

Melissa joined Columbia's legal department in August 2012, advising the company on real estate issues, negotiating right-of-way and lease agreements and defending the company's land rights in partnership with the litigation team. In October 2013, she transitioned from commercial practice to regulatory, handling matters on behalf of Columbia and its affiliates before utility commissions in Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and Massachusetts.

Melissa previously served on the board of directors for Local Matters, a nonprofit focused to provide nutrition education and food access to families in Central Ohio, and Amethyst, a nonprofit dedicated to helping women and their families recover from substance abuse and dependence. She also is a member of United Way Women's Leadership Council, Community Shelter Board's Women Leaders Rebuilding Lives, the Ohio State Bar Association and the Columbus Bar Association.

A native of Coshocton, Ohio, Melissa earned bachelor's degrees in political science and communications from Marietta College and a juris doctor from Capital University Law School.

Melissa, her husband, and their daughters reside in Jerome Township, Ohio.