

**COLLEGE SAVINGS PLANS NETWORK
2022 PREPAID MINI-CON VIRTUAL
FEBRUARY 23-24, 2022 | 1PM – 5PM ET
SPEAKER BIOS**

EVENT HOSTS – CSPN Prepaid Committee Co-Chairs



G. Alisa Ferguson

Associate General Counsel & ABLEnow Program Manager, Virginia529

Alisa serves as Virginia529's Associate General Counsel and Program Manager for Virginia529's Achieving Better Life Experience (ABLEnow) program. In that role, she provides legal support to the Plan's Board of Directors, CEO, General Counsel and the Plan's staff for all Virginia529 college savings programs as well as the Plan's ABLE savings program. She joined Virginia529 in 2011.

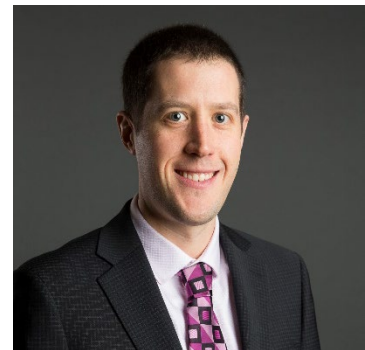
Prior to joining Virginia529, Alisa worked in private practice for 3 years as a trusts and estate attorney. She focused her practice in the areas of estate planning, special needs planning, and estate and trust administration.

Alisa graduated with honors from the University of Richmond School of Law. Alisa received her B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Criminal Justice from James Madison University. She is a member of the Virginia Bar Association, the Metro Richmond Women's Bar Association, the American Bar Association, and the Estate Planning Council of Richmond. She serves as a Co-chair of the CSPN Prepaid Tuition Committee. Alisa is past president of the Board of Directors for Medical Home Plus and is a member of the Women for Madison Executive Advisory Council for James Madison University.

Luke Minor

Director, Washington College Savings Plans (WA529)

Luke is the Director of College Savings Plans at the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). Luke has been with WSAC's college savings plans division since 2012 and has been in this role for three years serving as the chief administrative officer responsible for overseeing and growing Washington State's 529 Plans (WA529), which include the GET Prepaid Tuition Program and the DreamAhead College Investment Plan. Since 1998, tens of thousands of students have used more than \$1.6 billion of their WA529 savings to attend colleges in all 50 states and at least 15 foreign countries.



Luke holds a M.A. in Public Administration from The Evergreen State College and a BA in Business Administration from Western Washington University. When he's not focused on helping other families save for future higher education expenses, Luke thinks a lot about saving and planning for his own daughter's future education goals. He also enjoys getting outside to hike, ride bikes and even slowing down to enjoy the finer things in life like splashing in a puddle or two.

SESSION 1: The Changing Landscape Pt. I: The Shifting National and State Trends Affecting Prepays (PANEL DISCUSSION)

MODERATOR



Robin Lott

Bureau Director for the Office of Postsecondary Financial Planning (OPFP), Michigan Department of Treasury

Robin is the Bureau Director for the Office of Postsecondary Financial Planning (OPFP) within the Michigan Department of Treasury. The collective mission of the Bureau is to assist Michigan families and students to achieve higher education goals. Ms. Lott has been in her current role since August 2020 and works closely with the Chief Deputy State Treasurer and the State Treasurer on policy issues. She previously served as MET Executive Director from 1997 to 2020 and is a graduate of

Northwood University with a BA in Business Administration.

PANELISTS

Thomas M. Graf

Executive Director, Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority

Tom was appointed Executive Director of the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA) in December 1999 by the MEFA Board of Directors.



Prior to joining MEFA, Mr. Graf served the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in a number of legislative, research and budgetary roles for nearly twenty years. Most notably, he served as the Budget Director of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for six years. During his tenure, the Commonwealth produced seven balanced budgets; witnessed its Wall Street credit rating improve; continued to invest in the Commonwealth's Stabilization Fund (\$1.2 billion); and for the first time, deposited over \$230 million into the Commonwealth's Tax Reduction Fund giving tax relief to citizens of the Commonwealth. Earlier in his career, he served as the Research Director for the Office of the Minority Leader for six years and Co-Director of the Governor's Legislative Office for three years.

For over twenty years, Mr. Graf has served as the Executive Director of MEFA, a self-financing state authority whose mission is to assist students and their families plan, save and pay for college expenses. Since its creation in 1982, MEFA has offered Education Loans, among the nation's lowest cost college loan programs, to assist families of undergraduate and graduate students from across the country attend Massachusetts colleges and universities; as well as to assist Massachusetts residents attend colleges and universities throughout the nation. In 2015 MEFA expanded its loan offerings to include the MEFA Refinancing Loan Program to assist borrowers with refinancing education loans previously incurred for higher education costs. In addition to education loan programs, MEFA offers the Commonwealth's structured college savings programs including the U.Plan, the Commonwealth's prepaid tuition program that enables families to lock in tomorrow's tuition at today's rates at over

eighty Massachusetts colleges and universities and the U.Fund, the Commonwealth's college investing plan that allows families to invest for qualified higher education expenses through a selected portfolio of professionally managed mutual funds. In addition to the college savings programs, in the spring of 2017, MEFA launched the Commonwealth's ABL program providing tax-advantaged investment accounts to cover qualified disability expenses for individuals with disabilities without adversely impacting their federally means tested benefits. MEFA provides extensive resources and education programs across the Commonwealth to assist families with planning, saving and paying for higher education at every step along the way; including MEFA Pathway, the Commonwealth's college and career web portal, available at no cost to students and school counselors and over 500 seminars annually on all facets of college planning and financing.

The legislative, budgetary and management skills Mr. Graf acquired over the years has enabled him to become a highly successful, consensus building manager who is well respected among his colleagues and in his local community serving on a number of boards.

Mr. Graf received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Merrimack College in 1979.



Lael Oldmixon
Executive Director, Alaska 529

Lael joined Alaska 529 in 2013 as Executive Director. Oldmixon hails from New Hampshire and has lived in Alaska since 2007. In addition to 529 education savings, her professional experience includes admissions, residence life, and career services. She is passionate about financial literacy, behavioral finance, marketing, communications, and leadership development. Oldmixon holds a B.A. in American Studies from Saint Michael's College (2000) and a M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration and Student Affairs (HESA) from the University of Vermont (2005).

David P. Richardson
Managing Director of Research, TIAA Institute

Dave is Managing Director of Research at the TIAA Institute. Before joining the Institute, he served as Senior Economist for Public Finance at the White House Council of Economic Advisers and held the New York Life Chair in Risk Management and Insurance at Georgia State University. Previously, he worked as a financial economist in the Office of Tax Policy at the U.S. Treasury and was an assistant professor in the Department of Economics at Davidson College.



Richardson's research interests include public pensions, employer retirement benefit plans and household financial security. He has served as a research fellow for the China Center for Insurance and Social Security Research at Peking University, a research fellow for the Center for Risk Management Research, and a research associate at the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University. He also is a member of the Pension Research Council Advisory Board, the American Economic Association, the American Risk and Insurance Association, and the National Tax Association.

Richardson earned an M.A. and a Ph.D. in economics from Boston College, and a B.B.A. from the University of Georgia.

SESSION 2: Ask an Actuary (PANEL DISCUSSION)

MODERATOR



**Matthew M. Smith, Washington State Actuary
FCA, EA, MAAA**

Matt is a Fellow of the Conference of Consulting Actuaries (FCA), an Enrolled Actuary (EA), and a member of the American Academy of Actuaries (MAAA). He received his undergraduate degree in mathematics from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington. Matt started his actuarial career as an actuarial assistant with the Office of the State Actuary (OSA). Prior to his appointment as the State Actuary in November 2002, he worked for Willis Towers Watson, Milliman, and Howard Johnson/Merrill Lynch in various actuarial and consulting roles.

Matt is Washington's third State Actuary and serves as executive head of OSA. To learn more about OSA duties and responsibilities, see the [What We Do and Who We Serve](#) page. As the State Actuary, Matt oversees the annual actuarial valuations of 14 public retirement plans. He directs the actuarial services for the state's prepaid tuition program, certain medical programs, and the Long-Term Services and Supports Trust Program. OSA also provides staff and assistance to the [Select Committee on Pension Policy \(SCPP\)](#), a 20-member statutory committee. The SCPP studies issues and policies affecting the Washington State Retirement Systems and makes recommendations to the Legislature. Matt directs research and policy staff in support of the SCPP.

Matt believes that actuaries help the public identify, quantify, and manage risk. As State Actuary, he strives to support the soundness of Washington State financial security programs by simplifying and clearly explaining actuarial concepts. By translating complex information into easy to understand non-actuarial terms, plan members, legislators, citizens, and other stakeholders are able to make informed decisions about program benefits and policies.

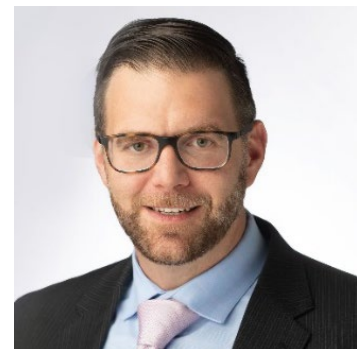
Matt and his wife Kimberly reside in Olympia and have three children.

PANELISTS

**Paul Wood
Senior Consultant, Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company (GRS)**

Paul is a Senior Consultant and Team Leader in GRS's Denver, Colorado office. He has nearly 20 years of public sector actuarial and benefits consulting experience.

Paul provides actuarial and retirement consulting services to states, cities and counties, including clients in Colorado, Rhode Island, Wyoming, Michigan, Washington, Alaska and Arizona. As Team Leader for GRS' Southwest region, Paul is responsible for ensuring client satisfaction and service quality covering pension and OPEB clients served by a 23-person consulting team.



Throughout his career, Paul has consulted extensively on plan design, funding, accounting and pricing for defined benefit pension plans, post-retirement health care programs, and §529 pre-paid tuition programs. His pension and retiree health care experience includes actuarial valuations, plan design analysis, long-term funding projections, and actuarial audits. Paul also provides actuarial soundness valuations, pricing analyses, and actuarial audits for §529 pre-paid tuition plans.

Paul is an Associate in the Society of Actuaries (ASA), a Fellow in the Conference of Consulting Actuaries (FCA) and a Member of the American Academy of Actuaries. Paul regularly presents in front of boards of trustees, plan sponsor staff, and professional associations. He has spoken at the National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) Treasury Management Training Symposium on the actuarial implications of pre-paid tuition plans, the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems (NCPERS) Annual Conference and Exhibition on various issues facing public sector pension plans, the National Pension Education Association (NPEA) Annual Conference on actuarial basics, the National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR) Annual Conference on Actuarial Audits, and the NCPERS FALL Conference on the impact of COVID mortality experience on public sector pension plans.

Paul holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Dan Sherman
CEO, Sherman Actuarial Services, LLC.

Dan is the CEO and Senior Consulting Actuary for Sherman Actuarial Services, LLC. Dan is the lead actuary for a large number of governmental employers, consulting on various retirement issues. Throughout his career, he has consulted with a very diverse clientele on actuarial and plan-design issues in connection with all types of retirement programs, including defined benefit plans, 401(k), 403(b) and 457 plans. During his career, he spent 12 years with PricewaterhouseCoopers becoming expert in the accounting rules that apply to retirement and postretirement medical plans. He has given special attention to benefit issues and deferred-compensation programs of particular interest to public and other non-profit employers. Dan has performed work on a variety of other projects.

EXPERIENCE

- Dan has 45 years of experience in the employee benefits and actuarial fields.
- Actuary for the administration of prepaid tuition plans for the Massachusetts Educational Finance Authority (U. Plan), the State of Alabama (PACT), Nevada Prepaid Tuition Plan, West Virginia Prepaid Tuition Plan, Texas Guaranteed Tuition Plan and Texas Tuition Promise Fund, Private College 529 and Providence Promise.
- Performed an actuarial audit of the Florida Prepaid Tuition program
- Dan has been the Actuary for 35 Massachusetts Retirement Systems, some for over 30 years.
- Testified before Superior Court of Rhode Island on pension plan changes on behalf of the City of Providence, and on behalf of the City of Cranston.
- He has recently performed Postretirement Medical Valuations for over 85 public sector clients
- He assisted the City of Worcester and the City of Brockton in issuing Pension Obligation Bonds
- He is a frequent speaker regarding State Pensions and GASB 67, 68, 74 & 75 before organizations such as the Massachusetts Municipal Association. Massachusetts Association of Finance Committees.
- Dan has testified before the Massachusetts Legislative Public Service Committee several times and the Texas Joint Committee on Finance in 2008. He has also been an expert witness on actuarial issues, including arbitration cases for several clients, property disbursements in divorces and a pension benefit disagreement.

- He has performed actuarial valuation, benefit calculations and retirement consulting services for major retail firms, hospitals, and manufacturers as well as several other private employer programs. These clients include Boston Scientific Corporation, Children’s Hospital, Degussa Construction Chemicals, Invitrogen, Dexter Corporation, KeySpan, New England Aquarium, Peabody Essex Museum, Portland Pipe Line, and Westerly Hospital.

CLIENTS

Dan’s consulting clients in recent years include:

- Alabama Prepaid Tuition • Texas Prepaid Tuition
- City of Peabody • City of Pawtucket
- City of Amesbury • City of Somerville
- Norfolk County • Bristol County
- City of New Bedford • Town of Franklin
- Plymouth County • Town of Lexington
- City of Waltham • Town of Watertown
- Town West Boylston • Town of Shrewsbury
- St. Paul School • State of West Virginia

EDUCATION & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Associate of the Society of Actuaries
- Member of the American Academy of Actuaries
- Dan earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mathematics and Physics from Ripon College and completed graduate study in actuarial sciences at the University of Nebraska
- Member of the Town of Wakefield’s Retirement Board
- Member of the Town of Wakefield’s Finance Committee
- Past Member of the Town of Wakefield’s Capital Planning Committee

Alan Perry, FSA, MAAA, CFA

Principal & Consulting Actuary, Milliman, Inc.

Alan is a principal and consulting actuary with the Philadelphia office of Milliman. He joined the firm in 1990. Alan has had primary responsibility over the last 30 years for preparing actuarial valuations and pricing analyses for prepaid tuition programs in Florida, Virginia, Washington, Ohio, South Carolina, Nevada, Alaska, West Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, Colorado, and Wisconsin. He has performed stochastic asset/liability studies for Ohio, Virginia, Colorado, and Washington and designed an immunized fixed income strategy for Wisconsin.



Alan’s experience covers prepaid tuition plans, retirement plans, and insurance organizations. He specializes in the analysis and management of financial risk. He performs asset/liability studies, including stochastic modeling and investment policy work. He is the Chair of Milliman’s Capital Markets Committee and oversees the development of the firm’s capital market assumptions.

PRESENTATIONS

Alan is a frequent speaker on prepaid tuition plan, pension, and investment topics, having addressed many groups, including:

- College Savings Plan Network
- National Association of State Treasurers
- International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans
- Government Finance Officers Association

PUBLICATIONS

Alan is co-author of the annual Milliman Pension Funding Study that analyzes the funding progress of the 100 largest U.S. corporate defined benefit plans. He also has authored papers on various actuarial topics of concern to Milliman's clients.

Selected biography:

- DB Plan Risk Management: Finding a Better Match Between Assets and Liabilities (Milliman *Benefits Perspectives*, 2007)
- Back to the Benefits Basics: DB or not DB – That is the Question (*Benefits Quarterly*, 2007)
- Taking Stock of Option Expensing (*Contingencies*, 2006)

AFFILIATIONS

Member of the Financial Analysts of Philadelphia

EDUCATION

- BBA, Economics, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
- MS, Actuarial Science, Temple University

PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS

- Fellow, Society of Actuaries
- CFA Charterholder
- Member, American Academy of Actuaries

SESSION 3: The Changing Landscape Pt. II: Keeping Prepays Relevant in an Evolving World (PANEL DISCUSSION)

MODERATOR



Soohyang Lee, CFA
Vice President, AKF Consulting Group

Soohyang is Vice President of AKF Consulting Group. In her role, she provides program and technical expertise on 529, ABLE and State-run Retirement Program client matters. She advises upon program matters generally including Morningstar strategic reviews, investment option changes and growth and revenue projections of 529, ABLE and State-run Retirement Programs. Additionally, she assists with various aspects of vendor procurement, including drafting and reviewing requests for proposals and providing scoring and cost analyses. She joined AKF Consulting in 2011 and has ten years of State-run Investment Program experience. Ms. Lee graduated from the University of Virginia McIntire School of Commerce (BS in Commerce with concentrations in Finance and Accounting). She is an SEC- and MSRB-registered Municipal Advisor Representative (Series 50). Ms. Lee is a CFA charterholder.

PANELISTS

Heather Birnie
Assistant Director of the Bureau of Savings Plans, Pennsylvania Treasury Department

Heather is the Assistant Director of the Bureau of Savings Plans within the Pennsylvania Treasury Department. The Bureau administers the PA 529 Guaranteed Savings Plan, PA 529 Investment Plan, PA ABLE Savings Plan, and the Keystone Scholars CSA Program. Heather has been with the Bureau and the PA Treasury Department for over eleven years, overseeing the operations of the savings plans, including the direct operations of the customer service call center.



Carolyn Bishop
Chief Operations Officer, Virginia529

Carolyn serves Virginia529 as the Chief Operations Officer. In her role, she is responsible for providing leadership for Technology, Finance, and Administration.

Bishop joined the team in February 2019, coming from her position as Operations Director of the System and Agency Services division of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, where she managed operations for five critical payments applications for the Federal Reserve System. Also at the Federal Reserve Bank, she served as the Director of Finance and Administrative Services for Business and Technology Solutions. Previously, Bishop was the County Administrator for Powhatan County, Virginia. She also has leadership experience with investments and derivatives analysis.

Bishop received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Masters in Public Administration, both from Virginia Commonwealth University. She also possesses certificates in Business Management from William and Mary, Nonprofit Management from the University of Richmond, and numerous technology certifications. In addition, Bishop serves as the Vice Chairman of the Virginia Board for Public Building Authority.



Erin Layton
Executive Director, Maryland 529

Erin is the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of Maryland 529. Maryland 529 oversees \$10 billion in assets across the Maryland Senator Edward J. Kasemeyer Prepaid College Trust, the Maryland Senator Edward J. Kasemeyer College Investment Plan, and the Maryland ABLE plan.

Ms. Layton has over 20 years of experience in the financial management and investment industry. Prior to becoming the Executive Director permanently, Ms. Layton served as the first full-time investment staff for Maryland 529 overseeing investments for all three different programs. Prior to Maryland 529, for almost a decade, Ms. Layton was the Manager of Investment Operations, Performance and Risk Management for The Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) working as part of the investment office overseeing almost \$3 billion dollars in assets. AECF is a private philanthropy based in Baltimore and works across the country to help federal agencies, states, counties, cities and neighborhoods create more innovative, cost-effective responses to the issues that negatively affect children. Prior to AECF, Ms. Layton worked in a variety of roles with T. Rowe Price Associates, also based in Baltimore.

Ms. Layton is a graduate of Loyola University's Sellinger School of Business with a master's degree in finance and a bachelor's degree in economics.

SESSION 4: Pumping up Prepaid Participation: Telling the Story and Building the Coalition

FACILITATOR



Rodger O'Connor

Associate Director for Marketing & Communications, WA529

Rodger is the Associate Director for Marketing and Communications for Washington College Savings Plans (WA529). Rodger has overseen all aspects of marketing for WA529 since 2019, including paid advertising, media, communications, and community outreach.

Rodger began his diverse marketing career in broadcast television when day-glo and acid washed jeans were in fashion, producing promos and commercials and directing marketing efforts for stations in Seattle, Portland, and Southern California. In 2014, Rodger transitioned to financial services as Director of Marketing for Northwest Credit Union Association, the trade association that serves more than 180 credit unions in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Prior to joining WA529, Rodger directed marketing and client acquisition for Northwest Financial & Tax Solutions, a venerable firm specializing in investing and retirement planning.

Rodger earned a BA in Broadcast Communications from Washington State University. He and his family have made SW Washington their home for more than 20 years.

PRESENTERS

Zach Cochran

Vice President, Media - Door No. 3

Zach is a media expert, number cruncher and die-hard baseball fan. He brings an incredible knack for finding innovative ways to study consumer insights, measure data, track results, report findings and develop impactful media plans that support clients' initiatives while staying within budget: treating client dollars as if they were his own. He has worked his media magic for some of the biggest brands in the country including Proctor & Gamble, Heineken, UBS, and GlaxoSmithKline.



For seven years, Zach has overseen media planning and buying for Texas Tuition Promise Fund and Texas College Savings Plan, two 529 plans sponsored by the state of Texas. These integrated campaigns work to drive awareness and adoption, consistently resulting in an increase in enrollments each year.

When Zach isn't studying media trends or swimming in spreadsheets, he is an active "Big" with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Texas, providing a sense of stability to a child in need of a reliable mentor and advocate. In return, he gets one more person to throw a baseball with.



Joanne Dashiell
Chief Marketing Officer, Private College 529 Plan

Joanne joined Tuition Plan Consortium, sponsor of Private College 529 Plan, as the Director of Consumer Engagement in 2019. She brings over 15 years of higher education experience and a passion for helping families and students make their college dreams an affordable reality.

Through her varied roles, Joanne has helped tens of thousands of families prepare for college by developing education and outreach programs for audiences of all ages. An artist and educator at heart, she enjoys breaking down complex college financing concepts and reaching families through creative programs, simplified language and informational videos that promote early college planning and saving. As an industry expert, Joanne has delivered presentations throughout the country at national, regional and state conferences and serves as a resource for secondary and post-secondary professionals, providing guidance on financial aid regulations and trends in college enrollment and financing.

Joanne's higher education career began in 2001 where she spent the next several years working in financial aid at both public and private institutions. Seeing the need to educate families sooner about the benefits of saving for higher education, her passion turned to developing early outreach programs as the Manager of Student and Parent Education Services at the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA) from 2007-2012. She spent the following six years at American Student Assistance as the Manager of Professional Services, where she led a national team of consultants dedicated to helping colleges develop, implement and promote financial literacy programs to support student's long-term financial success. Prior to joining TPC, Joanne managed all business operations, sales and marketing as Executive Director of the Higher Education Assistance Group, a premier financial aid consulting firm.

Joanne has served on the Massachusetts Educational Opportunity Association Board (MEOA) as well as the Executive Council for the Massachusetts Association of Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA). Joanne holds a BS and an MBA from the University of Maine.

Martha Bullock
MARCOM Director, Florida Prepaid College Board

Martha is the MARCOM Director for the Florida Prepaid College Board, the nation's largest and longest continuously running prepaid program in the nation. Ms. Bullock has managed the marketing and communication efforts for Florida Prepaid College Savings Plans, the Florida Prepaid College Foundation, and ABLE United since 2015. She previously worked with the World Trade Center Miami and United Parcel Service Latin American & Caribbean Division. Her academic pursuits and professional work in customer service, marketing, business development, and training throughout Latin America provided stamps in her passport to more than 17 countries in the region.



Ms. Bullock earned her Master of International Business degree from Florida International University and her Bachelor of Arts in Multinational Business Operations from Florida State University. She is also a proud alumna of Tallahassee Community College.

Ms. Bullock was an Exchange Student to Ecuador with American Field Service. Ms. Bullock started Florida Prepaid College Plans for her two children soon after they were born. Her son is currently using his Florida Prepaid College Plan at the University of Florida, while studying aerospace engineering, and her daughter hopes to study marine biology.

Her family resides in Tallahassee, Florida. When not encouraging families to save for college, Ms. Bullock and her family enjoy mountain biking, windsurfing, paddle boarding and camping throughout Florida.