

# Speaker Topics & Bios

## State of the Valley Symposium

### FORECASTING FUTURE GROWTH

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**Jim Westkott**

**Director of the Demography Section**

**Colorado Department of Local Affairs**

Jim Westkott is the Director of the Demography Section within the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, a position he has served in since 1995. For 12 years prior to that he served as the Projections Demographer within the section. Jim has also been an Assistant Professor in the College of Architecture and Planning and Director of Comprehensive Planning for the Philadelphia Metropolitan Planning Organization. He has a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, and a Masters in Regional Science / Economics and a Masters in City and Regional Planning from the University of Pennsylvania.

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### REGIONAL ECONOMICS: UNDERSTANDING & SHAPING OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE

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**Larry Swanson**

**Director, Regional Economy Program**

**Center for the Rocky Mountain West**

Dr. Swanson is Associate Director of the Center for the Rocky Mountain West and head of its Regional Economy program. Economic change and restructuring in the region, implications of this change for community and regional development, the region's evolving transborder relationship, and the region's changing economy-environment relationship are all focuses of the program.

He also serves as the economists for *Montana on the Move*, a Center project that seeks to help Montana's regional communities strengthen and unify local economic development efforts by providing professional support to community leaders for:

- Analyzing national, regional, and local economic trends
- Organizing public and private interests to create a community development strategy
- Networking with other communities to examine issues of mutual concern
- Creating unity of purpose among communities to solve common problems

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## **PLANNING FOR PROSPERITY**

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### **Harrison Rue**

#### **Director, Thomas Jefferson Regional Planning District, VA**

Harrison Rue is Director of The Thomas Jefferson Planning District, which strives to be a catalyst for solutions to improve the quality of life in a rapidly growing six-county region with over 200,000 residents. Through regional cooperation, it seeks effective and efficient answers that will contribute to the well-being of the region and preserve its natural and historic resources.

Harrison is a planner, builder, developer, trainer, and founder of the Citizen Planner Institute. Rue has more than 30 years of hands-on experience in construction, real estate development, planning and design, transportation, historic preservation, community organizing and process facilitation.

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## **COMMUNITY HEALTH ACCESS**

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### **Marc Riddick, Neil-Garing Insurance & HMC Board**

Marc Riddick has a diverse background in the healthcare industry spanning over seventeen years. He has helped develop cutting edge healthcare products in the non-profit arena and has also consulted on complex benefits programs for clients with as many as 5,000 employees in the for profit world.

In addition to product development and consulting, his experience includes management for both large and small health insurance companies and marketing for national life and disability insurers. Marc likes to say that he has “walked all the way around the block” in the group benefits industry. He has decided that his favorite role is that of broker/consultant. Marc is currently the Employee Benefits Manager for Neil-Garing Insurance in Glenwood Springs.

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### **Brad O'Neill, Managing Development Consultant, Van Gilder Insurance Corporation - Roaring Fork Valley Community Health Plan**

Brad O'Neill has been in the insurance industry for over 10 years in Colorado. He was part of the team responsible for forming the nation's first small business healthcare purchasing cooperative, The C.H.I.P. (Cooperative for Health Insurance Purchasing). Brad also has worked for Blue Cross and Blue Shield in the national large group market. Brad currently works for Van Gilder Insurance Corporation, the largest independent insurance brokerage in the Rocky Mountain Region as a Consultant. He works with employers creating and managing Health & Welfare Programs as well as Risk Management Programs. He is also involved with several consulting projects focusing on the rural healthcare crisis in Colorado and Wyoming.

Mr. O'Neill is the Development Consultant for Colorado's first and only recognized Private Labeled Community Health Plan, The Roaring Fork Valley Community Health Plan. Through his focused efforts, he helps clients evaluate and monitor their total cost of risk and evaluates various funding arrangements on their behalf.

Brad is a graduate of Western State College, and is pursuing his CEBS designation. He lives in Lone Tree, Colorado and his interests are reading, snowboarding, biking and hiking.

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### **Karen Spink, Health District of Northern Larimer County**

Karen Spink is the Co-Director of Community Impact for the Health District of Northern Larimer County. The Community Impact Team joins with other local organizations to find long-term solutions to some of the most challenging health issues in the community. This community-based approach often results in changes to the local healthcare system, including how services are delivered. Karen has over 14 years professional experience in program planning and evaluation, grant writing and grants management, program administration, and community collaborations. She is also on the board of the Larimer County's Healthier Communities Coalition. Karen holds a BS in Community Health Education from the University of Northern Colorado and a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Nebraska.

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### **Lynn Dierker, R.N.**

#### **Deputy Director for Community Initiatives**

#### **Colorado Health Institute**

As Deputy Director for Community Initiatives for the Colorado Health Institute, Ms. Dierker is responsible for building sustained partnerships between the Institute and its diverse constituents throughout the state. Prior to joining the Institute, Ms. Dierker maintained an independent consulting practice focused on assisting non-profit organizations in achieving their strategic goals and objectives. She also served as a Program Officer for The Colorado Trust, Regional Compliance Officer for Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Manager of Health Policy for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and Senior Health Policy Analyst with the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. Ms. Dierker served Governor Owens as a member of the Children's Basic Health Plan Policy Board and as staff to Governor Romer's Colorado Health Care Reform Initiative. Ms. Dierker is a registered nurse in intensive care and holds a B.S.N. degree from Emory University and a B.A. from Drew University.

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