



# CONFERENCE ON TOURISM

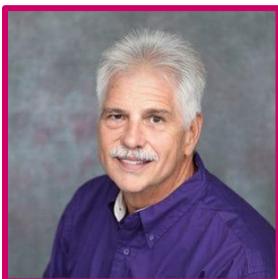
## SPEAKERS



### **Chris Adams**

#### **Director, Research and Online Marketing, Miles Partnership**

Chris has spent more than 15 years working with destination marketers in the U.S., New Zealand, Australia and the UK. An intrepid traveler and accomplished speaker, he gathers research and trends in travel around the globe. When he finds his way home, he shares his wit and wisdom with his wife and daughters.



### **George W. Bailey**

#### **Owner, Bailey Coach**

John Bailey founded Bailey Coach in 1998 with two European Style Motorcoach Buses and a vision to deliver a higher standard in the motorcoach bus market. Together with his partner, Rodney Sechrist, Bailey Coach acquired Tarbert's Airport Transportation in 2002 to provide on-demand airport service to the region's airports. In 2005, they purchased Hegin's Valley Lines Coach, bringing three more luxurious coach buses to the Bailey line for a total of nine. February of 2011, Bailey Coach acquired the charter bus division of Red Lion Bus Company and in early 2015, purchased three buses from Lincoln Bus Lines; two 55 passenger motorcoaches, one being handicap accessible, and one 47 passenger motorcoach. Bailey Coach purchased their first 40 passenger motorcoach in April of 2016. Today, they continue growing their fleet offering twelve deluxe motorcoaches, six luxury sedans, two passenger vans, and two SUVs.



**Lynn Brewer**

**Executive Director, American Bus Association**

Lynn Brewer has worked at ABA since 1992. She is responsible for ABA's Marketplace, all Board and Association Meetings, education programs and professional training seminars.

Working with a highly skilled team of ABA staff members, her significant accomplishments on behalf of ABA include bringing Marketplace management in-house beginning in 1996, setting the stage for continuous growth every year since 1996, to the point where show attendance has doubled since that year. As part of her efforts to make Marketplace the premier group travel event in the motorcoach, tour and travel industries, Lynn and her team have developed a winning combination that offers attendees quality business appointment sessions to create new business growth for their companies, limitless networking opportunities to make connections with the diverse membership that helps define ABA, and continuing education seminars. The professional development seminars at Marketplace have earned that distinction through Lynn's continuing drive to add professional speakers each year, to the point of offering more than 40 different seminars at Marketplace annually.

Brewer lives and works from Lexington, Ky, where she has made her home since 1996.



**Patricia Cowley**

**Executive Director, Greater NJ Motorcoach Association and Pennsylvania Bus Association**

After a long, successful career in corporate America in the areas of manufacturing, insurance and logistics, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to start my own business in 2019. As an executive leader and CFO for many years, my journey afforded me the ability to continue to learn and grow. As I grew my knowledge, my passion for helping business owners blossomed. I found myself in an executive facilitator role for business owner peer groups. I was responsible for managing all aspects associated with developing, growing and managing their group activities. This became the basis for my own company. I now specialize in the management of business peer groups and non-profit associations.

My background and experience includes financial management, human resource & benefit administration, recruiting, contracts administration, group development & facilitation, technology start-ups, new business

marketing, product development, Board of Director management, and group captive insurance. I have a history of implementing best practices, realizing significant operational cost savings and bringing people together to achieve results.

I have my BS degree in Business Administration, an AS Degree in Accounting and a Microsoft Professional Certification. I live in northwest New Jersey with my husband Duane and Australian Shepherd, Bailey. I have two grown sons who are my proudest accomplishments!



### **Tom Cosentino**

#### **Executive Director, Garden State Wine Growers Association**

Tom Cosentino is the Executive Director of the Garden State Wine Growers Association (GSWGA), the statewide advocacy and promotional channel of the New Jersey wine industry. He has over 35 years of strategic media relations, marketing communications and brand-building expertise. Cosentino joined the GSWGA from MWW PR where he coordinated public relations and advocacy programs for the firm's public affairs division, representing a diverse array of clients.

Cosentino oversees the GSWGA's day-to-day administrative and marketing functions; serves as spokesman for the wine industry in New Jersey; works with the Association's lobbyist on legislative initiatives; and is the liaison with the Murphy Administration, Department of Agriculture, Tourism and other industry groups. Cosentino is also responsible for securing grants and tasked with bringing corporate sponsors to the New Jersey wine industry.

Prior to joining MWW PR, Tom was a principal at Capital Public Affairs in Princeton where he headed up the firm's media relations division iMedia Public Relations. There, Tom helped develop the grassroots campaign UncorkNJ, which led to the passing of the direct shipping bill in 2012 allowing in-state wineries to ship wine directly to consumers and for out-of-state wineries to do so as well. He also served as the public relations representative for the Garden State Wine Growers while at iMedia and MWW.

Tom was also the founding Co-General Manager of Catalyst Public Relations in New York, where he directed programs for major brands such as Subway, vitaminwater and TicketsNow among others. He also was co-owner of O'Leary & Cosentino Communications for nine years and General Manager of Lapin East/West in New York. He also served as the Publicity Director of Yonkers Raceway in New York and began his career in 1983 as a media relations intern with the New York Yankees.

Tom has managed national programs for major sporting events including championship boxing matches starring Evander Holyfield, George Foreman, Sugar Ray Leonard and Thomas Hearns; worked on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Hockey League; launched Ted Williams' trading card company and the Women's United Soccer Association. In New Jersey, Tom managed programs for Alstede Farms, NJ2-1-1,

JCP&L, the Hambletonian Society, Meadowlands Racetrack, Association of NJ Chiropractors, and NJ Festival of Ballooning among others.

In addition to his professional career, Tom has worked as an Adjunct Professor at Rider University and currently serves on the Board of the Central Jersey Chapter of the American Red Cross and previously served on the Board of Directors of Michael's Feat, a 501c3 charity in Monmouth County that assists families of seriously ill newborns. He is also currently a board member of Visit South Jersey, a local Direct Marketing Organization.

Tom resides in Parlin, NJ with his wife Ann and has two sons.



### **Matthew Doherty**

#### **Executive Director, Casino Reinvestment Development Authority**

Matthew Doherty was selected to lead the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority as Executive Director effective July 1, 2018.

In his role as Executive Director, Mr. Doherty is responsible for creating public-private partnerships and inter-governmental agreements to encourage local growth within the Tourism District. He will be utilizing opportunities to supplement the CRDA's financing of special events, leveraging state assets and attracting private capital to stimulate investment in brick-and-mortar projects. Mr. Doherty was recently named one of the Power 50, South Jersey's most influential leaders by South Jersey Biz magazine.

Mr. Doherty is the former Mayor of Belmar, NJ. During his tenure as Mayor, Belmar was the only town in the state of NJ to have no tax increase for 7 straight years, all while recovering and rebuilding from Superstorm Sandy. Also, Belmar generated more private economic investment during his 7 years as Mayor than in the previous 30 years.

Prior to serving as Mayor of Belmar, Mr. Doherty was a financial advisor for firms such as MetLife, MassMutual and Investors Bank. He earned his Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree from Georgetown University where he was a scholarship athlete in Track & Field. He is married to his wife Maggie and they have three children.



**Andrea Evans Wood**

**Vice President Marketing, Miles Partnership**

Established Vice President of Marketing. Skilled in Digital Strategy and serves as both Head of Experiential Marketing and as the company lead on Third Party Technology Evaluations and Partnerships. Responsible for Innovation in Product Development and Immersive Storytelling.



**Terrence Gallagher**

**President, Lou Hammond Group**

As a leader and innovator in destination marketing, Terry Gallagher begins by finding the ethos of the destination – the special personality that makes it unique. Whether it's the Yankee independence of New Hampshire or the sybaritic pleasures of a Caribbean island, Terry has created award-winning campaigns that capture the imagination. A gifted writer and storyteller, he has helped guide the revitalization of Providence, Rhode Island as a leading culinary and cultural destination, the positioning of Sonoma County as a premier wine and vacation region, and the promotion of Florida's Paradise Coast as the ultimate beach escape, to name just a few.

Terry understands each destination in its many facets. With more than 30 years in the travel industry, he has implemented strategic communications programs for hotels, restaurants, cruise lines and airlines. In recognition of his outstanding achievements in the hospitality industry, in 2018 Terry brought home the Winthrop W. Grice Award from the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association, the organization's highest honor.



**Tiffany Gallagher**  
**Civitas**

Throughout her career, Ms. Gallagher has shown strong commitment to the tourism and business communities. Most recently, Ms. Gallagher served as the President of the Greater Syracuse Hospitality and Tourism Association and currently serves on the New York State Hospitality and Tourism Board of Directors. Relevant experience includes; serving on the Board of Directors of Destination Marketing Organizations, Strategic Planning Councils, and Business Improvement Districts. Ms. Gallagher works out of Upstate New York, where she is able to assist and manage clients along the eastern seaboard.



**James Gill, AAE, IAP, CPA**

**General Manager, Newark Airport, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey**

An Accredited Airport Executive and International Airport Professional, Jim Gill brings more than 25 years of experience to his role as a director in the Business + Finance Group at global management consulting firm LeighFisher. In this capacity, he advises airport administrators on fiscal planning and management, economic development, and business operations.

Previously, Jim Gill served as president and CEO of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority. During his time at the Grand Rapids, MI, airport, he strengthened relationships between the airport and its partners, increased nonstop routes, grew non-airline revenue by 25 percent, and achieved a 16 percent increase in passenger traffic. In addition, he oversaw the first phase of a \$45 million project to consolidate security checkpoints, create a new post-security marketplace, and refurbish a pre-security business center. Gill also put together a successful bid to host the Airports Council International – North America Annual Conference in 2020.

Prior to this, Jim Gill held several positions over the course of nine years with the Allegheny County Airport Authority (ACAA). As chief operating officer and chief financial officer, he oversaw day-to-day operations of Pittsburgh International and Allegheny County Airports, as well as more than 460 employees. His other positions with the ACAA included interim executive director and executive vice

president.

Earlier, while working as deputy director of finance, business, and administration at the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority, Gill led efforts to improve its credit rating and launched its passenger facility charge program, which increased annual revenues by more than \$19 million.

Gill also worked with the ACAA from 1997 to 2001, and prior to that, was the finance director and contract administrator supervisor with the Allegheny County Department of Aviation. He began his career as an auditor with the City of Pittsburgh.



**Javier Gonzalez**  
**Atlantic City Film**

Javier Gonzalez is a Mexican, El Paso, TX-based, Emmy-winning Producer whose films have been selected for the Cannes, Sundance, Toronto, South by Southwest, New York, Rotterdam, TriBeCa, Fantastic Fest, Morelia, Glasgow, Stockholm, Los Angeles, Sitges and Los Cabos Film Festivals. Javier has spent the last fifteen years working in various production capacities throughout the American and Mexican film industries. Javier is fluent in Spanish, English and German.



**Alex Heimann**  
**CEO, Tempest**

As Chief Executive Officer of Tempest, Alex is responsible for leading the innovation, strategy and execution of Tempest's digital services across the globe.

Tempest clients look to Alex to navigate through the noisy digital marketing landscape to ensure their digital marketing efforts as well as technology platforms are built on strategies and foundations to succeed today and in the future.



**Peggy Kelly**

**Director of Tourism Marketing/ Hudson County Cultural & Heritage Affairs, Tourism Development**

Peggy is a proven manager with a strong background in marketing creative services management able to coordinate multiple initiatives simultaneously, direct creative staff and freelancers, manage the budget, as well as manage the vendor relationships needed to successfully complete the project. She has experience with brand compliance and has served on branding team during a company wide transition. Peggy is a strong communicator who is able to run a department effectively and efficiently with a strong focus on solutions, results, profitability who is able to produce the best outcomes through attention to detail, assessment, and leadership. She has extensive experience and knowledge of print production, mailing regulations, and directing the design and copy for both print and web platforms.

Peggy is a Brand Champion who has successfully transitioned internal operations staff to embrace organization changes including the use of a new company name on all products. She is on the Board of Directors for the Jersey City International Television and Film Festival working to bring the art of moving media to the inner city community through workshops and screenings.



**Susan Koneful**

**Location Scout Manager and Covid Certified**

Susan has a passion for the Arts and has worked within the film/video community as well as for non-profit organizations.

With over 20 years of experience as a Location Scout and Manager for TV Commercials, Films and producing Special Events, she is well versed in bringing all aspects of a project together in a short amount of time. Her goal in all situations is to nurture a team dynamic and mentality.

Her non-profit and community involvement experiences are diversified, yet all intertwined within the Arts and community at large.



### **John Lambeth**

#### **Civitas**

Mr. Lambeth is an attorney who specializes in creating and operating business improvement districts. He was the primary author of the Property and Business Improvement District Law of 1994, and assisted with creation of the first property-based improvement districts in California. He is a frequent speaker on tourism improvement districts and property and business improvement districts. Mr. Lambeth has been involved in all aspects of district formation and modification, including outreach, plan development, and petition and ballot drives. He formerly served as clerk to the Honorable Malcolm M. Lucas, Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court.



### **Mike Lopez**

#### **Actor**

ACMike Lopez was cast in a role in the major motion movie BRUISED starring and directed by Halle Berry. Mike has done numerous commercial voice overs. ACMike was also cast in a role in the movie 48 BLOCKS by Little Rock Studios. ACMike Lopez has also been seen on stage at Resorts Casino Hotel, Ocean Casino Resort, Dante Hall Theater, and Bethesda Blues and Jazz Supper Club – Bethesda, Maryland with the likes of those including SNL Alumn and movie star Jersey Joe Piscopo, film star/ singer Renee Olstead, America's Got Talent winner Landau Murphy, Jr., and singer/composer Dave Damiani, just to name a few. ACMike is also a social media influencer on FB and Instagram, which can be found at Mike Lopez FB (Facebook,) ACMike FB, Live Work Play AC FB, and Instagram.



**Aaron McMillan**

**Managing Director of Operations Policy and Support, United Airlines**

Knowledgeable professional with progressive management and leadership experience in a multi-cultural corporate environment. Recognized as a thoughtful and creative senior leader with a strategic view. Experienced at conducting strategic customer research and partnering with business units to develop and implement plans for operational improvements.

Specialties: Customer Satisfaction Programs, Strategic & Tactical Planning, Performance Management, Supplier Management, Contract Negotiations, Operations Management, Budget Planning, Customer Metrics Analysis, Operations Leadership, Labor Relations, Quality Program Management, Workforce Management



**Honorable Phil Murphy**

**Governor of New Jersey**

Governor Phil Murphy, as he says, “grew up in a family that was middle class on a good day,” the youngest of four children with only one parent who graduated high school. His upbringing – where religion, a strong work ethic, education, and civic awareness were pillars of family life – shaped his values, his priorities, and the leader he is today.

Since taking office, Governor Murphy has focused on building a stronger and fairer New Jersey that works for every family. He has signed legislation putting New Jersey on the path to a \$15-an-hour minimum wage, enacted the nation’s strongest equal pay law to combat gender wage discrimination, ensured all workers have access to paid sick days, and expanded the state's Paid Family Leave provisions.

Governor Murphy has put a new emphasis on restoring the state’s dominance in the innovation economy by reinvesting in workforce development and supporting the growth of innovative and start-up companies.

Under his leadership, New Jersey is also emerging as a leader in combatting climate change through the deployment of offshore-wind energy technologies and banning offshore fossil-fuel exploration and drilling, among other measures to spur growth in the clean and renewable energy sectors.

Governor Murphy has reversed prior years of budget cuts and increased funding for both New Jersey's top-ranked public schools and NJ TRANSIT. And, he restored state funding for Planned Parenthood and women's health programs, including family planning services.

He has made New Jersey a national leader in tackling gun violence, and has expanded protections for the state's immigrant and LGBTQ communities, among others.

Prior to taking office, Governor Murphy had long been deeply engaged in civic life and philanthropic pursuits. He has led and supported charities to lift up troubled teens and domestic abuse survivors. Nationally, he served proudly as New Jersey's sole representative on the board of the NAACP, the world's oldest civil rights organization, and as Finance Chair of the Democratic National Committee. The Governor has also led national and state task forces, respectively, on education and public employee pensions and benefits.

In 2009, he answered President Obama's call to service and, following his confirmation by the United States Senate, became the U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, where he served until 2013.

Governor Murphy and First Lady Tammy Murphy live in Monmouth County and are the parents of Josh, Emma, Charlie, and Sam.

A proud public-school product, Governor Murphy holds degrees from Harvard University and the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.



**Lori Pepenella, CDME**

**CEO, Southern Ocean County Chamber of Commerce**

Lori Pepenella, CDME serves as Chief Executive Officer for 106 year Southern Ocean County Chamber of Commerce and accredited Destination Marketing Organization representing the Long Beach Island Region of NJ . Lori works with hundreds of local businesses and community stakeholders to create economic sustainability through marketing and tourism. She currently serves as Vice President of the New Jersey tourism industry Association, Commissioner for Ocean County Culture and Heritage, and Vice Chair for Ocean County Tourism and Business Advisory Board and is an advocate for innovation benefiting non profit and small business state wide.



**Adam Perle**  
**President, ArtPride**

As President & CEO, Adam Perle manages all ArtPride operations. He leads the senior management team and is responsible for resource development, as well as fiduciary oversight. Prior to joining ArtPride, Adam was the Vice President of the Princeton Regional Chamber of Commerce, where he led membership and tourism marketing efforts. During his time at the Chamber, Adam was a key part of the leadership team that doubled the size of the organization, and was instrumental in the expansion of the Princeton Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau. Before his work in the nonprofit sector, Adam worked on several political campaigns at the local, state, and federal levels.

Adam is a lover of Mark Rothko, 20th century American theatre, landscape photography, the blues, and New Orleans jazz. When he is not enjoying a New Jersey craft beer, or rooting for his beloved New York Giants, you can find Adam encouraging his two budding performers, Alexis and Marley. A lifelong New Jersey resident, Adam resides in Bridgewater with his wife, Mandi. The couple started dating at summer camp while they were opposing color war generals.



**Jenny Rose**  
**Tempest, Vice President of Integrated Marketing Services**

Jenny is an avid traveler and true believer in the power of tourism to unite communities and drive prosperity. She combines experience in journalism and public relations with more than a decade of crafting customized travel marketing plans to help destinations share their stories, inspire travel, and showcase demonstrable results. Jenny has partnered with more than 150 destinations over the course of her work in the travel and tourism space and enjoys sharing the unique story of each destination with travelers across the country.



**Adam Sacks**

**President, Tourism Economics**

Adam Sacks is the President of Tourism Economics; an Oxford Economics company dedicated to analytically-based consulting to the tourism sector.

For more than two decades, Adam has worked with destinations, industry associations, and companies around the world in the areas of opportunity and risk assessments, policy analysis, and economic impact.

Adam's work has provided the foundation for billions of dollars in capital investment decisions by hotel companies, developers, and investors. Destination marketing organizations around the world rely on Tourism Economics data and scenario models to inform global marketing investment allocations.

Adam also supports trade associations in the aviation, hotel, and broader travel arena with forecasts widely considered to be an industry standard. And by examining the economic merits of travel facilitation, taxation, and tourism promotion initiatives, Adam's work has influenced critical government policies.

He is an authority on measuring the economic impact of visitor activity and has analyzed the impacts of cruising, gaming, timeshare, hotels, new attractions and destination marketing.

Adam regularly presents to corporate strategic planning teams on the threats and opportunities facing their businesses and is a member of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Travel & Tourism Advisory Board.



**David Schoner**

For over 35 years David W. Schoner Jr. has worked for the New Jersey Motion Picture and Television Commission.

He is currently the Associate Director for the New Jersey Motion Picture and Television Commission. David has coordinated thousands of Hollywood productions during his career, including *Army of the Dead (filmed in Atlantic City)*, *The Soprano's* and its upcoming prequel film, Warner Bros smash hit *Joker*, Steven Spielberg's *West Side Story* and HBO's miniseries *Plot Against America*.

David serves his community as Vice-President of the Cedar Grove Board of Education where he's involved in various educational and child-related charitable endeavors.



**Joseph Simonetta, CAE**  
**Executive Director, NTIA, Senior Partner PSI**

Joseph Simonetta is a partner with Public Strategies Impact and has worked in political advocacy and association management for nearly 40 years, starting with his first role as campaign chairman for the Mayor of Phillipsburg in 1973 and chair of volunteers for Congresswoman Helen Meyner in 1974. A member of the Democratic Party, he served as legislative director, followed by chief of staff, at the mayor's office in Trenton and legislative liaison for Assemblyman Francis McMannimon and Assemblywoman Helen Szabo.

Considered an expert in public policy and legislation, Simonetta was appointed chair of the Advocacy Committee of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) IgCC Task Force in 2012 and currently chairs the Advocacy Subcommittee, creating a strategy for the AIA's state and local components. Simonetta has received awards for his success in association management, including Association Executive of the Year and the 1991 New Jersey Society of Association Executive.

Simonetta has earned the designation of Certified Association Executive, the highest certification in the association management field. He holds bachelor's degrees in business and political science from Mount St. Mary's College in Emmitsburg, Maryland.



**Melvin Tennant, CAE**

**Executive Director, Meet Minneapolis**

Melvin oversees the day-to-day operations of Meet Minneapolis, including the professional and support staff. Melvin serves as the voice of Meet Minneapolis through speaking engagements, civic activities and political council meetings. He has served as president and CEO of Meet Minneapolis since November 2007. Melvin also is the executive director of Sports Minneapolis.



**Michael Tripi**

**Michael Tripi, Creative Director**

Michael is the creative lead for Tempest's website branding and ongoing marketing campaigns and serves as the director of photography for asset collection shoots. He brings more than 15 years of award-winning advertising and branding experience and ten years in the travel and hospitality vertical to his role at Tempest. Michael's marketing experience covers both the agency and client side and allows him to produce creative messaging, that will not only break through the noise but also meet our client's objectives.



**Jeffrey Vasser**

Jeffrey S. Vasser, CHA, has a broad range of experience in the non-profit, hospitality/gaming/and sports and entertainment industry. His diverse background includes positions in

hotel/restaurant/gaming operations, financial management, convention center and arena management, sports and event production, and destination marketing.

Having worked for two international consulting firms, Mr. Vasser developed strong project management skills while managing engagements ranging from preparing the bid package for an Olympic Organizing Committee to the feasibility studies for arenas, museums, and mixed-use real estate developments to the installation of an enterprise-wide financial system. He has also developed effective leadership skills having served as a CEO for a \$50 million multi-faceted state authority as well as for a small trade association.

A consensus builder with strong communication and interpersonal skills, he enjoys working with complex organizations to improve financial performance, develop special events, and increase market share. Jeffrey has a passion for politics and international affairs as well and volunteers as an election observer for the Carter Center and has served on multiple missions to Venezuela and Jamaica.



**Tahesha Way, Esq.**

**New Jersey Secretary of State**

Tahesha Way serves as New Jersey's 34th Secretary of State. Nominated for appointment by Governor Phil Murphy on December 18, 2017, Ms. Way was sworn in on February 26, 2018. As Secretary of State, Ms. Way holds one of the nation's oldest constitutional offices and leads a department with a diverse portfolio. She serves as New Jersey's top election official, overseeing the state Division of Elections and its work in securing our democracy and ensuring broad, fair access to the right to vote. Ms. Way also chairs New Jersey's Complete Count Commission, a 27 member non-partisan commission established to encourage full participation in the 2020 Census. In addition to the critical work protecting what Secretary Way calls the "fraternal twins of democracy," Ms. Way also oversees the state government offices supporting New Jersey's vibrant arts, culture, history, and business communities.

Secretary Way belongs to the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), serving on the Executive Board as Treasurer, and previously serving as co-chair of NASS's Heritage Committee and International Relations Committee. In 2019, she and nine of her colleague Secretaries from across the US traveled as a delegation to Israel for a trip focused on cultural, economic, civic engagement, democratic elections and technology. Ms. Way serves on the Advisory Council of the civic engagement non-profit "More Than A Vote," and spearheads the New Jersey Ballot Bowl collegiate and high school competition and the Vote for Valor tribute initiative to further civic engagement and voter participation.

Throughout her career, Secretary Way has devoted herself to public service. Prior to becoming Secretary of State, Secretary Way was an Administrative Law Judge for the State of New Jersey. In 2006, Secretary Way was elected to the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders and served as the Freeholder

Director in 2009. She served as special counsel for the Passaic County Board of Social Services overseeing all agency litigation. She also served as a council member for the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council. She is the former president of the Women Empowered Democratic Organization of Passaic County, an organization dedicated to empowering Democratic women by increasing their participation with the goal of achieving greater equality in the political process. Secretary Way also previously served on the Board of Directors for the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a leading national think tank geared towards advancing dialogue and policy for improving women's lives and their families.

Secretary Way is a graduate of Brown University, where she served as Vice President of the collegiate chapter of the NAACP, President of her Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, taught religious education, and was a radio announcer for WBRU-FM. Ms. Way holds a juris doctor from the University of Virginia School of Law at Charlottesville, where she clerked for the Virginia Legal Aid Society and the United Steelworkers of America.