



## THE AGENDA & SPEAKER BIOS

### Schedule

**8:00-8:30 a.m.** – Registration/Networking/Continental Breakfast

**8:30-8:35 a.m.** – Welcome remarks, Danny Selnick, chair of the Communicator Team and member, board of governors, National Press Club

**Morning Speaker -- 8:35-9:30 a.m.** – "Legally Speaking" – Richard Levick. What are the implications for communicators when legal issues affecting the industry are in flux or evolving?

**Richard Levick** is chairman and CEO of Levick, one of the world's leading firms in crisis, litigation, and public affairs, representing companies and countries in the highest-profile matters. A powerful advocate for the strategic initiatives that companies must pursue in today's perilous environment, he regularly addresses corporate boards as well as industry and government leaders around the world, providing guidance on their most complex communications and reputation management challenges. He is featured in, and authors, countless articles, and is a frequent guest on prime time national and international television programs. Mr. Levick is a much-sought after keynote and graduation speaker and is a columnist for the top business blogs including Forbes. Mr. Levick has co-authored five books including, *The Communicators: Leadership in the Age of Crisis*; *Stop the Presses*; *The Crisis and Litigation PR Desk Reference*; *365 Marketing Meditations*; and *Lessons for Absent Children*.

## Session 1

**9:45-11 a.m.** – Panel: The Science Behind Effective Communication - Two academics and two PR/communicator professional to talk about the science behind effective communications -- in theory and in practice.

### Panelists:

- Dr. Ed Maibach – Professor/Communication Scientist at George Mason University
- Josh Wright – Executive Dir. for Ideas42
- Felicia Joy – SVP & Behavioral Science Lead, Edelman and Founder, C-School
- Dr. Sweta Chakraborty – Millennium Leadership Fellow at The Atlantic Council (Moderator)

### BIOS:

- **Edward Maibach** is a Distinguished University Professor at George Mason University and Director of Mason’s Center for Climate Change Communication. Ed’s research – funded by NSF, NASA and private foundations – focuses on public engagement in climate change. A Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Ed earned his PhD in communication science at Stanford University, his MPH at San Diego State University, and his BA at University of California, San Diego. Ed has served as Associate Director of the National Cancer Institute, Worldwide Director of Social Marketing at Porter Novelli, and Board Chairman for Kidsave International.
- **Josh Wright** is an Executive Director at ideas42. In addition to responsibility for the organization overall, Josh focuses on designing and implementing behavioral solutions to problems in financial services, poverty, healthcare, and education. Josh has extensive experience in the for-profit, non-profit, and public sectors; industry experience in financial services, media and entertainment, housing, and youth development; and functional expertise in business strategy, new business development, and new venture creation.
- **Felicia Joy** is a Senior Vice President in Edelman’s Corporate Advisory practice in Chicago and Group Head of Behavioral Science for the company worldwide. She advises C-suite clients on strategic communications during times of transformation; and, as a Harvard-trained behavioral scientist, applies human behavioral insights to solve various challenges ranging from how to prompt cannabis cultivators in California to voluntarily sign up for legal licensure to how to encourage doctors to prescribe newer, better versions of drugs when their patients are already subscribed to the original versions with acceptable results. She has worked across myriad industries including aviation, energy, retail, financial services, and hospitality, and her background includes more than 10 years of experience in strategy, issue management and communications.

- **Sweta Chakraborty** is a risk and behavioral scientist in the media. She is co-author of the book “Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Safety: A Study in Public and Private Regulation” from her time as a postdoc at Oxford University. Sweta is the founder and principle of Adapt to Thrive, a venture that seeks to better inform individuals, businesses, and government entities on the complex, interconnected challenges, such as food security and disease, already existing and emerging from a warming planet. She is co-host of the live weekly radio show “Risky Behavior” on Eaton Radio as well as the host and producer of The Center for Climate and Security’s “The Climate and Security Podcast.” She is a 2019/2020 Millennium Fellow at The Atlantic Council, and serves on the boards of the Serendipity Foundation, America Adapts, and We Don’t Have Time.

## Session 2

**11:15 AM - 12:30 p.m.** – Town Hall: Communicators and Journalists: "The Road Ahead" - This session will be a moderated panel of journalists across various news organizations and mediums. Questions will be taken from attendees, in advance via registration page and submitted during the discussion. The moderator will review and ask all questions of panelists in order to give balance to the session.

### Panelists:

- Jessica Estepa – Campaign Editor, CNN Politics
- Lisa Matthews – Assignment Manager, AP Television
- Ben Terris – Staff Writer, The Washington Post
- Kate Nocera – DC Bureau Chief, BuzzFeed
- Jon Decker – White House Reporter, Fox News
- Sonya Gavankar – Director of Public Relations at the Newseum (Moderator)

### BIOS:

**Jessica Estepa** is a campaign editor for CNN Politics, where she helps manage digital coverage of the 2020 election. Prior to CNN, she worked as a politics editor at USA TODAY, where she oversaw breaking and trending news coverage. Estepa also managed OnPolitics, USA TODAY's politics blog and newsletter. Additionally, she covered Congress and the federal government for E&E News and Roll Call, and she worked as a senior producer at National Geographic, where she helped relaunch the organization's homepage. Estepa is actively involved in the journalism community, leading the Online News Association's Washington, D.C., chapter for several years and completing the Paul Miller Fellowship with the National Press Foundation. A Nevada native, Estepa grew up in Las Vegas and studied journalism at the University of Nevada, Reno.

**Lisa Matthews** is Assignment Manager for Associated Press, U.S. Video. In that role she implements AP’s video and audio newsgathering efforts in Washington. She assigns all staff coverage of live, planned, and spot news events at the White House, Capitol Hill, the Pentagon and all federal agencies. She also oversees and directs crews in the field across the country to deliver spot, regional and enterprise coverage that breaks news - exclusive to the AP. In 2014, Lisa took a short break from news and joined the world

of public relations. She was a Vice President at Hager Sharp where she developed media strategy for the Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health, National Diabetes Education Program, The Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics and more. Lisa has worked more than 20 years in the broadcast division of the Associated Press. She has won two Edward R. Murrow Awards – one in 2002 for outstanding coverage of the events on September 11, 2001 and in 2010 for Video Continuing Coverage of the Economy. Lisa has worked more than 20 years in the broadcast division of the Associated Press. She also serves on the National Press Club's Board of Governors.

**Ben Terris** is a staff writer for the Style section of the Washington Post with a focus on political profiles. You may remember him from such topics as George and Kellyanne Conway's marriage and Aaron Schock's Downton Abby themed congressional office.

**Kate Nocera** is the Washington Bureau Chief for BuzzFeed News, where she was previously managing editor and Capitol Hill correspondent. In 2014, the National Press Foundation awarded her the Dirksen Award for Distinguished Reporting of Congress. She has worked for Politico, and the New York Daily News. Kate received a master's degree in journalism from the City University of New York Graduate School of Journalism and a bachelor's in sociology from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She lives on the internet, but also in Washington with her husband, Mike, and their pets, Max and Garry.

**Jon Decker** is the White House correspondent for Fox News Radio and has been a member of the White House Press Corps since 1995. In 2015, he was elected by his colleagues to the Board of the White House Correspondents' Association. He is also on the faculty of Georgetown University and UCLA Law School where he is an Adjunct Professor. Previously, Jon served as the White House correspondent for Reuters Television and SiriusXM Radio; Washington correspondent for PBS Television's "Nightly Business Report"; the host of PBS Television's "This Week in Business"; business reporter for the NBC affiliate in Washington (WRC); and field producer for NBC in Miami. He has served as a Media Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and was also an aide to the late U.S. Senator John Heinz. Jon has covered the Clinton, Bush, Obama and Trump Administrations, as well as 24 State of the Union Addresses, 6 Presidential elections and the Impeachment of President Clinton. He has been in the Supreme Court to cover some of the most important cases of the past two decades - including Bush v. Gore, NFIB v. Sebelius and Windsor v. United States.

**Sonya Gavankar** is a communicator who uses dynamic story-telling techniques as a spokesperson, television and podcast host, filmmaker and social multi-media content creator. Her work with the Newseum brought a cohesive voice to the its 250,000 square feet of exhibit and interactive programming. As the Director of Public Relations, she took the story and mission of the brand outside of the brick and mortar location. She can be seen hosting programs and giving commentary on everything from hard news to cooking shows on ABC and CBS affiliates, PBS, QVC and even the Puppy Bowl! Philanthropy is an important part of her life. She has served on several national boards that focus on education and social change, like the Hugh O'Brian Foundation, The Miss America Organization and Ladies America.

**12:30-1:00 p.m.** – Break for Lunch Setup

## **Luncheon Speaker**

**1:00-2:30 p.m.** – **Mike McCurry**, White House press secretary under President Bill Clinton, will share his insights and experience on crisis communications. National Press Club President, Alison Kodjak will moderate.

### **BIO:**

**Mike McCurry** is Director of the Center for Public Theology and a Distinguished Professor of Public Theology at the Wesley Theological Seminary in the nation's capital.

McCurry has nearly four decades of experience in Washington. McCurry served in the White House as Press Secretary to President Bill Clinton (1995-1998). He also served as Spokesman for the U.S. Department of State (1993-1995) and Director of Communications for the Democratic National Committee (1988-1990). McCurry held a variety of leadership roles in national campaigns for the Democratic ticket from 1984 to 2004 and worked as a Press Secretary in the United States Senate from 1976 to 1983, serving Senators Harrison A. Williams, Jr. (D-NJ) and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY).

McCurry serves on several boards or advisory councils including Share Our Strength, the Children's Scholarship Fund, the White House Historical Association, and the Global Health Initiative of the United Methodist Church. He is former Co-Chair of the Commission on Presidential Debates, which organizes the fall general election debates between the major candidates for President and Vice President of the United States. McCurry is also of counsel at the Washington, DC public affairs and communications consulting firm Public Strategies Washington, Inc.

McCurry received his Bachelor of Arts from Princeton University in 1976 and a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies from Georgetown University in 1985 in addition to his MA degree from Wesley Seminary which he received in 2013.

**Alison Kodjak**, the 112<sup>th</sup> president of the National Press Club, is an award-winning reporter and editor – including three George Polk Awards. Kodjak currently works as the Associated Press' Washington investigations editor where she manages a team of investigative reporters and works with colleagues across the AP to do deep reporting about how politics, policy and money in Washington affect the nation and the world. Previously, Kodjak was a health policy correspondent at National Public Radio. Past positions included: managing editor at the Center for Public Integrity and as a reporter at Bloomberg News, the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Palm Beach Post. She was a reporter and editor at the AP from 1997 to 2000. She was co-author of a 2011 book about the BP oil disaster, "In Too Deep: BP and the Drilling Race That Took It Down."

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