



# 2026 Northeast US Animal Health Association Annual Meeting Program

**April 12-15, 2026**

Newport Harbor Island Resort  
1 Goat Island, Newport, RI 02840



# 2026 Annual NEUSAHA/AAVLD Conference

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# Meeting Agenda



**Date**  
Sunday, April 12



**Time**  
6:00 PM–8:00 PM



**Location**  
Hospitality Suite - Room #901

## Meeting Title

Welcome Reception

## Meeting Subject

Please join us in the Hospitality Suite in room 901 on the 9th floor of the beautiful Newport Harbor Island Resort as we kick off the 2026 NEUSAHA/AAVLD Joint Annual Meeting. Enjoy light refreshments, connect with colleagues, and ease into the days ahead in a relaxed, welcome setting. We look forward to seeing you there!



**Date**  
Monday, April 13



**Time**  
7:00 AM–8:00 PM



**Location**  
Rose Island Ballroom and Foyer

## JOINT SESSION: NEUSAHA, NE WILDLIFE RABIES GROUP, NEAAVLD

Time	Topic
7:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Meeting Registration
7:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Display Table Session - Rose Island Foyer
<b>7:30 AM – 8:30 AM</b>	<b>Continental Breakfast - Rose Island Foyer</b>
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Joy Bennett, State Veterinarian, New York, NEUSAHA President</li><li>• Dr. Charlie Broaddus, State Veterinarian, Virginia, USAHA President</li><li>• Dr. Scott Marshall, State Veterinarian, Rhode Island</li><li>• Kenneth D. Ayars, Chief, Division of Agriculture and Forest Environment, Rhode Island Dept of Environmental Management</li></ul>
<b>8:30 AM – 8:45 AM</b>	<b>Sponsor Speaker: Aaron Avery, CEO, GlobalVetLink</b>
<b>RABIES SESSION</b>	
8:45 AM – 9:15 AM	<b>National Rabies Management Program (NMRP) Update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kathy Nelson, Acting Program Lead, USDA WS NMRP</li></ul>

# Meeting Agenda



## Date

Monday, April 13



## Time

7:00 AM-8:00 PM



## Location

Rose Island Ballroom and Foyer

Time	Topic
9:15 AM – 9:45 AM	<b>Updates from the New York State Rabies Laboratory</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. April Davis, Director, New York State Department of Health Rabies Laboratory</li></ul>
9:45 AM – 10:15 AM	<b>Recent Rabies Cases MA, CDC, Compendium Update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Catherine M. Brown, State Epidemiologist and State Public Health Veterinarian, Massachusetts Department of Public Health</li></ul>
<b>10:15 AM – 10:30 AM</b>	<b>Coffee Break - Rose Island Foyer</b>
10:30 AM – 11:00 AM	<b>Rabies Committee Resolutions, AAVLD Laboratory Survey</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Joanne Maki, SR Veterinarian, Public Health, Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health, USA Inc.</li></ul>
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	<b>LBM Biosecurity Assurance Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Erin Luley, Assistant Director, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services</li></ul>
11:30 AM – 12:00 PM	<b>State Accreditation Program Update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Amar Patil, Director, Division of Animal Health/State Veterinarian, New Jersey Department of Agriculture</li></ul>
<b>12:00 PM – 1:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch - Rose Island Ballroom</b>
1:00 PM – 1:30 PM	<b>Artificial Intelligence in Animal Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Renata Ivanek, Professor of Epidemiology, Department of Population Medicine and Diagnostic Services, Cornell University</li></ul>
1:30 PM – 2:00 PM	<b>PA NADPRP Updates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>DDr. Aminata Kalley, Epizootiologist, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services</li></ul>

# Meeting Agenda

**Date**

Monday, April 13

**Time**

7:00 AM-8:00 PM

**Location**

Rose Island Ballroom and Foyer

Time	Topic
2:00 PM – 2:30 PM	<b>Persistent and Emerging Poultry Viruses Beyond Influenza</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Mathias Martins, Virology/Molecular Diagnostics Section Head, Penn State Animal Diagnostic Laboratory</li></ul>
2:30 PM – 3:00 PM	<b>One Health Needs Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>AAgatha Winiarski, One Health Program Specialist, New Jersey Department of Agriculture (Virtual Presentation)</li></ul>
3:00 PM – 3:15 PM	<b>Sponsor Speaker: Julia Schaar, Compliance and Regulatory Director, Medgene Labs</b>
3:15 PM – 3:30 PM	<b>Coffee Break - Rose Island Foyer</b>
3:30 PM – 4:00 PM	<b>Decontamination and Decommissioning Laboratories</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Lauren Richardson, Senior Director of Science and Technology, Merrick &amp; Company, USA</li></ul>
4:00 PM – 4:30 PM	<b>Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) and Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP) Updates and Regional Impacts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Marline Azevedo, VMLRP Program Coordinator, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, USDA (Virtual Presentation)</li></ul>
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	<b>Banquet - Rose Island Ballroom</b>

# Meeting Agenda



## Date

Tuesday, April 14



## Time

7:00 AM-6:30 PM



## Location

Rose Island Ballroom and Foyer

## JOINT SESSION: NEUSAHA, NEAAVLD

Time	Topic
7:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Registration
7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Display Table Session - Rose Island Foyer
<b>7:30 AM – 8:30 AM</b>	<b>Continental Breakfast - Rose Island Foyer</b>
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	<b>USDA-APHIS-VS Updates and New World Screwworm</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Adis Dijab, Associate Deputy Administrator, USDA APHIS VS, Field Operations</li></ul>
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	<b>National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) – National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) Partnership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Leonardo Caserta, Associate Director - Virology Laboratory, Cornell Animal Health Diagnostic Center</li></ul>
9:30 AM – 9:45 AM	<b>Sponsor Speaker: Dr. Meredith Behr Petersen, Director of Swine Health, National Pork Board</b>
9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	<b>Sponsor Speaker: John Kisse, Region Executive Office, Livestock Marketing Association</b>
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	<b>Coffee Break - Rose Island Foyer</b>

## STATE ARBOVIRUS SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM SESSION

10:30 AM – 11:15 AM	<b>Rhode Island Arboviral Surveillance Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Domingo Lora Medina, Mosquito Abatement Coordinator, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management</li></ul>
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# Meeting Agenda

**Date**

Tuesday, April 14

**Time**

7:00 AM-6:30 PM

**Location**

Rose Island Ballroom and Foyer

Time	Topic
11:15 AM – 11:45 AM	<b>Vermont Arboviral Surveillance Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Patti Casey, Environmental Surveillance Program Director, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (Virtual Presentation)</li></ul>
11:45 AM – 12:00 PM	<b>Delaware Arboviral Surveillance Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Karen Lopez, State Veterinarian, Delaware Department of Agriculture, Poultry and Animal Health Section</li></ul>
<b>12:00 PM – 1:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch - Rose Island Ballroom</b>
1:00 PM – 1:30 PM	<b>National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response (NADPRP) - New York Update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Eireann Collins, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Division of Animal Industry</li></ul>
<b>AQUACULTURE SESSION</b>	
1:30 PM – 2:00 PM	<b>Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory and Regional Shellfish Seed Biosecurity Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. David Bushek, Director, Rutgers Haskin Shellfish Research Lab (virtual presentation)</li></ul>
2:00 PM – 2:30 PM	<b>Regulatory Aspects of Aquaculture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Benjamin Goetsch, Aquaculture Coordinator, Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council</li></ul>
2:30 PM – 3:00 PM	<b>Inside the Aquatic Diagnostic Lab: Where Aquatic Organisms Tell Their Story and Discovery Meets Innovation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dr. Galit Sharon, Director, Associate Professor of Biology &amp; Director of the Aquatic Diagnostic Laboratory, Roger Williams University</li></ul>

# Meeting Agenda



**Date**

Tuesday, April 14



**Time**

7:00 AM-6:30 PM



**Location**

Rose Island Ballroom and Foyer

Time	Topic
3:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Carpool to RWU-CEED
3:30 PM – 5:30 PM	<p><b>Tour of Roger Williams University – Center for Economic and Environmental Development (CEED) including: Aquatic Diagnostic Lab + Histology, Bivalves/Shellfish Hatchery &amp; Farm, Microbial Lab, and Wet Lab (Ornamental Fish and Shellfish)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation via carpool</li> </ul>
5:30 PM	RWU-CEED host Ferry-Cliffe Shellfish Farm Oyster Tasting and Wine for all tour members
<b>TUESDAY - DINNER ON YOUR OWN</b>	



**Date**

Wednesday, April 15



**Time**

7:00 AM-12:00 PM



**Location**

Rose Island Ballroom and Foyer

<b>NEUSAHA</b>	
Time	Topic
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM	Continental Breakfast - Rose Island Foyer
8:30 AM – 9:30 AM	<p><b>Roundtable –Emergency Preparedness Coordination in Northeast States</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderator – Dr. Eireann Collins, New York Emergency Management Coordinator, Division of Animal Industry, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets</li> </ul>
9:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Coffee Break - Rose Island Foyer
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	NEUSAHA Business Meeting
12:00 PM	Adjourn

# Speaker Biographies

## **Marline Azevedo**

Marline Azevedo is a Program Coordinator with the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). Since joining the agency in December 2019, she has supported programs including the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) and the Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP), which help support veterinary services and workforce development in designated veterinary service shortage situations. Ms. Azevedo holds a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Education.

## **Dr. Charles Broaddus**

Dr. Charlie Broaddus began in his current role in 2016 as the State Veterinarian and Director of the Division of Animal and Food Industry Services for the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). In this position, he provides leadership in support of Virginia's livestock, poultry, and food sectors through regulatory oversight; oversees animal welfare compliance at public and private animal shelters; operates four animal health laboratories; oversees Virginia's retail hemp enforcement program; protects public health by performing food inspections; and plans for and responds to infectious disease events and foodborne disease outbreaks. Prior to that, he worked for 7 years as the Program Manager for the Office of Veterinary Services at VDACS, and before that, he was in practice, working on both large and small animals. Broaddus received his BA in Economics from the University of Virginia, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Auburn University, and PhD in Veterinary Biomedical Sciences from Oklahoma State University. Broaddus also serves in the Army Reserves Veterinary Corps, and was deployed to Afghanistan 2019–2020, where he provided veterinary care for military working dogs and oversaw the food safety program for US forces in Afghanistan. His wife, Kristy, is a small animal veterinary surgeon with a specialty practice in Mechanicsville, and they live in Hanover County with their three children.

## **Dr. Catherine Brown**

Dr. Catherine Brown (Katie) is the State Epidemiologist (since 2018) and State Public Health Veterinarian (since 2006) at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). She completed her DVM at the University of Minnesota, a Master of Science in Wild Animal Health from the University of London, Royal Veterinary College and a Master of Public Health from Boston University. As the State Epidemiologist, she is passionate about collecting and using data for public health action and recognizes the critical importance of data-sharing across public health sectors to improve the lives of individuals and communities. As a veterinarian, she is deeply involved with the animal, human and environmental interface and the increasing risk that zoonotic and vector-borne disease pose to humans. Since 2011 she has served as the co-chair of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians' Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control.

# Speaker Biographies

## Dr. David Bushek

Dr. David Bushek is a Professor of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers University where he serves as the Director of the School's Marine Stations including the Haskin Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory (HSRL). He is an expert in shellfish ecology, parasitology and aquaculture, and is perhaps best known for his work on Dermo disease in the eastern oyster, which is native to the Atlantic Coast of North America.

Dr. Bushek holds a Doctorate in Ecology and Evolution from Rutgers University, a master's in biology from the University of Houston, and a Bachelor's in Zoology from The Ohio State University. After completing his doctorate, he joined the University of South Carolina serving as the Assistant Director of the Baruch Marine Field Laboratory for nearly 10 years before returning to Rutgers and the HSRL in 2003. With tenure in the Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences, he is a member of the Graduate Programs in Oceanography and Ecology & Evolution. In April 2011, he became the sixth Director of the HSRL which was established in 1888. As HSRL Director he oversees the Annual Delaware Bay Oyster Stock Assessment which determines the sustainable harvest level for the New Jersey Delaware Bay oyster fishery. Dr. Bushek is a Past-President of the National Shellfisheries Association, serves on the New Jersey Aquaculture Advisory Council, and has been a Board Member for the Partnership for Delaware Estuary (PDE) where he also served on the Science and Technical Advisory Committee. In 2024, Dr. Bushek was asked to oversee all of Rutgers Marine Stations.

While Dr. Bushek's research has focused on oyster diseases, he has worked with a variety of shellfish including several species of scallops, mussels, clams, and crabs. He is interested in shellfish recruitment dynamics, the habitats that shellfish form, the species that utilize those habitats and how large aggregations of shellfish can affect disease dynamics and ecosystem processes. His work appears in over 100 peer-reviewed articles, book chapters and technical reports as well as a variety of popular articles and news reports.

As HSRL Director he oversees the Annual Delaware Bay Oyster Stock Assessment which determines the sustainable harvest level for the New Jersey Delaware Bay oyster fishery. This has generated a unique and powerful long-term, spatially explicit dataset to understand shellfish population and disease dynamics. His expertise in shellfish settlement and recruitment has been used to investigate oyster recruitment determinants at various scales in laboratory and field studies. In 2015, he co-created the Regional Shellfish Seed Biosecurity Program ([rssbp.org](http://rssbp.org)) to facilitate the biosecure transfer of shellfish for aquaculture production, restoration and fishery enhancement. Recently, he led a large multidisciplinary, multi-institutional project (DARPA Reefense) to rapidly advance nature-based solutions to combat coastal erosion combining materials science, civil engineering, coastal dynamics, shellfish ecology, shellfish pathology and shellfish breeding.

# Speaker Biographies

## Dr. Leonardo Caserta

Leonardo Caserta is an Assistant Research Professor in the Department of Population Medicine and Diagnostic Sciences and serves as the Associate Director of the Virology Laboratory at the Animal Health Diagnostic Center at Cornell University. He also serves as the NAHLN–NBAF Partnership Region 1 Scientist. After earning his DVM from São Paulo State University (UNESP) in Brazil, he completed his MS and PhD in Genetics and Molecular Biology at the University of Campinas (UNICAMP), Brazil. His research during this time focused on avian respiratory viruses and viral diversity in wild animals from the Atlantic Forest. During his PhD, he joined Dr. Diego Diel's laboratory at South Dakota State University and later moved to Cornell University as a Postdoctoral Associate, where he conducted research on the development of recombinant vaccines and sequencing strategies for livestock viruses. Currently, his work focuses on the development and application of next-generation sequencing techniques for viral diagnostics and genomic surveillance.

## Patti Casey

Patti Casey has been the Director of the Environmental Surveillance Program at the VT Agency of Agriculture since 2017, and before that she was the state's Vector Surveillance Coordinator for 4 years. Like many native Vermonters, Patti has had more than one career in her lifetime. She pursued an undergraduate degree in Wildlife Biology at the University of Vermont, received a writing degree from Vermont College of Fine Arts, worked in private industry, the non-profit world, and finally state government. She spent several years touring nationally as a musician and maintains an active music career.

Patti started in vector surveillance as a field and lab tech and quickly assumed the role of Vector Surveillance Coordinator. She expanded that program significantly before a division restructuring put her in charge of not only vector surveillance but also the statewide groundwater pesticide monitoring program and Vermont's Pollinator Health program. Patti has spearheaded several tick surveillance efforts and started a statewide tire slicing program to reduce mosquito breeding habitat on farms. Patti grew up in Vergennes, the smallest city in Vermont, and now lives in Montpelier, the smallest capitol city in the United States.

## Dr. Eireann Collins

Dr. Eireann Collins is the Emergency Programs Coordinator for New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Division of Animal Industry. As part of that role, she is the Operation Section Chief for the current NYS/USDA joint incident management team for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza response and administers the Empire State Animal Response Team, the state body supporting County Animal Response Teams.

Prior to joining NYSAGM, she was in private mixed animal practice with a focus on Production Animal Medicine, in Minnesota, Texas, Maryland, Vermont, Massachusetts and New York State. She has also worked as a Veterinary Medical Officer for USDA Food Safety Inspection Service.

Dr. Collins is the current president of the National Alliance for State Animal and Agriculture Emergency Programs (NASAAEP) and is a graduate of Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

# Speaker Biographies

## Dr. April Davis

Dr. April Davis, DVM, PhD, is the Director of the Rabies Laboratory at the New York State Department of Health, at the Wadsworth Center. She completed her studies at Colorado State University and her postdoctoral training was conducted at the New York State Department of Health, Wadsworth Center, Arbovirus and Rabies Laboratories. The main research focus of the rabies laboratory is developing and improving rabies diagnostic tools. Some current projects include validating a real-time RT-PCR assay for use as a confirmatory test to the dFAT, a real time RT-PCR assay capable of typing different rabies virus variants circulating the United States, and whole genome sequencing. Additional research programs in the laboratory focus on studying rabies in bats within the laboratory and in field environments.

Our interests include:

- Determining if the silver hair bat rabies virus is more pathogenic than other bat rabies viruses
- Investigating the frequency with which big and/or little brown bats become infected with the silver hair bat rabies virus and how it relates to the potential for human exposure
- Examining the rabies virus genome of bats infected with a heterologous (non-host) rabies virus
- Understanding the impact of white nose syndrome (WNS) in rabies virus maintenance and its impact on indigenous bat populations

## Dr. Adis Dijab

Dr. Dijab earned his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from the Zagreb University College of Veterinary Medicine in Croatia in 1996. Following eight years of practice in a small animal clinic in Kentucky, he began his federal career with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2004.

Over the course of his service, Dr. Dijab has held a wide range of leadership and field positions across both the Food Safety and Inspection Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. His roles have included supervisory veterinary medical officer (VMO), field VMO, area veterinarian-in-charge, program director, and positions within the Senior Executive Service.

Dr. Dijab currently serves as the Associate Deputy Administrator for Veterinary Services, where he continues to advance the mission of safeguarding U.S. animal health and supporting the nation's agricultural infrastructure.

# Speaker Biographies

## Ben Goetsch

Ben Goetsch's journey to becoming the RI Aquaculture Coordinator was a long and winding path. He grew up in the Stony Creek area of Branford, Connecticut, and spent most of his time on small boats around the Thimble Islands, which have a rich history of shellfishing.

Brown University and the study of archaeology brought Goetsch to Rhode Island in 2001, and as a student archaeologist he worked in Pompeii and a Roman hilltop settlement in Northern Portugal for a several seasons. After finishing his undergraduate degree in 2005, Goetsch got involved with the Black Sea Shipwreck Research Project run by the University of Kiev, and he worked on excavating a Byzantine wreck off Crimea's coast for three seasons.

During his time off from excavations in Crimea, Goetsch started working at a dive shop in Warwick, RI. Filling tanks for commercial shellfish divers, Goetsch said he realized shell fishing presented a way to supplement his income, and he got a license to harvest steamers and clams.

"What started as a side gig soon turned into a way of life for me and I continued diving for clams, up to the point I decided to go to Law School at Roger Williams University and pursue a joint masters degree in Marine Affairs at URI," he said. "There I followed my passion for shellfish-related issues and soon discovered that shellfish aquaculture was a robust and rapidly expanding industry."

As a law student, Goetsch worked on shellfish aquaculture issues for Save The Bay as a legal intern, and as a law fellow for Rhode Island Sea Grant. His research brought him into contact with many of the oyster farmers in Rhode Island's salt ponds, and he spent a few years working on the water for various companies during and after the pursuit of his joint Master's in Marine affairs at the University of Rhode Island.

As the current RI Aquaculture Coordinator since 2020, Goetsch facilitates the aquaculture application process, which involves review by the local municipalities, Department of Environmental Management (DEM), the Marine Fisheries Council, and the Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, the Aquaculture Coordinator serves as the state's representative to all bodies public and private on all aquaculture related matters in addition to chairing the CRMC Biosecurity Board, which reviews state agency regulations and requests pertaining to aquaculture disease and importation of aquatic species in order to preserve the health of both the aquaculture industry and wild stocks.

# Speaker Biographies

## **Dr. Renata Ivanek**

Dr. Renata Ivanek is a Professor of Epidemiology at Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine. Her One Health research integrates epidemiology, veterinary medicine, data science, and modeling to strengthen national preparedness against biological threats to human, animal, and food systems. Renata's lab works on infectious disease control, antimicrobial stewardship, and farm-to-table food safety, while also tackling technical and ethical challenges of applying AI in food and veterinary sectors. She teaches epidemiology in graduate and DVM programs and serves as Co-Director of the Cornell Institute for Digital Agriculture and Director of Cornell's combined DVM-PhD program pathway.

## **Dr. Aminata Kalley**

Dr. Aminata Kalley currently holds a position as an Epizootiologist at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services. After graduating from the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine, she spent one year in large animal ambulatory practice in central Virginia. Dr. Kalley then transitioned to a position working for the Department of Homeland Security as a Clinical Veterinarian for research livestock housed at Plum Island Animal Disease Center.

In May 2023, Dr. Kalley completed additional training in foreign animal diseases preparedness through a veterinary public health and preventive medicine residency at The Ohio State University. Her residency work involved collaborating on projects with industry stakeholders, the USDA, and the Ohio Department of Agriculture to aid in developing state-level transboundary animal disease response plans and trainings. Dr. Kalley is a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine and wishes to continue to make advances in the field of transboundary animal diseases of livestock.

## **Dr. Karen Lopez**

Dr. Karen Lopez graduated from Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine in 2011. She also has a bachelor's degree in environmental science from Johns Hopkins University and a Master of Public Health degree from University of Minnesota. Dr. Lopez has been working as a state veterinarian for the Delaware Department of Agriculture since 2016. She grew up in NJ and has one cat, a grey tuxedo named Turkey Neck. She is currently getting fit and fabulous for an 11-day hiking trip in the Alps scheduled for 2027.

# Speaker Biographies

## **Domingo Lora Medina**

Domingo Lora Medina is a Senior Biologist with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, where he leads mosquito surveillance and abatement efforts to monitor and mitigate arboviral risk statewide. He is also a Ph.D. student in Biological and Environmental Sciences at the University of Rhode Island, investigating how microbial symbionts influence vector competence and pathogen transmission in ticks. His research integrates field ecology and laboratory-controlled infection experiments to study how symbiont-vector interactions alter transmission dynamics in tick systems.

## **Dr. Erin Luley**

Dr. Erin Luley was appointed Assistant Bureau Director of the PA Department of Agriculture Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services in May 2023. A lifelong Pennsylvania resident, she completed her undergraduate degree at Penn State University then graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine in 2014. Dr. Luley spent several years in private practice (mixed animal and small animal emergency) before entering a pathology residency at the Penn State Animal Diagnostic Lab (ADL). She received a Master's in Public Health degree from the University of Minnesota in 2018 and became a board-certified veterinary anatomic pathologist in 2021. She worked at ADL as an assistant clinical professor focusing on pathology of livestock species from 2017-2023.

## **Dr. Joanne Maki**

Dr. Joanne Maki, DVM, PhD is a veterinarian with 30+ years' experience in rabies prevention. Her veterinary degree is from at Louisiana State University and her Ph.D. is in Medical Microbiology from the University of Georgia. She joined the pharmaceutical industry in 1990 and led project teams to license three rabies vaccines: (PureVax®) for cats, an equine rabies/Potomac Horse Fever rabies combo, and the oral wildlife rabies vaccine, RABORAL V-RG®.

From 2005 – 2014, she was the Veterinary Public Health, Global Technical Director at Merial Limited focusing on mass dog rabies vaccination programs. During this time, she was involved in the first World Rabies Day organizing efforts and contributed to the global dog rabies elimination plan which has evolved into the United Against Rabies platform. Since 2014, she has been employed by Boehringer-Ingelheim, and the US wildlife oral rabies vaccine programs and other rabies projects as a Senior Veterinarian in Veterinary Public Health for North America.

# Speaker Biographies

## **Dr. Mathias Martins**

Mathias Martins is an Assistant Clinical Professor at Penn State and Section Head of Virology and Molecular Diagnostics at the Animal Diagnostic Laboratory (ADL). He is a veterinary virologist specializing in classical and molecular virology and laboratory diagnostics, focusing on persistent, emerging, and re-emerging viral diseases of poultry. Dr. Martins leads diagnostic services and applied research programs that strengthen disease detection, genomic surveillance, and outbreak response. His work integrates diagnostics and research to improve poultry health, guide disease management, and support rapid responses to viral threats.

## **Kathy Nelson**

Kathy Nelson received her Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Biology from the University of Vermont and has worked for the US Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services program for the past 28 years. She is currently the Acting Lead of the National Rabies Management Program, overseeing oral rabies vaccine bait distribution, enhanced rabies surveillance, post-bait monitoring, and research in 21 states plus Puerto Rico. In her spare time she enjoys hiking, fishing, turkey hunting, gardening, knitting, and doing virtually anything outside.

## **Dr. Amar Patil**

Dr. Amar Patil is a Veterinarian, Scientist, and board-certified Microbiologist in the specialties of veterinary virology and immunology by the American College of Veterinary Microbiologists. He is one of the few professionals who have worked on the laboratory side as well as the regulatory side of animal health in the US. He currently holds the position of the Director of the Division of Animal Health/New Jersey State Veterinarian with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. Before that, he was the lab director of the Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory at the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. He has served on various AAVLD committees both as chair and member. He is looking forward to serving USAHA in his current capacity as the State Veterinarian.

## **Dr. Lauren Richardson**

Lauren Richardson, DVM, MPH, DACVPM has a background in veterinary medicine and public health and has supported projects in over 20 countries requiring development of solutions in life sciences operations and transition, technology integration, biological materials handling and movement, biocontainment and biosecurity, risk and threat management, clinical veterinary medicine, CBRN, food safety, and infectious disease. As Senior Director of Science and Technology within Merrick's Life Sciences, Dr. Richardson provides subject matter expertise and support in operational and strategic planning, biorisk management, training, health systems strengthening efforts, and project and program management to support government, academic, and private industry clients. She works to ensure practical, feasible solutions to complex problems that cross multiple disciplines. Her foundational work in cyberbiosecurity includes consulting for institutions, peer-reviewed publications, support to development of credentials, and course development and training for clients around the world.

# Speaker Biographies

## **Julia Schaar**

Julia Schaar is the Compliance and Regulatory Director for Medgene Labs in Brookings, SD. Julia grew up on a farm and ranch in southeast South Dakota and was motivated to protecting animals and their owners, obtaining her Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science and a registered Veterinary Technician. After 12 years of managing mixed animal vet clinics, she took a position with Medgene Labs in Quality Assurance, Compliance, and Regulatory Affairs to help the company establish Medgene's Prescription Platform Biologics platform and products. In her current role as Compliance and Regulatory Director, she has licensed three vaccine production facilities and several vaccine licenses, including fully commercial, autogenous, conditional, and prescription licensed products with the USDA/Center for Veterinary Biologics. She works closely with all departments within Medgene to ensure compliance to the Code of Federal Regulations, licensing requirements, and pharmacovigilance.

## **Dr. Galit Sharon**

Dr. Sharon, Associate Professor of Marine Biology, joined the faculty at Roger Williams University in the summer of 2022 as a researcher and Director of the Aquatic Diagnostic Laboratory (ADL), which provides fish and shellfish diagnostic services to the aquaculture community in the northeast U.S. Dr. Sharon has a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from the University of Veterinary Medicine, Kosice, Slovakia. She completed a M.Sc. thesis and a Ph.D. in Fish Health at the Institute of Desert Research, Department of Agriculture and Biotechnology, Ben Gurion University, Israel. Dr. Sharon is also a Certified Aquatic Veterinarian, CertAqV, by the World Aquatic Veterinary Medical Association, and a Certified Fish Medicine Specialist, by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Veterinary Services, Israel. Dr. Sharon was an attending veterinarian and Head of the Department of Pathobiology and the Green-Keiser Fish Health Center, Israel Oceanographic & Limnological Research Ltd., National Center for Mariculture, Eilat, Israel, in which she directed novel research projects and provided aquatic veterinary services. She is a member the World Aquaculture Veterinary Medical Association, European Association of Fish Pathologists and is the Veterinarian of record for the RWU Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). She is recognized for her research and long-standing interest in the disease and pathology of fish Invertebrate and shellfish, aquatic animal diagnostics, fish health and welfare and Immunology of aquatic organisms.

## **Agatha Winiarski**

Agatha Winiarski serves as the Program Support Specialist for One Health at the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA). She holds a B.S. in Animal Health from Rutgers University and an M.H.S. in Environmental and Global Health with a concentration in One Health from the University of Florida. Her experience includes ecology field work in tick surveillance and small-mammal trapping, molecular research in hematopoietic aging, and epidemiological testing. Her current work involves public outreach and support for the New Jersey One Health Task Force and related initiatives out of the NJDA.