

Fueling Economic Development In Challenging Workforce Times

5TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

NWA

December 2-5, 2006
St. Petersburg, FL – The Vinoy Hotel

NWA ANNOUNCES CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



Tony Blankley

For seven years, Tony Blankley served as press secretary to then Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich. In that role, he not only helped create the messages that shook the country, but also helped create policy. Blankley's knack for appetizing sound bites (which he calls his "poor-man's poetry") and sound political strategy made him one of Washington's premiere sources of ideas and insights. Prior to his career on Capitol Hill, Blankley served President Reagan as a speechwriter and senior policy analyst.

After leaving Newt Gingrich's office in February 1997, Blankley joined John F. Kennedy Jr.'s George magazine. As a contributing editor, Blankley's monthly column "Between the Lines" featured his inside-the-beltway insights. Blankley is a regular panelist on the McLaughlin Group and he also appears regularly on MSNBC's Hardball with Chris Matthews and, The Nightly News with Brian Williams. In June 1999, Blankley joined The Washington Times as a weekly political columnist. Creators Syndicate internationally syndicates his column. Blankley authored his first book, *The West's Last Chance: Will We Win the Clash of Civilizations?*, in September 2005. It quickly made The New York Times best-sellers list.



Congressman Ric Keller

Congressman Ric Keller, representing Greater Orlando in the U.S. House of Representatives, was named chairman of the 21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee of the House Education and the Workforce Committee on March 1, 2006. The subcommittee has jurisdiction over higher education programs, including Pell Grants, technology in education, teacher training, job training, and welfare reform.

As the only Floridian in the House or Senate to sit on the education and workforce committee, Rep. Keller is the state's point man on such issues in Washington, D.C. His top priority upon election was to support fully funding Pell Grants. A Pell Grant recipient himself, Keller led the fight to boost support for the program, now providing needy students enough money to pay for tuition, books and fees at the University of Central Florida.



Sigurd Nilsen, Government Accountability Office, Education, Workforce and Income Security

Sigurd Nilsen brings more than 25 years experience in research, public policy analysis and management related to workforce, employment training and other social welfare areas to his position as Director for Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues at GAO. Since joining GAO in 1984, he has been responsible for more than 20 annual studies performed at the request of the Congress on a range of issues related to numerous federal programs and policy areas. Program-specific work has included evaluations of the Unemployment Insurance system, Welfare Reform, and the Workforce Investment Act. Broader policy work has included school-to-work transition issues, the changing size and demographics of the workforce and issues surrounding the impact of changing economic conditions and labor supply and demand.



John Wallace, Vice President, MDRC

John Wallace is the Vice President of MDRC in their California office, and has been involved in the country's workforce development system since 1976. In 1979, he became Director of Human Services for San Mateo County, California, and from 1982-86, he worked at the National Commission for Employment Policy in Washington D.C., where he served as Assistant Director and focused on developing performance standards for the workforce development system. In 1986, he joined MDRC, and since then has directed or worked on a number of national demonstrations and evaluations, including the One Stop-based Work Advancement and Support Center Demonstration for low-wage workers, the National Employment Retention and Advancement Evaluation, the Jobs-Plus Demonstration in public housing, the National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies, the National JTPA study, and the California GAIN evaluation. Mr. Wallace has testified several times before various congressional and state legislative committees and authored MDRC reports. Currently, he also has lead responsibility at MDRC for communicating MDRC research findings to congressional and executive agency officials and public interest and advocacy groups in Washington D.C., and states.

David Bradley

David Bradley gives a voice to the voiceless. For nearly three decades, David has been the preeminent advocate in Washington, D.C. working closely with the Congressional leadership and with numerous Administrations to ensure federal policies related to major social service programs. In a town full of corporate lobbyists, David Bradley has created with his government relations firm of Moss, McGee, Bradley and Colbert, a unique niche in Washington. He has focused on assisting nonprofit organizations and low income programs, including the National Workforce Association, with their legislative and regulatory needs. David serves as the CEO of both NWA and USA Works! These organizations focused on working with Congress and the Executive Branch to design and fund a sustainable job training system for America. The unique role he has crafted in Washington and his nearly unrivaled access to powerbrokers in the Congressional leadership has made David a popular presence on the speaker circuit and at universities around the nation. His speaking engagements range the gamut in the domestic policy arena, providing his audience with an insider's perspective of the political climate in Washington.

John Colbert

John Colbert is a partner in the government relations firm of Moss, McGee, Bradley and Colbert. John has an extensive background in the Executive Branch, as well as working with Congress. He served as a senior official in the Clinton Administration as Chief of Staff of the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, overseeing an \$11 billion budget. In this position, John oversaw the nation's major job training programs, the largest youth programs in the Executive Branch, (including the Job Corps), as well as programs that assist high technology workers, migrants, Native Americans, and older workers. Prior to becoming Chief of Staff, John was a legislative liaison with Congress for the Clinton Administration a number of major reauthorization bills and their implementation, including the Workforce Investment Act. An attorney in private practice before entering government, he also serves as Senior Counsel to the National Center on Education and the Economy. His background in government began in the area of foreign affairs, as an advisor to the former Deputy Prime Minister of Ireland, focusing on fostering the Irish peace process.