



NASCSP 2026 Annual Training Conference

WAP Core Conference Agenda

September 23 - 25, 2026

Wednesday, September 23rd

7:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

8:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Opening Plenary

The strength of our network has always been built from the ground up thanks to decades of federal, state, and local partnerships dedicated to reducing poverty and increasing energy equity in communities across the country. Our opening plenary honors that foundation while looking ahead. Join NASCSP leadership and our federal partners from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Community Services (OCS) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) as they share their vision, priorities, and what's next for the CSBG and Weatherization networks. From the roots of where we've been to the reach of where we're going...this is how we kick things off.

PRESENTERS: **Dr. Robinne Alexander, M.B.A., Th.D.**, Group Sales Specialist and Brand Ambassador, American Automobile Association; **Keishaa Austin**, Associate Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Critical Minerals and Energy Innovations, U.S. Department of Energy (invited); **Corine Frank**, Acting Director, Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; **Melanie Sanford**, Bureau of Community Action and Economic Opportunity, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and NASCSP Board President; **Cheryl Williams**, Executive Director, NASCSP

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Networking Break

Take a moment to connect and recharge during our networking break. This is your chance to mingle with fellow attendees, exchange ideas, and build valuable professional relationships. Enjoy refreshments and engage in stimulating conversations that could spark new collaborations and opportunities.

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS:

Annual Business Meeting (MEMBERS ONLY)

Join us for NASCSP's Annual Business Meeting, where members will receive key updates on organizational priorities, board activities, strategic initiatives, and financials. This meeting is an opportunity for members to engage with leadership, participate in decision-making processes, and help shape the direction of the association. Your voice and vote matter, so don't miss this critical session.

From Strategy to Impact: Advancing Energy Efficiency Workforce Development in Oregon

The Oregon Energy Conservation and Weatherization Training Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), was launched in 2024 to respond to workforce challenges experienced by WAP programs and contractors in Oregon. This session will discuss lessons learned while developing and implementing a statewide program that integrates U.S. Department of Labor, DOE, and industry needs, the transition of program funding from DOE to utilities, and strategies to maintain a human-centered, outcomes-driven approach to workforce development. Presenters will address workforce and funding challenges and successes, share the impact the program has had on state-level policy work, and provide recommendations and tools to implement similar programs in your state or service territory.

PRESENTERS: **Suzanne Gray**, *Workforce Development Manager, Community Action Partnership of Oregon*; **Lauren Kolojejchick-Kotch**, *Utility Policy Manager*, **Drew Sizemore**, *Director, Oregon Training Institute*

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Lunch (On Your Own)

2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS:

WAP Member Planning and Action

WAP Member Planning and Action is devoted to in-depth peer exchanges facilitated by your elected NASCSP regional representatives, covering critical topics in WAP operations and administration. This session is reserved for **NASCSP members only**.

Succession Planning for Stability: Weatherization Workforce Retention and Leadership Continuity

Does your organization have a plan ready to ensure continuity of leadership and operational knowledge in the event of a key staff retirement, a sudden departure, or changing roles? This session explores why succession planning in Weatherization is crucial. With aging workforces, evolving funding requirements, and growing technical skill demands, organizations must have structured processes in place to ensure continuity in key positions, identify and develop future leaders, maintain service quality, and reduce disruptions. Join us to discuss how your organization can build a plan for success that includes skills inventory, knowledge transfer sessions, job shadowing, cross-training, and credentialing.

PRESENTERS: **Mia Harnos**, *Director of Energy Partnerships, National Community Action Partnership*

3:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

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3:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS:

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Using Standard Work Specifications in Practical Field Applications

Too often and far from their intended purpose, Standard Work Specifications (SWS) become little more than a scoreboard for settling "who's right" arguments. This session reframes the SWS as a living, evolving tool for guidance and continuous improvement. Through real-world examples, we'll show how auditors, inspectors, technicians, and state monitors can put the SWS to work the way it was meant to be used. You'll leave with practical strategies to keep your specs driving improvement.

PRESENTER: **Kevin Scott**, *Community Development Training Center Coordinator, Piedmont Triad Regional Council*

Thursday, September 24th

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Weatherization Assistance Program Updates

This session will provide updates on the Weatherization Assistance Program, including recent developments, emerging priorities, and other information relevant to program administration and implementation.

PRESENTER: **Derek Schroeder**, *Weatherization Assistance Program Manager, Office of State and Community Energy Programs, U.S. Department of Energy (invited)*

10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

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10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Weatherization Terms and Conditions Review

Weatherization grant terms and conditions establish the framework for program administration, compliance, and accountability. This session will provide a practical overview of key award requirements, highlight frequently misunderstood provisions, and discuss strategies for successful implementation. Participants will gain a clearer understanding of their responsibilities, learn how to navigate compliance expectations, and identify resources that support effective management of Weatherization funding.

Updated 9/9/2026

PRESENTERS: **Kye Garvin**, *WAP Workforce Senior Program Manager*, **Megan Meadows**, *WAP Director*, **Claudia Torres**, *WAP IJJA Senior Program Manager*, *NASCSP*

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Lunch

1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Retrofit Radio: The Voices Behind Better Buildings

Retrofit Radio is a podcast dedicated to telling the stories of the people who make Weatherization possible. This live podcast session will feature a moderated panel representing multiple levels of the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) network, from frontline crews and trainers to program leadership and partners. Panelists will share their personal journeys into weatherization, how those experiences shaped their current roles, and how they are navigating current challenges facing the WAP network. Through authentic storytelling and audience engagement, attendees will gain insight into the people, resilience, and innovation driving weatherization forward across communities nationwide.

PRESENTERS: **Madden Delaney**, *Multimedia Asset Developer*, **John Pady**, *Chief Program and Expansion Officer, Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County*; **Keli Reynolds**, *Assistant Director of Single-Family Programs, HCA, Kentucky Housing Corporation*; **Skip Wiltshire-Gordon**, *Director, Government Affairs, AnnDyl Policy Group, LLC*

2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

The Art of Winning When it Seems Like All Hope is Lost

Leadership is easy when resources are plentiful, teams are aligned, and the path forward is clear. The true test of leadership comes when funding is uncertain, priorities shift, resources are stretched, and expectations remain high — yet the solutions that worked yesterday no longer seem like enough.

The Art of Winning When It Seems Like All Hope Is Lost is an engaging and practical keynote designed for leaders who are called to deliver results in the most challenging circumstances. Tailored for the community services professionals, this session examines how resilience, strategic thinking, courageous decision-making, and disciplined execution can transform obstacles into opportunities, even when the ground is shifting beneath you.

Through real-world examples, interactive discussion, and practical strategies, participants will be equipped to move from crisis to clarity, from obstacles to options, and from surviving to winning! The goal is not simply to survive difficult seasons; it is to develop the leadership capacity to find a path forward when others believe there isn't one.

PRESENTER: **Dr. Karen Y. Williams**, *International Executive Director, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.*

Friday, September 25th

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

8:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Maximizing IIJA: Best Practices for State Plan Implementation

This session will introduce the IIJA Best Practices Guide, developed by the NASCSP IIJA Implementation Working Group to help Weatherization Assistance Program grantees successfully modify and implement their IIJA State Plans. Participants will explore recommendations for maximizing funding, improving production and expenditures, strengthening program management, leveraging optional budget categories, and ensuring compliance with DOE requirements. The session will help states identify strategies to streamline operations, increase flexibility, and position themselves to fully utilize IIJA funding by the June 30, 2029, deadline.

PRESENTERS: **Alyssa Kroshus-Helling**, Weatherization Program Manager, North Dakota Department of Commerce; **Claudia Torres**, WAP IIJA Senior Program Manager, NASCSP; **Laura Whitfield**, Lead Project Manager, Weatherization, Georgia Environmental Finance Authority

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

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10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

The Connection Countdown: A Speed Networking Experience

The conference may be nearing its finish, but there's still time to make a few meaningful connections. In this fast-paced, game-show-inspired networking experience, participants will race the clock through a series of lively one-on-one rounds designed to spark real conversations. Each round introduces a new challenge, from swapping strategies for stretching limited resources to uncovering potential partnerships you didn't know existed. The rounds move fast, with music, countdowns, surprise prompts, and plenty of energy to keep things moving. You'll meet new colleagues, discover fresh perspectives, and identify connections worth continuing long after the session ends. No preparation required; just bring your business cards and your energy. Come ready to think quickly, share boldly, and grow your NASCSP network one connection at a time.

PRESENTER: **Raymond Thomas**, Director of Meetings and Strategic Engagement, NASCSP

11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Closing Plenary

Join us as we bring the conference to a close with reflections on key themes, takeaways, and connections made throughout the week. This session will highlight shared insights, celebrate collaborative learning, and look ahead to the work that continues beyond the conference. Participants will leave with renewed energy, strengthened relationships, and a clearer sense of how to carry forward what they have learned into their organizations and communities.