

**AHPA 9<sup>th</sup> Botanical Congress**  
**Compiled Speaker Bios**  
**(Subject to Change)**

**Linda Black Elk**, a Catawba Nation descendant, is an ethnobotanist specializing in teaching about culturally important plants and their uses as food and medicine. She works to build curriculum and ways of thinking that will promote and protect food sovereignty, traditional plant knowledge, and environmental quality as an extension of the fight against hydraulic fracturing and the fossil fuels industry. Black Elk and her family have been spearheading a grassroots effort to provide organic, traditional, shelf stable food, and traditional Indigenous medicines to elders and others in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. She has written for numerous publications, and is the author of "*Watoto Unyutapi*," a field guide to edible wild plants of the Dakota people. Black Elk spends her time foraging, hiking, and fishing on the prairie with her husband and three sons, who are all members of the Oceti Sakowin. She currently serves as the Food Sovereignty Coordinator at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, N. Dak.

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**Bill Chioffi** is the Vice President of Strategic Partnerships and Business Development for the Ric Scalzo Institute for Botanical Research at the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine (SCNM). He is an herbalist with over 25-years of experience in the production of botanical medicine. This includes all phases of vertically integrated botanical manufacturing of liquid extracts and concentrates, organic farming and processing of vertically integrated raw materials, qualitative and quantitative analysis of finished products and raw materials, international and domestic regulatory and GACP auditing experience, social responsibility/sustainability management and program development, agroforestry and supply chain development planning, political advocacy, clinical research guidance, formulation, new product development, and education. Chioffi serves on the following boards; United Plant Savers, Sustainable Herbs Project/ABC, Appalachian Forest Farmers, including past membership on the Executive Committee of the American Herbal Products Association. He has made friends and forged relationships across the globe with manufacturers and suppliers and looks forward to leading all business development and strategic corporate relations and other private clients for the Ric Scalzo Institute for Botanical Research at SCNM, and continuing to connect people and plants.

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**Edward Fletcher** has been in the botanical business and made his livelihood working with plants for all of his adult life. As the Cultivation Manager for Wilcox Natural Products, he developed and managed the cultivation program overseeing nearly 4,000 hectares in eight different countries of medicinal species crops. Fletcher continued this work as the Chief Operating Officer of Strategic Sourcing, Inc.'s Botanical Division for 15 years before joining Herbal Ingenuity, where he established and developed the Quality and Sustainability Department as a founding member of Herbal Ingenuity. He is now the Owner/President and COO for Native Botanicals, Inc.

Fletcher works hand-in-hand with suppliers, farmers, growers and wildcrafters addressing sustainability from propagation, cultivation, harvesting and post-harvest handling techniques for the chosen crop. He is an active member of the American Herbal Products Associations, and serves as the current Chair of the Botanical Raw Materials Committee. Fletcher is a member of the Dietary Supplement General Chapters Expert Committee of the US Pharmacopeia, several other advisory panels and speaks at numerous Industry gatherings.

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**Chi Hee Kim**, Senior Director, Global Government Affairs, Herbalife Nutrition, is responsible for identifying, developing and implementing global product- and policy-based strategies, and managing relationships with trade associations, professional organizations and government agencies for Herbalife International of America, Inc. Previously, Kim worked on scientific substantiation of product claims and safety and regulatory compliance. Kim came to Herbalife in 2005 from a privately-owned dietary supplement company where she worked in new product development.

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**Danielle Kruse**, West Farm Site Leader & Manager, Trout Lake Farm, LLC, has been an integral part of the farm since her arrival in 2009. She is responsible for all farm operations including preparing ground, planting, cultivating, all the way through harvest to root washing and bin drying. Kruse has been a leading force in the implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Trout Lake Farm is proud to be an industry leader in food safety standards. She has created an entirely new farm documentation system and standard operating procedures, and has set the highest standards for safety on the farm. The safety of Kruse's employees is her number one priority. Kruse's favorite part of the job: "...when I am out in the field on early morning rounds and see everyone working hard in the weeding crew, the tractors moving through the fields, the sun rising against Mt. Adams, and the day going according to planned, it's one of the most satisfying feelings." Kruse is a strong promoter of organic, sustainable agriculture, and does everything she can to promote the health of the soil and environment around her.

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**Crystal Lee, Ph.D. (Dine')**, was born/raised on the Navajo Nation. Her tribal clans are Tachii'nii (Red Running into the Water), Tabaaha (Water's Edge), Tsenjikini (Cliff Dwellers), and Kin I ichii'nii (Red House). She completed her undergraduate degree(s) at Arizona State University; Masters and Doctorate in Public Health at the University of Las Vegas-Nevada; Master's of Legal Studies in Indigenous Peoples Law at the University of Oklahoma, College of Law; Predoctoral Fellowship at Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health; and her Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of California-Los Angeles, David Geffen School of Medicine. Currently, Dr. Lee is faculty, Assistant Professor, at the University of New Mexico, College of Population Health, and an Indigenous HIV/AIDS Research Training Fellow at the University of Washington, Indigenous Wellness Research Institute. Dr. Lee conducts infectious disease biomedical prevention research with a focus on Native American health and examines Indigenous health policies at a tribal, state-tribal coordination, national, and international level. She is Founder/CEO of United Natives, a non-profit organization that serves Indian Country on multiple initiatives. She serves as Vice Chair for the Clark County NV, Democratic Party Native Caucus, Advisor for the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity; and on the United Nations (UN) North American Indigenous Caucus, UN Indigenous Women's Caucus, and UN Gender Equality Task Force. Dr. Lee also serves on the Board of Director's for the Las Vegas Indian Center. She served as a Tribal Health Advisor to the Obama Administration, and was honored by President Bill Clinton for her work with Indigenous communities at the Clinton Global Initiative.

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**Michael McGuffin** was honored in 2010 for over 20-years of dedicated service, having served as the President of the American Herbal Products Association (AHPA) since 1999 and a member of the Board of Trustee's for 10 years prior. He has been active in the herbal industry since 1974, having owned both retail and manufacturing businesses in this field.

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A leading expert on dietary supplement regulation, McGuffin has been published in scholarly and scientific journals, including the *Food and Drug Law Journal* and *Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics*, and also wrote the highly-lauded publication *AHPA's Annotated Final Rule on Dietary Supplement cGMP* (2007). Additionally, McGuffin served as Managing Editor of AHPA's *Botanical Safety Handbook* (1997) and *Herbs of Commerce, 2nd edition* (2000). He speaks frequently on dietary supplement regulation in the U.S. and abroad.

McGuffin has represented the herbal industry at state and federal hearings on herbal regulatory issues. He has served as a member of FDA's Food Advisory Committee Working Group on Good Manufacturing Practices for Dietary Supplements (1998-1999), FDA's Food Advisory Committee's Dietary Supplements Subcommittee (2003-2005), California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Analysis Food Warning Workgroup (2008-2010), and the Advisory Board of the USC School of Pharmacy Regulatory Science Master's Degree Program. He also serves on the boards of the American Herbal Pharmacopoeia, the American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, and United Plant Savers.

McGuffin was awarded the Cliff Adler "Heart in Business" award in 1994 and the Nutrition Business Journal Award for Efforts on Behalf of Industry in 2004 and 2012. McGuffin has been quoted in a variety of news publications such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *U.S. News & World Report* and *Newsweek* and has made appearances on ABC's Nightline, National Public Radio, and ABC Radio.

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**Ettore Milano, Ph.D.**, is a Purchasing Director at Indena. Dr. Milano has a technical background with degrees in Pharmaceutical Chemistry and a Doctorate in Organic Chemistry. He has been with Indena since 1998, and in the course of his career he has developed a diverse range of expertise in the botanical field. He began working in R&D for 10-years, moved to sales for seven years, was an outsourcing specialist for three years, and joined the purchasing department five years ago. Dr. Milano spends his time at Indena working closely with the relevant functions of the company; logistics, QA, QC, TO and R&D.

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**John Molina, J.D., M.D., L.H.D.**, is Pascua Yaqui and Yavapai-Apache. He is the Corporate Compliance Officer for Native Health, an Urban Indian Health Center in Phoenix, Arizona. He is the former Health Systems Director for the Kenaitze Indian Tribe in Kenai, Alaska. His previous positions were as Chief Executive Officer for Phoenix Indian Medical Center and as Assistant Director and Medical Director for Arizona's Medicaid program division for the American Indian Health Program. Dr. Molina is the Founder of Las Fuentes Health Clinic of Guadalupe, a community medical clinic in his hometown of Guadalupe, Ariz. He is also a Vietnam-era U.S. Navy Veteran.

Dr. Molina is a graduate of the University of Arizona College of Medicine and the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University. His specialty training is in obstetrics and gynecology, with his clinical practice having been with the Indian Health Service and Las Fuentes Health Clinic of Guadalupe.

Dr. Molina's academic interests are in Indian health care law and policy related to health care disparities, patient-centered medicine, and research in Indigenous communities.

Dr. Molina has published numerous medical articles on the integration of culture and medicine. He has been the recipient of numerous leadership awards, including an honorary doctoral degree in letters, *litterarum humanarum* (L.H.D.), from A.T. Still University of Health Sciences in Kirksville, Mo., for his humanitarian work.

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**Jonathan Nez**, Navajo Nation President, was born in Tuba City, Ariz., and raised in Shonto, Ariz. He began his public service after being elected as Shonto Chapter Vice President. He was later elected to serve three terms as a Navajo Nation Council Delegate, representing the chapters of Shonto, Oljato, Tsaah Bi Kin, and Navajo Mountain. He was also elected as a Navajo County Board of Supervisor for District 1 and served two terms. In 2015, Nez was elected Navajo Nation Vice President.

Nez believes in education. He is currently a doctoral student in political science and completed research on local empowerment and mobilizing local communities of the Navajo Nation to reinstate their inherent local way of governance. His research focuses on the reduction of dependence on the central tribal government, upholding and enhancing the local inherent sovereignty of the chapter areas. He is an alumnus of Northland Pioneer College and Northern Arizona University (NAU). Nez earned a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and a Master's degree in Public Administration from NAU.

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**Simon Pettman** is Executive Director of the International Alliance of Dietary/Food Supplement Associations (IADSA), and has been closely involved in the organization since its creation in 1998. IADSA was created to meet the increasing need for expertise, knowledge and experience on issues relating to supplements. Today, IADSA is the global platform to guide the evolution of policy and regulation in the sector. IADSA's work includes partnerships in countries and regions where supplement regulation and policy is being developed, modified or harmonized. Its work has included guidance on the creation of the ASEAN health supplement agreement, the organization of training programs for the Chinese government, and the creation of a Resource Center in India. Pettman's responsibilities within IADSA include building strategy to shape regulation and policy and implementing programs with experts from the member associations and companies.

In addition, Pettman founded EAS Strategies in 1992. In his role as Global Managing Director, Pettman has overseen the company's global development and the growth of its reputation as a leading specialist consultancy in food and health regulation and policy. He has provided strategic advice to companies, associations and governments in more than 60 countries, focusing particularly on finding solutions and effective pathways to regulatory and policy challenges.

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**Claire Morton Reynolds**, Senior Industry Analyst, *Nutrition Business Journal* (NBJ), informs the nutrition industry on trends across the dietary supplement, natural and organic food & beverage, personal care, and hemp CBD categories. She models and manages data and insights for NBJ, including market sizing, forecasting and trend analysis. As part of New Hope, NBJ helps companies large and small identify, prioritize, and take advantage of opportunities in the evolving food and nutrition economy.

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**Graham Rigby**, Chief Innovation Officer for Care/of, is a product development specialist with a track record of successful innovation launches in health, wellness, and sports nutrition. He started his career

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in food and beverages and has been in dietary supplements since 2007 with New Chapter, Organic India, and now Care/of. Rigby has been actively involved in AHPA for over 10-years serving on multiple committees, and serving as Chair of the Board of Trustees multiple times.

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**Josh Schneider**, CEO, Cultivaris Hemp LLC, is a fearless innovator always pushing boundaries and working to improve upon the status quo. Leading a large, young, plant sales, marketing and product development team early in his career gave Schneider a passion for shepherding new ideas, programs, and varieties to success in the marketplace. His enthusiasm for fresh ideas in both ornamental and agricultural sectors of the global plant business has made him the driver behind countless new products and programs. Schneider's experience founding and managing the global supply chain for the Global Breadfruit young plant tropical agricultural division of Cultivaris; his involvement in building out a reliable supply chain for hemp, and his years of work with ornamental plant breeders around the world have given him a strong understanding of domestic and international plant supply chains. With 20+ years of hands-on experience in retail and wholesale international horticultural, Schneider's focus is to build on the accumulated knowledge and experience in the horticulture industry to reliably bring the best hemp varieties to farmers and growers across the country.

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**Suzanne Shelton**, Managing Partner, The Shelton Group, has handled public relations for international and domestic dietary supplement and natural products manufacturers and suppliers since 1990. In addition to taking very good care of her clients, several of whom have kept her on retainer for decades, she is actively involved in advocating industry best practices and fostering growth. Awards Shelton has received include the AHPA Herbal Hero award, an NBJ award for Efforts on Behalf of Industry, a Crusader award from the NNFA, and NutraIngredients-USA NutraChampion. Shelton was a founding board and executive committee member of the Natural Products Foundation, and is Communications Committee Chair of the American Herbal Products Association.

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**David Solomon** is President of BDS Natural Products. As the largest manufacturer of botanicals and spices in the U.S., BDS Natural Products is a key supplier to the nutraceutical, food, and tea industries. He is in the business of offering unparalleled product knowledge of the world's botanical and spice supply. Having traveled to 87 countries reviewing crops and manufacturing processes, Solomon is deemed an expert in the purchasing of spices and herbal products. He is the Immediate Past President of the American Spice Trade Association.

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**Brandon Stolar**, Sales Manager, Indena USA, began his career wanting to work at a German company, and was hired at Brenntag as a sales trainee. After a year he moved into a full-time sales role as an Account Executive, managing northeast Ohio. Three and a half years into his role, Stolar earned an expanded territory and began covering western New York state in addition to his previous territory. At the end of 2016, he decided to switch companies and joined Indena as the US Sales Manager. Stolar has worked there since, growing Indena's business in the nutraceutical and nutrition markets.

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**Amy Summers** launched Pitch Publicity in the face of a rapidly changing climate for communication and media relations in 2003. She's credited as the first to strategize live media interviews at both the

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deepest and highest points of the planet (scientific laboratory Aquarius, 63 feet beneath the sea; and Mount Everest summit, 21,000 feet above sea level). Summers has more than 20 years of experience working with major clients in natural health to increase visibility through national publicity exposure. In 2018, “The Pitch with Amy Summers,” went live and quickly became one of the most highly ranked communications flash briefings on Amazon’s Alexa. After 500 consecutive episodes, Summers launched her second company, INICIVOX®, in February 2020 to help individuals improve a wide-range of soft skills centered on the complexity of communications. Summers earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Public Relations, with a minor in Health Science Education from the University of Florida. She has served as an adjunct lecturer at UF teaching, “Pitching Persuasion,” as well as served on UF’s Public Relations Advisory Council and currently serves as a regional director on the national board of directors of the University of Florida Alumni Association.

**Twitter:** @PitchAmy

**Hashtags:** #PitchPublicity #ThePitch #INICIVOX

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**Website:** [www.pitchpublicitynyc.com](http://www.pitchpublicitynyc.com) AND [www.INICIVOX.COM](http://www.INICIVOX.COM)

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**Kristina Tucker** brings over 25-years of experience to her role as Minister of Enlightenment and Commerce (Vice President of Sales and Communication) at The Republic of Tea. Her mission is to educate and inspire people throughout the world about tea, its varieties, origins, rituals and health benefits.

Tucker began with The Republic of Tea 18-years ago. She is instrumental in overseeing the company’s internal and external communications, public relations, philanthropic efforts, and management of the national sales team, international sales development, sales systems, analysis, and new business development and initiatives. She also serves as the company’s spokesperson.

Prior to joining The Republic of Tea, Tucker was National Sales Manager, Natural Foods, for Just Desserts, Inc. in Oakland, Calif. She also worked for Allegro Coffee Company in Boulder, Col., a subsidiary of Whole Foods Markets, Inc., and The Organic Coffee Company in Wareham, Mass., following her graduation from the University of Delaware, where she earned a Bachelor’s degree in Economics.

In 2018, Tucker was elected to the Board of Trustees of the American Herbal Products Association. She also serves on the Demeter USA Biodynamic Trade Committee, and she served as the Board President of Fresh Start, a Denver, Colo. non-profit, from 2010 to 2016. In 2020, Tucker obtained a Master’s degree in Strategic Communication from the prestigious American University in Washington D.C.

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**Cara Welch, Ph.D.**, is the Acting Director, Office of Dietary Supplement Programs (ODSP), Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In ODSP, Dr. Welch works on new policies and programs involving regulatory compliance matters for the dietary supplement industry. She joined FDA in 2014 as a chemist and utilizes her background to provide guidance on ODSP’s research program. Prior to FDA, Dr. Welch was

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the Senior Vice President of Scientific and Regulatory Affairs at the Natural Products Association. She earned her Doctorate in Medicinal Chemistry from Rutgers University working with traditional medicinal African plants.