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& DISTILLED SPIRITS**

# YEAR IN REVIEW



## About the YPN

The Renewable Fuels Association's Young Professionals Network (YPN) was formed in July 2020 and is dedicated to bringing together innovative and dedicated young professionals from across the U.S. ethanol industry. The YPN is a community of young leaders with a common goal to advance their respective businesses, build new relationships, and work with one another to identify new opportunities that grow and strengthen the renewable fuels industry.

## Advisory Board

Jackie Hayes, NCERC at SIUE  
*Chairperson & YPN Member*

Dana Siefkes-Lewis, Redfield Energy  
*RFA Board Member*

Janet Fisher, Lallemand Biofuels  
& Distilled Spirits  
*YPN Member*

Robert White, Renewable Fuels Association  
*RFA Advisory*

Tony Leiding, Trenton Agri-Products  
*RFA Board Member & YPN Member*

## Member Testimonial

"The Renewable Fuels Association YPN is a great source for young and emerging leaders in the ethanol industry to connect and collaborate. As an ethanol producer, getting to know the next generation of leaders in ethanol producing organizations, suppliers, and key business partners is essential and valuable. I commend the Renewable Fuels Association for being ahead of the pack in organizing this group." - Tony Leiding, President of Trenton Agri-Products



# A Letter from the Chairperson

Dear YPN Supporter,

When the Young Professionals Network was started in July 2020, it was at the height of COVID restrictions. Every meeting or conference we anticipated attending during the 2020 calendar year had been cancelled or converted to a virtual format. What we once took for granted, the events at which we could meet in-person and catch up with friends, suddenly felt very distant. So, while it didn't feel like the most opportune time to start a national networking group, I knew that giving young members of the ethanol industry a voice was needed at that time more than ever.

With the blessing from the RFA Board of Directors, we announced the launch of the Young Professionals Network and were quickly impressed by the amount of support it received. Over the span of a few weeks, the group gained dozens of members. Just six months after its inception, the group celebrated its 100th member. I'm extremely happy to report that the YPN now has 130+ members representing all sectors of the renewable fuels industry.

Along the way, the YPN has hosted five virtual events and two in-person events. Young professionals who may not have had the opportunity to meet otherwise are building their networks and making new friends. I'm thrilled with the success of the YPN thus far and excited about what the future holds. Most of all, I have a renewed sense of appreciation for the industry veterans who paved the way for those of us who hope to spend our careers in the ethanol industry. Their support--especially that from our premier sponsor, Lallemand Biofuels & Distilled Spirits--is invaluable and contributes greatly to the long-term success of the renewable fuels industry.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Hayes". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Jackie" and "Hayes" being capitalized and prominent.

Jackie Hayes

# YPN By the Numbers

August 2020 - December 2021

5 Virtual Events

2 In-Person Events

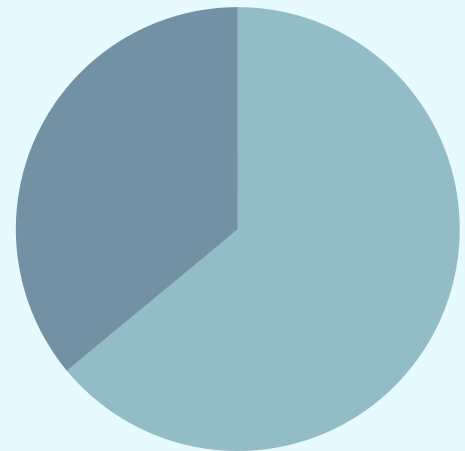
130+ Members

Who are the YPN members?

Gender

Women  
36%

Men  
64%

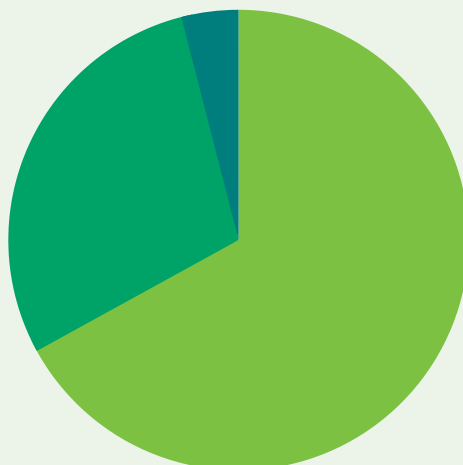


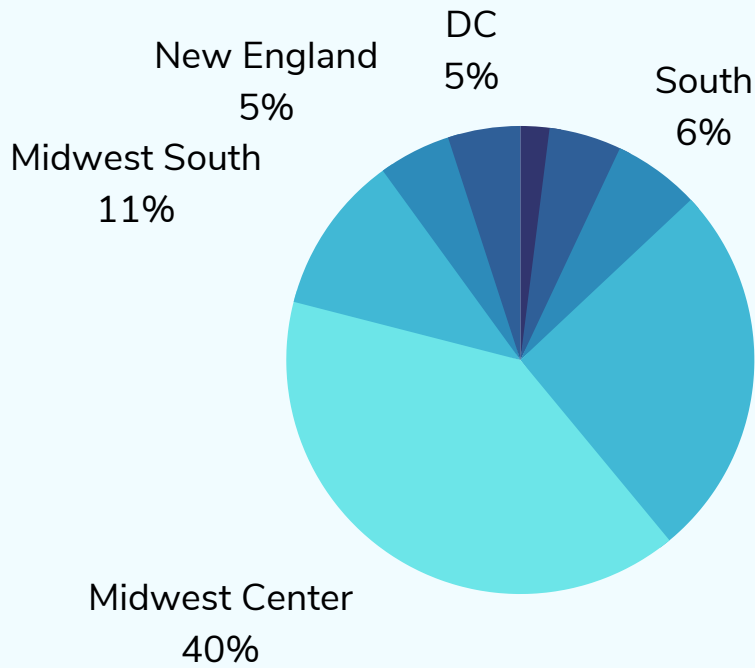
Company Role

Non-Management  
67%

Management  
29%

Executive  
4%



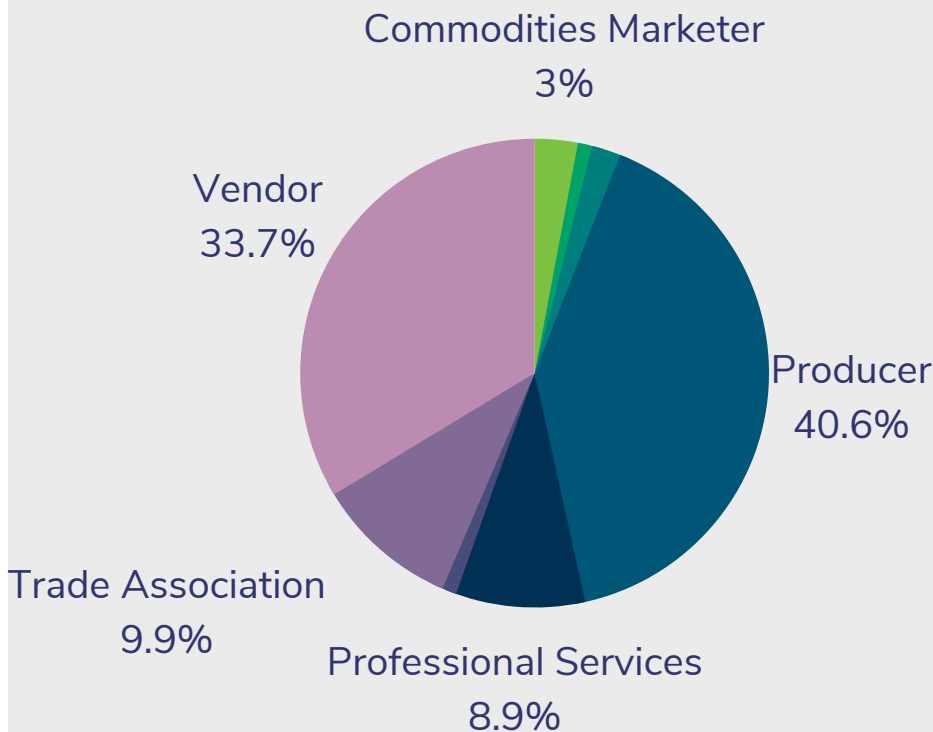


## Location

Midwest North  
26%

Canada  
Southwest  
South  
Midwest-North  
Midwest-Center  
Midwest-South  
New England  
DC

Alberta  
AZ, CA, CO  
GA, TN, TX  
MI, MN, ND, SD, WI  
IA, IL, IN, NE, OH  
KS, MO  
NH, NJ, NY, VT  
DC



## Industry Sector

# In-Person Events Recap

## Social Hour at the 2021 Fuel Ethanol Workshop

Johnny's Hall of Fame, Des Moines, IA | July 14, 2021

*This was the YPN's first in-person event and provided YPN members who were in attendance at FEW a venue to meet and network.*



## Breakfast with Ethanol Industry Veterans at RFA Annual Meeting

Des Moines, IA | September 29, 2021

Coinciding with the RFA 2021 Annual Meeting, YPN members enjoyed breakfast with three industry veterans, Carl Sitzmann of E Energy Adams, Randy Doyal of AI Corn Clean Fuel, and Mick Henderson of Commonwealth Agri-Energy, who gave valuable insight through stories from their successful careers in the ethanol industry.





# Virtual Events Recap

## October 2020 Virtual Networking Event: Zoom “Meet & Greet”

RFA’s Young Professionals Network hosted a series of Zoom-based “Meet & Greet” to provide an opportunity for all 70+ members to introduce themselves and meet other YPN members. The Meet & Greet were broken up into five sessions that took place over the month of October and were limited to fifteen YPN members in order to allow enough time for each YPN member to introduce themselves.

Took place October 13, October 15, October 20, October 22, October 28, 2020.

## February 2021 Virtual Networking Event: Zoom “Meet & Greet”

RFA’s Young Professionals Network hosted a series of Zoom-based “Meet & Greet” to provide an opportunity for all 95+ members to meet other YPN members and discuss dynamic industry topics.

Took place February 23, February 24, February 25, February 26, 2021.

## December 2021 All-Member Meeting

Following a year-end survey, the YPN members met virtually to discuss the progress that had been made thus far by the program and ideas for future networking events, learning opportunities, and new ways to engage with one another and industry leaders.

Took place December 15, 2021.

## Member Testimonial

"Being part of the YPN has exposed me to a wide variety of professionals within the biofuel and energy space. There is a myriad of business and backgrounds associated within YPN, demonstrating varying career pathways and providing enriching relationships. It has been a privilege to learn from industry titans on how to best navigate this rewarding field and to experience comradery among peers. I encourage anyone eligible to join this ambitious group!"- Mackenzie Boubin, Director of Global Ethanol Market Development, U.S. Grains Council





## Informational Webinars:

### November 2020 Webinar

#### *Installing & Selling Higher Ethanol Blends*

This webinar brought together two leading organizations in the fuel space: Bosselman Administrative Services and Source North America. Randy Gard of Bosselman presented the strategic ways his company has installed and marketed higher ethanol blends to gain an edge over their competitors. Jeff Dzieranowski of Source North America provided a virtual tour of their Source University Training Center, an exhibit of aboveground and belowground fueling equipment.

Took place Tuesday, November 17, 2020.

Sponsored by: KAAPA Ethanol Commodities, LLC



**YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NETWORK**

**Installing & Selling Higher Ethanol Blends**  
An Exclusive Webinar for the RFA's Young Professionals Network

**Tuesday, November 17 | 2-3 PM CST**  
The webinar will kick-off the educational programming for the Young Professionals Network and provide an overview of the innerworkings of installing higher ethanol blends. From the tanks in the ground, to the labels on the pump, a lot goes into selling our product to consumers.

**Presenters:**

**Jeff Dzieranowski**  
New Business Development Manager  
Source North America Corporation

**Randy Gard**  
Chief Operations Officer  
Bosselman Administrative Services

[Click Here to Register](#)

**Thank you to our sponsors!**

**KAAPA ETHANOL COMMODITIES, LLC**  
Webinar Sponsor

**LALLEMAND BIOFUELS & DISTILLED SPIRITS**  
Program Principal Sponsor

### March 2021 Webinar

#### *Ethanol Industry National Policy Update*

Presented by RFA Senior VP of Government & Public Affairs Troy Bredenkamp. This webinar provided an overview of the national policy opportunities and challenges facing the ethanol industry at the time. From a national LCFS, to the RFS post-2022, there was much to discuss.

Took place March 16, 2021.

Sponsored by: Commonwealth Agri-Energy, LLC



**YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NETWORK**

**Ethanol Industry National Policy Update**  
An Exclusive Webinar for the RFA's Young Professionals Network

**Tuesday, March 16 | 2-3 PM CST**  
This webinar is the second event offered in a series of educational programming for the Young Professionals Network and will provide an overview of the national policy opportunities and challenges facing our industry. From a national LCFS, to the RFS post-2022, there's a lot to discuss! Join us to receive an update from RFA's "boots on the ground."

**Presenters:**

**Troy Bredenkamp**  
Senior VP of Government & Public Affairs  
Renewable Fuels Association

[Click Here to Register](#)

**Thank you to our sponsors!**

**LALLEMAND BIOFUELS & DISTILLED SPIRITS**  
Program Principal Sponsor

**COMMONWEALTH AGRI-ENERGY**  
Webinar Sponsor

# Industry Discussion Summaries

## October 2020 Zoom Meet & Greet Topic:

**How can the ethanol industry improve in recruiting and retaining top notch talent?**

### Key Findings:

- The YPN is a new opportunity for the industry to engage with new and younger audiences. Also, younger audiences pose new opportunities for strategic messaging and market development.
- Currently, there are shortcomings in the ways the industry engages with high school and college students. Ethanol plants may lack resources (time, talent) to connect with local/regional schools. Also, attracting talent to rural areas can be tricky. How can the ethanol industry as a whole overcome this barrier to entry?
- New messaging should be explored to attract younger audiences. The ethanol industry has great benefits (ag connection, diverse job opportunities, good pay, opportunities for trades, connection to clean energy, etc). There are areas the industry can improve on by strategically showcasing these benefits to high school/college students.
- The industry should review initiatives and programs that improve employee retention. Ideas: Internal/external mentorship programs, company-wide educational opportunities, allowing younger employees to participate in industry conferences, etc.

Following the October 2020 Zoom Meet & Greet, a section of the YPN volunteered to serve on a working group dedicated to meeting industry needs related to recruiting and retaining top-notch talent in the ethanol sector. This group is identifying deliverables and strategies that can best support the ethanol industry in excelling in this area.

## Member Testimonials

"The Young Professionals Network continues to be an invaluable way to connect with fellow young professionals while gaining industry-exclusive knowledge and insights. YPN also provides an excellent platform to share ideas and build a robust network of industry colleagues. I look forward to participating in the YPN for years to come." – Bailey Arnold, Director, Clean Air Initiatives, American Lung Association

## **February 2021 Zoom Meet & Greet Topic:**

**What can the US ethanol industry's current leaders do to help prepare the next generation of leaders?**

### **Key Findings:**

- Areas of opportunity/need: Succession Planning, Learning Opportunities, Engagement with Current Leaders, Addressing Company Culture
- The ethanol industry has challenges that limit upward mobility (i.e. limited turnover in senior staff, lean operations).
- Young members of the industry would, if offered, take advantage of opportunities to engage with leaders in the ethanol industry. Many feel that opportunities are limited, especially for staff who are not able to travel to industry events.
- Succession planning is extremely important for organizations who expect leadership to retire in the near-future. There are examples where this has been done very well and could be a model for other organizations to emulate.
- Internal structure and opportunities for promotion, if available, need to be made clear to younger employees. Employees will stay longer at an organization if they know that there is room to grow and opportunities to build their skillsets. Allowing younger employees to participate in meetings with leadership is a great place to start.
- Encouraging a company culture of collaboration, proactive communication between all levels of employees, strong mission and values, work-life balance, and transparency are key to retaining young talent.
- There are industry-wide engagement opportunities, such as a mentorship program, that could be instituted to provide young professionals with opportunities to connect with industry leaders. Depending on where both sides are at in their careers, these connections could be extremely beneficial for the individuals and their organizations.

"I have enjoyed meeting so many new people across the industry through virtual meet and greets and at the YPN event during the FEW. I have a more thorough knowledge about the renewable fuels market through interactions with so many professionals, and I am proud to be a member of the Young Professionals Network." – Cody Painter, Electrician, Mid-Missouri Energy

# 2022 Calendar of Events

February 22, 2022

Young Professionals Network Social Hour at the National Ethanol Conference  
New Orleans, LA

April 12, 2022

Webinar - Supply Chains Disruptions and How to Respond

May 25, 2022

Webinar - Scoring Carbon Intensity and CI Accounting Best Practices

June 14, 2022

Young Professionals Network Social Hour at the 2022 Fuel Ethanol Workshop  
Minneapolis, MN

July 2022

Webinar - Topic: TBA

August 2022

Webinar - Topic: TBA

September 28-29, 2022

RFA Annual Meeting - YPN Engagement TBA  
Milwaukee, MN

October 2022

Webinar - Topic: TBA

February 28-March 2, 2023

National Ethanol Conference - YPN Engagement TBA  
Orlando, FL

*Check for an updated calendar of events on [EthanolRFA.org/YPN!](https://EthanolRFA.org/YPN/)*

## Become a YPN Member:

The YPN is a community of young leaders with a common goal to advance their respective businesses forward, build new relationships, and work with one another to identify new opportunities that grow and strengthen the renewable fuels industry.

Recruitment for the Young Professionals Network takes place year-round on a rolling basis and is free to join. To qualify to be a member, you must be 39 years old or younger, employed full time by a company in the ethanol industry or stakeholder industries, and support the RFA's mission to drive expanded demand for American-made renewable fuels and bio-products worldwide.

To apply, visit [EthanolRFA.org/YPN](http://EthanolRFA.org/YPN) and access the online application. Once your application is submitted and your eligibility to be a member is verified, someone from the YPN's steering committee will reach out to you to notify you of upcoming events and networking opportunities. An active YPN membership is required to participate in all YPN in-person and virtual events and all YPN members are required to participate in at least one event per calendar year in order to maintain their membership.

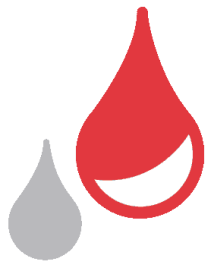
In order to support the long-term success of the ethanol industry, the Young Professionals Network is open to all young professionals, regardless of membership status with the RFA. Learn more about an RFA membership on the back inside cover of this report.

**Access the online application:**



"I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the YPN for recognizing the importance of outreach to the younger generation. There's no question that the veterans of this industry have made it into the massive success that it is today, and we should always be grateful to them for their contributions. However, the future is always as close as tomorrow, and the responsibility of keeping the momentum going and always striving for more will fall on the up-and-coming professionals, so it's crucial that their voices be heard and welcomed into the circles of the upper echelons. This network provides an excellent opportunity for those voices to sound loudly, clearly, and confidently, and I have no doubt they will do so with all the gumption and fire we've come to expect from our youthful population." - Cole Egger; Administrative Assistant , Quad County Corn Processors

# Thank you to our sponsor!



## ***LALLEMAND BIOFUELS & DISTILLED SPIRITS***

Lallemand Biofuels & Distilled Spirits is an industry leader in supplying fermentation products and value-added services to the ethanol industry. We specialize in the research, development, production and marketing of yeast, yeast nutrients, enzymes, and antimicrobial agents.

A vital part of the ethanol production process, fermentation products from Lallemand Biofuels & Distilled Spirits have been designed and selected to create value by tailoring objective solutions to ethanol plant needs.

Their value-creating approach is built upon a team of experienced technical sales and service professionals who serve as consultants to alcohol plant staff, identifying specific needs and providing targeted products, training, troubleshooting and laboratory services. LBDS is dedicated to supporting the industry with high quality, cutting edge products and value-creating technical service and education.

Through the Ethanol Technology Institute (our educational arm of LBDS), they provide numerous education training programs such as The Alcohol School, The Biofuels Academy, Lunch and Learns and also publishes The Alcohol Textbook (latest 6th edition now available).

For more information, please check out their website at [www.LBDS.com](http://www.LBDS.com).



- Alcohol School – Vienna, Austria- April 3-8, 2022
- Alcohol School – Montreal, Canada- September 11-16, 2022
- Alcohol School: Extra Credit Craft Distilling Seminar -Montreal, Canada- September 13-14, 2022

For more information please visit: [www.lbds.com/education](http://www.lbds.com/education)



## **RFA Membership: Protect your Assets and Invest in your Future**

### **Amplify Your Voice on Capitol Hill**

The RFA advocates on behalf of its members and works with state and federal policy makers to promote increased use of renewable fuels through supportive policies, regulations, and research and development initiatives.

### **Amplify Your Voice in the Industry**

By becoming a member of RFA, you will be provided with the technical and regulatory information needed to make smart business decisions and opportunities to make your company's mark on the renewable fuels industry.

### **Amplify Your Voice with Consumers**

In addition to our marketing and promotion efforts that educate consumers on the benefits of renewable fuels, RFA gives our members the tools they need to communicate effectively with these and other important audiences.

### **RFA Member Benefits:**

- Invitation to RFA's Annual Membership Meeting where you will be encouraged to provide input on RFA policy, activities and priorities.
- Invitation to participate in RFA's committees, where much of the industry's most important topics are discussed. Committees: (1) Technical, (2) Environmental, Health & Safety, (3) Co-Products, (4) New Uses.
- Invitation to RFA's Annual PAC Fundraiser & RFA Member Golf Tournament.
- Invitations to regional events such as dinners, political events, and more.
- Receive listing in membership directory & access to other member directories.
- Receive weekly updates summarizing regulatory, legislative, research and technical, market development, membership & marketing, and communications issues.
- Receive daily news clippings of ethanol-related stories from around the world Reduced registration fee for the National Ethanol Conference (NEC).
- Access to RFA's public awareness information, brochures, fact sheets, and industry reports.
- Link to your company on the RFA website.
- Producer Members receive additional benefits including a voting seat on RFA's Board of Directors.
- Prospective Producer Members receive a non-voting seat on the Board. The RFA Board meets on a quarterly basis.



*Join today to become part of the coalition moving the ethanol industry forward.*

Contact RFA's VP of Industry Relations Robert White: [rwhite@ethanolrfa.org](mailto:rwhite@ethanolrfa.org) | 402-661-4764





To learn more, visit [EthanolRFA.org/YPN](http://EthanolRFA.org/YPN)



Since 1981, the Renewable Fuels Association has been the leading trade association for America's ethanol industry, working to drive expanded demand for American-made renewable fuels and bioproducts worldwide. To learn more about the RFA, visit [EthanolRFA.org](http://EthanolRFA.org).

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