

North Carolina Association of Launderers and Cleaners

2024 Annual Convention – Professional Program

About our Speakers



Kathy Benzinger

Benzinger is from a small suburban town south of Buffalo, NY. She attributes her success during her 40-year career in drycleaning to relationships with colleagues and her involvement with DLI (Drycleaning & Laundry Institute). She has learned from the best, including her dad, and is committed to being there for others. Her journey is a testament to passion, perseverance, and a relentless pursuit of excellence in the dry-cleaning industry. She served on the DLI board from 2015-2023 and is currently serving as DLI President.



Chris Edwards

Edwards is a dry-cleaning industry veteran who currently serves as President and CEO of A Cleaner World Dry Cleaners, a 25-store operation based in High Point, NC. He received the Diamond Achievement Award in 2005 from the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (it's highest honor) for outstanding service to the industry and community. Edwards also holds the prestigious Certified Garment Care Professional (CGCP) designation from the DLI. He is the NCALC President for 2022-2024.



Ryan Fish

Fish bought his first dry cleaning business while attending college at the age of 23. He did not grow up in the dry-cleaning business and had no previous experience in the industry but was excited about growing routes. In addition to building routes, he got into restoration cleaning. After 11 years he sold his business to the largest cleaner in his market. A couple years later he bought his original business back and an additional 17 retail stores. At one time he had 23 retail stores and closed 11 of them during the pandemic. Today he owns and operates Red Hanger Cleaners - Utah's favorite cleaners since 1961.



James Gorzynski

Gorzynski is a Business Broker with NewLeaf Brokerage with over 17 years of expertise and education in accounting, tax, and financial realms. Throughout his career, he has been instrumental in providing substantial opportunities for companies and their employees, emphasizing practical, effective, and efficient solutions across all facets of operations. Gorzynski seeks to align himself with like-minded owners and buyers who share his commitment to excellence and vision for success.



Tony Hadad

As a dedicated Digital Marketing Customer Success Associate at SMRT Systems, Hadad guides clients in achieving their marketing objectives through expert onboarding, retention strategies, and campaign optimization. Specializing in trigger-based marketing, reputation management, social media, and SEO-focused website design, he ensures impactful results for businesses. With a diverse background spanning business management, entrepreneurship, marketing, and graphic design, Hadad brings a wealth of expertise to every project.



Larry Hill

Hill is owner and operator of Dandy Cleaners and American Dry Cleaners in Charlotte NC. He is a second-generation dry cleaner working in the business since 1978 and owner since 2003. He served as NCALC President for 2012-2014 and is currently the Education & Training Committee Chair.



Phillip Kolb

Kolb is a Senior Business Broker with NewLeaf Brokerage in Charlotte. His passion is helping business owners and their families towards a successful outcome. Through his work Phillip has come to appreciate that while every client and situation is unique, each opportunity permits him the ability to contribute meaningfully to his community and positively impact the lives of others. Prior to joining NewLeaf, he worked in the field of Wealth Management and Financial Services for more than a decade helping clients prepare for Retirement and other Life Events.



Kyle Panther

Panther is Owner of CRDN Textile and Electronics Restoration of Greater Charlotte and Martinizing Dry Cleaning in Charlotte. In his free time, he is a regular volunteer with the Tiger World Endangered Wildlife Preserve. Panther will be installed as the NCALC President for 2024-2026 at the recognition dinner on Sunday evening.



Liz Vetter

Vetter is a Business and Commercial Real Estate Broker with New Leaf Brokerage in Charlotte. With over 20 years of experience, Liz is adept at fostering thoughtful, profitable, and strategic growth for teams and companies alike. Specializing in the hospitality industry and trade services, Liz's passion lies in facilitating seamless transitions for businesses, ensuring they are passed on to new owners who will cherish and nurture them. Her mission is centered around creating fresh starts, preserving legacies, and offering opportunities for individuals.