



NCERC at SIUE

Advancing Biorenewables Research

LEADERSHIP STAFF BIOS



John Caupert | Executive Director

John Caupert has more than three decades of experience in the agriculture and biorenewables industries. In 2006, John was named Executive Director of the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research. Under John's leadership, the Center has become a shining example of a public private partnership. John has directed the pathway of more than 80 technologies into the commercial marketplace. These technologies have created tens of thousands of jobs and are generating billions of dollars of revenue on an annual basis. John's expertise has made him a sought-after voice, conducting speaking engagements to a diverse range of audiences. John is frequently called upon to educate and inform members of academia, industry and policymakers about the latest news, needs and opportunities in the bioeconomy. Three times, John has been recognized as an industry leader in the Business Journal's "Who's Who in Energy". John earned his Bachelors of Science and Masters of Science Degrees in Agribusiness Economics –

Specialization in Agriculture Policy at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.



Yanhong Zhang, PhD | Director of Research

Dr. Yan Zhang is the Director of Research/Associate Research Faculty at the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center (NCERC) of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and received her Ph.D. in analytical chemistry from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. After graduation, she worked at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign as an environmental chemist prior to starting at NCERC in 2003 as the Laboratory Manager. During her first several years at NCERC, her research focused on the use of Dried Distillers Grains with Solubles (DDGS) in animal diets and optimizing processing. From 2012-2017, she led research at a pharmaceutical company developing analytical methods, helping with production trouble shooting and FDA submissions. Now, as NCERC's Director of Research, she focuses on making cellulosic ethanol from waste material including municipal solid waste, corn stover, hemp, orchard waste, and others. She has led development of multiple proprietary technologies including corn kernel fiber to cellulosic

ethanol optimization and analytical methods, as well as a low-temperature low-cost pretreatment to convert waste material to fermentable sugars.



Jackie Hayes, MBA | Director of Business Development & Client Relations

As NCERC's Director of Business Development and Client Relations, Jackie Hayes leads all collaborations with NCERC's clients in the private sector and fosters relationships with various stakeholders across the bioeconomy. She also manages NCERC's strategic communications efforts and serves as the chairperson for the Renewable Fuels Association's Young Professionals Network. Prior to re-joining NCERC in 2021, Jackie served as the Manager of Member Relations at the Renewable Fuels Association from 2018 – 2021 and as NCERC's Specialist of Commercialization from 2017-2018. In November 2022, she was named as part of the St. Louis Business Journals 2022 Class of "40 Under 40" honorees. Jackie earned her Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations from Quincy University and Master of Business Administration from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Schedule interviews with any of the staff listed above by contacting Jackie at jhayes@ethanolresearch.com/618-660-5818

The NCERC at SIUE: Advancing Biorenewables Research
400 University Park Drive – Edwardsville, IL 62025
618-659-6737 – www.ethanolresearch.com