Highlights From EEI’s Annual Meeting

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EEI President and CEO Dan Brouillette.

EEI 2024’s Opening Keynote Session

EEI President and CEO Dan Brouillette welcomed attendees to EEI 2024 in Las Vegas by highlighting how EEI’s member companies and our industry and government partners are working together to deliver the future of energy.

“Throughout EEI 2024, we will cover important topics with leaders who are truly shaping our energy future,” said Brouillette. “We will showcase how EEI’s member companies are working to meet growing demand for electricity.”

Above, L to R: Jensen Huang, Founder and CEO, NVIDIA, and EEI Chair Pedro J. Pizarro, President and CEO, Edison International.

The opening session continued with a conversation between EEI Chair Pedro J. Pizarro, president and CEO of Edison International, and Jensen Huang, founder and CEO of NVIDIA. They discussed how NVIDIA’s pioneering work to advance AI and quantum computing has, in part, driven a significant growth in electricity demand, and how electric companies are partnering with companies like NVIDIA to meet that growing demand.

“We are seeing electricity demand, which had been fairly flat for many years, now really taking off,” said Pizarro. “This has given you a unique perspective about the intersection between the energy industry and the technology industry.”
“My guess is energy consumption goes up quite substantially,” agreed Huang. “The implication of the [artificial] intelligence that is created will reduce waste, and, hopefully, less carbon. This will, hopefully, create greater productivity and increase the size of industries. I think the future of intelligence is quite high, and then the future of energy is quite high.”

When asked by Pizarro about fears of AI taking over jobs as it becomes more sophisticated, Huang answered that AI makes companies more productive. “Most companies that I know, when they become more productive...they become more profitable and hire more people. It’s very rare that industries pair profitability with layoffs,” he said.

Huang also shared the advice he would give his younger self: “I would tell my 30-year-old self who doesn’t listen to anyone: Good for you. You want to walk an unconventional path, and you want to live a life of purpose and do something of value. We want outliers and people who think differently. I would encourage my younger self to go even further out. I realized my job was to create amazing conditions in which people would want to do their life’s work with me.”

Pizarro concluded by noting NVIDIA’s influence in driving innovative technology, saying: “We have a lot more advancement to do, and we look forward to partnering with NVIDIA on the future.”

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**Highlights from The Hub**

Above, L to R: EEI President and CEO Dan Brouillette; Hans Kobler, Founder and Managing Partner, Energy Impact Partners; Maria Robinson, Director, Grid
Deployment Office, U.S. Department of Energy; and EEI Chair Pedro J. Pizarro, President and CEO, Edison International.

In The Hub, EEI President and CEO Dan Brouillette and EEI Chair Pedro J. Pizarro, president and CEO of Edison International, set the scene for Tuesday’s programming on grid technologies and innovation. They were joined by Energy Impact Partners Founder and Managing Partner Hans Kobler, and U.S. Department of Energy Grid Deployment Office Director Maria Robinson for a discussion on the importance of industry-government partnerships to accelerate clean energy technology commercialization.

“What we’re talking about today is how some of these new economies and emerging technologies are shaping our economy and driving a clean energy transition,” said Brouillette.

Pizarro highlighted the critical need both for government investments and for policies like siting and permitting reform to drive the clean energy transition.

“Solving the siting and permitting issue is massive,” said Pizarro. “We could have all of the money in the world, but if we can’t get infrastructure into the ground, we cannot make progress.”

Brouillette agreed, saying siting and permitting reforms—and government partnership—are “critical for us to meet our clean energy goals, to advance new technologies, and to continue to grow this economy.”

Eric Holdsworth, executive director of the Institute for the Energy Transition, acted as emcee for Tuesday’s programming in The Hub, which included panel discussions and Tech Talks on EEI member companies' wildfire mitigation work and innovative grid technologies.
EEI Vice Chair Maria Pope, president and CEO of Portland General Electric, spoke about the steps that EEI’s member companies are taking to identify and mitigate wildfire risk, including maintaining government partnerships at a high level and making investments in critical wildfire mitigation technologies.

“The Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council (ESCC), how we work with the government at the highest levels, has worked with the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management on wildfire mitigation efforts,” said Pope, who co-chairs EEI’s Wildfire CEO Taskforce and the ESCC’s Wildfire Working Group. “We are making sure we are working together on what has become a society-wide issue.”
Above, L to R: Steve Powell, President and CEO, Southern California Edison; Patti Poppe, CEO, PG&E Corporation; Bryan Spear, CEO, Technosylva; and Sonia Kastner, Co-Founder and CEO, Pano.

The conversation on wildfire risk mitigation continued with a CEO Tech Dialogue featuring PG&E CEO Patti Poppe and Southern California Edison President and CEO Steve Powell. They talked about the partnerships between electric and technology companies to develop and deploy a range of wildfire mitigation and prevention technologies.

“We can’t do this by ourselves; all of our partners are important,” said Poppe. “I'm really proud of the partnerships we have as an electric company with our local incident command centers and emergency operations centers to do the best work we can in our community.”

“Different companies have different systems, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution to wildfire mitigation,” said Powell, who co-chairs EEI’s Wildfire CEO Taskforce. “It’s not just about wildfire mitigation—it’s about broader climate resilience and how we prepare our grid.”
Many discussions in The Hub centered on the grid-enhancing technologies that will help drive the clean energy transition.

Pat Vincent-Collawn, chair and CEO of PNM Resources and co-chair of The Commission on Accelerating Climate Action, joined a panel discussion on the key findings from the ‘Forging Climate Solutions: How to Accelerate Action Across America’ report by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Vincent-Collawn spoke about an important part of deploying clean energy infrastructure equitably: community engagement.

“You have to have genuine empathy for people who are impacted by projects,” she said. “And, if you wait to engage the community until you start on a project or start closing something down, you are already too late. You need an across-the-board engagement strategy.”
Avangrid CEO Pedro Azagra joined EEI Senior Vice President of International Programs Dr. Lawrence Jones and Octopus Energy Founder and CEO Greg Jackson to discuss how companies can harness innovation to deliver customer value.

“There is no clean energy transition without transmission, and there is no transmission without infrastructure,” said Dr. Jones, when talking about the need to expand transmission infrastructure to deliver resilient clean energy.

“Permitting reform is a must,” continued Azagra. “There must be full commitment at the federal and state level. It is unacceptable that it takes so long.”
Above, L to R: Alexina Jackson, Vice President of Strategic Development, The AES Corporation, and Hudson Gilmer, Co-Founder and CEO, LineVision.

The AES Corporation Vice President of Strategic Development Alexina Jackson highlighted the role of grid-enhancing technologies in the clean energy transition with LineVision Co-Founder and CEO Hudson Gilmer.

“If we think about the new loads that data centers will bring on by 2028, we’re talking about eight new New York Cities,” said Jackson. “That’s a tremendous amount of energy.”

“At AES Corporation, we are committed to a digital grid and to being more informed about our grid operations,” she continued.
These new technologies—and the widespread deployment of energy-users like electric vehicles and AI—are driving growth in electricity demand and requiring electric companies to develop innovative solutions to maintain affordability and reliability. During a panel discussion on this topic, Idaho Power President and CEO Lisa Grow spoke about how Idaho Power is working to meet rising energy demand: “We want to find the technology that will meet a need, solve a problem, and give us a new way to look at things. And, we’re looking for partners with high integrity who will push us a little.”

Puget Sound Energy President and CEO Mary Kipp agreed: “I took this job for two reasons: I wanted to work with technology companies, and Washington State has some of the most forward-thinking energy laws in the United States.”
In the following panel discussion on clean energy procurement, NV Energy President and CEO Doug Cannon echoed those sentiments when speaking with Duke Energy Senior Vice President of Pricing and Customer Solutions Lon Huber and Google Head of Energy Market Innovation Briana Kobor: “As electric companies, we have to take a deeper look about where we want to be in the future. If we want to stay relevant, we don’t have the choice but to innovate.”

“I look at a company like Google with the capital, brain-power, scientific know-how, and connections that could bypass us if we do not innovate with our customer and help them reach their business objectives,” Cannon continued. “Let’s be a trusted and valued partner for an innovative company like Google. I am really grateful that we can partner with these sorts of companies, who help challenge our thinking.”
Above: The 2024 Diverse and Emerging Leaders Cohort.

The Diverse and Emerging Leaders Cohort

This year, EEI 2024 is proud to welcome a new cohort of Diverse and Emerging Leaders, a CEO-nominated group of high-potential leaders from across the electric power industry. The group was invited to participate in learning, engagement, and networking opportunities throughout the conference.

During the Diverse and Emerging Leaders lunch on Tuesday afternoon, EEI Senior Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer, and Chief Diversity Officer Courtney Peterson welcomed the new cohort to EEI 2024. On Tuesday evening, Peterson officiated a graduation ceremony for the inaugural cohort.

Previewing Our Wednesday Agenda

Opening Keynote Session
Azure Ballroom | 8:45 – 10:30 a.m.

- EEI President and CEO Dan Brouillette
- U.S. Congressman Steven Horsford (D-NV)
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chairman Willie Phillips in conversation with EEI Vice Chair Calvin Butler, President and CEO, Exelon
- CEO Leadership Panel moderated by EEI Chair Pedro J. Pizarro, President and CEO, Edison International, and featuring EEI Vice Chair Maria Pope, President and CEO, Portland General Electric; EEI Vice Chair Calvin Butler,
President and CEO, Exelon Corporation; and David Campbell, Chairman and CEO, Evergy

**REMINDER:** For security reasons, all attendees are asked to be in the Azure Ballroom by 8:30 a.m. for the opening keynote sessions.

Workforce Development & Safety in The Hub  
*Cobalt Ballroom* | 10:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

- Distribution Transformation: Maintaining the Momentum  
  *Capri Room* 6-7 | 10:50 – 11:50 a.m.
- North American Hydrogen Backbone  
  *Capri Room* 8-9 | 10:50 – 11:50 a.m.

Conference Lunch in The Hub  
*Cobalt Ballroom* | 12:00 – 1:15 p.m.

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

- Managing and Building a Resilient Supply Chain  
  *Capri Room* 6-7 | 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.
- Meeting Demand Growth  
  *Capri Room* 8-9 | 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Advanced Generation & Grid Technologies in The Hub  
*Cobalt Ballroom* | 1:30 – 2:45 p.m.

Afternoon Keynote Session and 2024 Edison Award Presentation  
*Azure Ballroom* | 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

- Presentation of The Edison Awards
- Sandra Douglass Morgan, President, Las Vegas Raiders, in conversation with Doug Cannon, President and CEO, NV Energy

**REMINDER:** For security reasons, all attendees are asked to be in the Azure Ballroom by 2:45 p.m. for the afternoon keynote session.

Concurrent Breakouts

- AI: The Next Big Opportunity for Collaboration  
  *Capri Room* 6-7 | 4:15 – 5:15 p.m.
- No Home Left Behind: Ensuring Equitable Electrification  
  *Capri Room* 8-9 | 4:15 – 5:15 p.m.

Electric Transportation in The Hub  
*Cobalt Ballroom* | 4:15 – 5:30 p.m.
Happy Hour in The Hub
*Cobalt Ballroom* | 5:30 – 6:45 p.m.

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**Social Post of the Day**
Light Bulb Moment: NVIDIA CEO Sees Bright Future for AI-Powered Electric Grid

In a keynote at the Edison Electric Institute, Jensen Huang spoke about ways the new industrial revolution of generative AI is transforming the future for utilities and their customers.

June 18, 2024 by Rick Merritt
Follow all of the action on social media by using #EEI2024 in your posts and by using the EEI 2024 Social Media Toolkit. Amplify the digital conversation by retweeting, reposting, and sharing with your friends and followers.

Quick Clicks: Helpful Links and Resources

Download the complete schedule of events at EEI 2024, or find it within the EEI 2024 app. Questions about the app? Contact Chelsea Mulcahy.

- EEI 2024 Home
- EEI 2024 Agenda
- EEI 2024 Sponsors
- Electric Perspectives—Spring 2024
- Electric Perspectives Podcast
- Energy Talk—May 2024

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