



CREATING ECOSYSTEMS THAT ENCOURAGE OPPORTUNITIES

MEDA SUMMER CONFERENCE

July 26, 2017

9:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

World Trade Center, 21st Floor, Baltimore, MD

Co-Sponsored By:

Maryland Department of Commerce, Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development
MDOT's Port Administration

In today's world, economic development professionals are increasingly focusing their efforts on building strong ecosystems that encourage small businesses and entrepreneurs to grow in their communities. During our Summer Conference, you will discover approaches for building these ecosystems, collaborate with others who are doing or creating unique systems, and learn how to identify what works best for your community. Join us as we share best practices in transforming communities into ecosystems that attract and support small businesses and entrepreneurs.

9:00 – 9:30 REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER CONFERENCE

9:30 – 9:45 WELCOME & MEDA BUSINESS MEETING

President's Welcome – Kim Clark
Secretary's Report – Daniel Thompson
Membership Report – Renee Winsky

9:45 – 10:00 OPENING REMARKS

Jimmy Rhee, Special Secretary
Governor's Office of Small, Minority, and Women's Business Affairs

Special Secretary Rhee will outline the priorities of his department which is responsible for connecting "small, minority, and women-owned businesses with resources that empower them to compete with confidence in the public and private sectors." Hear from the Special Secretary about the recent changes at the department and how those changes can better assist economic developers support small business.

10:00 – 10:45 A CONVERSATION ON URBAN AND RURAL ECOSYSTEMS

Why is fostering small business and entrepreneurship important and what does this ecosystem look like? Learn from these specialists the true building blocks in creating a healthy ecosystem, identifying assets, and improving resources that support small businesses and entrepreneurs. Explore the emerging models of effective ecosystems, and what is working in other regions. How do communities identify their need? How do communities start conversation to change? What are some of the best practices? How do you measure success?

Mike Thielke, Executive Director, Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center

Darius Graham, J.D., Director, Social Innovation Lab, Johns Hopkins University

10:45 - 11:00 BREAK

11:00 – 12:00 MARYLAND’S ECOSYSTEMS WORKING AND EMERGING

These expert panel members will share what tactics they utilized in creating change in their respective communities, drawing on methods, successes, and lessons learned. Engage with these panelists to explore the assets in your own community.

Moderator: Janice Riley, Manager, Technical Innovation Center, Hagerstown Community College

Members: Robin Finnacom, Co-Founder,
Southern Maryland Innovation & Technology Initiative
Jen Meyer, CEO, Betamore
Ken Ulman, Founder & CEO of Margrave Strategies

12:00 – 1:15 LUNCH AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Welcome to Baltimore: Mayor Catherine Pugh

Introduction: Mike Gill, Secretary, Maryland Department of Commerce

Keynote Speakers: Calvin G. Butler, Jr., CEO, BG&E
Sarah Hemminger, CEO and Co-Founder, Thread

TouchPoint Baltimore is a unique collaboration of four nonprofit groups, two local corporations, and a community partner who leverage their assets to strengthen the Mondawmin community and Baltimore by sharing resources, information, and access to talent and networks. In keeping with our theme today, Calvin Butler and Sarah Hemminger will share how this partnership utilizes social capital to help disrupt isolation and create an ecosystem for opportunity within the community.

**Next MEDA Conference: October 23, 2017 to Kick Off Economic Development Week
(Location TBA)**