

2021 MEDA FALL CONFERENCE

Theme: Economic Recovery – Best Practices in Small Business & Workforce Trends Moving Forward

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

9:00a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Virtual

Sponsored by:

Maryland Department of Commerce
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Rockville Economic Development, Inc.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted economic activity across the nation, and communities are looking to strategize for long-term recovery. From supporting small businesses to next leveling workforce, communities and organizations have shifted to meet demand. This conference aims to identify creative and innovative programs that can speak to overcoming economic challenges.

9:00 – 9:15 WELCOME AND MEDA BUSINESS MEETING

Welcome: Danny Thompson, MEDA President

Approval of July Business Meeting Minutes: Denise Beaver, CEcD, MEDA Secretary

Membership Report: Renée Winsky, MEDA Membership Co-Chair

9:15 – 10:15 KEYNOTE – “Anirban Basu and the Chamber of Data”

Anirban Basu, Sage Policy Group

There is light at the end of the tunnel. Is it coming from an oncoming train? This presentation supplies economic data and analysis juxtaposing the pre-pandemic and pandemic world, and then supplies a forecast for the post-pandemic one. Among the areas of focus are labor markets, financial markets, real estate, construction, consumer spending, business investment, international trade and government finances.

10:15 – 11:15 SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR UNDERREPRESENTED BUSINESSES

Underrepresented business owners have been hit especially hard during this pandemic. What does recovery look like for these businesses? How are communities developing tools and program support to address these unique needs? This panel will explore how communities can support for Black, Latinx, and other underrepresented business owners and entrepreneurs as we place an emphasis on recovery, and in the future.

Moderator: Sam Shoge, Executive Director, Kent County Chamber of Commerce

Panelists:

- Todd Fawley-King, Real Estate Specialist, Montgomery County Planning Department
- Ronald Stubblefield, Chief of Staff, Pacific Community Ventures
- Naddia Clute, Business Consultant, Hispanic Business Center / Maryland Small Business Development Center



11:15 – 12:15 **FROM TRAINING TO RETAINING**

As part of this recovery, workforce development has transformed. This panel of representatives from across various industries and parts of the State will discuss how they've had to shift the work they do, the programs they utilize, and how they trained their employees to adapt to successfully recover from the pandemic. The regional training partners will be joined by business representatives to discuss the specific programs they've implemented. The ever-evolving best practices these businesses are utilizing to meet the demand of their industries and upskill and keep their employees.

Moderator: Erin Roth, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Maryland Department of Labor

Panelists (*training partners joined by employer partners*)

- Autumn Becker, Director, Allegany College (with Jonathan Hutcherson, Founder and CEO Exclamation Labs)
- Kanika Feaster-Gordon, Vice-President, Workforce Development, Humanim (with Lisa Rawlings, Director, Job Readiness & Workforce Initiatives, University of Maryland Baltimore)
- Ruth E. Baker, Dean of Continuing Education and Workforce Development, Wor-Wic Community College (with Venkat Talladivedula, Plant Manager, Crystal Steel Fabricators, Inc.)

12:15 **CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT**