SECURING OUR FUTURE
ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

Building Pathways For Upward Mobility

Program Guide



October 29, 2026

Palm Beach Convention Center

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Welcome

Welcome to the 2026 Securing Our Future Economic Mobility Summit

The objective of the summit is to bring systems leaders together in support of our unemployed or underemployed families. The workshops and plenary sessions will provide information about ways in which health and human services systems can work collaboratively to help families earn more and move out of poverty. To enhance the networking and learning opportunities during the summit, local workshop presenters are matched with national speakers with similar expertise.

You are crucial in finding sustainable solutions for families experiencing poverty, keeping our families in the center of our work, and strengthening our relationship with them. Participating in this event demonstrates your commitment to eliminating inequities that keep our families in poverty.

Committee Members

Palm Beach County Community Services Department
Dr. James Green
Elizabeth Harfmann
Jasmine Lewis
Sonja Holbrook
Natalie Vazquez
Doris Davis
Elcana Dantzler
Angela Cruz
Stephon Gordon
Mildred Warthen

Amplifying Impact for Communities
Jamie-Lee Bradshaw

Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission
Taruna Malhotra

School District of Palm Beach County
Keith Oswald
Fred Barch
Brian Heisler

Health Care District of Palm Beach County
Darcy Davis
Weesam Khoury

Palm Beach County Housing & Economic Development Department
Axel Miranda
David Jaco
Amanda Hughes

Palm Beach County Food Bank
Jaime Kendall

Palm Beach County Attorney's Office
Wilneeda Emmanuel

Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County
Aruna Gilbert

Palm Beach County Youth Services Department
Elisa Cramer

Florida Atlantic University
Danielle Groton

United Way of Palm Beach County
Renee Constantino

CareerSource of Palm Beach County
Julia Dattolo

Welcome Letter

Florida House of Representatives

Representative Anne Gerwig

District 93

Good morning,

Welcome to the 2026 Securing Our Future Economic Mobility Summit! On behalf of Florida House District 93, it is my pleasure to welcome the extraordinary leaders, organizations, and community partners gathered here today.

Palm Beach County is a community of tremendous opportunity. Yet, for too many families, the American dream remains just beyond their reach. We know that hard work alone does not guarantee economic success. Where families live, the schools their children attend, access to affordable housing, reliable transportation, healthcare and quality employment all influence their opportunities to succeed. That is why this year's theme "Shifting Conditions that Change the Odds for Upward Mobility" is so important.

Our challenge is not simply to help people navigate poverty it is to transform the conditions that perpetuate it. This requires government, businesses, educational institutions, nonprofits, philanthropy, and residents working together with a shared purpose. As elected officials, we have a responsibility to ensure that our policies, investments, and partnerships expand opportunities for every resident, regardless of their ZIP code.

Together we can build a Palm Beach County where opportunity is not determined by where you begin, but by what we make together.

Welcome and thank you!

Anne Gerwig

Florida House Representative Anne Gerwig
House District 93

Welcome Letter

THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

SENATOR LORI BERMAN
Democratic Leader
26th District

COMMITTEES:
Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government, *Vice Chair*
Appropriations
Education Postsecondary
Education Pre-K - 12
Health Policy
Judiciary
Rules

JOINT COMMITTEE:
Joint Legislative Budget Commission

October 16, 2026

Good morning, and welcome to the 2026 Securing Our Future Economic Mobility Summit!

On behalf of of the Florida Senate, it is my pleasure to welcome the extraordinary leaders, organizations, and community partners gathered here today.

Palm Beach County is a community of tremendous opportunity. Yet, for too many families, the American Dream remains just beyond their reach.

We know that hard work alone does not guarantee economic success. Where families live, the schools their children attend, access to affordable housing, reliable transportation, healthcare, and quality employment all influence their opportunities to succeed.

Our challenge is not simply to help people navigate poverty. It is to transform the conditions that perpetuate it.

This requires government, businesses, educational institutions, nonprofits, philanthropy, and residents working together with a shared purpose.

As elected officials, we have a responsibility to ensure that our policies, investments, and partnerships expand opportunities for every resident, regardless of their ZIP code.

I encourage each of you to approach today's conversations with a commitment to collaboration, innovation, and measurable results.

Together, we can build a Palm Beach County where opportunity is not determined by where you begin, but by what we make possible together.

Welcome, and thank you!

Lori Berman

A Letter from our Chairs

WELCOME TO THE 2026 SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

Shifting Conditions That Change the Odds for Upward Mobility

*On behalf of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Health and Human Services and the Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures Alliance, we are pleased to welcome you to the **3rd Securing Our Future Economic Mobility Summit!***

*We gather around a shared belief: **Every resident, regardless of their ZIP code, income, or circumstances, deserves a fair opportunity to succeed.** Achieving this vision requires more than helping individuals overcome challenges. It requires transforming the conditions and systems that limit opportunity.*

Since launching the Securing Our Future Initiative in 2017, our organizations have worked collaboratively to address poverty, strengthen families, and expand pathways to economic independence.

*This year's theme, **"Shifting Conditions That Change the Odds for Upward Mobility,"** challenges us to move beyond addressing the symptoms of poverty toward creating lasting, measurable change.*

*We are especially excited about **Opportunity Palm Beach County**, a bold initiative that will use data, research, and community partnerships to identify barriers, align investments, and expand economic opportunity across our communities.*

Meaningful progress requires collective leadership. Government, businesses, nonprofits, educational institutions, philanthropy, and residents must work together to create lasting solutions. We encourage you to engage, exchange ideas, build partnerships, and commit to actionable strategies.

***Our success will not be measured by today's conversations, but by the conditions we change tomorrow.** Together, we can shift conditions, change the odds, and secure a brighter future for all.*

Chair
Citizens Advisory Committee on Health and Human Services
Co-Chairs
Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures Alliance



BARBARA COX GERLOCK, PHD
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PALM BEACH COUNTY CHAIR



DR. LISA WILLIAMS-TAYLOR
CEO, CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL OF PALM BEACH COUNTY
BIRTH TO 22 ALLIANCE STEERING COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR



ELISA CRAMER
DIRECTOR, PALM BEACH COUNTY YOUTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT
BIRTH TO 22 ALLIANCE STEERING COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

Opportunity Ecosystem



Citizens Advisory Board
Health & Human Services Element

Birth-to-22 Alliance
Youth Master Plan

Palm Health Foundation
Healthier Together
Open Table

Scan to see the *Health and Human Services Element*

Various Reports & Plans

Florida ALICE Report
Health & Human Services Element
Housing Plan for All
Leading the Way Home
Housing Dashboard
Dept. of Housing & Economic Development Plan
Community Health Improvement Plan
Behavioral Health & SUD Master Plan
Hunger Relief Plan
Youth Master Plan
Transportation Plan

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT
Building Pathways for Upward Mobility

Scan me

About

About the Securing Our Future Initiative

The Securing Our Future Initiative (SOFI) was developed through the Birth to 22 Alliance as a strategy to facilitate the financial upward mobility of our families to ensure our youth have the resources they need to thrive in our community. Palm Beach County Community Services Department answered the call to lead this collective-impact, poverty-reduction initiative. As a well-respected Health and Human Services funder in Palm Beach County, the Community Services Department acknowledged they had the opportunity to engage local nonprofit organizations in the work of SOFI so they designed outcomes for SOFI and released a Request for Proposals to appoint community organizations that could conduct activities yielding the poverty-reducing outcomes identified. Following the Request for Proposals, a number of organizations were selected to participate in the Securing Our Future Initiative.

As you will see on the next page, the Securing Our Future Initiative has made strides in reducing childhood poverty in Palm Beach County. We have accomplished much and acknowledge there is still much more work to do. We are proud to collaborate with our local community to achieve a 10% reduction of childhood poverty over the next 10 years.

Success Stories

REAL STORIES. REAL PROGRESS. REAL POSSIBILITIES.

Every journey toward economic mobility begins with an opportunity. Behind every program, resource, and lever to economic mobility is a story of perseverance, growth, and possibility.

Through the Securing Our Future Initiative (SOFI), individuals and families are empowered with the tools, resources, and support needed to overcome barriers, strengthen financial stability, and build a foundation for long-term success.

Our Levers to Economic Mobility represent key areas of opportunity that help individuals and families move toward greater financial security and independence. But the true impact of this work is best understood through the experiences of those whose lives have been touched along the way.

These success stories reflect the power of access, education, determination, and opportunity. From overcoming challenges to reaching personal milestones, each story is a reminder that economic mobility is more than a goal — it is a journey made possible through meaningful support and lasting change.

Scan me

Scan the QR code to watch our video testimonials and hear firsthand how opportunity is creating pathways to brighter futures.

Agenda

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT
Thursday, October 29, 2026
8:30 AM -4:30 PM

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM

Networking Breakfast & Registration: ***Foyer***

9:00 AM - 9:30 AM

Welcome & Opening Remarks: ***Grand Ballroom***

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Opening Plenary Session: *The Power of Place: Re-imagining Communities Through Place-Based Economic Mobility Strategies;* ***Grand Ballroom***

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM

Childcare as Economic Infrastructure: *Strengthening Workforce Participation and Economic Opportunity;* ***Ballroom A***

From Housing Instability to Economic Mobility: *Affordable Housing Solutions That Change Conditions and Advance Upward Mobility;* ***Ballroom B***

Recovery, Resilience, and Opportunity: *Creating Systems that Support Brain Health, Recovery, and Economic Mobility;* ***Ballroom C***

Safe Communities, Strong Economies: *Reforming the Justice System to Support Second Chances and Economic Opportunity;* ***Room 1GH***

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Lunch Plenary Session: *Opportunity by Design: A Blueprint for Measuring and Expanding Economic Opportunity One ZIP Code at a Time;* ***Grand Ballroom***

1:45 PM - 2:45 PM

Education to Earnings: *Aligning Learning Systems and Workforce Development with Economic Opportunity;* ***Ballroom A***

The Opportunity Workforce: *Closing the Skills Gap to Promote Upward Economic Mobility;* ***Ballroom B***

From Hunger to Hope: *Food Security as a Pathway to Economic Mobility;* ***Ballroom C***

Wheels of Opportunity: *Innovative Transportation Solutions that Promote Economic Mobility;* ***Room 1GH***

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Closing Plenary Session: *AI and the Future of Economic Mobility: Transforming Opportunity for ALICE Families;* ***Grand Ballroom***

4:00 PM - 4:30 PM

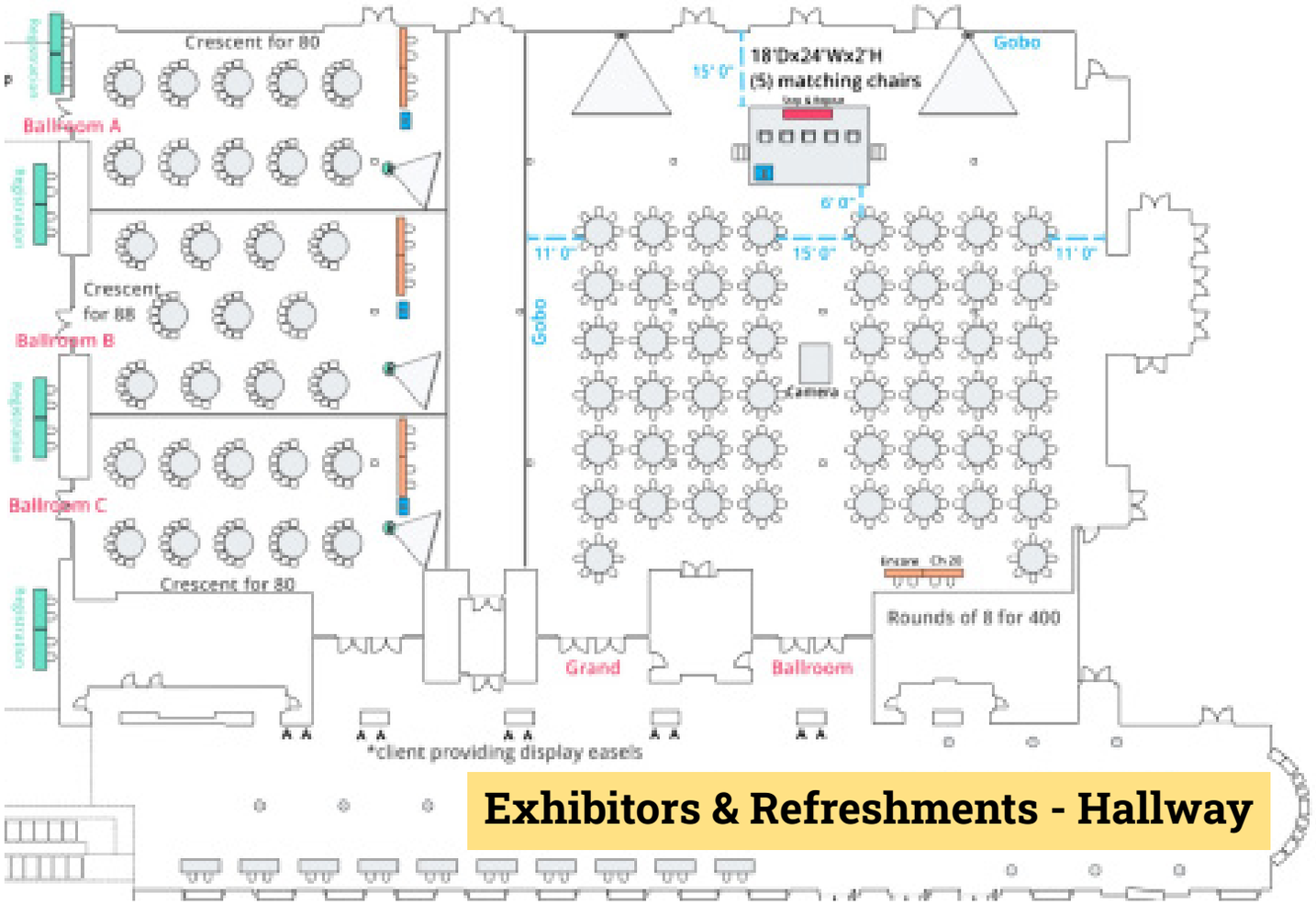
Closing Remarks

Summit Map

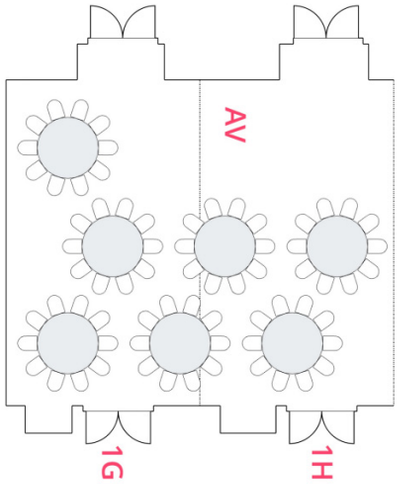
THE PALM BEACHES
PALM BEACH COUNTY
CONVENTION CENTER

Breakout Ballrooms A,B,C

Plenary Sessions - Grand Ballroom



Exhibitors & Refreshments - Hallway



Breakout Room 1GH - 1st Floor

9:30 am - 10:30 am

Morning Plenary

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

The Power of Place: Re-imagining Communities Through Place-Based Economic Mobility Strategies

Where someone lives should never determine how far they can go. This session explores how neighborhoods can become engines of opportunity through intentional place-based investments and cross-sector collaboration. Participants will hear updates on the Rise Coleman Park Initiative, examine successful place-based economic mobility models from across the country, and explore practical tools for revitalizing neighborhoods while improving education, housing, employment, health, and community wealth. The workshop will conclude with lessons learned and a replicable framework communities can use to build opportunity where it is needed most.

PANELISTS



UPENDO SHABAZZ
RISE COLEMAN PARK



KEITH FUDGE
URBAN INSTITUTE



DONIA ROBERTS
LAKE OKEECHOBEE REGIONAL ECONOMICAL ALLIANCE



SARAH MALEGA
LAKE WORTH BEACH CITY COMMISSIONER

MODERATOR



RALPH CLEMENTE
PALM BEACH VENTURE PHILANTHROPY

Speaker Biographies

Scan for Expanded Speaker Biographies



Upendo Shabazz
Chief Executive Officer, *RISE Coleman Park*
Upendo Shabazz is the Chief Executive Officer of RISE Coleman Park, a nonprofit community development organization in West Palm Beach, Florida, where she leads work across mixed-income housing, education, community wellbeing, and economic vitality. She stepped into the CEO role after leading strategic consulting work through her firm, U. Shabazz Consulting, LLC that helped reset and reposition the organization. With over two decades in the nonprofit and philanthropic sector, Upendo previously served twelve years as Palm Beach Regional Vice President for Allegany Franciscan Ministries and as Vice President of Community Impact for United Way of Palm Beach County. She began her career as a social worker before moving into nonprofit administration and grant leadership. A recognized thought leader in place-based investment and trust-based philanthropy. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in social work from Florida State University, a certification in Leadership and Management from the University of Miami, and a certification from the Harvard Women Leaders of Color program.



Keith Fudge
Director of Policy Management, *Urban Institute*
Keith Fudge is a director of policy management in the Research to Action Lab at the Urban Institute. He directs a body of work focused on providing data, tools, and technical assistance to support communities in increasing upward mobility from poverty. Previously, he managed the Evidence-Based Policymaking Collaborative and led technical assistance engagements for Urban's Pay for Success Initiative. Prior to Urban, Fudge worked in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research, where he supported research and communications efforts, including editing HUD at 50: Creating Pathways to Opportunity and editing and writing for Evidence Matters. He was a founding staffer and senior project manager for the White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities. Fudge has a BA in English from the University of Michigan and an MPP from the University of Michigan's Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.



Donia Adams Roberts
Executive Director, *Palm Beach Venture Philanthropy*
Donia Adams Roberts is an attorney, community advocate, and economic development leader working to expand opportunity throughout the Lake Okeechobee and Glades region. Through her leadership with the Lake Okeechobee Regional Economic Alliance (LORE), she supports efforts to strengthen the regional economy, advance business and investment, and create greater opportunities for residents and communities. She also has a longstanding commitment to serving vulnerable children and families, bringing a community-centered perspective to economic growth and mobility.



Raphael Clemente
Executive Director, *Palm Beach Venture Philanthropy*
Raphael Clemente is an urban planning and community development professional with nearly three decades of experience working in both the public and nonprofit sectors in Palm Beach County. He currently serves as Executive Director of Palm Beach Venture Philanthropy at the Quantum Foundation, where he leads place-based initiatives focused on neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing, small-business development, and improving social determinants of health.



Sarah Malega
Commissioner, *City of Lake Worth Beach*
Vice Mayor Sarah Malega was first elected to serve as the District 1 City Commissioner in March of 2021. She is a 13-year resident of Lake Worth Beach, and a proud business owner for the last 14 years. Commissioner Malega is a very active community leader who is committed to making a positive difference for the residents of Lake Worth Beach, especially the youth of our City. She strives to represent the City as a policy maker who cares about all residents and business owners, with open lines of communication, a welcoming City Hall, transparency and positivity. She has served on the Florida League of Cities Advocacy Committee and Legislative Committee as well as the Federal Action Strike Team fighting bad legislation and working with higher offices for the benefit of Lake Worth Beach. The Vice Mayor believes that welcoming new home buyers, new businesses and new development is critical to the City's future. As a successful business owner since 2006, she understands financial challenges, and the ever-changing global and economic landscape, and often acts as a liaison for the business community within the City. Vice Mayor Malega is enjoying setting Lake Worth Beach apart from other communities as a welcoming, inclusive, livable and unique city and welcomes you to our city!

10:45 am-11:45 am

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

Safe Communities, Strong Economies

Reforming the Justice System to Support Second Chances and Economic Opportunity

Economic mobility depends on safe communities and fair access to opportunity. This session explores how justice system reforms can reduce barriers to employment, strengthen communities, and improve long-term economic outcomes. Participants will discuss strategies such as second-chance hiring, expungement initiatives, "Ban the Box" policies, reforming fines and fees that create financial hardship, and expanding workforce opportunities for justice-involved individuals. Learn how governments, employers, nonprofits, and community leaders can work together to create pathways to employment that reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and strengthen local economies.

PANELIST



TARUNA MALHOTRA
PBC CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION



DANIEL EISINGER
PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE - DISTRICT 15



CHEO REID
STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DISTRICT 15



ORIE BULLARD
RIVIERA BEACH RE-ENTRY CENTER

MODERATOR



ELISA CRAMER
PBC YOUTH SERVICES DEPT.

Speaker Biographies

Scan for Expanded Speaker Biographies



Taruna Malhotra

Executive Director; PBC Criminal Justice Commission

Taruna Malhotra serves as Executive Director of Palm Beach County's Criminal Justice Commission, where she works with the CJC Board and partners to analyze and strengthen criminal justice and crime-prevention systems countywide. Previously Deputy Director of the Community Services Department, she managed a $225 million budget and oversaw major Health and Human Services programs, including Homeless Services, Seniors, Veterans, Community Action, and HIV initiatives. A collaborative, data-driven leader, she has led systemwide planning, implementation, and evaluation efforts and earned recognition for developing innovative technology and data infrastructure solutions that improved service delivery and advanced policy and program effectiveness across Palm Beach County.



Daniel Eisinger

Circuit 15 Public Defender

Daniel Eisinger grew up in Palm Beach County and is a graduate of Suncoast High School and the University of Florida, where he earned his B.A. and J.D. He has served in the Palm Beach County Public Defender's Office since 2003, representing clients in misdemeanor, felony, major crime, and capital cases. Dedicated to equity and reentry, Daniel has helped establish innovative court programs—including the Misdemeanor Mental Health Court and Driving Under Suspension Court—to improve outcomes and strengthen community safety. He is active in several legal associations and Leadership Palm Beach County. Daniel and his wife, Amy, have three sons and a rescue pup, CC.



Cheo Reid

Deputy Executive Director; *State Attorney's Office*

Cheo Reid has served the Palm Beach County State Attorney's Office for nearly 17 years, advancing its mission to pursue justice, protect victims, and strengthen public safety. He has worked across multiple divisions—including County Court, Felony, Juvenile, Domestic Violence, and Juvenile Special Victims—gaining extensive prosecutorial experience. His leadership roles include Specialty Unit Prosecutor, Deputy Chief of the Juvenile Division, Interim Deputy Chief Assistant State Attorney, and now Deputy Executive Director and Juvenile Division Chief. Beyond his legal work, Cheo has led the F. Malcolm Cunningham, Sr. Bar Association, serves on state rules committees, and is a proud graduate of Florida A&M University College of Law and member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.



Orie Bullard

Director; *The ReEntry Center*

Orie Bullard is the Director of The Reentry Center for the City of Riviera Beach, where he leads a multidisciplinary team providing comprehensive support to individuals returning from federal and state correctional institutions and county jails. With nearly two decades of experience in criminal justice and reentry, he has built strong partnerships among government agencies, service providers, employers, and community organizations to expand opportunity and improve reintegration outcomes. His work centers on practical, team-based solutions that address barriers to employment, housing, and family stability. Bullard is deeply committed to advancing second chances, strengthening public safety, and helping justice-impacted individuals rebuild their lives.



Elisa Cramer

Director; Palm Beach County Youth Services

Elisa Cramer is the Director of the Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, leading programs that support youth and families through behavioral health services, education, employment opportunities, and community partnerships. She co-chairs the Birth to 22 Alliance and key action teams focused on mental health, trauma, and resiliency. Elisa serves on multiple local boards and committees and has been recognized as a 2026 Community Impact Leadership Finalist. A Certified Public Manager and Spelman College graduate, she previously spent 14 years in leadership roles at Florida DCF and worked 15 years as a journalist. She lives in West Palm Beach with her family.

10:45 am-11:45 am

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

From Housing Instability to Economic Mobility

Affordable Housing Solutions That Change Conditions and Advance Upward Mobility

Housing is the foundation upon which families build financial stability and economic success. This session will explore how affordable housing strategies can serve as powerful catalysts for upward mobility by reducing housing cost burdens, increasing neighborhood stability, and connecting residents to opportunity. Participants will hear success stories from families participating in the Securing Our Future Initiative (SOFI) Cottage Home Program, learn about the Housing Plan for All Progress, and examine innovative approaches including affordable housing development, tiny home communities, rental assistance, and housing navigation. The session will demonstrate how housing, when integrated with employment, education, healthcare, and financial coaching, becomes a platform for long-term economic independence rather than simply a place to live.

PANELISTS



CARLOS SERRANO
PBC HOUSING SERVICES DEPT.



CAROL JONES-GILBERT
PBC HOUSING AUTHORITY



NATALIE VASQUEZ
PBC COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPT.



FLOWER SANCHEZ
SUNSHINE INDEPENDENT LIVING

MODERATOR



DR. CRISTINA LUCIER
THE LORD'S PLACE

SESSION SPONSOR

PNC

Speaker Biographies

Scan for Expanded Speaker Biographies



Carlos Serrano

Deputy Director; *Palm Beach County Housing and Economic Development*

Carlos is a Palm Beach County native with more than 25 years of experience in local housing, economic development, and community services. A University of Florida graduate, he has built deep expertise in public sector management, grant administration, policy development, and project financing. As Deputy Director of the Department of Housing and Economic Development, he leads major initiatives including the $200 million Housing Bond Loan Program and all federal and state housing funding strategies. He oversees contract development, housing programs, capital improvements, and development projects—and is known for his talent in structuring complex affordable housing deals.



Carol Jones-Gilbert

Chief Executive Officer; *Palm Beach County Housing Authority*

Carol Jones-Gilbert has served as Executive Director and CEO of the Palm Beach County Housing Authority since 2018, bringing decades of leadership in public housing and community services. Before joining PBCHA, she spent 12 years with the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, rising from Property Manager to Chief Operating Officer, and previously held roles with the Dallas Housing Authority, Franciscan Ministries, and organizations serving seniors, people with disabilities, and individuals experiencing homelessness. Carol is highly experienced in HUD programs and organizational effectiveness. A Texas A&M graduate, she is the proud mother of one son and grandmother of three.



Natalie Vasquez

Director; Palm Beach County Community Services Department - Self Sufficiency

Natalie Vazquez is the Director of the Division of Senior and Veteran Services for Palm Beach County, providing executive leadership for a comprehensive network of programs supporting older adults, veterans, caregivers, and vulnerable residents. With more than 14 years of public sector experience, she oversees senior centers, adult day care, nutrition programs, case management, veteran services, rental and utility assistance, and economic mobility initiatives. Previously, she led federally funded programs delivering more than $100 million in assistance and advanced major technology modernization efforts. Natalie is a CCAP, ROMA Trainer, Lean Six Sigma Green Belt, and holds a Master of Science in Education. Fluent in English and Spanish, she is dedicated to strengthening communities and improving quality of life.



Florence “Flower” Sanchez

Chief Executive Officer, *Sunshine Pathways Foundation*

Andrea has three decades of experience in health care and human services, focusing on improving access to health care and promoting health equity. She leads the Health Council of Southeast Florida (HCSEF) and the Lake Okeechobee Rural Health Network (LORHN), both established by Florida Statute to address health disparities and advocate for underserved populations. These organizationFlorence “Flower” Sanchez is a Florida native, mother, entrepreneur, and advocate whose life reflects the power of opportunity and community support. After experiencing foster care and homelessness, including as a young mother, she accessed local resources that helped her achieve stability and continue her education. She went on to build a career, become a homeowner, and co-found Sunshine Independent Living Transitional Housing and the Sunshine Pathways Foundation. Today, Florence uses her lived experience to advocate for individuals and families facing hardship and to help others connect with the resources and support that can lead to stability, independence, and hope.s also assess the impact of local initiatives. Andrea holds a B.A. in sociology, a master's in health science (MHS), and an MBA, all from the University of Florida.



Dr. Cristina Lucier

Chair; *Homeless and Housing Alliance of Palm Beach County*

Cristina Lucier, Ph.D., is Vice President of Community Programs at The Lord’s Place, where she leads programs supporting individuals and families experiencing homelessness. With a decade of nonprofit leadership experience, she focuses on strengthening programs, partnerships, and systems that promote long-term stability and economic mobility. Cristina also serves as President of the Palm Beach County Homeless & Housing Alliance, guiding countywide efforts to align priorities, improve coordination, and advance funding and policy strategies. Her work is grounded in direct program leadership, community collaboration, and system-level planning to create opportunities and stronger pathways for people facing housing instability.

10:45 am-11:45 am

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

Childcare as Economic Infrastructure:

Strengthening Workforce Participation and Economic Opportunity

Childcare is more than a family support service—it is a cornerstone of a thriving economy. Without reliable childcare, parents struggle to enter or remain in the workforce, businesses face labor shortages, and communities lose economic potential. This session will explore how expanding childcare capacity can strengthen workforce participation, increase family financial stability, and fuel regional economic growth. Participants will learn about innovative strategies for developing childcare centers, aligning public policies to support working families, integrating workforce development and employment services into community resource centers, and building partnerships that make quality childcare more affordable and accessible. Discover why investing in childcare is one of the smartest economic mobility strategies a community can make.

PANELISTS



DR. LISA WILLIAMS-TAYLOR
CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL



ERIC ROBY
FULLER CENTER



LAURA CONWAY
LUTHERAN SERVICES FLORIDA

MODERATOR



ARUNA GILBERT
EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

Speaker Biographies

Scan for Expanded Speaker Biographies



Dr. Lisa Williams-Taylor

Chief Executive Officer; *Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County*

Dr. Lisa Williams-Taylor is the Chief Executive Officer of Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, where she oversees prevention and early-intervention services that support more than 190,000 children and families annually. Under her leadership, the Council funds hundreds of programs and major public education initiatives to ensure children grow up healthy, safe, and ready for school and life. Previously Chief Program Officer, she led research, evaluation, and system performance efforts. With extensive experience in education, mental health, and criminal justice, Dr. Williams-Taylor has authored over 25 publications and holds advanced degrees in Forensic Psychology and Criminal Justice.



Eric Roby

Chief Executive Officer, *Fuller Center*

Eric Roby is the Chief Executive Officer of Fuller Center, where he leads transformative growth for one of South Florida's longest-standing nonprofits serving children and families. Since 2024, he has strengthened operations, expanded philanthropy, launched new teen and family initiatives, and achieved 100% kindergarten readiness among VPK graduates for two consecutive years. A former award-winning journalist and seasoned nonprofit executive, Roby previously held leadership roles with Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County and the American Red Cross. A first-generation college graduate, he is widely recognized for his strategic vision, partnerships, and commitment to community impact.



Laura Conway

Executive Director, *Lutheran Services Florida*

Laura Conway is a nonprofit executive and early childhood education leader with more than 23 years of experience strengthening organizations and improving outcomes for children and families. Her career began in Honduras, where she and her husband grew a nonprofit serving abused and vulnerable children from a single building into a 17-building campus with comprehensive care and a bilingual school. After moving to the U.S., she advanced in Head Start leadership, eventually joining Lutheran Services Florida, where she now oversees one of its largest Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Palm Beach County. Her work centers on building strong systems, empowering staff, and creating opportunities for children to thrive.



Aruna Gilbert

Chief Program Officer, *Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County*

Aruna Gilbert is the Chief Program and Policy Officer at the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County, where she leads programs that shape early learning and strengthen the adults who support young children. With more than 21 years in early childhood education, she bridges clinical expertise with systems-level policy work and founded the Early Care and Education Advocacy Fellowship to empower childcare leaders as advocates. Aruna is pursuing a Doctor of Social Work, focusing on teacher-child relationships and equitable AI in education. A Bank Street College and Florida advocacy fellow, she is dedicated to ensuring every child enters school ready to thrive.

10:45 am-11:45 am

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

Recovery, Resilience, and Opportunity:

Creating Systems that Support Brain Health, Recovery, and Economic Mobility

Recovery is an economic development strategy. Individuals experiencing mental health conditions or substance use disorders can thrive in the workforce when communities build systems that support healing, resilience, and opportunity. This session will examine how integrated approaches—including Recovery Community Hubs, Project OVERDOSE, behavioral health services, peer support, and recovery-friendly workplaces—can improve employment outcomes while strengthening communities. Participants will explore how addressing brain health, trauma, and social determinants of health increases workforce participation, reduces long-term public costs, and creates sustainable pathways to economic mobility. Learn how investing in recovery transforms lives while building a healthier, more productive workforce.

PANELISTS



ANN BERNER
SOUTHEAST BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NETWORK



DARCY DAVIS
HEALTH CARE DISTRICT OF PBC



HEATHER DESTEFANO
PALM HEALTH FOUNDATION



TYLER GLOCK
THE RECOVERY HUB OF PBC

MODERATOR



ANDREA STEPHENSON
HEALTH COUNCIL OF SOUTH EAST FLORIDA

Speaker Biographies



Ann Berner

CEO/President; *Southeast Behavioral Health Network*

Carol Jones-Gilbert has served as Executive Director and CEO of the Palm Beach County Housing Authority since 2018, bringing decades of leadership in public housing and community services. Before joining PBCHA, she spent 12 years with the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, rising from Property Manager to Chief Operating Officer, and previously held roles with the Dallas Housing Authority, Franciscan Ministries, and organizations serving seniors, people with disabilities, and individuals experiencing homelessness. Carol is highly experienced in HUD programs and organizational effectiveness. A Texas A&M graduate, she is the proud mother of one son and grandmother of three.



Darcy Davis

Chief Executive Officer; Health Care District of Palm Beach County

Darcy J. Davis has served as President and CEO of the Health Care District of Palm Beach County for a decade, advancing data-driven operations and expert financial stewardship, including achieving the District's lowest millage rate in 37 years. She led creation of the county's innovative addiction treatment model, now replicated statewide through Florida's CORE Network, and is spearheading the Two Waters Mental Health Center, Florida's first integrated crisis and behavioral health facility. An accountant by training, she holds degrees from Mercer University and Troy State University. Davis has earned extensive recognition, including Becker's 2026 Women Presidents and CEOs to Know and the 2026 Ultimate CEO award.



Dr. Heather DeStefano;

Director of Grants and Community Partnerships; *Palm Health Foundation*

Heather L. DeStefano, DSW, LCSW-QS, is Director of Grants and Community Partnerships at Palm Health Foundation, where she leads grantmaking and cross-sector partnerships to strengthen community health. A licensed clinical social worker and educator, her work has a strong focus on workforce development, particularly within behavioral health, brain health, and allied health professions. She works across philanthropy and community systems to strengthen workforce pathways, support emerging and nontraditional health professionals, and build a workforce that is more responsive to the needs and experiences of residents.



Tyler Glock

Secretary; *The Recovery Community Hub of PBC Board of Directors*

Tyler Glock is a person in long-term recovery and Board President of the Recovery Community HUB of Palm Beach County, a peer-led Recovery Community Organization with four centers across the county, from the coast to the Glades. His own recovery reshaped the direction of his life and career, leading him to 15 years as a behavioral health professional focused on treatment access, payer systems, and integrity across the care system.



Dr. Andrea Stephenson-Royster

Chief Executive Officer; *Health Council of Southeast Florida*

Andrea has three decades of experience in health care and human services, focusing on improving access to health care and promoting health equity. She leads the Health Council of Southeast Florida (HCSEF) and the Lake Okeechobee Rural Health Network (LORHN), both established by Florida Statute to address health disparities and advocate for underserved populations. These organizations also assess the impact of local initiatives. Andrea holds a B.A. in sociology, a master's in health science (MHS), and an MBA, all from the University of Florida.

12:00 pm-1:30 pm

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

Lunch Plenary

Opportunity by design: A Blueprint for Measuring and Expanding Economic Opportunity One ZIP Code at a Time

Communities improve what they measure together. This interactive session introduces Opportunity Palm Beach County, an innovative countywide initiative designed to transform how communities understand, measure, and expand opportunity. Participants will explore the evidence-based Upward Mobility Framework, learn how GIS Opportunity Mapping can identify neighborhood strengths and barriers, and discover how the Social & Economic Mobility Research Institute will support data-driven decision making and continuous learning. The workshop will also demonstrate how governments, businesses, nonprofits, philanthropies, educational institutions, and residents can use shared mobility metrics to align investments, strengthen accountability, and create measurable improvements in upward economic mobility—one neighborhood and one ZIP code at a time.

PANELISTS



HEATHER COGAR
FLORIDA CHAMBER FOUNDATION



ADAM HASNER
FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY



KEELY TAYLOR
BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



JORDAN DAVIS
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MODERATOR



MAYOR JOHN PAUL (JP) O'CONNOR
CITY OF WESTLAKE
PALM BEACH COUNTY LEAGUE OF CITIES

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Heather Cogar

Statewide Director, Community Engagement; *Florida Chamber Foundation*

Heather Cogar serves as Statewide Director of Community Engagement for the Florida Chamber Foundation's Florida Prosperity Initiative, where she leads efforts to address childhood poverty and advance prosperity and self-sufficiency across Florida. Drawing on both professional expertise and her own journey of overcoming adversity, Heather brings a powerful perspective to building solutions that connect businesses, community organizations, and families. Her work is grounded in the belief that generational poverty can be broken, one family and one community at a time.



Adam Hasner

President; *Florida Atlantic University*

Adam Hasner is the President of Florida Atlantic University, bringing more than 30 years of leadership experience in public service, education, economic development, and innovation. A longtime Palm Beach County resident and former Florida House Majority Leader, he has been a strong advocate for Florida Atlantic's growth and research mission. As president, he leads the university's six campuses and its continued advancement in research, student success, innovation, and regional economic growth.



Keely Gideon-Taylor

President; *Black Chamber of Commerce*

Keely Gideon-Taylor manages Community Relations for The Palm Beach Post and Palm Beach Daily News, where she builds community, business, and corporate relationships and oversees philanthropic initiatives. She also serves as Board Chair of the Black Chamber of Commerce of Palm Beach County and is actively involved with several organizations supporting leadership, youth, and community advancement. Her commitment to service and community engagement has earned her Gannett's Greatest Award for Community Cultivation.



Jordan Davis

Director of Affordable Housing; *Related Ross*

Jordan is the Director of Affordable Housing at Related Ross in West Palm Beach, where he oversees all aspects of mixed-income development in Palm Beach County. Jordan currently serves on the City of West Palm Beach's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) and is Co-Chair of the Urban Land Institute's Young Leaders Program. He received his Bachelor of Business Administration, with distinction, from the University of Michigan's Stephen M. Ross School of Business in 2017. Jordan is a Board Member of the University of Michigan's Weiser Center for Real Estate and founded the University of Michigan's Real Estate Mentorship Program



JohnPaul O'Connor

Mayor; City of Westlake | President; Palm Beach County League of Cities

JohnPaul O'Connor serves as Mayor of the City of Westlake, Florida, and is an advocate for strong local communities and local decision-making. In 2025, he was recognized by the Florida League of Cities with its Home Rule Hero Award for his advocacy during the state legislative session and his efforts to elevate the perspectives of Florida's municipalities. He currently serves as the Board Chair of the Palm Beach County League of Cities.

1:45 pm-2:45 pm

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

The Opportunity Workforce

Closing the Skills Gap to Promote Upward Economic Mobility

Small businesses and a strong workforce is the engine of a thriving economy. This workshop will examine the role of small businesses in economic mobility, the workforce landscape, identify emerging skills gaps, and explore innovative strategies for connecting residents to family-sustaining careers. Participants will discuss entrepreneurship, entry-level career pathways, industry partnerships, apprenticeships, workforce coaching, and skills-based hiring practices that prepare workers for today's and tomorrow's economy. The session will also highlight the critical role of case managers and career navigators in helping individuals overcome barriers, remain engaged in training, and achieve long-term employment success. Learn how aligning workforce systems with employer demand creates opportunity for workers while strengthening the regional economy.

PANELISTS



KEMBERLY BUSH
PATHWAY TO PROPSERITY



JULIA DATTOLO
CAREER SOURCE PALM BEACH COUNTY



LAYREN ESPINOSA
OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS PALM BEACH COUNTY



MIRA ZHIVKOVA
COMMUNITY PARTNERS OF SOUTH FLORIDA

MODERATOR



DORIS DAVIS
PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPT.

Speaker Biographies

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Kemberly Bush

Chief Executive Officer; *Pathways to Prosperity*

Kemberly C. Bush is the founding CEO of Pathways to Prosperity, Inc. (P2P). For the past 17 years, she has led the organization in fulfilling its mission to strengthen communities throughout Palm Beach County by advancing the social, mental, spiritual, emotional, and economic well-being of children and families through education and social services. A Palm Beach County native with more than 35 years of social work experience, Kemberly is passionate about helping others develop and achieve a vision for their lives. She is a community leader, board member, and mentor to young women. Guided by her faith, love of family, and heart for service, Kemberly remains committed to uplifting people and strengthening her community.



Julia Dattolo

Chief Executive Officer; *CareerSource PBC*

Julia Dattolo is the President and CEO of CareerSource Palm Beach County, leading the county's workforce development agency and advancing talent and business solutions that drive regional growth. A champion for workforce innovation, she has strengthened partnerships that expand education, career development, and employment opportunities for residents. Julia has been recognized as Nonprofit Executive of the Year, the Toni Jennings Florida Workforce Professional of the Year, and Palm Beach North Chamber Woman of the Year. A military veteran, she serves on multiple state and national workforce boards. She holds a B.S. from the University of New Hampshire, a master's degree from UCLA, and is an alum of Leadership Palm Beach County.



Layren Espinosa

Director, Office of Small Business Development, *PBC Department of Housing and Economic Development*

Layren Espinosa is the Director of Palm Beach County's Office of Small Business Development, where she leads initiatives to expand economic opportunities for small businesses and strengthen local entrepreneurship. Born in Cuba and raised in Palm Beach County, her personal journey fuels her commitment to expanding pathways to success. Before joining the County, she spent 13 years with Adopt-A-Family, rising to Director of Agency Relations and helping raise more than $2.5 million annually while supporting a $6 million housing campaign. A Leadership Palm Beach County alum and Bank of America Emerging Leader, she is dedicated to service-centered, community-driven economic development.



Mira Zhivkova

Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer; *Community Partners of South Florida*

Mira Zhivkova is a dynamic and performance-driven professional with a passion for strategic leadership and empathetic, people-focused management. Joining Community Partners of South Florida as Director of HR in 2021, Mira's journey led her to become Chief Operating Officer in 2023, and then Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer in 2025. Her experience encompasses both profit and non-profit industries, and involves spearheading operations, managing complex projects, and driving organizational growth. She takes pride in her proven success in HR, change management, process optimization, and fostering diversity and inclusion. She is passionate about crafting out-of-the-box solutions and harnessing technology for innovative problem-solving.



Doris Davis

Sr. Program Manager; *Palm Beach County Community Services Department*

Doris Davis is a seasoned human services professional with more than 25 years of experience helping individuals and families build stability and economic mobility. A native of Panama and former military child, she brings a deep appreciation for diverse communities and service. Doris holds a B.S. in Psychology, an M.A. in Human Relations and Counseling, and is a nationally certified ROMA Trainer. Her leadership spans Community Action, Head Start, program administration, grant compliance, and local government. At Palm Beach County Community Services, she has supported initiatives focused on housing stability, economic mobility, energy assistance, and family self-sufficiency, championing collaboration to create lasting community impact.

1:45 pm-2:45 pm

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

From Hunger to Hope:

Food Security as a Pathway to Economic Mobility

Food security is about far more than meeting immediate nutritional needs—it is a critical building block for economic success. This workshop will explore how innovative food system strategies can reduce poverty while creating employment, entrepreneurship, and workforce development opportunities. Participants will learn about food bank workforce initiatives, commercial kitchens that support small business creation, nutrition programs that improve health outcomes, and employment pathways connected to food production and distribution. The session will demonstrate how investments in food security can simultaneously strengthen families, improve community health, stimulate local economies, and create lasting pathways to self-sufficiency.

PANELISTS



DR. JYOTHI GUNTA
FL DEPT OF HEALTH



JAMIE KENDALL
PBC FOOD BANK



RUTH MAGERIA
CROS MINISTRIES



JASON MANDLE
RESTORATION BRIDGE INTERNATIONAL

MODERATOR



TAMMY FIELDS
CHAIR FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVE

Speaker Biographies

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Dr. Jyothi Gunta, MD, MPH, FACPM

Director; *Florida Department of Health Palm Beach County*

Dr. Jyothi Gunta, MD, MPH, has served as Director of the Florida Department of Health in Palm Beach County since 2023. Board-certified in preventive, public health, occupational, and environmental medicine, she has worked across clinical and non-clinical settings, including family medicine, epidemiology, research, and policy. Dr. Gunta earned her medical degree in St. Petersburg, Russia, and her MPH from Nova Southeastern University, completing pediatric training at Tripler Army Medical Center. Her leadership experience includes roles with the U.S. Veterans Health Administration and CDC, with published work in The Lancet's Child and Adolescent Health. She is deeply committed to advancing community health.



Jamie Kendall

Chief Executive Officer; *Palm Beach County Food Bank*

Jamie Kendall is the CEO of the Palm Beach County Food Bank, leading the county's hunger-relief efforts and ensuring residents have consistent access to nutritious food. She oversees programs supporting more than 200 partner agencies and community initiatives that assist individuals and families in need. A longtime nonprofit leader, Jamie brings over 30 years of experience with humanitarian and conservation organizations across Georgia. An Ohio native and Bowling Green State University graduate, she is a proud new resident of Boynton Beach and is dedicated to strengthening community partnerships that reduce food insecurity and improve quality of life for Palm Beach County families.



Ruth Mageria

Executive Director; *CROS Ministries*

Ruth Mageria is the Chief Executive Officer of CROS Ministries, where she has served for 25 non-consecutive years and led the organization since 2014. A committed nonprofit leader, she has held key roles including President of the Nonprofit Chamber of Palm Beach County, Chair of the Association of Agency Executives, and ex-officio board member of United Way of Palm Beach County. Originally from Kenya, Ruth has also consulted with the Kenya Association of Fundraising Professionals. She holds degrees from Daystar University and Towson University, along with a certificate from Harvard Business School, and is a proud mother living in West Palm Beach.



Jason Mandle

Executive Director; *Restoration Bridge International*

Jason Mandle is the Executive Director of Restoration Bridge International, bringing two decades of experience in operations management, logistics, and systems optimization. A U.S. Navy veteran, he studied Economics at New York University and Business Administration at Towson University before leading operational growth across multiple organizations. After relocating to Florida in 2013, Jason volunteered with RBI, later joining full-time as Director of Operations and becoming Executive Director in 2024. He now drives the organization's mission to reduce food insecurity and strengthen distribution systems. Jason and his wife, Marcela, also operate housing and recovery programs supporting individuals overcoming substance use disorders.



Tammy Fields, Esq.

Chair; *United Way Hunger Initiative*

Tammy Fields dedicated 37 years of service to Palm Beach County, beginning as an attorney in the County Attorney's Office, later becoming the founding Director of the Youth Services Department, and concluding her career as a Deputy County Administrator. She holds degrees from Syracuse University and Stetson University College of Law and has been a member of The Florida Bar for 40 years. Tammy is certified in Trauma-Informed Care and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In retirement, she chairs the Food Security and Nutrition Board, serves on the United Way Board, and is a 2025 Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

1:45 pm-2:45 pm

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

Education to Earnings:

Aligning Learning Systems and Workforce Development with Economic Opportunity

Education should be a direct pathway to economic mobility. This session will explore how communities can better align K-12 education, adult education, higher education, workforce development, and employer needs to create seamless pathways from learning to meaningful careers. Participants will examine innovative workforce training models, industry-recognized certifications, apprenticeships, on-the-job learning opportunities, and employer partnerships that prepare residents for high-demand careers. The discussion will also highlight policies and private-sector investments that strengthen workforce participation, increase wages, and ensure every learner has access to opportunities that lead to long-term economic success.

PANELISTS



MICHAEL BURKE
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PBC



DR. AVA PARKER
PALM BEACH STATE UNIVERSITY



JEREMY MORSE
RELATED ROSS FOUNDATION

MODERATOR



DR. NAELYS LUNA
FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

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Mike Burke
Superintendent; *Palm Beach County School District*
As the Superintendent of the A-Rated School District of Palm Beach County, Mr. Michael Burke is passionate about ensuring academic excellence and paving the way to post-graduate success for the District's more than 170,000 students who attend 183 district-operated schools. He is deeply committed to the School Board's mission to educate, affirm, and inspire each student in an equity-embedded school system. As Superintendent of the tenth-largest district in the nation, Mr. Burke also oversees Palm Beach County's largest workforce. The District employs nearly 23,000 people



Dr. Ava Parker
President; *Palm Beach State College*
Ava L. Parker is the first woman to serve as President of Palm Beach State College, where she has led record enrollment growth and elevated the College's national reputation in workforce development, technology, and innovation since 2015. Under her leadership, PBSC has expanded state-of-the-art facilities, opened its fifth campus, and launched major initiatives—from the Julie and John Kime Health Innovation Building to hosting the SoFi Center and TGL. Parker is driving development of the Quantum Innovation Center and expanding high-speed research capabilities through Florida LambdaRail. An attorney and former Florida Polytechnic COO, she holds B.A. and J.D. degrees from the University of Florida.



Jeremy Morse
Executive Director; *Related Ross Foundation*
As Executive Director of the Related Ross Foundation, I bring people and organizations together to drive meaningful community change. Guided by our "Build Together" mission, I invest in social infrastructure that strengthens connection, belonging, and opportunity across the communities we serve. With deep experience in fundraising, nonprofit leadership, and community development, I help organizations amplify their impact through programs rooted in the Foundation's core values: Wellness, Education, Opportunity, and Culture. A lifelong jazz musician, I hold a bachelor's degree from Eckerd College and a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary.



Dr. Naelys Luna, Ph.D., M.S.W.,
Founding Dean and Professor; *College of Social Work and Criminal Justice*
Dr. Naelys Luna is the Founding Dean of the College of Social Work and Criminal Justice at Florida Atlantic University, where she previously served as Interim Dean and Director of the Sandler School of Social Work. A licensed social worker in New York and New Jersey, she has provided clinical services to children, adolescents, and families in diverse behavioral-health settings. Dr. Luna's research focuses on substance use, mood disorders, mental health outcomes, and psychosocial functioning. A former FADD president and ACE Fellow, she serves on national boards and collaborates internationally. She holds an MSW and PhD from Fordham University and a BA from Seton Hall University.

3:00 pm-4:00 pm

SECURING OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC MOBILITY SUMMIT

Closing Plenary

AI and the Future of Economic Mobility: Transforming Opportunity for ALICE Families

Artificial Intelligence is reshaping the future of work, education, and public services. Will it widen opportunity—or widen inequality? This forward-looking session explores how AI can become a powerful tool for advancing economic mobility for ALICE families and other economically vulnerable populations. Participants will examine emerging case studies demonstrating how AI can streamline eligibility determination, improve access to benefits, personalize workforce training, strengthen job matching, and enhance service delivery across the human services system. The session will also explore strategies for preparing workers for an AI-driven economy while ensuring technology expands opportunity rather than creating new barriers.

PANELISTS



DR. LAURIE GEORGE
UNITED WAY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY



DAN CANE
MODMED



DR. AVA PARKER
PALM BEACH STATE UNIVERSITY

MODERATOR



TIM BURKE
PALM BEACH POST

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Dr. Laurie George
President and CEO, *United Way of Palm Beach County*
Dr. Laurie George is President and CEO of United Way of Palm Beach County, where she has spent 28 years expanding the organization's impact and strengthening services for families across the community. Known for her collaborative leadership, she builds cross-sector partnerships to advance youth opportunity, financial stability, community health, and resiliency. Dr. George leads the United Way Worldwide AI Cohort, shaping responsible AI adoption while working to prevent widening digital inequities. She holds a Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies and is a Certified Fund-Raising Executive. Under her leadership, United Way supports more than 110 local programs and initiatives.



Dan Cane
Co-Chief CEO & Co-Founder; ModMed
Daniel Cane is the co-CEO and co-founder of ModMed and a recognized leader in healthcare technology, named one of the Top 50 Healthcare Technology CEOs in 2022–2024 and an EY Entrepreneur of the Year. Passionate about advancing healthcare, he champions AI, machine learning, telehealth, and structured data to improve outcomes and transparency. Under his leadership, ModMed has earned numerous accolades and leverages insights from over 750 million patient encounters. Dan is deeply involved in community and educational initiatives and previously co-founded Blackboard Inc. A Cornell graduate, he lives in Boca Raton with his family.



Dr. Ava Parker
President; *Palm Beach State College*
Ava L. Parker is the first woman to serve as President of Palm Beach State College, where she has led record enrollment growth and elevated the College's national reputation in workforce development, technology, and innovation since 2015. Under her leadership, PBSC has expanded state-of-the-art facilities, opened its fifth campus, and launched major initiatives—from the Julie and John Kime Health Innovation Building to hosting the SoFi Center and TGL. Parker is driving development of the Quantum Innovation Center and expanding high-speed research capabilities through Florida LambdaRail. An attorney and former Florida Polytechnic COO, she holds B.A. and J.D. degrees from the University of Florida.



Tim Burke
Former Publisher; *The Palm Beach Post*
Timothy D. Burke brings a unique blend of media leadership and workplace-technology expertise to discussions on AI and its community impact. During his four decades in journalism, he held key roles at The Palm Beach Post, including Publisher, Executive Editor, and VP of Digital Media, and chaired the Florida Press Association. After leaving the newspaper industry, he led HR Tech—the world's largest workplace-technology conference—while overseeing digital and print media for HR Executive. Today, he advises organizations on digital transformation and workplace technology. Burke is deeply active in Palm Beach County, serving on numerous boards and community leadership initiatives.

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