

# SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

## LAW CENTER

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Law Center, Minority Business Development Agency Business Centers Partner for Annual 'Innovation in Agriculture & Energy Opportunity Zone Summit'**

In a collaborative effort, the Southern University Law Center (SULC) and the Louisiana Minority Business Development Agency Business Center (LA MBDA) have joined forces with the MBDA's Federal Procurement Center to orchestrate the highly anticipated IAEOZ Summit. This pivotal event is scheduled to unfold from October 17 to 19 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

"I am super excited as operator of the MBDA Federal Procurement Center to partner with a leading Land Grant HBCU, and the Louisiana MBDA Center," said Keith Moore, operator at the Minority Business Development Agency Federal Procurement Center. "This is the first time the IAEOZ Summit is collaborating with another MBDA Center – demonstrating that our Nation's MBDA Centers are committed to executing *A Team Approach* model to address the Federal and State contracting needs of our MBE clients and their success."

Over the course of the dynamic 3-day business development Summit, distinguished figures from the realms of business, commerce, technology, and philanthropy will convene to deliberate upon the evolving landscape of farming in the United States. Notably, the spotlight will shine on the pivotal role that Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Land Grant colleges play within distressed Opportunity Zones. These institutions are poised to serve as influential anchor points, spearheading the charge in agribusiness education, innovation, commercialization, and land preservation and restoration tasks.

This transformative endeavor also underscores a commitment to rekindling prosperity within minority-driven, rural communities. By harnessing the power of these institutions, the Summit aims to chart a course toward renewed wealth creation, promising a brighter future for these underserved locales.

"It is imperative, now more than ever, that we recognize the importance of agriculture, energy, workforce development, and how these sectors are intertwined," said John K. Pierre, Chancellor of Southern University Law Center. "This year's conference will shed light on how Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) and leaders can shape a future where these industries thrive and build a collaborative and sustainable society."

Summit participants will gain invaluable insights into leveraging funds and grants stemming from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and unlocking Government contracting avenues for MBEs, all catalyzed by the groundbreaking Executive Orders 13985 and 14008. Esteemed speakers will disseminate practical strategies for fostering sustainability and pioneering carbon sequestration endeavors within the realm of agriculture. Furthermore, they will highlight triumphant instances of minority-owned agribusiness ventures.

Engaging panels will delve into the realm of Smart Farming, unveiling the forefront of technological marvels in food production and security. Thought leaders will discuss pioneering methodologies and programs to revitalize rural communities, propel job creation, and nurture workforce development. This summit promises to equip attendees with actionable intelligence, forging a path toward a more resilient and inclusive agricultural landscape.

Attending the IAEOZ Summit, whether in person or virtually, offers distinct benefits depending on your preferences, circumstances, and goals. Here is a comparison of the benefits of attending the summit physically versus attending virtually:

#### **Benefits of Attending Physically:**

1. **Networking Opportunities:** In-person attendance allows for direct, face-to-face interactions with speakers, panelists, fellow attendees, numerous Federal Agency decision-makers and potential partners. These interactions can lead to deeper connections, collaborations, and partnerships.
2. **Real-time Engagement:** Physically attending allows you to engage in real-time discussions, ask questions, and participate in interactive sessions, providing a more dynamic and engaging experience.
3. **Experiential Learning:** Participating in site visits, hands-on activities, and demonstrations can offer experiential learning opportunities that virtual attendance may not fully replicate.
4. **Building Relationships:** Meeting people in person helps build stronger relationships and trust, which can be valuable for future business endeavors.
5. **Serendipitous Opportunities:** Chance encounters and impromptu conversations during breaks or social events can lead to unexpected opportunities and connections.

Registration is \$50 for in-person attendance and \$35 for virtual attendance. Participants can secure their spot and or get more information by visiting [www.iaeo Summit.com](http://www.iaeo Summit.com).