

Shipt

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Gateway Business Conference



NOV 13-14

Birmingham, Alabama

20
24

Business Sustainability: The Business of Tomorrow



Dear Esteemed Guests,

As we gather for the annual 2024 Gateway Conference hosted by the Southern Region Minority Supplier Development Council (SRMSDC), we extend our deepest gratitude to all who have made this event possible. A special thank you goes to our title sponsor, **Shipt**, whose generous support has made this conference successful.

We are also immensely grateful to our annual sponsors and resource partners, whose continuous commitment and collaboration have been pivotal in driving the success of this conference. Your support enables us to provide a platform for meaningful discussions, networking opportunities, and the exchange of innovative ideas that inspire growth and development across our diverse communities.

The Gateway Conference is more than just an event; it is a convergence of minds aiming to explore the future of business, innovation, and collaboration. Attendees can look forward to insightful sessions and connecting with industry leaders and visionaries. Your attendance and support enhance the experience for all attendees and help further our mission to foster an inclusive and dynamic business environment. We are excited to see what we can achieve together and look forward to continued collaboration and engagement throughout the conference.

Once again, thank you for your invaluable support and partnership. We are thrilled to have you with us on this journey and are confident that this year's conference will be a resounding success.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Day 1- Wednesday, November 13, 2024

7:30 AM - 1:00 PM - Registration

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM - Welcome Networking Breakfast

Welcome to Gateway's first day, with a productive, entertaining networking breakfast to foster meaningful connections and collaborative opportunities. This event offers an upbeat backdrop of music in an informal atmosphere, perfect for engaging conversations with industry professionals and peers eager to share insights and experiences.

While enjoying a delicious breakfast spread, including fresh pastries, seasonal fruits, and gourmet coffee, you will have the opportunity to expand your network and build valuable relationships.

Sponsored by Southern Company, Alabama Power, Mississippi Power

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM - Why Business Sustainability Matters Today

Alvin-o Williams, SRMSDC

Sustainability is a crucial topic as businesses face increasing environmental and social challenges. It involves meeting present needs without compromising future generations' ability to meet theirs, focusing on responsible operations that protect natural resources and vulnerable populations. For businesses, this means integrating environmental and social factors into decision-making and prioritizing long-term practices that reduce negative impacts.

Sponsored by TVA and Walmart

9:15 AM - 10:00 AM - Beyond Supplier Diversity: Advocating for Sustainable and Equitable Supply Chain Solutions through Environmental and Social Justice

Gregory Willis, Esq.

This discussion focuses on recent legislative changes affecting historically underutilized businesses and explores how circularity and sustainability can effectively promote sustainability, equity, supplier diversity, and supply chain diversification.

Sponsored by Chevron

10:00 AM - 10:45 AM - The Fundamentals of Circularity

Abeeb Oyelere, Graduate Assistant, University of South Alabama

Sustainability is a fundamental principle of circularity, focusing on developing a circular economy that efficiently uses resources, minimizes waste, and promotes reuse and recycling. For businesses, this entails embracing circular practices, such as harnessing renewable energy, recycling materials, and designing products and services with their entire lifecycle in mind—all while remaining profitable. These practices not only foster socioeconomic growth but also protect the environment, preserving the finite resources we depend on, including clean air, clean water, fertile soil, marine life, and diverse plant and animal species.

Sponsored by ExxonMobil

10:45 AM - 11:00 AM - Break

Sponsored by Kopri Promotions

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM - Unlocking Global Potential: How the Partnership of SRMSDC and EMSDC with the Global Supplier Diversity Alliance (GSDA) Enhances Relationships and Opportunities for Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)

Cassandra Dorrington, President and CEO of the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council (CAMSC)

Brian Oglesby, President and CEO of Eastern Minority Supplier Development Council (EMSDC)

Alvin-o Williams, President and CEO of the Southern Region Minority Supplier Development Council (SRMSDC)

In a groundbreaking move that will redefine the landscape of minority business enterprises (MBEs), the Southern Region Minority Supplier Development Council (SRMSDC) and the Eastern Minority Supplier Development Council (EMSDC) have entered a strategic alliance with the Global Supplier Diversity Alliance (GSDA). This session explores the profound positive impact of this collaboration on MBEs, which will unlock unprecedented opportunities on a global scale. Join us as we explore the myriad benefits of this partnership. Discover how MBEs can now easily access international markets, tapping into new business prospects and revenue streams. Learn about the enhanced networking opportunities that enable businesses to connect with industry leaders and like-minded entrepreneurs worldwide, fostering relationships crucial for growth and innovation.

Sponsored by Toyota

11:30 AM - 11:45 AM - ExxonMobil Check Presentation

11:45 AM - 1:15 PM - Brunch with Mayors

Mayor Jaylen Smith, Earle, AR

Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., Natchitoches, LA

Hope Whiteside, Ph.D., University of Alabama Transportation Institute

How often do you get a chance to enjoy a leisurely brunch? Now, imagine having the opportunity to share that experience with two of the Gulf South's most innovative Mayors. While you savor delicious food and delightful conversation, you'll have the unique chance to engage with the Honorable Ronnie Williams and the Honorable Jaylen Smith. These visionary leaders are not just focused on their cities; they are actively working to elevate the conversation around climate change, which sits at the top of their agendas. During this special brunch, you'll learn about their proactive strategies and initiatives to make their cities and the residents within them more climate-resilient. This is not just a meal; it's an opportunity to connect, learn, and be inspired by the efforts of those at the forefront of local governance. Don't miss this chance to dive deep into essential discussions while enjoying great company and delicious food!

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1:15 PM - 1:30 PM - Break

Sponsored by Smith Printing Services

1:30 PM - 2:15 PM - Breakout Session 1 - Corporate Track - Strengthening Your Supply Chain Through Circularity

Dr. Marc Scott, Associate Professor of Practice and Associate Department Chair & Director of Research, Supply Chain Management Research Center, University of Arkansas

Circularity establishes a closed-loop system in which resources are reused, recycled, or repurposed rather than discarded. This principle is particularly significant in supply chains, where goods and materials are constantly circulated. By fostering stronger partnerships with suppliers who prioritize circular business practices, large purchasing organizations can minimize their supply chain's environmental impact, reduce waste, lower carbon emissions, enhance resource efficiency, and cut costs. Such collaboration can pave the way for innovative solutions and circular strategies that benefit all stakeholders. Learn how circularity can be implemented in your organization.

Sponsored by ExxonMobil

1:30 PM - 2:15 PM - Breakout Session 1 - Breakout 1 - Small Business Track - The Pivot: Creating a Healing-Centered Business Culture to Boost Sustainability

Rhonda Tso-A-Fatt, Ed.D., Founder & CEO, The Moriah Group

In this breakout session, participants will explore the vital importance of cultivating a healing-centered business culture and its significant impact on workplace productivity and overall culture. The discussion will focus on strategies to prioritize employee well-being, such as implementing mental health support, offering flexible work arrangements, and promoting open communication. By strongly emphasizing creating a supportive environment, your business can enhance productivity, strengthen employee loyalty, and foster a positive work atmosphere.

Sponsored by Shell, OXY, and BP

2:15 PM - 2:30 PM - Break

Sponsored by Birmingham Business Alliance

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM - Breakout Session 2 - Corporate Track - Beyond Compliance: Integrating DEI and Supplier Diversity for Sustainable Growth

Sponsored by Entergy

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM - Breakout Session 2 - Small Business Track - Cybersecurity and Generative AI for Sustainable Business Owners

Theresa Jones, Visionary Owner and Principal Consultant, EvalvIQ

As businesses become increasingly digital and connected in today's fast-paced world, cybersecurity has emerged as a critical aspect that cannot be overlooked. This breakout session As businesses become increasingly digital and connected in today's fast-paced world, cybersecurity has emerged as a vital aspect that cannot be ignored. This breakout session aims to delve deeply into the importance of implementing robust cybersecurity measures to protect your business and sensitive data, ensuring the long-term sustainability of your business operations. Explore various tools and strategies you can use today to safeguard your business, your clients, and your family.

Sponsored by Nissan

3:15 - 3:30 PM - Break

Sponsored by EvalvIQ

3:30 PM - 3:45 PM - Introduction of the Enhanced Benefits Program for Small Businesses

Alvin-o Williams, President of the SRMSDC
Mark Samuel, Regional Director of MBE Services

Learn about the enhanced benefits for Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) that register or certify with SRMSDC. These enhanced benefits include exclusive access to premium healthcare, financial services, and valuable resources like eBooks and planning guides. MBEs can also enjoy significant savings on various products and services, helping them thrive in their business endeavors.

Sponsored by Protective Insurance

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM - Welcome & All-Star Awards Nominee Recognition Reception

Top Golf Birmingham
1111 24th St N
Birmingham, AL 35234

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Day 2 - November 14, 2024

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM - Networking Breakfast

Welcome again to Gateway, where we are thrilled to kick off our second networking breakfast! We encourage you to continue fostering these connections, as networking is crucial for personal and professional growth. This breakfast event features an upbeat backdrop of carefully curated music, setting a relaxed and inviting atmosphere ideal for engaging conversations. You'll have the chance to mingle with industry professionals and peers eager to share their insights and experiences. So come ready to connect, exchange ideas, and enjoy a delicious breakfast in great company!

Sponsored by Jackson Offshore, APC Construction, James Group, Blue Springs Metals, Diversity Vuteq, Georgetown Metal Processing, Brewster Procurement, ZONES, Magnolia Automotive, Choctaw Kaul

8:45 AM - 9:00 AM - Why Business Sustainability Matters Tomorrow

Alvin-o Williams, SRMSDC

As the world grapples with escalating environmental challenges, the importance of business sustainability has never been greater. While considerable resources have been allocated to evaluating business partnerships, the focus is shifting toward your

actions versus what kind of business you may be categorized as. Climate change will be our great equalizer, and tomorrow, you will have to consider the impact of your business: Who do you affect? Where do you make a difference? How do you influence positive change for all? Climate change is a universal issue, and the future of your business will hinge on how effectively you adapt to meet it.

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9:00 AM - 9:45 AM - How Climate Change Has Impacted Infrastructure: New Infrastructure Opportunities

Bob Dickerson, Moderator
Mikesha Harvill/Birmingham Jefferson Transit Authority
Ryan Veney, Shuttlesworth Airport

An in-depth discussion on the effects of climate change on transportation and mobility sectors, as well as the emerging opportunities for businesses prioritizing circularity and sustainability (road, water & air).

Sponsored by Birmingham Business Resource Center

9:45 AM - 10:30 AM - Fireside Chat

Malik Yoba, Actor, Writer, Producer, and Entrepreneur

Many are well-acquainted with the principles of recycling. Yet, other dimensions of sustainability are increasingly gaining recognition in the business landscape as the significance of sustainable practices rises for both companies and consumers. Join Malik Yoba for an engaging fireside chat where he will discuss how he weaves various aspects of sustainability into his business strategy, aiming to reduce environmental impact while boosting socio-economic benefits for the communities he serves.

Sponsored by Honda, Beau Rivage Resort & Casino, and Bank of America

10:30 AM - 10:45 AM - Break

Sponsored by Darby Enterprise Global Solutions

10:45 AM - 11:30 AM - Discover New Business Opportunities with AgTech

Harold Singletary, BrightMa Farms

Enter a realm where agriculture and technology converge to forge groundbreaking opportunities. Explore the latest advancements in agricultural technology and uncover how sustainable farming, precision agriculture, and the integration of AI and IoT are transforming the industry. Gain invaluable insights from an innovator and entrepreneur

who has harnessed AgTech to disrupt multiple sectors, crafting new products and services centered around circularity. Stay informed on emerging trends and solutions that have the potential to reshape your business strategy.

Sponsored by Amazon

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM - EXIM: Expanding Beyond the Borders While Enhancing Sustainable Change

LaTaunya Darden, Senior Business Development Specialist, EXIM BANK

Expanding your business beyond U.S. borders can be a strategic move to harness eco-friendly initiatives that foster growth and promote sustainable practices in today's competitive market. By tapping into global opportunities, you can reach new customers who value sustainability and environmental responsibility. Learn how to successfully make this transition by leveraging EXIMBANK's vast resources and support, which offers financial products, expertise, and guidance tailored to help businesses navigate international expansion while committing to eco-friendly practices.

Sponsored by CenterPoint Energy

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM - How TREKIT's ridesharing solution contributes to sustainable healthcare by bolstering healthy state initiatives

Pierre Shuttlesworth, President and CEO of TREKIT

Meet the 3rd largest ridesharing service in America. Yes, you may have heard of Uber or Lyft, but have you heard of TREKIT? A revolutionary ridesharing service that primarily supports the healthcare industry, targeting Medicaid and Medicare passengers. TREKIT's impact goes beyond just providing a convenient mode of transportation; it also contributes to sustainable healthcare by supporting healthy state initiatives.

Sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield of LA and Tulane University

12:30 PM - 2:00 PM - All-Star Awards Luncheon

Our annual awards luncheon is a prestigious event typically held on the final day of the Gateway event. It recognizes and celebrates the accomplishments of individuals, teams, and companies that foster economic development, support diverse businesses, and promote equitable business practices. This luncheon is the best way to honor those who drive growth and create new opportunities for small and large, diverse enterprises.

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2:15 PM - 4:30 PM - Matchmaker Meetings

Business matchmaker meetings are organized networking sessions designed to directly link businesses with potential partners, clients, or resource partners. These sessions usually consist of pre-arranged one-on-one meetings, allowing participants to explore their needs, present their offerings, and identify opportunities for collaboration. The primary objective is to foster meaningful connections that can lead to lucrative business deals, partnerships, or other mutually beneficial relationships.

Sponsored by Electra Grid Solutions



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Resource Center

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Smith Printing Services



Darby Enterprise Global Solutions



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GATEWAY 2024 RESOURCE PARTNERS



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2024 Supplier of the Year Nominees [Class 1]

82'S LLC

Atkins & Goolsby, Inc.

BamaClean

Kopri Promotions

Lemonade Creative Marketing



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2024 Supplier of the Year Nominees [Class 2]

**Trent Dang/ dba
Happy Guest Promotions**

Falls Facility Services, Inc.

Andrew Zoo & Associates, Inc.

Evans Agency, Inc.

Landrum Janitorial SVC, Inc.



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2024 Supplier of the Year Nominees [Class 3]

Chacon Steel Erectors, Inc.

Enterprise Staffing, LLC

Chemical Distributors Solutions

NSRW, Inc.



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2024 Supplier of the Year Nominees [Class 4]

Magnolia Automotive Services Group

Brewster Procurement Group, Inc.

Kaul Glove & Manufacturing Company

Diversity Vuteq, LLC

APC Construction

Georgetown Metal Processing, LLC

Jackson Offshore Operators



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2024 Regional Automotive Prime Supplier of the Year Nominees

Toni Cooley

Systems Electro Coating

Kirk Lewis

Georgetown Metal Processing

Dr. Larry Crawford

Diversity Vuteq

John James

Magnolia Automotive

Frank Davis

Horizon Services Corporation



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2024 Supporting Partner of the Year Nominees

Victor Brown

Birmingham Business Alliance

Bob Dickerson

BBRC

Myra Pineda

HCCL

Phala Mire

WBEC South

David Payton

10KSB New Orleans

Sharon Smith

Alabama MBDA



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2024 Supporting Partner of the Year Nominees

Charletta Fortson
Louisiana MBDA

Rose Greer
Mississippi MBDA

Lynette White-Colin
NOLA Business Alliance

Tatiana Bruce,
LED



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2024 Buyer of the Year Nominees

Cole Berthelot

Shell

Paul Lewis

Honda

Pat Allen

Toyota

Brian K. Hall

Shell

Lakeya Mazant

Entergy



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2024 Corporate Advocate of the Year Nominees

Rivers Frederick
Entergy

Jean-Marc Villain
Ochsner Health

Donovan Casanave
Shell

Jessican McMahan
Brasfield and Gorrie

Anselmo Rodriguez
Blue Cross Blue Shield of LA

Dave Fieldman
Chevron



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2024 Corporate Advocate of the Year Nominees

Shikira Garcia

Caesars Entertainment

Yvette Moten

BP

Leviticous "Vic" Cleveland

CenterPoint

Michael Brown

CenterPoint

Scheryl Settle

Amazon

Tamara Garrett

OXY

Gina Bertrand

Tulane University



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2024 Corporate Advocate of the Year Nominees

Traniece Mills
Amazon

Karl Harris Sr.
Honda

Elly Bradford
Honda

Devin Shrank
ExxonMobil

Matt Greene
Toyota

Ryoko Watanabe
Toyota

Marcella McCullough
Nissan



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Business Sustainability: The Business of Tomorrow

2024 Regional Automotive OEM of the Year Nominees

Matt Greene

Toyota

Marcella McCullough

Nissan

Shaquanta Lewis

VW

Karl Harris Sr.

Honda



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Business Sustainability: The Business of Tomorrow

2024 Regional Corporation of the Year Nominees

Anselmo Rodriguez
Blue Cross Blue Shield of LA
Leviticous “Vic” Cleveland
CenterPoint

Khadijah Abdullah
Shipt

Rivers Frederick
Entergy

Theresa Jones
Protective Life Insurance

Jean-Marc Villain
Ochsner Health



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Business Sustainability: The Business of Tomorrow

2024 National Corporation of the Year Nominees

Matt Greene

Toyota

Nancy Swartout

ExxonMobil

Marcella McCullough

Nissan

Donovan Casanave

Shell

Dave Fieldman

Chevron

Karl Harris Sr.

Honda