



***Building Foundations for a Strong Economic Future***  
**2023 WEDA SPRING CONFERENCE**

Olympia Hotel at Capitol Lake & Governor’s Mansion – Legislative Reception

**Agenda**

**Tuesday, March 28, 2023**

7:00 pm                    **Informal No-Host Pre-Conference Dinner** (West Water Restaurant)

**Wednesday, March 29, 2023**

10:00 - 11:45 am        **WEDA Q1 Board Meeting** (Puget Room)

11:30 am - 12:00 pm    **Conference Registration Opens** (Ballroom Foyer)

12:00 - 12:30 pm        **Buffet Lunch & Interactive Networking** (Forest Ballroom)  
Sponsor: Washington Small Business Development Center

**Welcome and Introductions:** Alisha Benson, President & CEO, Greater Spokane Inc. & WEDA Board Chair

12:30 - 1:00 pm        **Opening General Session**  
Sponsor: Thurston Economic Development Council

**Land Acknowledgement: Kris Peters, Chairman, Squaxin Island Tribal Council**

Remarks from WEDA Leadership & Sponsors

1:00 - 1:40 pm        ***Identifying the Foundations for a Strong Economy***

**Keynote Speaker: Dr. Vange Ocasio Hochheimer, Professor of Economics, School of Business, Whitworth University**  
Sponsor: Pierce County

1:40 - 2:40 pm        **Fireside Chat: *Solid Economic Foundations, Strong Communities***  
Sponsor: Washington Minority Business Development Agency Business Center

- Jesse Downs, COO, Willapa Bay Enterprises
- Kristina Hudson, CEO, OneRedmond & OneEastside
- Mark Riker, Executive Secretary, Washington State Building & Construction Trades
- City of Anacortes Councilmember Ryan Walters

2:40 - 3:00 pm        **Snack Break**

3:00 - 4:30 pm      **WEDA 2023 Economic Development Awards Ceremony**  
*Honoring Outstanding Achievement in Economic Development*  
Sponsor: City of Seattle

5:30 - 7:00 pm      **WEDA Legislative Reception** (Governor's Mansion)  
Sponsor: Port of Seattle

**HONORING WEDA'S 2023 LEGISLATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHAMPION**  
**Washington State Lieutenant Governor Denny Heck**

8:00 pm              ***Building the Pipeline for Our Profession: Emerging Leaders Get Together***  
(Fireplace Area, West Water Lounge)

8:30 pm              ***Building Partnerships & Friendships, Old & New: After Hours No-Host Get Together***  
(West Water Lounge)

**Thursday, March 30, 2023**

8:00 am              **Conference Registration Opens** (Forest Ballroom Lobby)

8:00 - 8:45 am      **Buffet Breakfast & Interactive Networking** (Forest Ballroom)  
Sponsor: Employment Security Department, SharedWork Program

8:45 - 9:30 am      **Morning General Session: *Building Strong Foundations for a More Inclusive Economy***  
Sponsor: Greater Spokane, Inc.

**Commerce Conversations:**

- Chris Green, Assistant Director, Economic Development & Competitiveness, Washington State Department of Commerce & WEDA Board Vice Chair
- Joe Sky-Tucker, President & CEO, Business Impact NW

9:30 - 10:30 am    **Washington State Commerce Industry Sector Leads & Partners Panel: *Emerging Trends, Innovations & Opportunities to Build Economic Foundations***  
Sponsor: Washington State Department of Commerce

**Moderated by:** Chris Green, Assistant Director, Economic Development & Competitiveness, Washington State Dept. of Commerce & WEDA Board Vice Chair

- Alison Beason, Life Science & Global Health Sector Lead
- Rob Duff, Sustainable Business Development Director
- Shannon Halberstadt, Creative Economy Sector Lead
- Madison Roy, Agriculture Economist, Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Stephanie Scott, Innovation Cluster Accelerator Program Director

10:30 - 11:00 am   **Roundtable Strategic Discussions with Commerce Sector Leads/Key Commerce Staff & Partners: *Exploring Opportunities to Build Stronger Communities***

11:00 am - 12:00 pm **Legislative Discussion with WEDA Partners: *State Opportunities to Build Economic Foundations***

Sponsor: Port of Vancouver USA

- Candice Bock, Director of Government Relations, Assoc. of Washington Cities
- Eric ffitch, Executive Director, Washington Public Ports Association
- Paul Jewel, Senior Policy Director, Washington State Association of Counties
- Kris Johnson, President & CEO, Association of Washington Business
- Mark Mattke, CEO, Spokane Workforce Council for WA Workforce Association

12:00 - 12:40 pm **Lunch & Legislative Update: *Responding to the Call for Action***

Sponsor: Clallam Economic Development Council

**Legislative Economic Development Leaders Panel**

Sponsor: Impact Washington

- House Innovation, Community & Economic Development & Veterans Committee Chair Cindy Ryu (D-32<sup>nd</sup> District-NW King & SW Snohomish Counties)
- House Innovation, Community & Economic Development Committee Ranking Member Mike Volz (R-6-Spokane County)

12:40 - 1:30 pm **Closing Session**

Sponsor: National Development Council

**Keynote Speaker: Daniel Seddiqui, Founder & CEO, *“Living the Map”***

**Closing Remarks & Action Items**

---

## 2023 WEDA SUMMER CONFERENCE

---

Please save August 8-10, 2023 for our annual Summer Conference!

*The location will be announced at Closing Session*

Watch [www.wedaonline.org](http://www.wedaonline.org) for details.

---

**Thank You to Our WEDA 2023 Spring Conference Sponsors!**

