



## WEDA 2024 Summer Conference Agenda

### *Sprinting Towards a More Equitable Future*

*preliminary – agenda will be regularly updated until the conference*

June 18-20, 2024 – Spokane, WA – as of 5/15/2024 11:06 PM

#### Tuesday, June 18

2:00-4:00 pm

***Economic Development for the Future Highlights Tours*** – pre-registration required through WEDA’s online conference platform, Swapcard once open (target for Swapcard rollout is June 12)

- **Downtown Spokane Tour: Place-Based Economic Development through the Downtown Spokane Partnership, a Business Improvement District**  
Check in time 1:45 pm; Tour 2:00 – 4:00 pm
- **Spokane Sports & Recreation Tourism Tour: Spokane Arena, Centennial Trail & The Podium Powered by SCTU hosted by Spokane Sports**  
Check in time 1:45 pm; Tour 2:00 – 4:00 pm

7:30-9:00 pm

***Reenergizing as We Sprint Forward Together: “First Quarter” Social Welcome Gathering (non-hosted)*** – Terrace Room West  
Davenport Grand  
333 West Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane

#### Wednesday, June 19

*Most meetings and events will be held at the: Davenport Grand, 333 West Spokane Falls Boulevard in Spokane. Please note all offsite locations.*

9:30-11:15 am

WEDA Q2/Q3 Board Meeting – *Board Members & WEDA Staff only*  
– Skybridge Board Room

10:00-11:00 am

***Upping Our Game for Our Economic Future: Pre-Conference Professional Development Workshops***

***Pre-Conference Professional Development Workshop: Nourishing Relationships - Connecting Equitable and Sustainable Networks of Support for Small Businesses in Washington*** – Meeting Room 4  
Workshop Leader: Washington State Microenterprise Association

**Pre-Conference Professional Development Workshop: *Utilizing Business Improvements Areas to Drive Local Economies (How to Create, Renew, Expand, Support and Partner with BIAs)*** – Meeting Room 5  
Workshop Leader: Uncommon Bridges (*formerly BDS Planning*)

11:30 am Registration, Buffet Lunch & Networking – Grand Ballroom Lobby

11:40 am-2:00 pm **Opening General Session** – Grand Ballroom A

**Tribal Land Acknowledgment**

**Juneteenth Acknowledgment**

***About Juneteenth:** Juneteenth (short for “June Nineteenth”) marks the day when federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865 to take control of the state, freed 250,000 enslaved African Americans and ensured that all enslaved people be freed. The troops’ arrival came a full two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth honors the end to slavery in the United States and is considered the longest-running African American holiday. On June 17, 2021, it officially became a federal holiday.*

**Local Government Welcome:** City of Spokane Mayor Lisa Brown

**Update & Insights from the International Economic Development Council:**  
Nathan Ohle, President & CEO, IEDC

Opening Remarks from WEDA Leadership & Sponsors

12:40-2:00 pm ***Creating a More Equitable Economic Future for All of Washington State***

**Keynote Speaker: Andrea Caupain Sanderson, Co-Executive Director, BIPOC ED (Executive Directors) Coalition**

**Fireside Chat: *Successful Strategies Towards a More Equitable Economic Future***

Featured Speakers:

- Andrea Caupain Sanderson, Co-Executive Director, BIPOC ED (Executive Directors) Coalition
- Paula Sardinas, CEO & President, FMS Global Strategies and Founder, Washington Build Back Black Alliance
- Shirline Wilson, Executive Director, Washington Employers for Racial Equity
- Beto Yarce, Region X Administrator, US Small Business Administration

2:00-2:15 pm Networking Break

2:15-3:15 pm

**Breakouts 1: *Innovative Resources for Equitable Economic Development***  
(choose 1):

***Clearing Hurdles with Equitable Investments in Broadband Infrastructure*** –  
Grand Ballroom A

Panelists:

- Paul Kimmel, Regional Business Manager, Avista
- Nick Pappin, Digital Equity & Broadband Director, WSU Extension  
Broadband Resources
- Ariane Schmidt, Executive Director, Broadlinc, Spokane Regional Broadband  
Development Authority
- Aaron Wheeler, Director, Washington State Broadband Office

***Fostering Arts & Culture and Equity & Vitality in Our Creative Industries*** –  
Meeting Room 4

Panelists:

- Ginger Ewing, Executive Director, Terrain & Board Member, Artist Trust
- Shannon Halberstadt, Creative Economy Sector Lead, Washington State  
Department of Commerce
- Jose Iniguez, President & Executive Director, Encanto Arts
- Ryker, CEO, Influx

***Strategies for a More Equitable Future for Small Business*** – Meeting Room 5

Panelists:

- Sue Kane, PhD., CEO, NCW Tech Alliance
- Antonia Stinnett, Program Manager, Grow America (*formerly National  
Development Council*)
- Martin Valadez, Executive Director, Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of  
Commerce
- Linda Womack, Managing Director, Small Business Finance & Community  
Support, Washington State Department of Commerce

3:15-3:30 pm

Networking & Snack Break – Grand Ballroom Lobby

3:30-4:30 pm

**Breakouts 2: *Sprinting Together with Effective Partnerships*** (choose 1):

***Creative Intergovernmental, Public/Private Partnerships to Foster a More  
Equitable & Sustainable Future*** – Grand Ballroom A

Panelists:

- Michaele Armstrong, PhD, CEO, Evergreen Bioscience Innovation Cluster
- Jennifer Baker, President & CEO, Columbia River Economic Development  
Council & WEDA Board Member
- Maria Cullooyah, Director of Public Works & Utilities, Spokane Tribe of  
Indians
- John Sklut, Senior Advisor to the President & Liaison for External &  
Governmental Affairs, Gonzaga University - American Aerospace Materials  
Manufacturing Center, TechHub

***Sprinting Ahead to Address the Workforce & Attainable Housing Crisis –***  
Meeting Room 4

Panelists:

- Deb Elzinga, President & CEO, Community Frameworks
- Tedd Kelleher, Director of Housing Policy, Washington State Department of Commerce
- Ben Stuckart, Executive Director, Spokane Low-Income Housing Consortium
- *Additional Speakers To Be Announced*

***Fostering a More Equitable Future in Workforce Development –*** Meeting Room 5

Panelists:

- Kerra Bower, Owner/Director, Little Scholars Development Center; Founder, Raze Development Center
- Cami Feek, Commissioner, Washington State Employment Security Department
- Kelley Charvet, Chief Administrative Officer, CHAS Health; Immediate Past Board Chair, Spokane Workforce Development Council
- Dennis Sisco-Taylor, PhD, Assistant Professor & Director, School of Psychology Gonzaga University; Board Member, Child Care Aware
- Shellie Willis, Senior Director of Collective Impact, Workforce Central

*Meet in the Davenport Grand Lobby at 5:10 pm to walk to The Podium with WEDA leaders.*

5:30-7:30 pm

***Celebrating Juneteenth, Spokane & All of Washington State's More Equitable Economic Future – "Half-Time" Networking Reception***

The Podium Powered by STCU  
511 Joe Albi Way, Spokane

Featured Speaker:

- **Washington State Commission on African American Affairs Chair & Pastor, Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church of Spokane, Reverend Walter J. Kendricks**

**HONORING WEDA'S 2024 LEGISLATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHAMPIONS**

**State Senator Lynda Wilson**

**State Representative Chris Corry**

**State Senate Majority Leader Andy Billig \***

**State Representative Alicia Rule \***

**\* Will be accepting award at later date – State Senate Business, Financial Services, Gaming & Trade Committee Vice Chair Noel Frame will be delivering brief remarks honoring them**

*Join us for a special reception at The Podium Powered by STCU. Dress code: business casual -- WEDA conference registrants must wear their nametags, please. There will be a brief speaking program at approximately 6:15 pm.*

**About The Podium:** Spokane has a long resume of hosting successful sports events—from local to national to international championships. Building on Spokane’s already excellent reputation as a city for athletes, Spokane Public Facilities District, along with Spokane Sports, proudly present an all-new destination sports venue — The Podium Powered by STCU. A unique competition venue designed for ultimate athlete and fan convenience. Sitting high on 15-foot basalt outcropping, overlooking downtown Spokane and connected to Riverfront Park, The Podium Powered by STCU is located in the heart of downtown Spokane. This spectacular setting is strategically positioned near Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena and Spokane Convention Center, making Spokane a premier destination for a wide variety of combined events.

8:00-9:30 pm      **Building Our Pipeline: Emerging Leaders Gathering – pre-registration requested through Swapcard once open**  
ZOLA Restaurant & Live Music Bar – Tilt Room  
22 West Main Ave, Spokane

9:30 pm            **Building Connections & Sprinting Together: After Hours No-Host Get Together**  
– The Grand Restaurant & Lounge, Davenport Grand

#### **Thursday, June 20**

8:00-8:40 am      Breakfast - Networking Activities (Affinity Groupings) – Grand Ballroom A

8:40-9:45 am      **Morning General Session: “Bringing Washington to the World” - Economic Opportunities for Washington through FIFA 2026 and Beyond**

**Local Government Welcome:** Chair of the Spokane County Board of Commissioners Mary Kuney

**Keynote Speaker: Peter Tomozawa, CEO, SeattleFWC26** (FIFA World Cup 26 Local Organizing Committee)

**About FIFA World Cup 26™:** The FIFA World Cup 26™ will be the biggest sporting event ever – three Host Countries, 16 Host Cities, 48 teams, and 104 matches uniting an entire continent to showcase a momentous new tournament format while keeping the exciting 4-team groups to ensure the ultimate football spectacle. With more countries, cities, teams, and games, FIFA World Cup 26™ will unite the entire world on the biggest stage ever and will engage millions of fans across 16 stadiums and billions worldwide. The tournament will take place in June and July 2026.

**About SeattleFWC26:** SeattleFWC26 is the local organizing committee for Seattle’s participation as one of the 16 host cities selected for the FIFA World Cup 26™. As a not-for-profit organization, SeattleFWC26’s vision is to foster a lasting legacy for our region, guided by the spirit of soccer, innovation and inclusion. To keep up to date on the latest news and involvement opportunities with SeattleFWC26, please register: <http://www.seattlefwc26.org/get-involved>. A big part of getting ready for six FIFA World Cup 26™ matches, traveling fans, and teams from around the world needing fields for practice and “base camps” for their World Cup travels is improving field surfaces and playing facilities statewide. With the state’s economy benefiting from the 750,000 visitors expected to travel throughout Washington, investments in fields and facilities today will pay off not only during the games, but in the positive legacy they will provide to future teams, events and athletes. For these reasons and more, the Washington State Legislature stepped up in the recent session to allocate \$15 million toward initial improvements – from stadium modernizations at Lumen Field, to upgrading soccer fields at likely practice facilities around the state. Additionally, the Legislature invested \$1 million for statewide tourism opportunities.

**State Partnerships for a More Equitable Future: *Capitalizing on FIFA 2026 & Statewide Tourism Opportunities***

- David Blandford, Executive Director, State of WA Tourism

9:45-10:00 am      Networking Break

10:00-11:00 am      **Breakouts 3: *Fostering Forward-Thinking Economic Opportunities*** (choose 1):

***Economic Development Teamwork in Action: Spokane's Successful Sports & Recreation Tourism Strategies*** – Grand Ballroom A

Panelists:

- Anna Alsept, Director of Sports Management, Spokane Sports
- Stephanie Curran, CEO, Spokane Public Facilities District
- Katie Harnetiaux, Co-Owner & President, USL Spokane
- Lisa Simpson, Senior Director of Partnership & Engagement, Visit Spokane

***Forward-Thinking Best Practices from Our Emerging Leaders*** – Meeting Room 4  
*Featuring: A Panel of WEDA's Emerging Leaders & Information about Getting Involved*

Hosts & Moderators: Sarah Cho, City Center Program Manager, City of Lynnwood & Katie Enders, Assistant Planner for Economic Development, Puget Sound Regional Council

*Speakers To Be Announced*

***Rural Is Underserved: Forward-Thinking for Opportunity in Rural Washington*** – Meeting Room 5

Panelists:

- Michael Gaffney, Assistant Extension Director, Community & Economic Development, Washington State University
- Roni Holder-Diefenbach, Executive Director, Economic Alliance (Okanogan County) & WEDA Board Member
- Lynn Longan, Rural Strategies Manager, Washington State Department of Commerce
- Helen Price Johnson, State Director, USDA Rural Development

11:00-11:15 am      Networking Break – ***Preparing for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter!***

11:15 am-12:00 pm      **General Session: *A More Equitable Economy for Washington – Assessing Our Progress & Forecasting Our Future*** – Grand Ballroom A

Featured Speakers:

- **Dr. Vange Ocasio Hochheimer, PhD, Economics & Finance, Whitworth University**
- **Anneliese Vance-Sherman, PhD, Chief Labor Economist, Washington State Employment Security Department**

12:00-1:00 pm      Lunch

12:10-1:30 pm

**Closing General Session: *Sprinting Ahead Together Toward a More Equitable Future***

***Fireside Chat - Sprinting, Dribbling, Skating, Leaping Forward Together: Impactful Economic Development through Sports & Recreation***

Panelists:

- Ashley Blake, Chief Executive Officer, Spokane Sports
- Ashley Fosberg, Vice President of Philanthropy, Seattle Sounders FC; Executive Director, RAVE Foundation
- Beth Knox, President & Chief Executive Officer, Seattle Sports Commission & SEA 2026 Bid Committee Co-Chair
- Jeff Koffel, Executive Director, Tri County Economic Development District and Northeast Washington Tourism & Recreation

1:15-1:30 pm

WEDA Annual Meeting, Board & Officer Elections, Action Items & Next Steps

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## 2025 WEDA WINTER CONFERENCE

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Please save **March 25-27, 2025** for our annual Winter Conference in Olympia!

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

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