

# SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

## SATURDAY SESSIONS

### **Session Set 1: Kids Out of School and Out of Work. Disconnected Youth: Problem and Opportunity?**

Presenter: David Jason Fischer, Center for an Urban Future

Buried within two daunting challenges facing American communities--the pending retirement of the Baby Boomers and the growing numbers of "disconnected" young adults neither working nor in school--is a tremendous opportunity. As the Boomers gradually depart the workforce over the next two decades, policymakers will have unprecedented insight into the emerging job market. With the right intervention and equipped with sufficient resources large numbers of at-risk young people can be transitioned into newly vacated career-track jobs. This session will examine the repercussions of allowing these challenges to go unaddressed, as well as examine opportunities to help reconnect disadvantaged young people to the labor and educational market.

### **Session Set 1: Transforming Economies through Arts, Culture and Creative Enterprises**

Presenter: Robin Keegan, Louisiana Recovery Authority

Cities throughout the United States and abroad are implementing strategies to turn their "creative sectors" into engines of economic growth. Culture and the arts, and now the 'creative industries', are becoming tools to meet a wide variety of economic goals. From the revitalization of central business districts and underserved neighborhoods to community building and developing human capital – culture and arts are making a come back. Having a 'creativity agenda' is becoming an organizing principle for urban economic development around the country.

So just what is this creativity agenda? And how can cities use an elusive concept like "creativity" to help meet concrete agendas of economic prosperity and community development.

This course will provide an overview of basic urban economic development practices and then focus on the different theories and goals of the creativity agenda. In addition to the theories, it will also explore concrete examples throughout the US and abroad of the use of this agenda in developing city and regional plans to support these multiple goals. As with any good policy analysis, these examples will include both successful models of addressing a creativity agenda as well as instances where despite the best intentions these goals were not realized and why.

### **Session Set 1: How to Identify and Groom the Growth Industries of the Future**

Presenter: Bill Fair, Alexandria Real Estate Equities

There is no one answer, silver bullet, or one-size-fits-all approach for diversifying and strengthening a city or region's economy. Rather, savvy jurisdictions are identifying the unique underlying advantages that they have (or would like to have) and then are building core foundations upon which to develop and diversify their local economy. Through the investigation of several models, including New York, Florida, San Diego, Ireland, and Singapore, participants will see how different regions have identified and tried to exploit future growth industries. By the conclusion of this course, participants should have an understanding of multiple development models, should be able to develop the framework for a unique "growth" asset survey and should have a basic understanding of the importance and utility of creative public /private partnership approaches to attract and retain growth industries.

### **Session Set 2: Public Universities' Roles In Workforce Development**

Presenter: Neil Kleiman, Research and Communications for Seedco

This session will discuss the role of higher education in ensuring regions have a well-prepared workforce and that all residents have access to the essential credentials that are only available at a post-secondary institution. We will also discuss the unique ways in which universities interface with businesses, work force, students and government. And we will examine the effectiveness of public policies explored by states and local governments as they attempt to enhance economic development opportunities for communities. .

## **Session Set 2: Tapping your Assets: A "How to" on Sector Analysis and Local Economic Development**

Presenter: Jonathan Bowles, Center for an Urban Future

In an age where businesses and skilled employees are more mobile than ever, cities and regions across the U.S. face increasing pressure to develop smart and sustainable economic development strategies. But creating an effective, long-term economic development strategy requires more than just building sports arenas or providing subsidies to attract large companies. And what works for one area won't necessarily be a formula for success elsewhere. For instance, even with smart planning, not every city can succeed in developing a biotechnology cluster or become a haven for artists and creative professionals.

The most reliable local economic development strategy today is one that attempts to harness an area's unique assets. This should include identifying overlooked or underappreciated resources, and developing a strategy to maximize their potential. An asset strategy might involve building upon a key local institution, such as a university; a geographic attribute, like a waterfront or a surplus of available land for development; workforce strengths, such as a large pool of engineers or a highly-entrepreneurial local population; and industries for which the community already has a competitive advantage.

## **Session Set 2: Tax Incentives for Corporations--How to Decide if They are Worth it?**

Presenter: Bettina Damiani, Good Jobs New York

The economic war among the states (and increasingly among the suburbs) makes "job blackmail" rampant in the U.S. today. Such episodes involve existing jobs threatened with relocation, and new jobs in corporate expansions, as companies play states and cities against each other for tax breaks that routinely exceed \$100,000 per job. The prospect of losing jobs or trophy deals causes public officials to overspend, often agreeing to Swiss cheese like terms that make investments needlessly risky. Learn how officials can get through the smoke and mirrors of today's corporate giveaway schemes to create a process that promotes good jobs, regional equity, transparency and accountability.

## **SUNDAY SESSION**

### **Good Policy to Good Politics:**

#### **How to Lift the Discussion of Economic Development Issues in a Campaign Environment.**

Presenters: Jeffrey Plaut, Basil Smikle, Andrew Breslau & Andrew Gillum

At a time when economic insecurity consistently rates near the top of concerns communicated to pollsters, productive electoral discussions of economic development issues remain rare in many races. How can we use smart economic development policy to sharpen our electoral strategies rather leaving ourselves at a competitive disadvantage? How does talking about economic and workforce development become a "winning" strategy? How do candidates not get "bogged down" in substance but rather use substance to their advantage? The panelists will talk about their own experiences in the field, offer opinions on issue framing and their understanding of voter concerns and take a look at how the current national climate offers opportunity or peril when it comes to a variety of these issues.