

# Wealth Creation



THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE PRESENTS THE

## **2024 EDD Wealth Creation Summit: Building Equitable Regional Economies**

JULY 31 - AUGUST 2, 2024  
GREENVILLE, SC

For more information about wealth creation, visit [nado.org/wealthcreation](https://nado.org/wealthcreation) or contact Melissa Levy, Regional Development Researcher/Wealth Creation Specialist at [mlevy@nado.org](mailto:mlevy@nado.org).

This event is offered through the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP), managed by the NADO Research Foundation to build the capacity of the national network of EDDs. To learn more, visit: [www.nado.org/EDDCoP](https://www.nado.org/EDDCoP). The EDD CoP is made possible through an award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce (ED22HDQ3070106).



FOLLOW THE QR CODE WITH  
YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA FOR  
WEALTH CREATION RESOURCES.

## **Welcome!**

The NADO Research Foundation and Economic Development District Community of Practice are pleased to have you join us in beautiful Greenville for our first ever Wealth Creation Summit. Timed to coincide with the 2024 National Regional Transportation Conference, this event will feature interactive sessions, impactful panel discussions, and a tour showcasing wealth creation work right here in our host city.

We hope you will find it to be an educational, inspiring three days filled with fresh ideas and inspiring examples, as well as opportunities to interact and network with your peers.

## **About the NADO Research Foundation**

The NADO Research Foundation is the non-profit research affiliate of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), a membership association of the country's regional development organizations (RDOs). "RDO" is a term used to describe the organizations that make up the national network of over 540 multi-jurisdictional planning and development agencies, which are known locally as Councils of Governments, Economic Development Districts, Regional Planning Commissions, or by other names. Founded in 1988, the NADO Research Foundation is at the forefront of researching and sharing the latest innovative approaches to regional economic development in small metropolitan and rural America. It provides training, research, and peer networking services to RDOs in the areas of economic and disaster resilience, transportation, sustainable communities, and professional development.

## **About the Economic Development District Community of Practice**

Through the EDD Community of Practice, the NADO Research Foundation and its partners provide tools, resources, and networking opportunities for EDD staff to strengthen organizational capacity and better guide regions towards becoming more competitive, resilient, and equitable. Programming offers useful and responsive resources through a mix of educational platforms and delivers up-to-date training and networking services to EDDs, guiding them on a path to support regional resilience and prosperity. Learn more at [nado.org/eddcop](http://nado.org/eddcop).

For more information about wealth creation, visit [nado.org/wealthcreation](http://nado.org/wealthcreation) or contact Melissa Levy, Regional Development Researcher/Wealth Creation Specialist at [mlevy@nado.org](mailto:mlevy@nado.org).

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## Wednesday, July 31

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### **Registration**

8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

*Mezzanine*

### **Opening Plenary: The Industrial Commons: A Case Study in Growing and Rooting Local Wealth**

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

*Gold Ballroom*

The Industrial Commons is a mission-driven nonprofit based in Western North Carolina that develops community-owned manufacturing enterprises and programs to address business resiliency, worker agency, and environmental issues. In this opening plenary session, you'll hear from Industrial Commons co-founder Sara Chester about how they drive economic impact in a rural Appalachian region by leading with a five-part blueprint for rural wealth creation.

- **Sara Chester**, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director, *The Industrial Commons*
- Moderator: **Chip Bentley**, Deputy Director, *Appalachian Council of Governments*

### **Mobile Workshop: Swamp Rabbit Trail**

11:00 AM – 4:00 PM

*Meet to depart at 10:45 AM in the hotel lobby.*

In the afternoon, a mobile workshop will take attendees on a bus tour along the City of Greenville's award-winning Swamp Rabbit Trail. The Trail is a key community asset that has helped to grow the city's downtown into a regional economic anchor. It is a 28-mile multi-use greenway that traverses along the Reedy River on an old railroad corridor. Stops in Travelers Rest and Mauldin, and at Furman University, will introduce attendees to colorful local businesses, driving home the impact of recreation and quality-of-life investments as a core component of a wealth creation strategy. On this tour, attendees will hear from a variety of people who have had a hand in the development of the trail and related trail-based developments. Lunch will be provided at the Swamp Rabbit Café and the workshop will end with a happy hour at the Bridgeway Brewery.

### **Alternate Afternoon Programming:**

#### **Lunch On Your Own**

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

#### **Regional Transportation Concurrent Sessions:**

#### **Technology Tools to Support Transportation Planning and Delivery**

1:15 PM – 2:45 PM

*Poinsett Ballroom*

### **Communication Tools and Public Outreach to Support Bike/Ped Planning**

1:15 PM – 2:45 PM

*Gold Ballroom*

### **Current Issues in Regional Freight**

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

*Francis Marion*

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Data Collection to Support Planning for Access**

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

*Poinsett Ballroom*

## **Thursday, August 1**

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### **Registration**

8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

*Mezzanine*

### **Wealth Creation IOI: Using the Eight Capitals**

9:00 AM – 10:15 AM

*Gold Ballroom*

*Joint session with the Regional Transportation Conference*

The Eight Capitals are the assets that make a region an attractive place to live, work, and visit. In this session, NADO Research Foundation staff members Melissa Levy and Carrie Kissel will walk through the eight capitals framework to wealth building and the process of identifying each element in diverse types of communities. Breakouts and other interactive components will give attendees the chance to apply the framework to their own regions.

- **Melissa Levy**, Regional Development Researcher/Wealth Creation Specialist, *NADO Research Foundation*
- **Carrie Kissel**, Associate Director, *NADO Research Foundation*

### **Plenary Training Session: Uncovering Opportunities Through Value Chain Mapping**

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

*Gold Ballroom*

*Joint session with the Regional Transportation Conference*

A WealthWorks value chain is a network of people, businesses, organizations and agencies addressing a market opportunity to meet demand for specific products or services—advancing self-interest while building rooted local and regional wealth. In this workshop, we'll be mapping value chains in a variety of sectors, identifying gaps and opportunities.

- **Mariia Zimmerman**, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, *Office of the Secretary, US Department of Transportation*
- **Melissa Levy**, Regional Development Researcher/Wealth Creation Specialist, *NADO Research Foundation*
- **Carrie Kissel**, Associate Director, *NADO Research Foundation*
- Moderator: **Gena McCullough**, Assistant Director/Planning Director, *Bi-State Regional Commission (IL/IA)*

### **Lunch: Keeping Wealth Local Through Value Chains**

12:15 PM – 1:30 PM

*Gold Ballroom*

The lunch session will feature comments from Justin Holt of the Asheville Nuttery on the emerging walnut-based value chain in Western North Carolina. Hear how one Appalachian business is taking a wealth creation approach to build a business and an industry that encourages sustainable agroforestry and pride in a region's natural assets.

- **Justin Holt**, Co-Founder, *Asheville Nuttery*
- Moderator: **Jason Ray**, Executive Director, *Southwest Missouri COG - Missouri State*

### **Concurrent Session: Building an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem**

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM

*Francis Marion*

At the core of an entrepreneurial ecosystem are talent, information and resources that help entrepreneurs find what they need at all stages of growth. This session will talk about the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Greenville area around entrepreneurship support, social enterprise and access to capital.

- **Eric Weissmann**, Executive Director, *Next Gen*
- **Dan Weidenbenner**, Executive Director, *Mill Village Ministries*
- **Margaret Gifford**, Chief Investment Officer and Co-Founder, *Abundance Capital*
- Moderator: **Vicki Eggers**, Economic Development Director, *Northern Oklahoma Development Authority*

### **Concurrent Session: Building Partnerships and Engaging New Demand Partners**

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM

*Poinsett Ballroom*

Key to the wealth creation approach are partners, whether demand partners, transactional partners, support partners and/or investment partners. In this session, we'll discuss the different kinds of partners and practice identifying and developing value propositions to engage them in your work.

- **Melissa Levy**, Regional Development Researcher/Wealth Creation Specialist, *NADO Research Foundation*
- **Carrie Kissel**, Associate Director, *NADO Research Foundation*

### **Concurrent Session: Encouraging Sector Collaboration**

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM

*Francis Marion*

Industry clusters grow when public, private, and philanthropic ventures work hand-in-hand to make a region's firms more than just a sum of their parts. In this session you'll hear from leaders who have helped to nurture two very different industry clusters. Learn how these leaders employ a wealth creation approach in their sectors.

- **Amy Allison**, Director, *North Carolina Outdoor Economy Office*
- **Noah Wilson**, Director of Sector Development, *Mountain Bizworks*
- **Sulynn Creswell**, Executive Director, *Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center*
- **Kristin Law**, Arts Programs & Marketing Director, *Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center*

## **Concurrent Session: Economies for People and Planet—The Greenville Context**

3:15-4:30 PM

*Poinsett Ballroom*

Hear about the Greenville context around wealth creation. The Upstate Impact Collective is a group of local business owners, nonprofit leaders and educational groups united by their commitment to community wealth building and environmental sustainability. The Collective is bringing together business owners and local leaders to make a positive impact in Upstate South Carolina.

- **Phil Allen**, Director, *Upstate Impact Collective* and Project Manager, *Bricolage Dynamics; Liability Brewing*
- **Dr. Brannon Andersen**, Rose J. Forgiore Professor of Earth, Environmental and Sustainability Sciences, *Furman University*
- **Sarah Lyons**, Director, *Piedmont Community Alliance*
- Moderator: **Karen Kurt**, Executive Director, *East Central Iowa Council of Governments*

## **Networking Happy Hour**

4:45 PM – 6:00 PM

*Piano Lounge and Bar*

## **Friday, August 2**

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### **Registration**

8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

*Mezzanine*

### **Breakfast**

8:30 AM

*Mezzanine & Veranda*

### **Everyone Eats: Food Systems and Wealth Creation**

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

*Poinsett Ballroom*

Everyone eats! In this session you'll hear from EDDs that have focused efforts on cultivating local and regional food system opportunities, building equity and opportunities for farms and food producers in their regions. You'll also hear about soil wealth areas from the Croatan Institute.

- **John Fenderson**, Senior Fellow, *Croatan Institute*
- **Mary Jane Lonnais**, Food Systems Planner, *Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments*
- **Jennifer Bedrosian**, Food Systems Coordinator, *Piedmont Triad Regional Council*

## What You Measure is What You Get: Measurement and Wealth Creation

10:45 AM – 12:15 PM

*Poinsett Ballroom*

Developing quantifiable metrics is one key way to track progress on Wealth Creation goals and overall regional development trends. In this session, you'll hear from Lowcountry COG about their Community Indicators site, a centralized hub for metrics tracking more than 100 indicators across 36 topics in the region. Cheryal Hills will share about wealth creation metrics used in food systems work at the Region Five Development Commission.

- **Maleena Parkey**, Principal Planner, *Lowcountry Council of Governments (SC)*
- **Cheryal Hills**, Executive Director, *Region Five Development Commission*
- **Alexis Halbert**, Senior Advisor and Events Management, *Pennsylvania State University/Impact Finance Center*

## Thank You and Closing

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM

*Poinsett Ballroom*

Comments by Melissa Levy and Cheryal Hills.

## Plenary Speakers



**Sara Chester**, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director, *The Industrial Commons*

After graduating from UNC Chapel Hill, Sara returned to her hometown of Morganton, NC. She worked for eight years at Burke Development, Inc., focusing much of this time on place-based initiatives that develop economic opportunity. She co-founded The Industrial Commons (TIC) in 2015 with Molly Hemstreet to rebuild a diverse working class based on locally rooted wealth. TIC has been nationally recognized for its leadership in cooperative ecosystem development, the textile circular economy, and developing a rural wealth blueprint. Sara was honored to serve as a 2022-2023 Aspen Job Quality Fellow. She serves on the Burke County Planning Board and is Vice Chair for the Board of Directors for the North Carolina Rural Center.



**Justin Holt**, Co-Founder, *Asheville Nuttery*

Justin Holt has over 15 years experience in agroecology and related fields. He has devoted his career to ecological regeneration and connecting people with land. He is co-founder of Nutty Buddy Collective, Asheville Nuttery, and Kudzu Culture, guides wild foods foraging tours with No Taste Like Home, served for many years as director of an outdoor education non-profit, and has worked as a consultant for people and communities engaged in ecological forestry, permaculture, and agroforestry since 2012.

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