

Key Note Speakers



Matt Martin

Regional Executive, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond

Matt Martin is a regional executive at the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. He is based in the Charlotte office, where he leads the bank's outreach efforts across North Carolina and South Carolina.

As part of the nation's central bank, the Richmond Fed supports the monetary policy process by engaging business, banking, and community leaders throughout the District to gain a real-time understanding of the state of the economy and the challenges facing our communities.

As the regional executive, Martin has responsibility for these efforts across the two-state area through a range of activities, including a regional Board of Directors, industry roundtables, speaking engagements, and other undertakings.

Martin joined the Richmond Fed as a regional economist in 2006 and was promoted into his current role in 2009. Prior to joining the Bank, he worked as a senior economist for Moody's Analytics and as an analyst at the Congressional Budget Office. He also spent time as a faculty member at Kent State University where he taught macroeconomics, money and banking, and economic history.

Martin is active in the community, having served as past chair of the board for Community Link, a housing non-profit. In addition, he is chair of the board of directors for Veteran's Bridge Home, an organization that connects Veterans and their families, in any state of transition, to the community. He is also a board member of the North Carolina Council for Economic Education and the Belk School of Business Advisory Board at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. Martin served as a member of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Opportunity Task Force and is a graduate of both Leadership North Carolina and Leadership Charlotte.

A Pennsylvania native, Martin has a bachelor's degree in economics from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a doctorate in economics from the University of Delaware, which he earned after completing his military service.



Deborah Myerson

Founder/Principal, Myerson Consulting

Deborah Myerson, founder/principal of Myerson Consulting, a premier urban planning firm and certified Women's Business Enterprise located in Bloomington, Indiana.

In addition to leading Myerson Consulting, she serves as Senior Fellow for Research and Policy at the Urban Land Institute Terwilliger Center for Housing. In this role, she conducts research, produces reports, and engages with housing practitioners to advance policies and practices that support attainable and affordable housing nationwide.

Since 2003, her firm has empowered organizational leaders and local governments to achieve real-world impact through comprehensive research, insightful policy analysis, effective stakeholder engagement, and innovative program development.

Her work is driven by values rooted in social justice, equity and inclusion.



Melanie Brown

Owner and Founder

Melanie Cannon Brown is the owner and founder of Restoration 52, LLC (R|52), a health-focused, M/WBE real estate development firm. The forward-thinking R|52 convenes non-traditional partnerships to develop solutions in the built environment. By design, partnerships address costly health equity gaps while promoting wellbeing.

Prior to launching R|52, Melanie was a vice president with strategic and operational oversight for a Midwestern health system consisting of 18 hospitals, 70 clinics, and 100 health and shelter organizations.

Melanie serves on the Management Council as the Chair of Mission Advancement for the Urban Land Institute of South Carolina (ULI SC), Board Member of CommunityWorks, and member of the Greenville Affordable Housing Coalition. In addition to serving in multiple volunteer roles, Melanie was instrumental in establishing the ULI Real Estate Diversity Initiative (REDI) in South Carolina, which launched in the Upstate in 2023. The program is designed to actively engage marginalized communities in the real estate development process.

Upstate Affordable Housing Summit



LaTorrie Geer
CommunityWorks

LaTorrie Geer is a forward-thinking C-suite executive with nearly two decades of experience in nonprofit and organizational development. As the CEO of CommunityWorks, a leading Community Development Financial Institution, she has driven strategic growth and expanded services, managing \$30 million in assets. LaTorrie's expertise spans organizational expansion, change management, and diversity and inclusion.

She is also the Principal Owner of Bleux Management Group, where she provides business development resources to nonprofits. Her leadership extends to various board roles, including Chairperson of the Nonprofit Alliance and Generation4. LaTorrie holds a BS in Risk Management & Insurance/Human Resources from the University of South Carolina and is a certified Economic Development Finance Professional.



Katy Davenport
CommunityWorks

Katy Davenport is a seasoned strategic leader with over a decade of experience in community development and financial services. As the Chief Strategy Officer at CommunityWorks, she has spearheaded strategic planning, managed multiple programs supporting over 600 clients annually, and led the implementation of innovative technology solutions. Katy has a proven track record in resource development, having launched the first SBA-funded Women's Business Center in Upstate South Carolina.

She also serves as Principal at Finish Line Consulting, providing expert grant writing and review services. Katy holds a Master of Arts in Security Studies from Kansas State University and a Bachelor of Science in History from the University of Central Missouri, along with several professional certifications in economic and housing development finance. Her volunteer work includes roles on various committees and as a youth sports coach, demonstrating her commitment to community engagement and development.

Upstate Affordable Housing Summit



Frederick Moore

Professional Staff Member, United States Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, Chair Senator Tim Scott

Frederick is a Professional Staff Member for Chairman Tim Scott on the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. In his tenure at the U.S. House of Representatives he honed his skills in policy and legislative affairs. There, he served the constituents of Ohio's 6th Congressional District and engaged with key policy areas, including banking, financial services, Housing, AI, and insurance.



Tammie Hoy Hawkins

Together Consulting

Utilizing over 25 years of community economic development experience, Tammie provides direct technical assistance and consulting services in the areas of non-profit capacity building, affordable housing, neighborhood development and revitalization, community development finance, and asset building. Tammie works with a wide range of community stakeholders including but limited to nonprofit and for-profit community economic development partners, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIS), Purpose Built Communities and network members as well as state and local government entities.

As part of her consulting Tammie served as the Project Manager for the Northside Development Group's Northside Initiative in Spartanburg, SC, a Purpose Built Community, for over 6 years. Tammie also helped to launch multiple housing trust funds across the southeast. Tammie most recently served as the CEO for CommunityWorks.

Prior to starting Together Consulting in 2012, Tammie worked for the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond as a Community Development Regional Manager.



Christina Mojica

Reason Foundation

Christina Mojica is a land use and housing policy analyst at Reason Foundation.

She holds a bachelor's degree in English Literature and a master's degree in Diplomacy and International Relations from Seton Hall University, where she specialized in Foreign Policy Analysis and International Law and Human Rights.

Based in St. Petersburg, FL, Christina has worked in advocacy and policy addressing tax legislation, displacement, and the housing crisis. Her experience includes developing policy proposals to tackle issues such as abandoned properties, short-term rentals, rising housing costs, and illegal coastal construction. Her current focus is creating affordable and accessible housing solutions and improving living conditions through sustainable strategies.



Ashon Nesbitt

Florida Housing Coalition

ASHON is the CEO of the Florida Housing Coalition. A respected community and nonprofit leader, Mr. Nesbitt was previously Chief Programs Officer and Technical Advisor with the Coalition, where he led the Community Land Trust Institute and the Center for Racial Equity. During his tenure at the Coalition, Nesbitt has championed an expansion and professionalization of Community Land Trusts throughout the state, overseeing the development of the nationally recognized and first of its kind Community Land Trust Certification Program, which, in 2021, led to six nonprofits receiving their Certification.

Mr. Nesbitt's academic qualifications and expertise in urban planning and real estate are a testament to his deep understanding of the field. He holds two Masters Degrees from the University of Florida, one in Urban and Regional Planning and another in Real Estate. He also earned a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Studies from Florida A&M University. As the CEO of the Coalition, Mr. Nesbitt is at the forefront of all the organization's housing affordability production and preservation initiatives.

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Tina Belge

Catalyst Community Consulting

Tina is the owner of a small business, Catalyst Community Consulting, where she helps spark change for local governments, nonprofits, and the private sector for housing affordability. She utilizes her community development and urban planning background as well as her policy and advocacy skills to help her clients make a sustainable impact. Her career has spanned both government, non-profit, and the private sector where she has written, led, and advocated for policy in regard to housing affordability, trees, and zoning reform.

She is a two-time AmeriCorps service member, former planner at both Greenville County Redevelopment Authority and Greenville County, who also served as the Executive Director of Keep Greenville County Beautiful, former Director of Policy and Advocacy for the Greenville Housing Fund and current candidate for Greenville City Council.

She is the third generation of her family to live in the upstate and is an alumnus of Georgia Southern University and UNC Chapel Hill's MPA program, where she focused on Community and Economic Development and is an AICP certified planner. She has a wonderful husband, Jacob, and two daughters, Sammy and Robin, and their two dogs, Lily and Ruff.



Kaitlin Garrett

Growing Together, Tulsa OK

Kaitlin Garrett is the Executive Director of Growing Together, a place-based nonprofit serving as the Community Quarterback in Tulsa's Kendall-Whittier neighborhood. With over nine years of leadership at the organization—including roles as Director of Operations and Deputy Director—Kaitlin has helped shape collaborative, community-driven strategies that bridge gaps in education, housing, and economic opportunity.

With a background in K-12 school operations and organizational leadership, Kaitlin brings a systems-level lens to nonprofit management, aligning direct services and partnerships to meet the evolving needs of families. Under her leadership, Growing Together continues to deepen its impact through initiatives as the Community Quarterback while also evolving the organization's direct services to operate in every component, such as operating the Communities In Schools wrap-around program, a Latino small business CDFI, and the Community Leadership Institute.



Julie Tuttle

STYX Companies

Julie Tuttle is the Chief Executive Officer of Ascend Management and a Partner at Styx Companies, where she turns buildings into communities and ideas into thriving investments. She has steered multifamily real estate projects through every stage, from dirt lot to ribbon cutting, lease-up to full occupancy, and onward to record-breaking transactions, all without ever lowering the bar on quality.

Over her career, Julie has worn every hat in the industry: marketing guru, operations strategist, construction wrangler, customer experience architect and she brings the best of each role to every project she touches. A lifelong real estate devotee (she's never strayed from the business), Julie pairs sharp strategy with an eye for design, a knack for placemaking, and an instinct for what makes people fall in love with where they live. Her passion is building not just properties, but places people are proud to call home.

Styx Companies is a Columbia, SC-based real estate development firm with a focus on developing irreplaceable assets that are unique within their markets. Styx Companies has a heart for adaptive reuse, historic preservation, workforce housing, ground up-development, and overall placemaking - always keeping in mind how to improve the value and experience for both investors and end-users.



Tim Green, MURP, PhD

Director of Data & Research Openfields

Tim has over two decades of experience researching, teaching, and writing about local and regional planning and development issues as an academic and consultant. His work is focused on designing research, data architectures, and tools that shed light on complex problems and inform community leaders and decision makers. He is familiar with a broad range of social science research methods and analytical techniques from spatial statistics to survey design.

Education: MURP and PhD in Regional Planning, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Upstate Affordable Housing Summit



Michelle Mapp, MEM, MPA, JD

Michelle Mapp Attorney at Law, LLC

Michelle A. Mapp is a seasoned leader, attorney, and strategic consultant with over three decades of cross-sector experience in nonprofit leadership, public policy, legal advocacy, and community development finance. With a proven record of translating vision into results, Michelle brings to every engagement a commitment to equity, systems change, and collaborative leadership.

In her role as an Equal Justice Works Law Fellow and Advocacy Director at the ACLU of South Carolina, Michelle developed and led the state's first comprehensive campaign to establish a right to counsel for tenants facing eviction. She commissioned and co-authored the seminal report, *The Economic Impact of an Eviction Right to Counsel in South Carolina*, in collaboration with South Carolina Legal Services.

Michelle has served on strategic advisory committees including the Graduate School of the College of Charleston's MPA Advisory Board, College of Charleston's African American Studies Advisory Board, One Region Taskforce, South Carolina Rural Action Taskforce, Charleston County Affordable Housing Taskforce, and the Town of Mount Pleasant Workforce Housing Advisory Committee.



Mikayla Mangle, Esq.

Staff Attorney, Center for Heirs Property

Mikayla Mangle is the Upstate Staff Attorney at the Center for Heirs Property. She previously served as an Equal Justice Works Fellow at the Center for Heirs Property where she focused on heirs property reform and black land loss in the southeast. Mikayla earned her JD at Tulane Law School where she specialized in environmental law.



Rick Reinhard

Niagara Consulting Group

Rick Reinhard is principal of Niagara Consulting Group, focusing on house-of-worship reuse and redevelopment and broader economic-development initiatives. For more than three decades, Rick led economic-development organizations in five US and UK cities and served as chief of staff to the mayor of Buffalo.

More recently Rick joined United Methodist Church leadership as Chief Administrative Officer of the General Board of Church and Society, its social-justice agency, then headed *A Future With Hope*, working on real-estate and Covid-related initiatives for the church.

He has taught city planning and urban policy at seven major research universities. Rick has a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from the College of William and Mary and a Master of Business and Public Management from Rice University and was a Loeb Fellow at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design. He lives in the Washington DC area.



Tomeka Strickland

Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta

Tomeka is Senior Vice President and Director of Community Investment Services at the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta. She oversees the Bank's housing and community lending programs, which provide critical funding to expand affordable housing opportunities across its seven-state district plus Washington, DC. In 2024 and 2025, FHLBank Atlanta committed \$120 million annually to affordable housing and community lending, supporting thousands of rental and homeownership families across the region.

With more than 20 years of experience in banking and affordable housing, Tomeka has advanced programs that address challenges such as heirs' property, access to down payment assistance, workforce housing, and financing gaps in multifamily housing. She works closely with the Bank's leadership and board, as well as member financial institutions, nonprofits, developers, and community stakeholders to ensure programs remain responsive to regional housing needs and continue to drive meaningful community impact.

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