



**White House Rural Council & Delta Regional Authority Host
*Rural Opportunity Investment Conference:
Spurring Economic Development Through Investment in the Delta***

AGENDA

Monday, January 11

Arkansas State University Mid-South

**Marion Berry Building at the corner of College Blvd. and Broadway
West Memphis, AR**

1:00-4:30 pm

- 12:00-12:30 pm:** Leave Peabody for Arkansas State University Mid-South
Lunch served at ASU Mid-South
Bus picks up participants at Union Street hotel entrance at noon
- 1:00-2:00 pm:** Opening Session
Welcome: Dr. Debra West, Chancellor, ASU Mid-South
Opening Remarks: Bill Bynum, CEO, Hope Credit Union
*Plenary: Secretary Rodney Slater, Former U.S.
Secretary of Transportation*
- 2:15-3:45 pm:** **PANEL 1: Equity Investment: Creating Opportunity and Attracting Investments**
Moderator: Franklin McLarty, Co-Founder and Vice Chairman of McLarty Capital Partners
Panelists: Jan Bouten, Partner, Innova Memphis
Al Puchala, CEO, Capitol Peak Asset Management
Sam Ridders, Administrator, USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service
Pete Nelson, President, Ag Innovation Development Group LLC
- 3:45-4:30 pm:** Closing Session
*Closing Remarks: Chris Masingill, Federal Co-Chairman
Delta Regional Authority*

*Closing Plenary: Jim Schultz, Director, Illinois Dept. of
Commerce and Economic Opportunity*

4:45 pm: Return to Peabody Hotel via bus

*Dinner and Event at National Civil Rights Museum (6:00-9:00 pm)
Bus to pick up participants at Union Street hotel entrance beginning at
5:45 pm and continuing every 15 minutes until 7:00 pm*

**Tuesday, January 12
Peabody Hotel Meeting Rooms
Mezzanine Level
Memphis, TN
8:30am- 4:30 pm**

7:30-8:30 am: Breakfast in Venetian Ballroom

8:30-9:30 am: Opening Plenary
Continental Ballroom

*Welcome: Chris Masingill, Federal Co-Chairman, Delta
Regional Authority*

*Introduction: Matt McKenna, Senior Advisor, Community &
Foundation Investment, Office of the Secretary,
U.S. Department of Agriculture*

*Plenary: Andrew Jacob CFA, Chief Regulatory, Legislative
and Compliance Officer, CoBank*

9:45-11:00 am: **PANEL 2: Investment Opportunities: Sourcing and
Utilization of Equity**
Continental Ballroom

*Moderator: Deputy Under Secretary Lillian Salerno, USDA-
Rural Development*

*Panelists: Dr. Steve Bares, President and Executive Director,
Memphis BioWorks
Clint Gwin, President, Pathway Lending
Pat Morand, President, Open Prairie
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Matt
Erskine, U.S. Economic Development
Administration*

11:15-12:30 pm: BREAKOUT SESSION 1

Topics:

1. Infrastructure

Continental Ballroom

*Moderator: Ted Townsend, Chief of Staff, Tennessee
Department of Economic and Community
Development*

*Panelists: Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Matt
Erskine, U.S. Economic Development
Administration
Ines Polonius, CEO, Communities Unlimited
Paul Young, Director, Division of Housing and
Community Development, City of Memphis*

2. Regional Food Systems

Peabody Grand Ballroom D/E

Moderator: Malini Ram Moraghan

*Panelists: Jeff Good, President, Mangia Bene Restaurant
Management Group
David Watkins, Founder, Soul City Hospitality
John Aufer, Executive Director, Delta Cuisine
Mark Vanderhoek, Community Relations
Manager, Coyote Creek Organic Feed Mill*

12:30-2:00 pm: LUNCH PANEL: Impact Investing

Continental Ballroom

Moderator: Darrin Williams, CEO, Southern Bancorp

*Panelists: Sanjeev Krishnan, Managing Director, S2G
Ventures
Donna Gambrell, former Director, U.S. Department
of the Treasury's Community Development
Financial Institutions Fund
Alan Lange, Co-Founder & Managing Director,
MuniStrategies*

2:15 -3:30 pm: BREAKOUT SESSION 2

Topics:

1. Biofuels/Energy

Continental Ballroom

Moderator: Todd Campbell, Alternate Energy Advisor, USDA

*Panelists: Dr. Sumesh Arora, Vice President, Innovate MS
Tom Bryant, Director of Membership, National
Farmers Union*

*J.D. Lowery, Manager, Community and Economic
Development, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas*

2. *Tourism/Cultural Economies/Conservation
Peabody Grand Ballroom D/E*

*Panelists: Aubrey Preston, Founder, Americana Music
Triangle*

*Terry Eastin, Founding Director, Big River
Strategic Initiative*

*Charlie McVean, Founder, Chairman, and CEO,
McVean Trading and Investments, LLC*

3:45-4:30 pm: *Closing Plenary
Continental Ballroom*

*Plenary: Doug O'Brien, Senior Policy Advisor for Rural
Affairs with the White House Domestic Policy
Council*

Reception following in Venetian Ballroom until 6:00 pm