



PRESS RELEASE

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INAUGURAL BLACK INNOVATION TOUR COMING TO PENSACOLA

Pensacola, FL – Innovators and entrepreneurs from across Florida and the Southeast will attend the two-day Black Founders’ Innovation Summit on April 19 – 20, 2024. In conjunction with the inaugural Florida Black Innovation Tour – a groundbreaking series of events that traversed the vibrant cities of Tampa, Orlando, and Miami – this summit aims to bring together like-minded individuals and organizations committed to empowering and uplifting the Black community through the power of innovation. The summit kicks off with a welcome reception on Friday, April 19, 2024, at 5:00 PM at the Kukua Institute. Speakers, workshops, and panel discussions will be held on Saturday, April 20, 2024, beginning at 9:00 AM (8:00 AM Registration) at DeVilliers Square.

Entrepreneurs, investors, and leaders will gather in-person to learn, network, and get empowered to innovate and scale their businesses, develop and promote their ideas, and foster connections and partnerships. The keynote speaker is Dr. LaTanya White, president of Concept Creative Group in Tallahassee and Washington, DC. Her substantial research and scholarship on racial equity and entrepreneurship culminated in developing *Dynastic Wealth™: An Approach to Advancing Racial Equity in Entrepreneurship Ecosystems*. “It’s important that we continue to use entrepreneurship as one of the paths and connections to intergenerational wealth,” said Lloyd Reshard, board chair of the Kukua Institute, the host of the summit. “Dr. White’s work is innovative and empowering.”

Following the keynote, Ms. Rose Lejiste, the CEO of RL Engineering and Tech Solutions in Orlando, will present a workshop on data management and artificial intelligence (AI). A former Kennedy Space Center engineer, Ms. Lejiste is an expert in data analytics, AI, performance management, process analysis and improvement, reliability engineering, and strategic planning. “The afternoon will be filled with interactive panels of entrepreneurs, investors, and thought leaders from across the state,” Reshard said. “It is exciting to partner with the Florida Black Innovation Tour and awe-inspiring to host these innovators and learn from their experiences.”

The summit is free and open to the public with required registration at bfis.kukuainstitute.org.

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Black Founders’ Innovation Summit Reception
Friday, April 19, 2024, 5:00 – 8:00 PM
Kukua Institute, 300 N. Reus Street, Pensacola
Registration: bfis.kukuainstitute.org

Black Founders’ Innovation Summit
Saturday, April 20, 2024, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
DeVilliers Square, 321 N. DeVilliers St., Pensacola
Registration: bfis.kukuainstitute.org

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The following organizations have partnered with the Kukua Institute and the Black Innovation Leaders of Florida to host the Black Founders’ Innovation Summit: Blacks in Technology – Pensacola Chapter; Equity Project Alliance; The First Bank; Florida Blue; Florida Power & Light; Gulf Coast Minority Chamber of Commerce; Innisfree Hotels; Make Startups; Pensacola Chamber of Commerce; Pensacola Network of Black Professionals; Quint Studer; Renasant Bank; and Synergy Construction.