

## **Innovate Michigan! Summit Offers New Strategies and Fresh Thinking for Michigan's Economic Challenges and Successes**

*Conference brings together economic experts and professionals working on the front lines of economic development at local and regional levels throughout Michigan*

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September 3, 2015

### ***For Immediate Release***

EAST LANSING, Mich. – The popular and dynamic Innovate Michigan! Summit returns for a fourth year on Thursday, September 10 at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center on the East Lansing campus of Michigan State University, 8:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Economic developers, entrepreneurs, business and community leaders, investors, scholars, students, and local and state government officials are invited to attend, and share, learn, and create unique and innovative approaches aimed at furthering economic growth in Michigan.

“Innovation in economic development is needed now more than ever. The work of REI and its partners is critical to our continued economic well-being,” said Rex LaMore, director of the MSU Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED).

The annual event continues the work supported by the U.S. Department of Commerce with CCED and the MSU EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI). Funded by a five-year, \$915,000 grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration in 2012, REI is growing a statewide virtual network to help generate new models, policies, and practices that will improve the state's economic future.

The Summit provides an additional platform for idea generation, networking, and discussion, and gives REI the opportunity to present summaries of their work from the past year.

“REI is unique in that it offers a crowd-sourced method to creating, identifying, and sharing innovative approaches to economic development. The Summit provides an opportunity to explore those innovative possibilities,” said Jennifer Bruen, CCED project coordinator.

Featured speakers include:



### **University Outreach and Engagement**

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and Economic  
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***Terry Link, Starting Now, LLC***

***Bill Stough, Sustainable Research Group***

9:30-10:10 a.m., Room 104B

Discussion of different policies and practices that would support and sustain Triple Bottom Line businesses, a business model that not only provides the entrepreneur with a good life, but also aims to address urgent social issues.

***Eric Frederick, Connect Michigan***

10:20-11 a.m., Room 104B

Discussion of findings from an REI-funded Co-Learning Plan project on the economic benefits of teleworking and telework centers.

**Keynote Address: Nailah Ellis-Brown, Ellis Infinity Beverage Company, Detroit**

3 p.m., Kellogg Center Auditorium

Compelling story about economic development and entrepreneurial pursuit. Ellis-Brown was born, raised, and educated in Detroit and now operates a successful and expanding Detroit business that produces an all-natural hibiscus tea originally brewed and sold in the Bronx by her great-grandfather.

“My key to success: pray like everything depends on God, and work like everything depends on you,” said featured keynoter Nailah Ellis-Brown.

More information, including registration details and speaker information, is available at REI’s website, <http://www.reicenter.org/>.

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The mission of the Michigan State University Center for Community and Economic Development is to advance MSU’s land-grant mission by creating, disseminating and applying knowledge to improve the quality of life in distressed communities.

Michigan State University has been advancing knowledge and transforming lives through innovative teaching, research and outreach for more than 150 years. MSU is known internationally as a major public university with global reach and extraordinary impact. Its 17 degree-granting colleges attract scholars worldwide who are interested in combining education with practical problem solving.

**Media Advisory**

# Innovate Michigan! Summit

Hosted By: Michigan State EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation  
MSU Center for Community and Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration

Date: Thursday, September 10, 2015

Where: Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center  
219 South Harrison Road  
East Lansing, Michigan 48824

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Keynote: 3:00 p.m. – Nailah Ellis-Brown, Ellis Infinity Beverage Co., Detroit  
Kellogg Center Auditorium

Compelling story about economic development and entrepreneurial pursuit. Ellis-Brown was born, raised, and educated in Detroit and now operates a successful and expanding Detroit business that produces an all-natural hibiscus tea originally brewed and sold in the Bronx by her great-grandfather.

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Website: [www.reicenter.org](http://www.reicenter.org)

## FURTHER INFO:

See attached news release

\*NOTE: Rex LaMore will be available for comment and interviews at alternative times if media contacts are unable to attend the event.