



DC Chamber of Commerce Hosts Small Business Summit & Showcase

Policy, Practical Tools, and Local Business Recognition in Downtown DC

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 6, 2026) – The [DC Chamber of Commerce](#) will host its annual [Small Business Summit & Showcase](#) on Monday, May 11, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. The convening brings together hundreds of local entrepreneurs, business leaders and policymakers for a full day of programming and networking.

The 2026 Summit theme, “*Stronger Together, Built for What’s Next*,” focuses on equipping small businesses with practical tools for growth, from AI-driven operations and access to capital to navigating government contracts and strengthening brand identity. A central highlight of this year’s event is the Small Business Awards, which celebrate outstanding Washington, D.C.-based businesses and entrepreneurs making an impact across the District.

Programming includes:

- Morning and afternoon plenary sessions
- Fireside chats with executives from the region
- Breakout workshops on AI, financial readiness, branding, and procurement
- A Makers Market spotlighting local businesses
- Coach’s Corner, featuring one-on-one technical assistance and advisory support available to DC small businesses
- Dedicated networking with DC agencies and business leaders
- Small Business Awards honoring standout local entrepreneurs

Featured Speakers:

- **District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser**
- **Phil Mendelson**, Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia
- **Doni Crawford**, At-Large Councilmember, Council of the District of Columbia
- **Wendell Felder**, Ward 7 Councilmember; Chair, Committee on Business and Economic Development, Council of the District of Columbia
- **Exodie C. Roe III**, Interim Director for Business and Economic Development, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED)
- **Rosemary Suggs-Evans**, Director, DC Dept. of Small and Local Business Development
- **Karima Woods**, Commissioner, DC Dept. of Insurance, Securities and Banking
- **Earle “Chico” Horton III**, Partner, Tiber Hudson; Chairman, DC Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- **Mila Kofman**, Executive Director, DC Health Benefit Exchange Authority
- **Chinyere Hubbard**, President and CEO, DC Chamber of Commerce
- **Dr. Steven Johnson**, Executive Vice President, Events DC
- **Jummy Olabanji**, Anchor, NBC 4 (Mistress of Ceremonies)

- **Anna Kovner**, Executive Vice President and Director of Research, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond
- **Neil Bradley**, Executive Vice President, Chief Policy Officer, and Head of Strategic Advocacy, US Chamber of Commerce

WHEN: Monday, May 11, 2026

TIME: 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

WHERE: Walter E. Washington Convention Center (801 Allen Y. Lew Place NW)

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Morning Session

- 7:30 AM – 9:15 AM | Registration and breakfast / networking
- 9:15 AM – 9:50 AM | Welcome remarks and featured speakers
 - Carolyn Howell, CEO, EVENTS USA
 - Chinyere Hubbard, President and CEO, DC Chamber of Commerce
 - Sherryl Newman, Director, Link Strategic Partners (MC)
 - Earle Chico Horton III, Tiber Hudson and Chairman of the Board, DC Chamber of Commerce
 - The Honorable Mayor Muriel Bowser
 - Dr. Steven Johnson, Events DC
 - Rashad Young, Senior Vice President, Howard University
 - Phil Mendelson, Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia
 - Lamont Akins, Director, Pepco
 - Doni Crawford, At-Large Councilmember, Council of the District of Columbia

9:50 AM – 10:11 AM | Morning fireside chat

- John Tucker, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond and Anna Kovner, TD Bank
- 10:11 AM – 10:19 AM | Morning remarks continue
 - Sherryl Newman, Link Strategic Partners (MC)
 - Remarks - Mila Kofman, Executive Director, Health Benefit Exchange Authority
 - Remarks - Chinyere Hubbard, President and CEO, DC Chamber of Commerce
- 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM Small Business Coach's Corner
- BREAKOUTS: 10:30-11:30 AM AND 11:45 AM – 12:45 PM
 - Breakout A: AI-Powered Operations & Decision-Making
 - Breakout B: Winning Government & Enterprise Contracts in a New Era
 - Breakout C: Seen But Not Chosen: The Brand Problem AI Is Exposing
 - Breakout D: Financial Preparedness and Access to Capital
 - Breakout E: Start Smart: The Essentials Every New Business Needs

- o Breakout F: Verizon: AI & Cybersecurity for Small Businesses

Luncheon & Awards Ceremony

- 12:00 PM – 12:47 PM | Luncheon Doors Open, Networking and Invocation
 - o Luncheon doors open
 - o Musical Number by Tevin Price, Washington Performing Arts
 - o Welcome Address by Event Emcee, Jummy Olabanji, NBC 4
 - o Welcome Remarks by Chinyere Hubbard, DC Chamber of Commerce
 - o Invocation by Rev. Thomas L. Bowen, Founder, Engage Faith
- 12:47 PM – 1:12 PM | Lunch is Served & Leadership Remarks
 - o Lunch is served (10 min break)
 - o Remarks - Earle Chico Horton III, Tiber Hudson
 - o Remarks - Exodie C. Roe III, Interim Director, DMPED
 - o Remarks - Stacy Burnette, Esq., Comcast
 - o Remarks - Wendell Felder, Councilmember, District of Columbia Council
- 1:12 PM – 1:32 PM | Keynote Fireside Chat
 - o Neil Bradley, US Chamber of Commerce and Chinyere Hubbard, DC Chamber of Commerce
- 1:32 PM – 2:15 PM | 2026 Small Business Awards Presentation
 - o Greetings and awards ceremony intro, Jummy Olabanji
 - o Remarks - Shaina Ross, Amazon
 - o Award presentations for DC Dept. of Small and Local Business Development - Rosemary Suggs-Evans, Director, DSLBD
 - Made in DC Maker of the Year - Oluwatobi OSOBUKOLA-ABUBU, Fritters and Roast
 - CBE of the Year – Jimmie Drummond, Drummond Projects
 - Retailer of the Year – Merry Pin,
 - o DC Chamber of Commerce awards presentation
 - Remarks - Susan Shorters, High Impact Partners, and Nelvin J. Adriatico-Thadhani, City National Bank
 - Small Business of the Year – Call Your Mother Deli (Andrew Dana)
 - Small Business Person of the Year – Victor Holt, V-Tech Solutions
 - Non-Profit of the Year – Jubilee Housing (James Knight)
 - Small Business Champion of the Year – Mila Kofman, DC Health Benefit Exchange Authority
 - Women In Business Champion Award – Ronnette Meyers, JLAN Solutions
 - Young Entrepreneur of the Year – Cory Jones Jr., First Choice Construction
- 2:15 PM | Closing Remarks

- Jummy Olabanji
- Chinyere Hubbard, DC Chamber of Commerce

Awards Luncheon

The luncheon will recognize outstanding leaders and organizations across categories, including:

AWARD	NAME	COMPANY
MADE IN DC MAKER OF THE YEAR	Oluwatobi OSOBUKOLA-ABUBU	Fritters and Roast LLC
CBE OF THE YEAR	Jimmie Drummond III	Drummond Projects
RETAILER OF THE YEAR	Madeleine Odendahl + Megan Flynn	Merry Pin
SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR	Andrew Dana	Call Your Mother Deli
SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR	Victor Holt	V-Tech Solutions, Inc.
NON-PROFIT OF THE YEAR	James Knight	Jubilee Housing
SMALL BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR	Mila Kofman	DC Health Benefits Exchange
WOMEN IN BUSINESS CHAMPION AWARD	Ronnette Meyers	JLAN Solutions
YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR	Cory Jones, Jr.	First Choice Construction

For more information about the 2026 Small Business Summit & Showcase, including sponsorship opportunities, please visit:

<https://dcchamber.org/events/2026-small-business-summit-showcase/>.

###

PRESS CONTACT

Press, including broadcast vans, are welcome to arrive early for set-up or interviews. Please contact Meredith Elliott (meredith@thebrandguild.com) and Kathy Allen (kallen@dcchamber.org) to coordinate any media set-up needs.

ABOUT THE DC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The DC Chamber of Commerce is the largest Chamber in the Washington, DC region. As an advocate for the District's business community for 87 years, the Chamber proudly serves a diverse membership of more than 1,000 organizations. For more information,

visit <https://www.dcchamber.org>.