

# PUGET SOUND ECONOMIC SUMMIT

ADVANCING AN EQUITABLE  
AND INCLUSIVE RECOVERY

## TICKETS ON SALE, SPEAKER LINEUP ANNOUNCED FOR TIMELY PUGET SOUND ECONOMIC SUMMIT TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 15-17, 2020

*Streamed live from the newly modernized Bell Harbor International Conference Center on Pier 66, the virtual summit with top business and policy leaders will focus on strategies for an equitable and inclusive recovery for Washington's business, hospitality and tourism industries*



*Featured speakers include Operation Hope's CEO John Hope Bryant, Alaska Airlines' President Ben Minicucci and Mayor of Tacoma Victoria Woodards*

**SEATTLE (August 12, 2020)** – Bell Harbor International Conference Center (BHICC) and World Trade Center Seattle (WTCSE) will host for the Puget Sound Economic Summit, a three-day virtual conference that will focus on strategies to advance an equitable and inclusive recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The summit will bring together business leaders, government officials, nonprofit organizations and meeting planners who will drive business decisions as the region moves forward.

The livestreamed event will also unveil a multi-million dollar modernization of

BHICC, now among the region's most technologically sophisticated and flexible conference centers, with stunning views of Elliott Bay. Along with a recent refresh to the event spaces at WTCSE, the facilities on Seattle's Central Waterfront offer a world-class gathering place that provides access, collaboration and networking for the business community in the Northwest.

Supported by the Port of Seattle and KOMO-TV, the summit will provide interactive dialogue on the most current issues facing the business, hospitality, meetings and events, and tourism industries, while emphasizing the importance of collaborative learning and support from peers in the business community from throughout the Puget Sound region. An additional event partner is the *Puget Sound Business Journal*.

"Streaming this event from Seattle's Central Waterfront reminds us of the transformative change we invested in decades ago to bring visitors and residents and activity back to this part of our city," said Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director for the Port of Seattle. "We need that kind of vision and transformational change again to help our entire community recover from COVID and decades of inequitable investment."

The summit will feature top business leaders throughout the three days. John Hope Bryant, American entrepreneur, philanthropist and founder of Operation Hope, will kick off the event as the keynote presenter.

Other featured speakers will include:

- Ben Minicucci, President, Alaska Airlines
- Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director, Port of Seattle
- Tom Norwalk, President and CEO, Visit Seattle
- Lori Otto Punke, President Washington Council on International Trade
- Dr. John Wiesman, Secretary of Health
- ...and more!

The sessions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- "The COVID-19 Economy: Challenges and Opportunities," featuring:
  - Chris Mefford, CEO, Community Attributes
  - Bookda Gheisar, Sr. Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Port of Seattle
  - Lori Otto Punke, President, Washington Council on International Trade

- Mayor Jimmy Matta, City of Burien
- “Moving Us Forward Together,” featuring:
  - Marie Kurose, CEO, Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County
  - Shannon Loew, Founder, FIX Impact Development
  - Brian McGowan, CEO, Greater Seattle Partners
  - Mayor Victoria Woodards, City of Tacoma

In addition, virtual networking and tours will be offered to showcase BHICC’s significant renovations, which now give the conference center the ability to host larger and simultaneous events and provide flexible meeting room configurations that align with industry trends and safety standards. The renovation makes the most of Pier 66’s location by maximizing stunning views and natural light in event spaces and includes enhanced wayfinding systems to improve guest navigation around Pier 66 and BHICC. The renovation also includes elevated audiovisual capabilities such as livestreaming events of all sizes.

“We are so honored to host the Puget Sound Economic Summit and help facilitate important conversations about the state of our industry during this unprecedented time,” said Linda Jones, general manager of BHICC. “With the completion of our recent renovation, we are thrilled to showcase BHICC’s capabilities to adapt and to host large-scale virtual events, as well as lead the region and industry on designing what future events will look like in the current climate.”

All-access passes are available for purchase [here](#) for \$75 per person. BHICC and the WTCSE are owned by the Port of Seattle and managed by Columbia Hospitality, Inc. For more information, visit [www.PugetSoundEconomicSummit.com](http://www.PugetSoundEconomicSummit.com).

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#### **About Bell Harbor International Conference Center**

*Bell Harbor International Conference Center (BHICC), including the World Trade Center Seattle and Smith Cove Event Center, is Seattle’s premier waterfront conference and event venue. BHICC offers 100,000 square feet of event space accommodating up to 5,000 guests, advanced technology equipment and support, customizable menus, 180-degree panoramic views of Puget Sound, and access to nearby attractions like Pike Place Market. BHICC is one of the only venues in Washington State that is a member of IACC, adhering to a high set of quality standards in the meeting industry. BHICC is owned by the Port of Seattle and managed and operated by Seattle-based Columbia Hospitality, Inc. To learn more visit [www.bellharbor.com](http://www.bellharbor.com).*

**About World Trade Center Seattle**

*A gateway for commerce, trade and opportunity, World Trade Center Seattle (WTCSE) is a gathering place that provides access, collaboration and networking for business leaders throughout the region. WTCSE is part of the World Trade Center Association that provides members with access to more than 330 World Trade Centers in 90 countries with more than 1.5 million member companies. Located on the Seattle waterfront at 2200 Alaskan Way, WTCSE offers members complimentary valet service, no-charge meeting rooms and no minimum expenditures. Meeting and event space offering stunning views of the Seattle waterfront is also available to the general public. WTCSE is owned by the Port of Seattle and operated by Columbia Hospitality. For more information, please visit [www.wtcseattle.com](http://www.wtcseattle.com).*

**About the Port of Seattle**

*Founded in 1911 by a vote of the people as a special purpose government, the Port of Seattle's mission is to promote economic opportunities and quality of life in the region by advancing trade, travel, commerce, and job creation in an equitable, accountable, and environmentally responsible manner.*

*The Port owns and operates Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, Fishermen's Terminal—home of the North Pacific fishing fleet—and public marinas. The Port also owns two cruise ship terminals, a grain terminal, real estate assets, and marine cargo terminals through its partnership in the Northwest Seaport Alliance.*

*Port operations help support nearly 200,000 jobs and \$7 billion in wages throughout the region. Over the next 18 years, the port's "Century Agenda" seeks to create an additional 100,000 jobs through economic growth while becoming the nation's leading green and energy-efficient port. Learn more at [www.portseattle.org](http://www.portseattle.org).*

**About Columbia Hospitality**

*Columbia Hospitality, Inc. (Columbia) is a Seattle-based hospitality management and consulting company that was established in 1995 by founder and CEO John Oppenheimer. Columbia's growing portfolio includes award-winning hotels, conference centers, distinctive venues, private and public golf facilities, restaurants and bars, and residential properties. Columbia creates exceptional experiences for guests and team members while achieving phenomenal results for property owners. With over 20 years of proven success in management, Columbia has also consulted on over 200 hospitality projects worldwide, delivering a high level of customized service to partners and investors. For more information about Columbia and to view the entire portfolio, visit [www.columbiahospitality.com](http://www.columbiahospitality.com).*

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