



USI | URBAN STRATEGIES, INC.

NOVEMBER 30 -  
DECEMBER 2, 2022  
FORT MYERS, FL.

# CHOICE MEANS CHOICE CONFERENCE

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ANCHORING EQUITY AND CULTURE

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 2, 2022

FORT MYERS, FLORIDA

#CMCFTMYERS22

# Keynote Speakers



**“It is hard to argue that housing is not a fundamental human need. Decent, affordable housing should be a basic right for everybody in this country. The reason is simple: without stable shelter, everything else falls apart.”**

**–Matthew Desmond**

MacArthur “Genius” Matthew Desmond’s Pulitzer Prize winning bestseller *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* draws on years of embedded fieldwork and painstakingly gathered data to transform our understanding of inequity and economic exploitation in America. In addition to the Pulitzer, *Evicted* won the National Books Critics Circle Award, the Andrew Carnegie Medal, the PEN/John Kenneth Galbraith

Award, the Heartland Prize, and more, and was named one of the Best Books of 2016 by nearly three dozen outlets, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Desmond is the founder and Principal Investigator of Princeton’s [Eviction Lab](#). Desmond launched the Eviction Lab in 2017 after conversations with renters and policymakers convinced him that collecting national data on eviction would help answer fundamental questions about residential instability, forced moves, and poverty in America. In 2018, they published the first-ever national dataset of evictions in America, collecting millions of data points going back to 2000. In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic devastation it brought to millions, the Eviction Lab recognized that the broader and longstanding issue of income and housing insecurity had quickly become paramount to the health of an entire nation. To better understand the steps states have taken to prevent homelessness during and after the pandemic, the Eviction Lab released the [Eviction Tracking System](#) (ETS), which monitors eviction filings in real time across a set of American cities, and, in partnership with Columbia Law School Professor Emily Benfer, a [policy scorecard](#) for each state, distilling the contents of thousands of newly-released emergency orders, declarations, and legislation into a clear set of critical measures included in, and left out of, state-level pandemic responses related to eviction and housing.



Dr. Michael McAfee became President and CEO of PolicyLink in 2018, seven years after becoming the inaugural director of the [Promise Neighborhoods Institute at PolicyLink](#). His results-driven leadership, depth of knowledge about building and sustaining an organization, and devotion to serving the nation's most underserved populations made him the obvious choice to lead the 20-year-old PolicyLink as [Angela Glover Blackwell](#) transitioned to founder in residence.

During his time at PolicyLink, Michael has played a leadership role in securing Promise Neighborhoods as a permanent federal program, led efforts to improve outcomes for more than 300,000 children, and facilitated the investment of billions of dollars in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty. He is the catalyst for a new and growing body of work – [corporate racial equity](#) – which includes the first comprehensive tool to guide private-sector companies in assessing and actively promoting equity in every aspect of their company's value chain. Michael carries forward the legacy to realize the promise of equity – just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. His legacy will lie in his efforts to stand in transformative solidarity with others, collectively charting a course to Win on Equity. He is building a well-planned, well-coordinated, well-executed, and sustained campaign that frees America's democracy from the oppressive blend of patriarchy, capitalism, and racism.

Michael lives in the Oakland Hills with his wife, Maja, and their two Brussels Griffons (Gigi and Griff). He is an avid off-road hiker and practitioner of yoga.



During her lifetime, Ms. Bland has been both a witness and a participant in some of our nation's most consequential civil rights battles. Born and raised in Selma, Alabama, she has seen first-hand how racism and segregation created a deadly divide between people--neighbors, co-workers, classmates--and she decided early on that she would always try to lift her voice to decry injustice wherever she saw it.

In the early 1960's, she joined her grandmother at Dallas County Voters League meetings led by the great Amelia Boynton. She began her own activism, with SNCC (The Student Non-Violent

Coordinating Committee), at the age of 8 along with other children and teens in her neighborhood. They all wanted to do their part to make the goals of the Civil Rights Movement, equal justice and equal treatment, a reality for themselves and their families.

By the time she was 11 years old, she had been arrested 13 times that are documented. She was an active participant in Bloody Sunday, marching alongside more than 600 peaceful activists only to get brutally beaten, tear-gassed and hit by policemen on horses with billy clubs. As a teenager, Ms. Bland was one of seven Black students to integrate A. G. Parish High School.

**HER EARLY INVOLVEMENT IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST "JIM CROW", OUR AMERICAN APARTHEID, HAS BEEN THE FOUNDATION AND FUEL FOR HER LIFELONG CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS WORK.**

Ms. Bland served in the US Army and returned to Selma to co-found and lead the National Voting Rights Museum, lead a tour company, Journeys for the Soul, that welcomes visitors from around the world, and is the founder of Foot Soldiers Park & Education Center ([footsoldierspark.org](http://footsoldierspark.org)). As she guides groups through Selma now, on the trail of the foot soldiers of 1965, they see clearly the connections between our history and our current reality.

A much sought after speaker with a compelling personal story of civil rights activism, Ms. Bland has presented at conferences and workshops from the Smithsonian in Washington, DC to and at venues in nearly every state in the nation.

## Getting to Ft. Myers, Florida!

**Fort Myers** is located in Florida between Miami and Tampa.

Tourists will find amazing beaches and cultural nights, festivals, theatres, and more, always with a good temperature that allows people to enjoy all the city has to offer.

The main airport near Fort Myers Beach is Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW - 11000 Terminal Access Rd., Fort Myers, FL 33913). **RSW Airport** is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Fort Myers, United States.

Visitors can also travel to [Page Field - Southwest Florida, Punta Gorda Airport](#), Rosa Parks Transportation Center, or the [Fort Myers Station of Amtrak](#).

From **RSW Airport** the following transportation options available:

- 🚗 Bus: There is public transportation available at Fort Myers Airport.
  - [See more information](#) on Bus Route 50
- 🚗 Rideshare: Get to Fort Myers city center in just 20 minutes by taxi.
  - [See more information](#) on Taxi and Rideshare options
- 🚗 Car Rental: Renting a car at Fort Myers Airport is a good idea to move around.
  - [See more information](#) on renting for #CMCFTMYERS22

### [Arrive at the Luminary Hotel & Co., Autograph Collection](#)

While you're in town for the #CMCFTMYERS22 convening, enjoy the following hotel amenities:

- 🚗 Bicycle Rental - \$10
- 🚗 Convenience Store
- 🚗 Daily Housekeeping
- 🚗 Dry Cleaning Service
- 🚗 Fitness Center

- 🚗 Gift Shop
- 🚗 Outdoor Pool
- 🚗 Restaurant
- 🚗 Room Service
- 🚗 Sustainability

- 🚗 **Check-in:** 4:00 pm
- 🚗 **Check-out:** 11:00 am
- 🚗 **Smoke-Free Property**
- 🚗 [See Accessibility Features](#)
- 🚗 [Pet Policy - Pets Not Allowed](#)

[Studio King Suite, Partial River View](#)

- 🚗 Parking
  - On-Site Parking
    - Daily: \$15
    - Hourly: \$1
  - Valet
    - Daily: \$23
- 🚗 Off-Site Parking
  - City of Palms Parking Garage,

[King Chaise Lounge, Partial River View](#)  
[Double, Two Queen, Partial River View](#)

- o No In and Out Privileges

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. How much does the Choice MEANS Choice cost?**

There is no cost to attend the convening. However, the cost of lodging, travel and some meals will need to be covered by the attendee.

### **2. Where should interested parties confirm their participation?**

Click the link (<https://www.communitiesofchoice.com/>) to register for the 2022 Choice MEANS Choice convening, and while you're there, register for the communities of practice!

#### **[Book your group rate for Choice MEANS Choice 2022 Conference](#)**

*(Conference dates are November 30 - December 2, 2022)*

**The deadline for booking lodging is November 1, 2022**

### **3. How many participants can attend from our grant?**

We ask that grantees limit participants to **5-6** individuals. Those individuals can include but are not limited to People, Neighborhood, Housing, and Resident/Youth leaders.

### **4. Can grantees share or present at the conference?**

Yes, after a Call for Proposals, many CNI grantees have submitted and confirmed participation in presentations and panels.

In 2019, USI hosted an exhibit on the history of Redlining for conference participants.

This year, we will host a "Display Museum" and welcome all grantees with redevelopment photos with relevant data, presentations or exhibits relevant to the history of redevelopment to contact Erika Wilson at [COC@urbanstrategiesinc.org](mailto:COC@urbanstrategiesinc.org) to display their contributions at the convening.

The youth of Green Garden Bakery have already confirmed their booth.

### **5. Will there be Photography and Videography at the conference?**

Yes, there will be an Official Photographer and Videographer as well as recorded sessions for partners, team members, and developers unable to attend in person. These sessions will also be available for in-person conference attendees that wish to revisit discussions or to view sessions they missed.

## Choice MEANS Choice Amenities and Conference Options

### Dinner Options

The City of Ft. Myers has an array of options within walking distance of the hotel, and we welcome you to join us in tasting the best cuisines of the city. Breakfast and Lunch is provided with your convening registration.

### Ft. Myers Site Tour and Groundbreaking Celebration

To celebrate the transformation taking place in Ft. Myers, the City of Ft. Myers, Ft. Myers Housing Authority, and esteemed guests welcome Choice Neighborhood grantees to join in the celebration happening in the Greater Dunbar community. Transportation will be provided. We ask that attendees make a note on the registration form if they intend to participate in the tour and celebration.

### Luggage Space

For participants that need to check out before leaving the conference, there will be a designated location for luggage to lounge until you're ready to leave the Luminary.

### Photography

The **Choice MEANS Choice Conference: Anchoring Equity and Culture** will have an official photographer and videographer. If you choose to not be included in photos, please update your registration, or visit the Check-In Station of the conference to update our team. Members of [Green Garden Bakery](#) will take over the USI Social Media and may interview you!

### Sunrise Walk

This is open to attendees of all ages to join change leaders at the best time of day, sunrise!

### USI Bus Stop

Transportation to the Site Tour, Groundbreaking Celebration, and Welcome Celebration will be provided. Update your registration or stop by our Check-In station to ensure your seat.

### Welcome Reception

Cheers and welcome to the Choice MEANS Choice: Anchoring Equity and Culture convening

### Yoga

If sunrise is a bit too early for you, how about a mindful session of yoga? Practice with CNI grantees as we prepare to further equitable results for communities across the country.

### Youth

For the young leaders joining the conference, we haven't forgotten about you and welcome you to network with other young leaders in attendance through youth-designed activities. We are requesting that youth between the ages of **14 - 18 years** are registered for the conference.

[Green Garden Bakery](#) youth of USI Minneapolis' Heritage Park Community will serve as Conference Ambassadors taking over the USI social media, capturing footage of the conference from their unique vantage point (join them by using #CMCFTMYERS22), hosting an after-conference event on Thursday, December 1, selling their products and swag in our *Display Museum*, and moderating a panel on Day 2.

## 2022 Choice MEANS Choice Layout

### Wednesday

- Pre-conference events will take place at the Collaboratory.
- The Philanthropy Breakfast is by **Invitation Only** and for Philanthropic entities.
- The Developer Roundtable is by **Invitation Only** and for Developers.
- Please note during registration or check-in if you desire to attend the Site Tour and Celebration
  - Pickup at the Luminary at 12:30 p.m. to the Site and then pick up from the site at X p.m. to the Collaboratory

### Thursday

- Breakfast is available in the **Galleria** with seating in the Caloosa Sound Convention Center in Salon C.
- The Welcome, Keynote, and Meals will take place in the Caloosa Sound Convention Center in Salon C
- Lunch is available in the **Galleria** with seating in the Caloosa Sound Convention Center in Salon C.
- The 10 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and 3:15 p.m. blocks will take place in the Caloosa Sound Convention Center in **Salon A, B, D, and E.**

### Friday

- Breakfast is available in the **Galleria** with seating in the Caloosa Sound Convention Center in Salon C.
- The Keynote and Meals will take place in Caloosa Sound Convention Center in Salon C
- Lunch is available in the **Galleria** with seating in Caloosa Sound Convention Center in Salon C.
- The 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. blocks will take place on level 4 of the hotel building in the **Heitman, Langford, Firestone, and Hendry** rooms.

**Wednesday, November 30, 2022**

8:00 AM

***Philanthropy Breakfast***

Location: Collaboratory  
2301 Jackson St. Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Overview: Opportunity for philanthropic organizations to meet with HUD Choice Neighborhood team members to the roles and future of philanthropy and the federal government in equitable development.

Invite Only.

10:00 AM

***Developer Roundtable***

Location: Collaboratory  
2301 Jackson St. Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Overview: Opportunity for local and national affordable housing developers to meet with HUD Choice Neighborhood team members to discuss the future of the program and the current state of affordable housing.

Invite Only.

1:30 PM

***Ft. Myers Site Tour***

Location: Luminary Hotel & Co, Ft. Myers Lobby

4:00 PM

***Groundbreaking Celebration***

Location: Luminary Hotel & Co, Ft. Myers Lobby

5:00 PM

***Welcome Reception***

Location: Collaboratory  
2301 Jackson St. Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Overview: Opportunity to nosh on great food, listen to local music and meet new people.

## Thursday, December 01, 2022

5:30 AM **Sunrise Walk**

6:30 AM **Yoga** led by a certified yoga instructor  
Location: Moonlight Garden in the Luminary Hotel  
Self-Care is important. We hope you will join us as we connect.

7:30 AM **Breakfast and Registration**  
Galleria in Caloosa Sound Convention Center building

8:30 AM **Welcome**  
Mayor Kevin B. Anderson, *City of Fort Myers*  
Cindy Nava, Senior Policy Advisor, *Office of Field Policy and Management, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development*

9:00 AM **Keynote - [Dr. Matthew Desmond, Author, Founder, and Principal Investigator of Princeton's Eviction Lab](#)**

### PRIVATE SESSION WITH DR. MATT DESMOND

10:15 AM **Session One**

 **PEOPLE: Strategies of Economic Mobility**

Participants will learn about best practices in the CNI community that have produced successful outcomes around economic mobility.

- Haley Buzzard, *USI Tulsa*
- Jeff Hall, *City of Tulsa*
- Andrew Meloney, *City of Philadelphia*
- Moderator: Salin Geevarghese, *S&S Insight*

 **NEIGHBORHOOD: Partnership for Equitable and Resilient Communities(PERC)**

 **NEIGHBORHOOD: Meeting This Moment through the Lens of Community and Economic Development including Climate, Transportation, Housing, & More**

Participants will learn about some of the greatest threats to successful community transformation

- Rasheca Barrow, *Fifth Third Bank*
- Henry McKoy, *US Department of Energy*
- Theresa Mitchell, *The Community Builders*
- Najaah Daniels, *Inclusive Capital Collective*
- Moderator: *Christina Autin*

 **GENERAL: Mapping Corridors of Opportunity for Strategic Community Development\***

Participants will review a strategic visioning approach to community

redevelopment that leverages the relationship between place, people, neighborhoods, and housing surrounding the Fort Myers, Florida, Southward Village community.

- Jennifer Hagen, *University of Florida IFAS Extension Lee County*
- Moderator: Diana Giraldo, *Community Development Reimagined*

11:45 AM **Break**

12:00 PM **Choice Chat** with Esther Shin, President of USI

**12:30 PM Lunch**

1:30 PM **Session Two**

 **PEOPLE: Wealth Creation and Systems Change**

Participants will learn about best practices and challenges to decreasing the racial wealth gap.

- Subira Brown, *USI Baltimore*
- Josh Sledge, *Filene*
- Stewart Williams, *OneTen*
- Moderator: Elizabeth Glenn

 **EDUCATION: Superintendents' Panel**

Participants will learn about strategies, successes, and challenges that CNI grantee education partners are tackling to ensure stable learning environments for learners in transition due to redevelopment and post-COVID.

- Dr. Kelvin Adams, *St. Louis Public Schools*
- Tricia McManus, *Winston-Salem Public Schools*
- Moderator: Tyronda Minter, *USI*

 **NEIGHBORHOOD: Resident and Outreach Engagement\***

Participants will learn about the roles that different organizations can plan in implementation; the value of engaging local anchor institutions, particularly hospitals and healthcare providers; and examples of how these relationships can be leveraged to attract new partners and funding.

- Eric Schwartz, MD, *Capital Health*
- Dr. Michael Nordquist, PhD, *Isles*
- Moderator: Chrysti Huff, *Trenton Housing Authority*

 **GENERAL: Proactive Alignment and Trust Building\***

Participants will learn about the challenges that the People Components face, but also offer strategies on how to best embrace and overcome those challenges.

- Edith Pagen, *Housing Authority City of Camden*
- Shane Still, *Housing Authority City of Camden*
- Moderator: Tracey Fleming Powell, *Housing Authority City of Camden*

3:00 PM **Break**

3:15 PM **Session Three**

 **PEOPLE: Addressing Community Violence - Part 2**

Participants will experience an interactive container meant to name and address community violence in service to thriving community redevelopment

- Asani Shakur, *USI*
- Sandra Barnhill, JD, *Foreverfamily, Inc*
- Brother Lyle Muhammed, *Circle of Brotherhood*
- Moderator: Kristie Stutler, *USI Policy and Influence*

 **GENERAL: Radical Love**

Participants will discuss the power and practice of radical love in service to equitable community redevelopment

- Donovan Duncan, *USI*
- JoAnn Bland, *Journeys for the Soul*
- Adriane Johnson-Williams, Ph.D., *Standpoint Consulting*
- Moderator: Shana Brodnax, *3 Birds Coaching and Consulting*

 **HOUSING: Stimulus/Tax Credits Funding**

Participants will learn about tools to finance community revitalization efforts.

- Jeff Lines, *Tag Associates*
- Andrea Ponsor, *Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future*
- Dan Rosen, *Klein Hornig*
- Moderator: Stacy Spann, *MidCity*

 **GENERAL: Promising Practices**

Participants will learn about best practices to supporting successful community transformation.

- Jaime Gloshey, *Native Women Lead*
- Theresa Mitchell, *The Community Builders*
- Josephine Thomason, *Alliance for a Healthier Generation*
- Moderator: Mark Joseph, *Case Western*

**(\* denotes a Choice Neighborhood grantee panel submission)**

Friday, December 2, 2022

5:30 AM **Sunrise Walk**

6:30 AM **Yoga** led by a certified yoga instructor  
Location: Moonlight Garden in the Luminary Hotel  
Self-Care is important to this work. We hope you will join us as we connect.

7:30 AM **Breakfast and Registration**  
Location: Galleria in Caloosa Sound Convention Center building

8:30 AM **Keynote - [Dr. Michael McAfee, President, and CEO of PolicyLink](#)**

10:00 AM **Break**

10:15 AM **Session Four**

 **GENERAL: Housing Stability**

*Participants will learn about best practices to support residents that are at risk of losing their housing during times of crisis or change (relocation, global pandemic, affordable housing shortage, special needs)*

- Nicole Brown, *People First, Empowered by USI*
- Cashauna Hill, *Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center*
- Dr. Susan Perry, *City of Norfolk - People First*
- Ellen Sahli, *Family Housing Fund*
- Moderator: Alecia Leonard, *USI*

 **EDUCATION: Youth Voice Shark Tank**

*Join Minneapolis Youth Leaders in an interactive session that will advance your youth activation and engagement techniques in community. If you are looking for new ways to incorporate youth voice into your work attend this session to hear tips from youth leaders, practice new strategies, and pitch them to a group of youth judges. Top strategies will get be rewarded with Green Garden Bakery swag and gifts.*

 **GENERAL: CDFI's role in Community Transformation**

Participants will learn about how CDFIs have evolved and their role as a tool for supporting neighborhood revitalization

- Amber Bond, *African American Alliance of CDFI CEOs*
- Robin Hacke, *Center for Community Investment*
- Anthony Jewett, *SW Florida Impact Partners LLP*
- Moderator: Celina Pena, *Friedman Associates*

 **GENERAL: CNI Post Revitalization**

Participants will discuss wisdom from a recently completed revitalization project

- Eva Mosby, *USI*

- Evette Hester, *Housing Authority of the City of New Orleans*
  - Moderator: Pamela Lawrence, *Annie E. Casey Foundation*
- 11:45 AM     **Break**

12:00 PM     **Lunch and Learn with Ms. Joann Bland**

1:30 PM     **Session Five**

 **HOUSING: Affordable Housing of the Future**

Participants will learn from CNI developers about the bright spots and challenges of affordable housing in this country.

- Emily Bernstein, *McCormack Baron Salazar*
- Catherine Cawthon, *Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing*
- Todd Lieberman, *Brinshore*
- Will Towns, *Gorman*
- Moderator: Esther Shin, *USI*

 **EDUCATION: Youth Voice and Community\***

- Nimet Abubaker, *Green Garden Bakery*
- D’Lovantae Allen, *Green Garden Bakery*
- Ariana Merrick, *Green Garden Bakery*
- Sarod Williams, *Green Garden Bakery*
- Moderator: Lamia Fisher, *Green Garden Bakery*

 **GENERAL: Successful Reoccupancy**

Participants will highlight strong strategies and challenges for successful reoccupancy into thriving communities.

- Jeff Hall, *City of Tulsa*
- Nannette Ray, *City of Milwaukee*
- Treneice Walton, *USI Louisville*
- Moderator: TaLonda Holland, *USI Policy and Influence*

 **HOUSING: A New Mainstreet in a CHOICE Neighborhood\***

Participants will learn about the Trenton community that is focused on improving Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard as a key main street corridor to uplift the neighborhood. In particular, the community wanted this street to exemplify the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. so that it becomes a focal point of activity for the neighborhood with new businesses, restaurants, housing, and investment opportunities. This represented a change in direction from the City’s Master Plan but was immediately embraced as a new vision for the neighborhood.

- Matt Broad, *Trenton Health Team*
- Dr. Michael Nordquist, *City of Trenton*
- Moderator: Deborah Schulze, *City Planning Institute*

3:00 PM     **Closeout and Dismissal**

**(\* denotes a Choice Neighborhood grantee panel submission)**