

For Immediate Release

Contact: Akia Ashmond Brew

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agbrew@iedconline.org

**IEDC Kicks Off the 2018 Economic Future Forum**

*Eight-County Region in Buffalo Niagara, New York to host three-day discussion of ways to leverage future industries which will impact economic development.*

Washington, DC (May 25, 2018) – The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) will hold its 2018 Economic Future Forum from June 24-26 in Buffalo, NY at the Marriott Harbor Center. The event will feature sessions on topics from cross-border collaborations to transit-oriented development. Speakers will also discuss effective economic development programs and projections on the current U.S. economy.

“On behalf of all Buffalo residents and business owners, I’d like to welcome the International Economic Development Council and all attendees of the 2018 IEDC Economic Future Forum to our wonderful City,” said Mayor Byron W. Brown. “I hope that this is a successful and inspiring forum for you, as you discuss future industries that will positively impact economic development. My Administration works every day to implement initiatives that add to our over \$6 billion in economic development taking place citywide.”

The forum will also have sessions where the city will highlight its success in modernization and the beneficial impact to its residents. The full program may be seen at [www.iedconline.org/futureforum](http://www.iedconline.org/futureforum). Program topics include:

- The Benefits of Transit-Oriented Development
- Future of Work
- Industry Forecasts and Roundtables – Real Estate, Retail and Entertainment
- Industry Forecasts and Roundtables – Professional Services, Ai, Finance
- Innovating Beyond Borders
- Health and Wellness Tourism: Offering the Fountain of Youth in Your Community
- Brownfields: So Much Potential, So Much To Do

“We are so excited to welcome more than 200 economic developers to the Buffalo Niagara region. The IEDC Future Forum could not have come to Buffalo Niagara at a better time, as we both celebrate and continue to build upon our regional renaissance. This is the first time Buffalo Niagara will host

the Future Forum, positioning our community as a true learning lab for economic development and bringing our successes to prominence,” said Thomas Kucharski, president and CEO, Invest Buffalo Niagara

Forum attendees will also tour various projects in Buffalo, including:

- The Niagara Power Vista
- Tesla and Panasonic’s joint venture project and a state-of-the-art logistics center, Sonwil
- The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC)

**Keynote speakers for this event include:**

- J.P. Bak, ESQ, Chief Executive Officer, Bak USA, Buffalo, NY
- Ulla Bak, ESQ, President, Bak USA, Buffalo, NY
- Jeremy “Jerry” Jacobs Jr., Co-Chief Executive Officer, Delaware North, and Alternative Governor, Boston Bruins
- René F. Jones, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, M&T Bank
- Dr. Norma Nowak, Executive Director, NYS Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics & Life Science, Buffalo, NY
- Mark Poloncarz, Esq., County Executive, Erie County Government, Buffalo, NY
- Chuck Vollmer, Founder, Jobenomics, Vienna VA

“Technology has sped up our lives in unprecedented ways. Thankfully, we are able to foresee and predict the future with a lot more accuracy than our predecessors, which has given us an advantage. The next step is to position today’s resources for future growth, and this event will bring many of those elements to light...” - Craig J. Richard, CECD, FM, 2018 IEDC Chairman and President and CEO of Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation

IEDC’s think tank, the Economic Development Research Partners, EDRP, will also launch a new report, **The Future Ready: How Economic Development Organizations Prepare for Tomorrow’s Economy**, which will explore how artificial intelligence, virtual reality, robotics, blockchain and other developing technologies and innovations will impact healthcare, manufacturing, retail and food, and how communities can proactively respond to disruption. Information about this new paper may be seen at [www.iedconline.org/edrp](http://www.iedconline.org/edrp).

Online registration for this event is open at [www.iedconline.org/futureforum](http://www.iedconline.org/futureforum). Onsite registration will begin Sunday, June 24. Details, including rates, hotel reservations and the program may be found online.

### **About the International Economic Development Council**

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a non-profit membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 5,200 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities by creating, retaining and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC's members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience. Given the breadth of economic development work, our members are employed in a wide variety of settings including local, state, provincial and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities and a variety of other institutions. IEDC's members create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities and improve the quality of life in their regions.  
[www.iedcONLINE.org](http://www.iedcONLINE.org).