Headliners announced for 12th annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week

January 23, 2020



Leading up to its 12th year, New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), co-produced by the A. B. Freeman School of Business at Tulane University and The Idea Village, has announced its lineup of headline speakers.

Thousands will convene in New Orleans, March 23 – 27, for the weeklong event that unites entrepreneurs, local leaders and investors in a celebration of the city's entrepreneurial spirit and activity.

"Tulane University has been an integral part of the city's entrepreneurial community for many decades," said Ira Solomon, dean of the Freeman School. "With the 12th annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, we have made important changes that will take the conversation to the next level, with new opportunities for learning, collaboration, mentorship and funding."

The premier event commences with *NOEW In Your Neighborhood*, featuring three days of community-organized, citywide events, March 23 – 25. The *NOEW Summit* will follow at the Ace Hotel in downtown New Orleans, March 26 – 27.

NOEW 2020 is expected to draw as many as 5,000 attendees and nearly 100 notable speakers, including:

- **Stuart Haselden** – Co-CEO, Away
  - *Founded in 2016, Away is a travel lifestyle brand valued at $1.4 billion*
  - *Recently served as COO of Lululemon*
- **Walter Robb** – Former Co-CEO, Whole Foods
  - *An investor, mentor and advisor to the next generation of American food companies*
- **Jon Najarian** – Co-Founder, Najarian Family Office; Contributor, CNBC's "Fast Money"
  - *Retired NFL player, author and world-renowned investor and market analyst*
- **Desiree Rogers** – CEO, Black Opal Beauty
  - *Businesswoman, former White House social secretary for President Barack Obama's office and former CEO of Johnson Publishing Company*
- **Verne Harnish** – Founder, Entrepreneurs' Organization
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  - *Author of the bestseller Mastering the Rockefeller Habits, translated into nine languages, and international award-winning book, Scaling Up*
  - *Also founder and CEO of Scaling Up, a global executive education and coaching company with over 180 partners on six continents*
- **Mathew Knowles** – CEO, Music World Entertainment
  - *A record executive, talent manager and former manager of Destiny's Child*

- **Cindy Eckert** – Founder, The Pink Ceiling/Pinkubator
    - *The Pink Ceiling offers strategic consulting or seed investing and commercial support for startups breaking through for women*
- **Irwin Simon** – Chairman & CEO, Aphria
    - *One of the largest cannabis companies in the world*
    - *Also founder of Hain Celestial Group, the largest natural organic food and personal care company in the world, with sales of more than $3.5 billion*
- **Sydney Torres** – Founder, IV Capital
    - *Entrepreneur, actor and real estate investor, lives for the thrill of making the kind of deal where everyone benefits*

NOEW will also host the 20th annual Tulane Business Model Competition. Presented by the Freeman School's Albert Lepage Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the competition will award a total prize package of $125,000 — an all-time-high — to a student-led startup that demonstrates a market-tested ability to adapt to customers' needs.

"This year's speakers represent the best and the brightest in the entrepreneurial ecosystem from around the world, and NOEW delivers them right here to our doorstep," said Jon Atkinson, CEO of The Idea Village. "From showcasing emerging trends, innovations and personal anecdotes, this year's speakers are sure to deliver inspired learnings."

JPMorgan Chase & Co. returns for its third year as a presenting sponsor of NOEW, continuing its long-standing commitment to local startup companies and investing in the next generation of leaders.

"We are proud to join NOEW in its quest to connect New Orleans' startup community to the cutting edge of global business," said Katie LeGardeur, market leader in Louisiana for JPMorgan Chase & Co. "As an early believer and consistent champion of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in New Orleans, we support NOEW in its continuing effort to bring free, world-class education to our community, and boost the region's reputation as a place to build industry leading businesses."

NOEW events are free and open to the public. To learn about NOEW's 2020 schedule, visit www.NOEW.org. Registration will open mid-February.