

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 21, 2015

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Southeast Minnesota Economic Forum Brings Leaders Together to Discuss Regional Economy

WHAT Southeast Minnesota Economic Forum

WHEN Tuesday, September 29th, 8:00am-12:00pm

WHERE Rochester International Event Center, 7333 Airport View Dr. SW, Rochester, MN 55902

WHO IS INVITED This event is open to the public; however, attendees must register in advance

With economic development initiatives [Journey to Growth \(J2G\)](#) and [Destination Medical Center \(DMC\)](#) getting underway in 2015, the [Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce](#) and [Rochester Area Economic Development, Inc., \(RAEDI\)](#) are bringing together regional leaders to examine SE Minnesota economic expectations for 2016. This event will feature keynotes from Tim Penny, former U.S. Representative, now President and CEO of the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), and Steve Loehr, Vice President of Operations for Kwik-Trip.

A panel of economic experts, including Andy Chafolias of Titan Development & Investments, Susan Savat of Merchants Bank, and Gene Hugoson, former Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner, will discuss the economic outlook from their unique perspectives. A separate panel of corporate executives will also weigh in on the prospects for their industry sectors. The panel will include Walt Ling of IBM, Joe Powers of Powers Ventures, Dick Pope of Wincraft inc. and Tim Fritz of Hormel Foods.

This event is expected to draw more than 500 Southeast Minnesota Business and Government leaders. Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce President Rob Miller said "We hope through this event to draw attention to the strengths of the SE Minnesota economy and to some of the challenges that the businesses in our region are facing. We're beginning to work with chambers throughout the region to build a more cohesive approach to economic growth. This event provides a great opportunity start that process."

This cost of this event is \$30 for members of any regional chamber and \$40 for non-members. Table sponsorships are also available. For more information about table sponsorship, contact Mike Schnell, Government Affairs Coordinator, at mschnell@rochestermnchamber.com or call the Chamber at 507-288-1122. Those interested in registering and finding out more about the Forum can visit the Chamber's website:

<http://business.rochestermnchamber.com/events/details/southeast-minnesota-economic-forum-1513598>

PARTNERS Collaborative partners and sponsors include: RAEDI, Merchants Bank, People's Energy Cooperative, Rochester Community and Technical College, RSP Architects, Fairway Outdoor Advertising, Rochester International Airport, Rochester International Event Center, Spectrum Pro Audio, Titan Development & Investments, and ABC 6 News.

The Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce is a membership organization representing more than 1,450 businesses throughout SE Minnesota. The Chamber provides networking, marketing, public advocacy and educational opportunities to its membership, and works to represent the business community on economic and governmental issues. The Chamber's mission is "to lead, inform, advocate and advance business interests for members, and to promote a healthy community and a growing economy." More information can be found at www.rochestermnchamber.com