

National Summit on Equality of Opportunity Inspires the Call for Change

Yesterday, the U.S. Chamber hosted the [National Summit on Equality of Opportunity](#)—a conversation that included many voices, thoughtful listening, and a drive for action.

“We fundamentally believe that all Americans should have the opportunity to earn their success, rise on their own merit, and live the American Dream. But we know today that isn’t the case. Too many are held back because of the color of their skin,” said Chamber CEO Tom Donohue in opening the summit.

“Too many Black Americans are limited by inequalities deeply embedded in our education, health care, housing, and criminal justice systems. Too many face insurmountable barriers to employment, entrepreneurship, and economic success.

“All of us must work together to close these opportunity gaps. It is the smart thing for our economy, our competitiveness, and our collective future. But above all, it is the right thing for a strong society that values the dignity and promise of every man, woman, and child.

“We champion diversity and inclusion across the business community because it is the right thing to do. And what our mothers taught us all along is true: Do the right things for the right reasons and good things happen,” Donohue added. “Businesses that are more diverse create more value, better serve customers and employees, and stay relevant. But much more needs to be done. And together, we can do more.”

After hearing from inspiring leaders like AT&T Chairman and CEO Randall Stephenson and basketball legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Chamber President Suzanne Clark closed the event with a call to action.

“What matters most isn’t today. It’s what we do next—how we drive meaningful, measurable impact through public policy and private sector solutions. We need to develop concrete and data-based policies. We need legislative proposals to bridge opportunity gaps, starting with education, employment, entrepreneurship, and criminal justice reform,” she said. “We look forward to working with partners and stakeholders to move these proposals forward quickly in our nation’s capital and in state houses across the country.”

“At the same time, we will continue to convene our members and other leaders in business to discuss best practices and plans of action that we can begin implementing now on specific challenges ranging from equitable hiring practices and board diversity to workforce development and access to capital,” she added.

“Together, we can work to harness the passion, this energy from this moment.... We can build momentum for real change,” said Clark. “At the Chamber, we wake up every

day believing that opportunity is the key to a better life. We understand what a job means to a family and to a community. And we know that business is a force for good—and we can and must be a champion for all.”

ICYMI earlier today, Suzanne Clark discussed how business plays a positive role in society during a [Washington Post Live event](#).