

HERE Conference: Coming to Eau Claire, Wisconsin Sept. 14-16, 2022

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Eau Claire, Wis.— With HMong* American Day and Wisconsin's HMong-Lao Veterans Day approaching on May 14, 2022, HMong American Leadership & Economic Development (HALED) of Eau Claire is proud to announce a first-in-the-nation conference and summit on HMong American economic advancement will be hosted Sept. 14-16, 2022 at Pablo Center at the Confluence.

The HMong Economic Advancement, Research, and Equity (HERE) Conference will take place at Pablo Center at the Confluence in downtown Eau Claire. The two-day hybrid conference and one-day summit offers entrepreneurs, business professionals and policymakers the opportunity to explore strategies to build wealth equity for HMong and other ethnic entrepreneurs.

“More than 45 years after the first Hmong refugees came to America, second- and third-generation

HMong Americans still face obstacles to building their social and economic capital,” said Mai Xiong,

HERE Conference chair and founder, president and CEO of HALED. “The 2022 HERE Conference and Summit is an inclusive, imaginative effort to provide ethnic entrepreneurs and policymakers alike with resources, networking opportunities, and research insights to help this community thrive.”

Conference attendees will benefit from impactful programming while networking with industry leaders, connecting with mentors, and receiving free business consultations. A Sept. 14 banquet, “Igniting Your Potential Through Local Support,” and a Sept. 15 “Little Mekong Night Market” in Phoenix Park emulating the feel of a Southeast Asian outdoor market, will add unique experiential elements to the conference.

HMong people living in Laos and Vietnam assisted the United States in the Vietnam War but faced retaliation following the war’s conclusion. Beginning in 1975, thousands of HMong refugees resettled in the U.S. According to [Pew Research](#) and U.S. Census data, the U.S. is now home to more than 325,000 Hmong Americans, with the greatest populations living in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and California.

Xiong, who also vice-chairs the Wisconsin Governor’s Council on Equity and Inclusion, has engaged statewide organizations and national partners to develop the HERE Conference’s broad and inclusive

**Note: the spelling “HMong” is used rather than “Hmong” throughout conference literature as an inclusive acknowledgement of the two main dialects—Green, or Moob Leeg, and White, or Hmoob Dawb—spoken by HMong communities.*

offerings. Keynote speakers will include members of the state and federal government with expertise on advancing ethnic and rural populations, with more details being announced in the coming months.

Organizers aim to bring 300-500 conference attendees to Eau Claire in September of 2022. [Early-bird registration](#) runs now through June 30. You can learn more about the conference by visiting [HALED’s website](#) or following the [HERE Conference event on Facebook](#).