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Business of Healthcare Summit to address state's 'most crucial' concerns

October 31, 2023

The Florida State University College of Business is bringing together healthcare leaders from throughout Florida and the U.S. for a comprehensive one-day forum to address the industry's most pressing workforce, policy, financial and technology issues.



The Business of Healthcare Summit, scheduled for Jan. 26 at the Augustus B. Turnbull Conference Center, will examine healthcare operations in the state and nation from the perspective of hospitals,

private practices, health systems, policy boards and other professional organizations.

It will feature executives from Advent Health, the Florida Chamber of Commerce, the Florida Hospital Association, The Garner Group, Health Advocates Network, Johnson & Johnson's DePuy Synthes medical-device subsidiary, Memorial Healthcare System, healthcare IT services provider Ruvos, Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare and VITAS Healthcare .

College of Business alumni **Kevin Little** (BS Accounting '92), CEO of Health Advocates Network, and **Alex Fernandez** (BS Finance '02), CFO of VITAS Healthcare, will join them as panelists, along with **Doug Tatum**, entrepreneur in residence at FSU's Jim Moran College of Entrepreneurship.

Richard McCullough, FSU president, and **Michael Hartline**, dean of the College of Business, are scheduled to provide welcome comments. McCullough has overseen the launch of the FSU Health initiative, which includes \$125 million in state funding to build a new academic health center on the campus of project partner Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare.

"Florida State University is eager to take a leadership role in helping healthcare practitioners and administrators understand emerging issues, solve problems and benefit from discoveries," McCullough said. "This inaugural Business of Healthcare Summit is an excellent example of the concerted initiatives we'll undertake as we strive to transform healthcare delivery, education and research as well as business operations in Florida and across the nation."

Hartline has emphasized plans to create more courses and programs that underscore the business of healthcare. That includes a new MBA specialization in healthcare management.

"This summit will thoroughly explore some of the most crucial topics in healthcare across our state, and we're delighted with the response we've received from leaders in various sectors," he said. "These executives join us in their commitment to solving problems and seizing opportunities as healthcare becomes an increasingly urgent component of our society and of our college's programs and curriculum."

Event coordinator **Blake Renfro**, the college's director of business development, said the summit aims to, among other things, trumpet FSU's work "in trying to solve critical issues," including in healthcare. He noted research from faculty members including **Matthew Baucum**, an assistant professor in the Department of Business Analytics, Information Systems and Supply Chain, who continues to deepen his expertise in machine learning, healthcare analytics and insight on improved patient treatment.

Renfro said he sees FSU and the summit as "the conduit bringing together the private sector, healthcare, government and academia to impact the quality of health in the state of Florida."

The event will present four themes based on feedback from leaders in Florida healthcare, government and academia -- talent and workforce planning; data and technology; investment and financial operations; and public health policy and regulation.

The significance of the latter theme prompted event organizers to schedule the summit in January to coincide with Florida's 2024 legislative session, which begins Jan. 9 and ends March 8. The attendance fee is \$125 per person, including a lunch and light breakfast. The fee for attending via online stream is \$75. Visit **businessofhealthcare.fsu.edu** (**[/businessofhealthcare.fsu.edu](https://businessofhealthcare.fsu.edu)**) to register.

"We want to have some thoughtful conversations around, 'What are the barriers that hospitals are facing? How can we relieve some of the pressure on the health system?'" Renfro said. "How do providers deliver the best possible care, with limited resources? How can they do that in a cost-effective manner?"

Business of Healthcare summits will continue in future years at locations throughout the state, he said.

"We want to establish a presence and a forum in cities and regions across Florida," Renfro said. "Healthcare will remain an urgent topic regardless of whether you're living or working in Jacksonville, Miami, Tampa, Pensacola or Tallahassee."

-- Pete Reinwald



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