Air Quality
HOUSTON REGIONAL SUMMIT

Houston-Galveston Area Council

OCT. 8, 2026, HOUSTON, TX
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
University of Houston Alumni Center | 3204 Cullen Blvd, Houston, TX 77204

Agenda

9:00 a.m.
Registration, Continental Breakfast, and Welcome Remarks
Start your day by checking in, picking up materials, and enjoying a light continental breakfast. This is a great opportunity to meet fellow attendees and begin networking before sessions start.

10:00 a.m.
Keynote Address: State of Air Quality - Connecting Weather, Climate, and Clean Air
Speaker: Lance Wood, Meteorologist, Harris County Flood Control District
Meteorologist Lance Wood will take us inside the latest regional air quality trends, exploring what the data—and the weather—can tell us about the air we breathe.

11:00 a.m.
Keynote Address: From Planning to Action: Implementation in Practice
Speaker: Elizabeth Carlson, Sustainability Subcommittee Lead, World Cup Host Committee
Elizabeth Carlson will share lessons and outcomes from the HOU26 World Cup Sustainability Plan, offering a real-world look at how ambitious sustainability plans become action.

11:40 a.m.
Networking Activity, Student Poster Showcase, and Vendor Exhibits
Connect with fellow participants, student research presenters, and industry exhibitors. Use this time to exchange ideas, build partnerships, and continue conversations sparked by the morning's discussions.

12:00 p.m.
Networking Lunch
Take a break and continue networking with fellow participants over lunch catered by Local Foods.

Choose 1 Dynamic Breakout Per Time Session

Location	Breakout A: O'Quinn Great Hall	Breakout B: Melcher Boardroom	Breakout C: Douglass Library	Breakout D: Blomstrom Conference
Session 1 1:00 p.m.	Community Air Monitoring to Action	Economic Benefit through Clean Air Action	Community Solutions in Action: SEED	Public Health Impacts from Air Quality Action
Session 2 2:15 p.m.	Industry in Action	Transportation in Action	Nature-Based Solutions in Action: Urban Trees	Action in Buildings & Energy Sector

3:30 p.m.
Networking & Snacks Break
Enjoy a snack break, continue networking with peers, and visit with student and vendor exhibits

3:40 p.m.
AI and Air Quality: Tools for the Future of Clean Air
Speaker: Dr. Tammy Yuan, Assistant Professor, University of Houston
Dr. Yuan will showcase how artificial intelligence and online regional resources can put new tools and information in the hands of communities and decision-makers.

3:55 p.m.
Closing Reflections
We will conclude the summit summary of key takeaways from the event, reflections from panelists, and next steps for continued collaboration on air quality improvements

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2026 Summit Emcee

Meredith Jennings, PhD, CC-P

Director of Local Govt. & Community Initiatives, HARC

With more than a decade of experience in climate resilience, research, and project management, Dr. Meredith Jennings builds cross-sector partnerships and advances equitable, science-based climate solutions for communities across Texas.

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The State of Air Quality
Keynote Speaker

Lance Wood

Meteorologist, Harris Co. Flood Control District

With over 30 years of experience as a meteorologist, including tenure in the National Weather Service, Mr. Wood supports the Harris County Flood Control District through applying data, models, and analytics to better understand storm behavior and improve how we prepare for and respond to severe weather.

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From Planning to Action
Keynote Speaker

Elizabeth Carlson
Chief Sustainability Officer, Tricon

Elizabeth Carlson is Chief Sustainability Officer at Tricon International and Chair of the FIFA World Cup 26 Houston™ Sustainability Committee. She brings more than 15 years of global experience advancing sustainability, resilience, and responsible business growth.

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Breakout Session

Community Air Monitoring to Action

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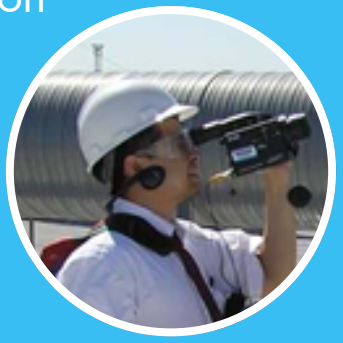
Learn how community monitoring efforts and local data are helping residents, researchers, and public agencies better understand air quality and turn information into action

Dr. Denae King
Associate Director, Bullard Center for Environmental and Climate Justice
Texas Southern University

Bridgette Murray
Founder, Executive Director
ACTS



Nguyen Ly
Bureau Chief of Public Health - Pollution Control & Prevention
Houston Health Department

Moderated by: Grace Tee Lewis, PhD

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Breakout Session

Industry in Action

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Hear directly from industry leaders about the innovations, partnerships, and practical steps businesses are taking to advance cleaner operations.

Ahmed Farghaly
Logistics Management Professional
S.A. TALKE

Pending

Lisa Gianukos
Strategic Account and Community Engagement Manager
Moonshot

Moderated by: Andrew DeCandis

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Breakout Session

Community Solutions in Action: SEED

See how Harris County's SEED initiatives are turning community priorities and local partnerships into meaningful solutions, **featuring SEED grant recipients** working on the ground.

Lisa Lin
Director of Sustainability
Harris County

Pilar Fuentes
Climate Justice Analyst
Harris County

Andy Escobar
Campaigns Manager
Coalition for Environment, Equity, and Resilience

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Breakout Session

Public Health Impacts from Air Quality Action

Traci Gonzales, MSN, APRN, CPNP-PC

Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, Texas Children's Hospital

Traci Gonzales will connect the dots between air quality and health, highlighting why cleaner air matters for the health and well-being of communities across the region.

Introduced by: Heather Meyers

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Breakout Session

Economic Benefit through Clean Air Action

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Panel Moderator

Marina Badoian-Kriticos

Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, HARC

Explore how clean air investments can create economic opportunity, strengthen communities, and support a more competitive regional economy with leaders from across the Houston region.

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Breakout Session

Transportartion in Action

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From community shuttles to innovative mobility technologies, hear how regional partners are putting cleaner, more accessible transportation solutions into action.

Ruthanne Haut
Transportation Director
The Woodlands Township

Robyn Egbert
Manager, TDM
H-GAC

Pending

Jason Smith
Deputy Chief of Staff
Montgomery County

Moderated by: Madeline Statkewicz, PhD

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Nature-Based Solutions in Action

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This session will explore how urban trees and other nature-based strategies can help communities tackle air quality, heat, and resilience challenges.

Ryan Bare, PhD
Senior Research Scientist
HARC

Justin Bower
Director, Community & Environmental
H-GAC

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Action in Buildings & Energy Sector

Breakout Session

Shaun Auckland

Sr. Manager, Government and Community Engagement, SPEER

Shaun Auckland of SPEER will spotlight practical energy efficiency and building strategies that can reduce emissions, lower energy use, and help create healthier communities.

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AI and Air Quality

Tammy Yuan, PhD

Assistant Professor,
University of Houston

Dr. Tammy Yuan is an Assistant Professor of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Houston. Her research applies remote sensing, Earth system modeling, and interpretable AI to study land-atmosphere interactions, coastal resilience, wildfires, and environmental change.

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