

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**AABE Future of Clean Energy Summit Brings Together Diverse Businesses, Utilities and Educational Leaders at Burns & McDonnell**

KANSAS CITY, Missouri — The Kansas-Missouri chapter of the [American Association of Blacks in Energy](#) (AABE) hosted the Future of Clean Energy Summit on Thursday, Feb. 9, at [Burns & McDonnell](#), a national engineering and construction leader in the energy sector.

The summit brought together AABE members, utility industry leaders and local educational institutions for a series of panel discussions on preparations for the clean energy transition and its impact for private and public organizations and the greater Kansas City community. Panelists included representatives from regional utilities and schools, as well as from the U.S. Department of Energy.

“It was important to bring together people from several local utilities with AABE members and educators to discuss the dramatic changes in our nation’s power infrastructure,” says [Ralph Cleveland](#), president and CEO of the national AABE organization. “A lot of work is needed, a lot of funding is becoming available, and there is so much we all can do to prepare and participate. Community-based conversations like these are essential to a clean energy future and entrepreneurial development.”

Attendees at the half-day event discussed shared challenges, best practices and action steps for successful growth in the near future and the long term. The panels covered three interrelated topics:

- Clean energy investments — federal and local funding mechanisms.
- Infrastructure readiness — how communities are preparing.
- Educational readiness — preparing the workforce of today and tomorrow.

“Getting to a future powered with clean energy calls for a comprehensive approach, and everyone needs to get involved,” says [Laron Evans](#), president of the Kansas-Missouri chapter and Midwest director of AABE, and business diversity director for transmission and distribution at Burns & McDonnell. “The summit provides both a forum to learn about coming changes and a platform for Black engineers, executives and community leaders to help shape those initiatives.

“It’s an exciting time for our AABE members, and this summit was a great occasion to gather public entities and private businesses to discuss the opportunities and establish some valuable connections.”

Utilities participating in the summit included Evergy, Spire and the Kansas City Board of Public Utilities. Schools included Raytown School District, Kansas City Public School District and the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Burns & McDonnell is a member company of the local AABE chapter.



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