

The **NADEC Annual Spring Conference** was held May 19-20, 2022, at the Washington Marriott at Metro Center. The event brought together a diverse group of 173 attendees and sponsors. The sessions, speakers, and networking opportunities were excellent and included professionals from a variety of position titles, jobs, company size and industries. Attendees came from across the world to provide us with answers to our questions and assist with roadblocks. We were given opportunities to visit with new people and learn from their different experiences and backgrounds. It was a great chance to make new friends and expand professional networks. Many attendees met with their local Members of Congress, or their staff, on May 18th. These face-to-face meetings serve as the best strategy for communicating with them.

The conference officially opened on Thursday, May 19th, with a welcome from Shawn Levsen / NADEC Chair and International Sales Manager, UPS. Topics covered that morning included "Trade Policy Update," "Export Opportunities & Challenges," "Latin America Trade Opportunities," and "Exporting in Travel & Tourism, Education." Lunch was held along with a conversation between the new Chair of the EXIM Bank, Reta Jo Lewis, and NADEC's Trade Policy Chair, David Day, on EXIM Bank's new policies, broader mission, and enhanced focus on small business. The message was clear: **EXIM works with businesses of all sizes and any business who is interested in EXIM's services should PUT IN AN APPLICATION.** Afternoon sessions included "U.K. Open for Business: The Way Forward," "Exporting to India," "SME Resources for increasing exports- your educational institutional advantage," "U.S.- Africa Trade Relations: How to be part of the Economic Growth & Development on the New Frontier," "Southbound Trade Initiative," and "Financing your Exporting Business." **At the Export to India session, attendees were given a 60-day trial to use the online resource *indiaindex.com* by using the promocode: NADEC.** India Index seamlessly connects American companies with Indian suppliers. The day concluded with a speed networking session.

Friday, May 19th, began with awards to the Export Advocate of the Year, DEC of the Year, and Executive Secretary of the Year. Congressman Dusty Johnson (R-SD) received the "Export Advocate of the Year" award for his efforts leading the Ocean Shipping and Reform Act. Congress Johnson is fighting China's shipping companies which are taking advantage of American businesses through unfair and illegal practices and are making record profits through price gouging. "The DEC of the Year" winner was the Louisiana District Export Council. The "Executive Secretary of the Year" was Heather Ranck of the North Dakota DEC. Morning sessions included "Exporting to Island Nations" and "Cybersecurity & the Global Impact on Trade."

Lunch was held with Former Commerce Deputy Secretary Karen Dunn Kelley. Afternoon session included "Supply Chain Opportunities to Increase Your Exports," "DEC Engagement & Orientation," "Exporting to Challenging Markets (Middle East)," "Trade Policy & Global Markets Update," "Using the DEC to Reach Underserved Communities." The day closed with "Small Business Success Story" and closing remarks.

There are currently 61 local DEC's nationwide. The conference was the first in-person NADEC conference since the beginning of Covid and helped to energize and invigorate the DEC's in attendance. It was a great way to share ideas and discover the resources that are available to American companies and should have a profound effect on attendees' trade goals and their ability to win global sales. NADEC highly recommends viewing the videos from the conference [here](#).