

Innovation Takes Center Stage at Business Forum

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When most people think of innovation in business, they tend to focus on high-tech companies, but Keith Crawford has a different perspective. The co-chair of this year's Tulane Business Forum, Crawford says the Oct. 17 seminar will offer a different look at new ways of doing business, from health care to service industries.



Keynote speaker for the Tulane Business Forum will be Richard M. Bracken, president and chief operating officer of HCA, one of the nation's leading provider of healthcare services.

"Innovation can be found in some unlikely places," says Crawford. "For example, you don't think of the offshore services industry as being terribly innovative, but Todd Hornbeck has brought an incredible level of innovation not only to his boats but to the way the business is structured. The joke among the industry is that his vessels out in the Gulf look more like NASA space shuttles."

Hornbeck, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Covington, La.-based Hornbeck Offshore Services, is one of eight local, regional and national executives

who will take on the topic of innovation at the 29th annual Tulane Business Forum, which will take place on Friday, Oct. 17, at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside. Registration is at 8 a.m. and the conference runs from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

“Innovation as a process is something the New Orleans business community needs,” says Crawford, a management consultant and chief financial officer with local entrepreneurial support firm the Idea Village. “I think one reason more businesses aren't demonstrating innovative thinking is that no one's ever shown them how to drive innovation through their organizations. That's really what we strived to do with our slate of speakers.”

This year's keynote luncheon speaker is Richard M. Bracken, president and chief operating officer of HCA, based in Nashville, Tenn., who will discuss HCA's approach to fostering a culture of innovation. Tulane Medical Center is a partnership jointly owned by Tulane University and HCA, one of the nation's leading providers of healthcare services.

The [forum](#) will kick off with David M. Mize, retired major general and senior vice president with Apogen Technologies/QinetiQ North America, who will discuss the proposed Federal City project in Algiers, La., an innovative new model for military and federal installations. Next, Debra Neill Baker and Edwin Neill III of Hammond, La.-based Neill Corp. will talk about the role innovation has played in building their business, one of the nation's leading beauty and salon services companies.

Following a break, William F. Borne, chairman and chief executive officer of Amedisys Inc. of Baton Rouge, La., will talk about his company's approach to the value proposition in health care, and then business writer and editor Kathy Finn will moderate a panel discussion on spotting opportunities, featuring Hornbeck; Jim Bridger, general manager of the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad; and Matthew M. Wisdom, co-founder and chief executive officer of TurboSquid Inc.

Tulane faculty and staff members can register at the special discounted rate of \$75. For more information about the special rate, contact Rhonda Earles at 504-865-8470 or rearles@tulane.edu.