



Barry University to Host Workshop on Energy Transitions Research with Florida Policy Leaders

Alfred P. Sloan Foundation-funded study results to be presented at Orlando symposium

ORLANDO, FL, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Barry University School of Law will host the Just Energy Transitions & Place Workshop on Friday, October 3, 2025, at Orlando City Hall, presenting findings from a three-year research initiative that examined energy system transformations across four diverse American states.

The \$500,000 study, funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, was conducted collaboratively by researchers from Barry University, University of Minnesota, University of Richmond, University of Kansas, and Pennsylvania State University, focusing on how communities in Florida, Kansas, Louisiana, and Pennsylvania can approach energy transitions while considering local conditions, existing infrastructure, and community-defined priorities.

The full-day symposium will bring together researchers, policymakers, and community leaders to explore how place-based considerations should inform energy transition initiatives. At 10:00 AM, a panel of Central Florida officials will participate in a press briefing discussion, featuring Orlando Commissioner Shan Rose, State Rep. Anna Eskamani, Orange County Commissioner Nicole Wilson, Seminole County Commissioner Lee Constantine, Orlando's Director of Sustainability Michael Hess, and Orange County's Resilience Officer Carrie Black, among others.

Communities with established energy production histories demonstrated advantages in transitioning to emerging energy sectors. Metropolitan regions showed particular interest in distributed generation technologies that could reduce operational expenses and enhance price stability for both commercial and residential consumers. Communities in storm-vulnerable areas prioritized resilient infrastructure capable of maintaining essential services during grid disruptions.

The research team was led by Professor Nadia Ahmad from Barry University School of Law and Professor Elise Harrington from the University of Minnesota School of Public Affairs, working alongside an interdisciplinary team.

Professor Nadia Ahmad, Barry University School of Law and Co-Lead Researcher: "Our research

demonstrates that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to energy transitions. What works in coastal Florida, where communities prioritize hurricane-resilient infrastructure, differs dramatically from solutions in Kansas agricultural communities or Pennsylvania's industrial regions. By centering local voices and existing capabilities, we can create energy policies that are not only environmentally sustainable but also economically viable and socially just for the communities they serve."

Dean Leticia Diaz, Barry University School of Law: "This groundbreaking research exemplifies Barry University's commitment to scholarship that directly benefits communities. By bringing together researchers, policymakers, and community leaders here in Orlando, we're creating a vital space for translating rigorous academic research into actionable policies that can improve lives. Professor Ahmad and her colleagues have produced work that will shape how we think about energy justice and community-centered transitions for years to come."

Florida Representative Anna Eskamani: "This research confirms what we see every day in Central Florida that energy policy cannot be divorced from the lived experiences of our communities. Floridians need energy solutions that address our unique challenges, particularly our vulnerability to hurricanes and extreme weather. This workshop brings together exactly the right voices: researchers, policymakers, and most importantly, community leaders who understand firsthand what's at stake. I'm honored to participate in this critical conversation about how we can build an energy future that is resilient, affordable, and equitable for all Floridians."

The afternoon program will center community voices absent from policy discussions, featuring leaders who will share lived experiences of energy transitions, environmental burdens, and community organizing efforts. Clayton Louis Ferrara, Executive Director of IDEAS for Us, will bring perspectives from his work leading a United Nations-accredited NGO that develops environmental solutions worldwide. N.Y. Nathiri, Executive Director of the Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community, will share insights from more than three decades of cultural preservation and advocacy work in America's first incorporated all-Black municipality. Dr. Ernesto Ruiz, Research Coordinator for The Farmworker Association of Florida, will discuss how energy transitions affect agricultural worker communities and vulnerable populations. Cetta Barnhart, CEO and Founder of Seed Time Harvest Farms, will discuss grassroots approaches to building resilient local systems and food sovereignty as it relates to energy justice.

When: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Where: Fairview Room at Orlando City Hall, 400 South Orange Avenue, Orlando, FL 32801

Registration required here: <https://bit.ly/JETPlaceWorkshop>

Parking: City Commons Parking Garage, 56 Boone Avenue

More information about the Just Energy Transitions and Place project is available at <https://jetplace.org/>

Professor Nadia B. Ahmad

Barry University School of Law
+1 (407) 925-2285
nahmad@barry.edu

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/854239800>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.