

PRESS RELEASE | July 2, 2026

---

## ICYMI: FDRA Hosts Fourth Annual Sneaker Day on the Hill Celebrating Sneaker Culture and America's 250th Anniversary

*America250 Tribute and Panel on Design, Entrepreneurship, and Career Pathways Headline This Year's Event*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. —** The Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA), in partnership with the **Congressional Sneaker Caucus**, hosted the fourth annual Sneaker Day on the Hill — an event blending style, culture, innovation, and policy to celebrate the legacy and future of America's sneaker industry.



*[Left to Right: Sneaker Day on the Hill with Sean Williams (SOLEcial Studies COMMUNITY Academy), Andy Polk (FDRA), Matt Priest (FDRA), Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL 25), Thomas Crockett (FDRA), and Dr. D'Wayne Edwards (PENSOLE Footwear Design Academy and Pensole Lewis College of Business & Design)]*

“Sneakers are more than just footwear — they’re a \$100+ billion global industry that fuels jobs, creativity, and cultural connection,” **said Matt Priest, President & CEO of FDRA.** “We’re proud to work with the Congressional Sneaker Caucus to spotlight the economic importance of our industry while having a little fun along the way. Sneaker Day on the Hill is proof that bipartisanship is still possible — especially when sneakers are involved — and we’re working hard to get the administration to ease the burden tariffs are placing on everyday families. As America prepares to mark its 250th anniversary, we’re also proud to reflect on the role American footwear innovation has played in shaping this country’s culture, economy, and identity from the very beginning.”

Held in the U.S. Capitol, the event was co-hosted by Congressman Jared Moskowitz (D-FL-23), founder and co-chair of the Congressional Sneaker Caucus, alongside Congresswoman Sharice Davids (D-KS-03) and other participating Members of Congress.

The afternoon featured a dynamic panel discussion with Sean Williams, co-founder of SOLEcial Studies CommUNITY Academy, and Dr. D’Wayne Edwards, founder of PENSOLE Footwear Design Academy and Pensole Lewis College of Business & Design. The conversation centered on sneaker culture, design, entrepreneurship, and career pathways across the footwear industry.



*[Panel discussion with Andy Polk, Sean Williams, and Dr. D’Wayne Edwards]*

This year’s event comes as the nation prepares to mark its 250th anniversary. FDRA and its members are proud to reflect on the role American footwear innovation has played across 250 years of history — from work boots that built this country to the sneakers that have shaped its culture. As America250 celebrations unfold nationwide, Sneaker Day on the Hill serves as a reminder that the footwear industry has been part of the American story from the very beginning and remains a driver of creativity, commerce, and community for the next 250 years.



*[adidas sneaker collection curated by SOLEcial Studies]*

Sneaker Day on the Hill wasn't just a celebration — it was a call to action. As the footwear industry continues to face challenges such as tariffs and global supply chain shifts, events like this serve as a powerful reminder that fashion and policy are deeply interconnected. Now in its fourth year, the event continues to grow as a gathering of Members, staff, students, designers, collectors, and industry leaders united by a shared appreciation for sneaker culture and a commitment to smart trade policy.

Recent Coverage on Footwear and Inflation Trends:

- **The Athletic** – Why are so many players wearing pink footwear at the World Cup?
- **WWD** – [This Year's Average Back-to-school Spend for Apparel and Shoes Is Expected to Be \\$278, PwC Report Says](#)

For more information about [FDRA](#) or to schedule an interview with Matt Priest, please email [fdracomms@cgagroup.com](mailto:fdracomms@cgagroup.com)

---

## About FDRA

FDRA is governed and directed by footwear executives and is the only trade organization focused solely on the footwear industry. Serving the full footwear supply chain, it boosts its members' bottom lines through innovative products, training, consulting on footwear design and development, sourcing and compliance, trade and customs, advocacy, and consumer and sales trend analysis for shoe retailers around the world. FDRA supports 500 companies and brands worldwide, representing 98% of the total U.S. footwear industry. Learn more: [fdra.org](http://fdra.org)