



Connect. Collaborate. Lead

2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



MAY 8, 2026



COLUMBUS, OH



LEARN. SHARE.
INSPIRE.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Conference at a glance.....3



Executive Board.....4



Keynote.....5



Session Descriptions.....6-8



Institutional Reps.....9



Lunch and Learn Applications....10

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE



- 9:30 am Check-In and Networking
- 10:00 AM Welcome and Fireside Chat:
Exploring New Leadership Styles



- 11:00 AM Plenary Session:
Legislative Updates
- 12:00 PM Networking Lunch



- 1:00 PM Keynote:
Futurist and AI
- 2:00 PM Panel Discussion
Generations in the Workplace
- 3:00 PM Closing

EXECUTIVE BOARD

State Co-Chairs

Dr. Courtney L. Clarke

Associate Dean Social
Sciences,
Western Campus
Cuyahoga Community College

Dr. Nanette L. Smith

Vice President
Institutional Effectiveness
Planning
Rhodes State College

Dr. Sarah C. Wallis

Instructional
Design
The Humanized Co.

Dr. Holly Craider

Co-Chair Emeritus

Vice President, Curriculum and
Quality Quality,
Cuyahoga Community College
Founder and Attorney,
Craider Law

Dr. Rita Kumar

Professor of English,
Executive Director
Faculty Enrichment Center
University of Cincinnati

Dr. Desiree Polk-Bland

Executive Dean of
Student Affairs
Columbus State
Community College

Erika Hill

Executive Director
Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small
Businesses,
Small Business at Work
Cuyahoga Community College

Dr. Ladorian Latin

Program Chair,
Mathematics College of
Arts, Sciences and
Technology
Franklin University

Amanda Watkins

Assistant Registrar for
Student Services
Wright State University

Dr. Shantelle Jenkins

Assistant to the Vice President
for Inclusive Excellence Projects
Ohio University

Leslie Melton

Senior Director for academic
advising and career services
Columbus State Community College

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Futurist and AI

The rise of **artificially-intelligent agents** will reshape the economic landscape, heralding a fundamentally new economy, an “agentic economy” where most transactions occur autonomously. In this world, each individual will be supported by thousands of AI agents, amplifying personal productivity to unprecedented levels. The traditional structures of **employment will shift**, with employees potentially reporting to AI supervisors and bureaucracies giving way to an “agent-ocracy”—a decision-making system that operates with minimal--if any--human intervention. Cities, too, will function autonomously, leveraging sensors and **AI-driven decision-making** to manage infrastructure and services, such as dispatching fleets of autonomous snow removal vehicles in real-time. This transformation raises fundamental questions: **What role will humans play in an economy dominated by intelligent agents?** What does “work” mean in an agentic economy? How will the wealth generated by these autonomous systems be distributed? What will be the politics of the agentic economy? The service sector and care economy, long reliant on human labor, will be profoundly disrupted, necessitating new economic theories to account for agent-driven productivity and decision-making. Furthermore, as AI agents become core participants in cognitive labor, the very nature of knowledge work will evolve, indeed **redefining the meaning of “knowledge.”** This presentation explores the implications of an agentic economy, addressing both its potential benefits and the challenges it poses to existing economic and social structures.



David J. Staley, Ph.D is a writer, designer, futurist, historiographer, presenter, educator, advisor, public intellectual, and has been described as both an “avant garde scholar” and “eclectic academic.”

He is an Associate Professor in the departments of History and Design at The Ohio State University. He is the author of several books, including:

- *[The AI Symposium](#),*
- *[Anticipatory Biographies: Personal Histories of the Future](#),*
- *[Alternative Universities: Speculative Design for Innovation in Higher Education](#),*
- *[Knowledge Towns: Colleges and Universities as Talent Magnets](#)*
- *[Visionary Histories](#),* a collection of his essays about the future.

He is the host of the “[Voices of Excellence](#)” podcast, and president of [Columbus Futurists](#), a local think tank. In 2022 he was awarded “Best Freelance Writer” by the Ohio Society of Professional Journalists for his “[Next](#)” futures column with Columbus Underground.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS AND SPEAKER BIOS

Fireside Chat: Exploring New Leadership Styles

Over the past several years, higher education leaders have been asked to navigate **extraordinary levels of uncertainty**—declining enrollments, financial pressures, shifting student needs, workforce fatigue, and continued calls to reexamine who we are and who we serve. At the same time, we've been reminded—sometimes painfully—that **our institutions are not just systems and structures. They are people.**

This informal fireside chat will focus on **human-centered leadership**, featuring two dynamic leaders. This session will explore how leading with empathy, care and respect can be a game-changer. Utilizing an **empathetic lens** doesn't mean avoiding hard decisions. It doesn't mean lowering standards or ignoring reality. Rather, it asks a different question alongside the operational one—not just *What must be done?* but ***How do we do this in a way that honors the people carrying the weight of this work?***



Dr. Rebecca Rahschulte is President of the Western Campus at Cuyahoga Community College and a recognized leader in higher education focused on expanding access, advancing student success, and strengthening workforce and transfer pathways. Prior to joining Tri-C, Dr. Rahschulte spent more than two decades at Ivy Tech Community College in a variety of leadership roles, including Vice President for Academic Affairs and Associate Provost. She is a 2024–2025 Aspen Rising Presidents Fellow and has contributed to national and state initiatives supporting student success and academic advancement.



Chelsea Elliott, MSW, Founder & CEO of Sōmōcom Lab and creator of the EQ Kids Crew! ® The Social-Emotional Card Game for Kids. Her mission is to help adults create emotionally healthy and safe environments for kids while building kids' confidence, resilience, and communication skills through emotional wellness. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Cincinnati in Psychology, her master's degree from Boston College in Macro Social Work, a Women in Entrepreneurship certificate from Cornell University, is a graduate of the Central Ohio Parent Leadership Training Institute, and Goldman Sachs One Million Black Women's Black in Business Program.



Courtney Clarke, Ed.D., serves as Associate Dean of Social Sciences, at the Western Campus of Cuyahoga Community College. In this role, she oversees the academic disciplines of Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, History, Anthropology and Education. In addition, she serves as associate director of the Institute for Poverty in Urban Education, aligning with her research interests in equity, poverty, and building social capital for under-resourced students.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS AND SPEAKER BIOS

Legislative Update

Higher education policy in Ohio continues to evolve, making it essential for institutional leaders to **stay informed and prepared**. This session will deliver a timely and engaging overview of recent and pending legislative developments affecting higher education at both the state and federal levels. Participants will receive **updates on key Ohio legislation**, including House Bill 96 and Senate Bill 1, with a focus on how these measures may shape **institutional governance, funding priorities, academic programming, and student support services**.

In addition to state-level updates, the session will highlight emerging federal legislative trends and policy actions with the potential to influence compliance expectations, financial aid programs, workforce initiatives, and institutional accountability. **Designed to connect policy developments to real-world institutional impact**, this presentation will translate complex legislative language into clear, actionable insights. Attendees will leave with a stronger understanding of the **current policy landscape**, greater awareness of anticipated legislative priorities, and **practical strategies for monitoring and responding** to ongoing policy changes affecting Ohio's higher education community.



Dr. Holly Craider is the Founder and an Attorney at Craider Law. She also serves as the Vice President of Curriculum and Academic Quality, and an adjunct faculty member in the Business Administration department at Cuyahoga Community College. With 20 years of experience as a higher education professional, she has worked in the areas of admissions, financial aid, student success, recruitment, eLearning & Innovation, academic affairs, and curriculum development. Craider also serves as a Peer Reviewer for the Higher Learning Commission.

Craider has been a regular presenter for professional organizations including the ACE Women's Network of Ohio, the American Association of Community Colleges, the National Resource Center for the First Year Experience, American College Personnel Association, and the National Career Development Association. Her areas of research include appreciative inquiry in regard to first-generation community college students and the utilization of communication as a means to motivate and uplift students and higher education professionals.

Dr. Craider is a Ralph M. Besse Teaching Excellence award winner and is a graduate of the John Rouche and HERS Wellesley leadership institutes, and of the Greater Cleveland Partnership leadership program. She has a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Kent State University and a juris doctorate degree from Akron Law.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS AND SPEAKER BIOS

Panel Discussion: Generations in the Workplace

Explore the dynamics of today's **multigenerational workforce** in this engaging session featuring **perspectives from across career stages, generations, and backgrounds**. As organizations bring together individuals with diverse experiences, expectations, and communication styles, understanding these differences is key to building strong, **collaborative teams**. This session will highlight how generational perspectives influence the workplace and offer **practical strategies** for fostering mutual understanding, effective communication, and inclusive environments where **all employees can thrive**.



Dr. Christina Hampshire (Millennial), LISW-S, CDCA, is a licensed mental health and substance use therapist with 12+ years of experience serving youth, adults, and families across Ohio. She provides individual, family, and group counseling through her fully online private practice, grounded in compassionate, client-centered care. She holds a BA and MSW from The Ohio State University and a doctorate in Human Services from Capella University. Passionate about growth and well-being, she integrates clinical expertise with a leadership lens in her work. Outside of practice, she enjoys writing, reading, art, gaming, karaoke, and time with family and friends.



Dr. Patricia Hampshire (Gen X) is the Director of Student Counseling Services at Rhodes State College, with 18 years of service. She previously served as Chair of Public Services and Assistant Professor in the Addictions, Mental Health, and Social Work Assistant program, and remains passionate about supporting student growth. She is an Independently Licensed Social Worker with Supervision designation (LISW-S), a Human Services-Board Certified Practitioner (HS-BCP), and a certified Sexologist. Amongst other degree, Dr. Hampshire earned her Doctorate in Human Services from Capella University. Outside of work, she enjoys time with her children, crafting, cooking, and music- often singing and dancing wherever she goes



Linda Pleiman (Boomer) joined ACE WNO in 2020 while supporting the Vice President of Institutional Innovation and Economic Development at Union Institute & University. She currently serves as Secretary and Treasurer for ACE WNO, where she provides administrative support to the board and contributes to the organization's operations as a non-voting member.



Kaylor Sines (Gen Z) is a senior workforce strategy leader at Columbus State Community College, specializing in employer engagement, talent development, and innovative training solutions. In nearly six years with the Office of Talent Strategy, she has advanced to Senior Director, leading accelerated training programs, the non-credit registration office, and high-impact employer partnerships. She holds bachelor's degrees in Strategic Communication and Nonprofit Leadership & Strategy and a master's in Communication and Business Leadership from High Point University



Dr. Nanette L. Smith (GenX) is a higher education leader with 20+ years of experience in teaching, assessment, and academic administration, with a focus on accreditation, institutional effectiveness, and strategic planning. She serves as Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning at Rhodes State College and as the College's Accreditation Liaison Officer with the Higher Learning Commission. Amongst other degree, she holds a Doctorate in Education Leadership and Management from Capella University She is a Capella ambassador and a member of the Higher Learning Commission Peer Corps.

BE THE CONNECTION. REPRESENT YOUR INSTITUTION.

Become an Institutional Representative for ACE WNO!

Institutional Representatives serve as key liaisons between their campus and ACE WNO—helping to share resources, gather insights, and strengthen collaboration across our higher education community.



AS AN INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIVE, YOU WILL:



STAY INFORMED

Receive timely updates on ACE WNO programs, events, and initiatives.



SHARE & CONNECT

Bring valuable information back to your campus and share your insights with the network.



ENGAGE & COLLABORATE

Participate in discussions, committees, and initiatives that advance higher education in Ohio



AMPLIFY IMPACT

Help strengthen communications and promote opportunities for your colleagues



BE A LEADER

Play an active role in shaping the future of our institutions and communities.



STEP UP. SPEAK UP. SIGN UP.

Your voice. Your campus. Our collective impact.

READY TO GET INVOLVED?

Sign up today to become your institution's Representative for ACE WNO.

Email
Amanda.Watkins@wright.edu
to apply!

SHARE YOUR EXPERTISE. MAKE AN IMPACT.



SUBMIT A PROPOSAL for an ACE WNO VIRTUAL LUNCH & LEARN SESSION!

Our Virtual Lunch & Learn series connects higher education professionals across Ohio and beyond for 60 minutes of insights, strategies, and solutions that matter. We’re looking for engaging, practical, and innovative topics that will inform, inspire, and spark conversation.

TOPIC IDEAS MAY INCLUDE:



LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT
Leading teams and navigating change



STUDENT SUCCESS & ENGAGEMENT
Strategies to support student outcomes



TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Leveraging tools and emerging trends



POLICY, COMPLIANCE & GOVERNANCE
Staying informed and moving forward

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- ✓ Sessions are 60 minutes in length, including Q&A
- ✓ Open to ACE WNO members and partners
- ✓ Focus on practical takeaways and real-world application
- ✓ Sessions will be held virtually
- ✓ Proposals are reviewed on a rolling basis

SUBMISSION INFORMATION



READY TO SHARE YOUR IDEA?
Submit your proposal using our online form.

surveymonkey.com/r/ssACEWNO

Thank you!



Thank you to our speakers and attendees
for sharing your time and talents.

We appreciate your support!

www.aceohiowomen.org

