



Collaborative Conference Agenda

8:15 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. **Registration, Networking Breakfast & Vendor Fair // Event Forum**

9:00 a.m. - 9:10 a.m. **Welcome // Event Forum**
C. Todd Jones, President and General Counsel // AICUO
Dr. John Comerford, President // Otterbein University

9:10 a.m. - 10:25 a.m. **Presidential Panel Discussion // Event Forum**
Dr. Jared Tice, President // Capital University
Ms. Kathryn Heidemann, President // Cleveland Institute of Art
Dr. Corey Cockerill, President // Wilmington College
Moderator: Rocco Freed, Partnership Director // EdSights

10:35 a.m. - 11:25 a.m. **Track Session 1**

- Beyond the Balance: Reframing Financial Responsibility Through Campus-Wide Collaboration *- Ashland University // Rm. 164
- Rethinking Gateway Placement and Removing Barriers to Matriculation - Franklin University // Rm. 113
- Systems, Not People: Fixing Campus Program Pitfalls through Better Processes - Ohio Wesleyan University // Rm. 140
- Bridging the Gaps: Designing Collaborative Information Systems to Support Adult Learner Transitions - Oberlin College, ESC of Northeast Ohio // Rm. 165

11:35 a.m. - 12:25 p.m. **Track Session 2**

- Driving Transformational Change - Selecting ONU's Next ERP *- Ohio Northern University // Rm. 164
- Audacity & Alignment: Repositioning Enrollment Marketing as a Strategic Driver of Institutional Growth - Columbus College of Art and Design // Rm. 113
- A Fieldhouse for Everyone: Where Design Meets Mission - Design Collaborative, Heidelberg University // Rm. 140
- Breaking Bread: Gamifying Intercultural Empathy and Navigating Difficult Conversations - John Carroll University // Rm. 165

12:25 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. **Networking Lunch & Vendor Fair // Event Forum**

1:40 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. **Track Session 3**

- Campus Master Planning In the Land-Rich, Cash-Poor Era *- McCullers Group, University of Dayton // Rm. 164
- Proactively Supporting Admitted Students for a Stronger Start - Edsights // Rm. 113
- CARE in Action: Strengthening Student Retention Through Belonging, Early Support, and Campus Partnerships - Wilmington College // Rm. 140
- Preparing Students to be READY for their Future - Otterbein University // Rm. 165

2:40 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. **Closing Session // Event Forum**
Equity in Inquiry: How to Conduct Neuroinclusive Campus Grievance Procedures
Laura Anthony, Chair, Education Practice Group // Bricker Graydon Wyatt
Senior Consultant // INCompliance Consulting

Session Descriptions

Session 1

Beyond the Balance: Reframing Financial Responsibility Through Campus-Wide Collaboration

Catherine Williams, Asst. Provost & Senior Advisor to the President for Student Success | Ashland University

Janet Edwards, CPA, Assistant VP & Controller | Ashland University

Marc Pasteris, VP and CFO | Ashland University

Institutions across higher education continue to face challenges related to financial literacy, student financial account responsibility, and the impacts of unpaid balances on student success and institutional stability. At Ashland University (AU), fragmented processes, inconsistent messaging, delayed payments, and beginning-of-term account issues affected key populations, including student-athletes, international students, and residential students. Financial literacy and accountability were often viewed as transactional rather than integrated components of student success. To address these challenges, AU launched a cross-campus collaboration uniting Financial Aid, Student Accounts, Student Success, Athletics, and International Services under a shared, student-centered framework. Using institutional data, AU identified populations needing additional support, evaluated processes, clarified roles, and examined system limitations to improve efficiency and compliance.

Rethinking Gateway Placement and Removing Barriers to Matriculation

Dr. Kody Kuehnl, Dean, College of Arts, Sciences & Technology | Franklin University

Dr. Lynne Rouzer, SVP, Student Affairs & Enrollment Management | Franklin University

Each trimester, hundreds of otherwise qualified working adult applicants do not matriculate, not because of academic inability, but because of friction with placement testing. What if the barrier isn't demonstrating college readiness but the process itself? Franklin University is replacing traditional gatekeeping with a multi-model, technology-enabled placement strategy. At the center is an agentic AI-supported Guided Self-Placement system that actively engages students in structured reflection, presents authentic course expectations, and generates placement insights, followed by a required advising conversation to preserve rigor and accountability. By combining AI, student agency, controlled pilot design, and embedded safeguards, we are testing whether institutions can increase matriculation, protect academic standards, and improve persistence all while removing one of higher education's most persistent enrollment barriers.

Systems, Not People: Fixing Campus Program Pitfalls through Better Processes

Lauren Hensley, Director of Holistic Advising | Ohio Wesleyan University

Brad Pulcini, Dean of Student Services | Ohio Wesleyan University

Emily Lugg, Director of the Sagan Academic Resource Center | Ohio Wesleyan University

When our campus programs aren't getting the buy-in we would like, it can be easy to blame a lack of resources, skills, or care. When we flip the script to instead look at the systems affecting the challenge, we get to the root of the challenge, transforming the ways we work. In this session, leaders of four campus offices at Ohio Wesleyan University will share examples of turning challenges into successes by recognizing the system-level issue/opportunity and ultimately building a better process. The session will be directly relevant to first-year experience, new student registration, faculty development, and academic success, while overall takeaways and discussion prompts will engage all functional areas of higher education.

Bridging the Gaps: Designing Collaborative Information Systems to Support Adult Learner Transitions

Nadine Grimm, Coordinator of 21st Century Learning | ESC of Northeast Ohio

Tanisha Shende, Student | Oberlin College and Conservatory

The Northeast Ohio Adult Provider Network, coordinated by the Educational Service Center (ESC) of Northeast Ohio, unites independent adult education organizations around a shared mission: building a regional system that offers learners real options and mobility as they pursue workforce readiness. Despite this shared vision, limited coordination and inconsistent information sharing create transition points where learners fall through the cracks. In partnership with Oberlin College, Network members are addressing this challenge through a two-phase, human-centered design study examining how breakdowns occur during program transitions, what information providers need from one another, and how a collaborative information system can improve coordination and learner retention. Working directly with adult learners and providers, the team is developing a prototype information-sharing and coordinating tool to strengthen the connective tissue between programs. Attendees will leave with practical insights on building cross-organizational, community partnerships that keep learners at the center.

Session Descriptions

Session 2

Driving Transformational Change - Selecting ONU's Next ERP

Jeff Reiman, CIO | Ohio Northern University

This presentation outlines the university's strategic process to select a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system as part of a broader digital transformation. After more than 30 years on an on-premises system, the institution pursued a cloud-based Software as a Service (SaaS) solution to better support its students, driven by Board priorities, staffing challenges, and budget needs. A cross-functional committee representing HR, Finance, IT, and the Registrar completed the selection, choosing Workday over other vendors. The university's vision focuses on transforming operations through automation, increasing efficiency with streamlined processes, enhancing the user experience, and establishing a secure, reliable "single source of truth" for data. Expected benefits include improved financial and HR workflows, stronger mobile capabilities for students, and advanced tools for IT, along with key lessons on the importance of strong partners, process standardization, clear communication, and preparing teams for large-scale change.

Audacity & Alignment: Repositioning Enrollment Marketing as a Strategic Driver of Institutional Growth

Tia Ramey, Senior Director of Marketing and Performance | Columbus College of Art and Design

Corinne Mares, Marketing Manager | Columbus College of Art and Design

In a higher education landscape defined by economic uncertainty and increased competition, institutions cannot afford fragmented messaging or passive marketing. This session explores how finding the audacity in your institutional voice can become the catalyst for deeper alignment and measurable enrollment growth. We will examine how clarifying what truly differentiates your college, and boldly articulating that impact, creates stronger resonance with both students and parents. Participants will learn how to build cross-campus alignment around a shared messaging framework, ensuring marketing, admissions, and leadership are moving in the same strategic direction. The session also demonstrates how to connect bold storytelling to performance by leveraging website optimization, behavioral tracking, SEO strategy, email engagement, and weekly dashboard reporting. Audacity is not just tone – it is a disciplined approach to differentiation, alignment, and accountability. Attendees will leave with practical strategies to sharpen their message, unify their teams, and measure the real impact of their enrollment marketing efforts.

A Fieldhouse for Everyone: Where Design Meets Mission

Tim Terman, Partner, Senior Architect | Design Collaborative

Ashley Helmstetter, VP for Advancement, Marketing, Alumni, and Community Relations | Heidelberg University

When Heidelberg University built Frann's Fieldhouse, the vision went beyond creating a space for varsity sports. The goal was simple: give students a place to gather, move, connect, and feel like they belong. This session will break down how intentional choices helped turn a large recreational facility into a true third place—welcoming, flexible, and accessible to all students. Attendees will learn how to align facility investments with student success goals, design spaces that prioritize belonging—not just performance—and create environments that feel genuinely open to everyone, not just those in uniform. They'll gain relatable insights and practical strategies for leveraging campus facilities as powerful, everyday tools to strengthen engagement and support long-term retention.

Breaking Bread: Gamifying Intercultural Empathy and Navigating Difficult Conversations

Ayse Selen Zarrelli, Director, Center for Student Belonging | John Carroll University

Dr. Semiha Topal, Associate Director, Tuohy Center of Interreligious Understanding | John Carroll University

How do we move students from polarized silence to curious dialogue? This session explores "Breaking Bread," an award-winning collaborative program at John Carroll University between the Tuohy Center for Interreligious Understanding and the Center for Student Belonging. By integrating structured gameplay into interreligious dialogue, this student-led initiative—funded by Interfaith America and recipient of the 2025 OCPA Innovation Award—creates a low-stakes environment for high-impact learning. Participants will discover how to use interactive programming to build empathy and foster curiosity on their own campuses.

Session Descriptions

Session 3

Campus Master Planning In the Land-Rich, Cash-Poor Era

Cortland McCullers, Director, Development Planning | McCullers Group

Rick Krysiak, VP for Facilities & Planning | University of Dayton

McCullers Group will address the challenges and value of available or underutilized land and assets, and the opportunities they present to support university goals. Featuring a campus perspective from the University of Dayton, the session will explore the role of housing, recreation, entertainment, athletics, and service- and experiential-focused retail, as well as strategies for maximizing available land and funding to meet these needs. It will also highlight the value of a campus master plan that incorporates diversified revenue opportunities while enhancing the student and faculty experience, along with lessons learned, best practices, and key value-adds from McCullers Group's experience in the marketplace.

Proactively Supporting Admitted Students for a Stronger Start

Gabrielle Cervantes, Partnerships Director | EdSights

EdSights will provide a data-driven discussion on how institutions are using real-time insights to better support students through the admissions process and set them up for a stronger start before day one. The session will focus on identifying and addressing enrollment barriers—such as financial uncertainty, next-step confusion, and readiness questions—as they surface after acceptance. Through SMS-based engagement and real-time response data, institutions can uncover patterns across incoming students, guide timely outreach, and reduce friction during critical enrollment moments. Attendees will gain practical takeaways on how admissions teams can use data to improve coordination, support students earlier, and create a more connected admissions experience.

CARE in Action: Strengthening Student Retention Through Belonging, Early Support, and Campus Partnerships

Toycee Hague-Palmer, Ed.D., Associate VP for Student Affairs | Wilmington College

Sigrid Solomon, VP, Chief Student Affairs, Dean of Students | Wilmington College

This presentation examines Wilmington College's CARE Team model, a coordinated, student-focused approach that promotes student success and retention through campus partnerships. Drawing on research by Vincent Tinto and Terrell Strayhorn, the session shows that students are more likely to be retained and persist when they have significant relationships and feel they belong. A key part of this model is the CARE Team's use of an early alert system, which helps spot students' concerns early and start timely, personal support. Faculty, staff, coaches, and campus support services work together so Student Success Coordinators and CARE Team members can reach out, mentor, and connect students with campus resources to address academic, social, and personal challenges. Coupled with interventions and individualized support, Wilmington College students' ability to remain enrolled and continue their academic pursuits is positively impacted. Through intentional collaboration, the CARE model builds connections, supports achievement, and improves retention.

Preparing Students to be READY for their Future

Dr. Colette Masterson, Associate Director, Student Success & Career Development | Otterbein University

Established in 2025, READY Day is a day out of the academic calendar dedicated to personal and professional preparation. Shifting the academic calendar to cancel classes, activities, and athletic events, all Otterbein students, faculty and staff spent the day focused on affirming their academic course of study, building community in their academic discipline, and planning for life after Otterbein, connecting with alumni, exploring internship and employment opportunities. Hosting a conference for 2,200 students takes a quiet peaceful village! Learn how faculty, staff, students, alumni, employers, and community stakeholders came together to start this new University tradition and graduation requirement.

Session Descriptions

Closing Session

Equity in Inquiry: How to Conduct Neuroinclusive Campus Grievance Procedures

Presenter: Laura Anthony, Chair, Education Practice Group, Senior Consultant | Bricker Graydon Wyatt, INCompliance Consulting

Statistics suggest that up to 20 percent of the population—and 53 percent of Gen Z—experience neurodiverse conditions that affect how they process, recall, and communicate information. Campus grievance procedures often overlook these impacts, making it difficult for neurodivergent participants to navigate them. In this session, Laura Anthony will explore common forms of neurodivergence and share strategies for institutions to improve policies and practices, and ensure grievance procedures are neuroinclusive. She will address misconceptions about neurodiversity, highlight research on credibility assessments, and offer practical tips for structuring investigations and hearings, including those under Title IX, to produce reliable outcomes. Laura's perspective is shaped by her career as a disability lawyer and her journey supporting a parent with traumatic brain injury. These experiences, coupled with her role as a civil rights investigator, hearing officer and facilitator of informal resolutions, enable her to translate legal requirements into practical solutions for higher education professionals.