

2025 TLSD

2025 Teaching, Learning and Student Development Conference
Shaping the Future of Massachusetts Community Colleges
Innovation, Inclusion and Impact

Friday, May 2, 2025

8:00am-3:30pm



Bristol Community College

777 Elsbree Street, Fall River, MA 02720

BRISTOL
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

2025 TLSD

2025 Teaching, Learning and Student Development Conference
Shaping the Future of Massachusetts Community Colleges
Innovation, Inclusion and Impact

Schedule-at-a-Glance

8:00-8:45am

Registration and Breakfast

H Building Lobby

8:45-10:00am

Morning General Session

H Building Theatre

10:15-10:45am

Breakout Sessions

H, J, C, E, & L Bldgs.

11:00-11:30am

Breakout Sessions

H, J, C, E, & L Bldgs.

11:30am-12:30pm

Lunch

G Building Atrium

12:45-1:15pm

Breakout Sessions

H, J, C, E, & L Bldgs.

1:30-2:00pm

Breakout Sessions

H, J, C, E, & L Bldgs.

2:15-2:45pm

Breakout Sessions

H, J, C, E, & L Bldgs.

3:00-3:30pm

Breakout Sessions

H, J, C, E, & L Bldgs.

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Morning Keynote Presentation



Michael D. Smith

Professor of Information Technology and Public Policy
Heinz College and Tepper School of Business
Carnegie Mellon University

Michael Smith is a higher education strategist and author of *The Abundant University: Remaking Higher Education for a Digital World*. At TLSD, he will challenge us to rethink the limitations of traditional academic structures and embrace an open, abundant model driven by technology and data.

Smith's work focuses on unlocking the potential of digital transformation in higher education, making learning more accessible, scalable, and transparent. Through his research and advocacy, he promotes the use of open standards, credential registries, and interoperable systems to break down institutional silos and create opportunity at scale. His insights offer a compelling vision for building an educational system that meets the evolving needs of learners and employers alike.

Main Stage—H Building Theatre

10:15-10:45am

Credential Engine

Jared Diener, Credential Engine, and Tim Hathaway, Bristol CC

Mapping the credentials, qualifications, and skills landscape to support learning and career pathways.

11:00-11:30am

AACRAO

Mike Simmons, AACRAO

Providing advocacy, research, and policy-based guidance and training to higher education professionals.

12:45-1:15pm

CCBA

Angela Kersenbrock, CCBA

Providing leadership and resources to community colleges to build and sustain high-value, career-focused baccalaureate degrees that maximize opportunities for all learners.

1:30-2:00pm

Data and Web3

Dale Allen and Jeff Merriman, DXtera; Nick Burrell, ZogoTech

Helping colleges use data to answer questions to improve institutional processes.

2:15-2:45pm

NCIA

Katherine Wesley, NCIA

Operating under AACCC to provide leadership for instructional programs and activities and promote innovation.

3:00-3:30pm

CredLens

Kate Smalkin, CredLens

Matching credential issuer data to wage and employment data to provide real-time analytics.

10:15-10:30am	Quinsigamond Community College <i>Kevin Li, Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs</i>
10:30-10:45am	Bristol Community College <i>Adrienne Foster-Scharf, Dean of STEM</i>
10:45-11:00am	Middlesex Community College <i>Karen Townsend, Dean of Health</i>
11:00-11:15am	Cape Cod Community College <i>Tom Schaefer, Associate Professor</i>
11:15-11:30am	Berkshire Community College <i>Amanda Lardizabal, Assistant Professor</i>
11:30-11:45am	Northern Essex Community College <i>Tom Greene, Interim Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs</i>
12:45-1:00pm	Roxbury Community College
1:00-1:15pm	Greenfield Community College <i>Trevor Kearns, Interim Dean of Liberal Arts</i>
1:15-1:30pm	Massasoit Community College <i>Rachel Jessica Daniel, Associate Dean of Professional Development</i>
1:30-1:45pm	Holyoke Community College <i>Renee Tastad, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs</i>
1:45-2:00pm	North Shore Community College <i>Andrea Milligan, Director, Center for Teaching, Learning & Innovation</i>
2:00-2:15pm	Massachusetts Bay Community College <i>Richard Williams, Dean, Student Success and Strategic Initiatives</i>
2:15-2:30pm	Mount Wachusett Community College <i>Laurie Occhipinti, Dean, Liberal Arts, Humanities, Education</i>
2:30-2:45pm	Springfield Technical Community College
2:45-3:00pm	Bunker Hill Community College

10:15-10:45am**Building Bridges: Comprehensive Support for Early College Success at Argosy Collegiate Charter School**

Holly Raposo, Dean of Early College Programming and Career Development; **Jessica Mello Campbell**, Dean of Early College Programming and Career Development; **Abbi O'Connor**, Early College Liaison; and **Brian Silva-Boutwell**, Early College Liaison

Argosy's wraparound support services for early college students include structured companion courses within the school schedule, ensuring consistent companion course teacher check-ins and up-to-date student progress tracking to proactively support students. Faculty/liaison collaboration can provide valuable insight and connections to college resources. This comprehensive approach helps students navigate both high school and college demands, ensuring academic and personal success.

11:00-11:30am**Charting the Course: Argosy Early College Students' Insights and Stories**

Holly Raposo, Dean of Early College Programming and Career Development; **Jessica Mello Campbell**, Dean of Early College Programming and Career Development

In this panel, early college students share their personal experiences navigating the transition between high school and college. They will discuss challenges, triumphs, and the support systems that have helped them succeed. This session offers valuable insights into the student experience, providing a platform for peer-driven conversation and advice.

12:45-1:15pm**Students as a Driving Force for Retention: Learning from Student Narratives to Build Collaborative and Supportive Classroom, Mentorship and Advising Experiences**

Laurel Carpenter, Professor and Chair of Environmental Science, Holyoke Community College

Students are experts on what they need to succeed in college; yet, they rarely are involved in developing their own college experiences. This session will provide case study examples and resources for using student voice to build collaborative environments to shape classroom and mentoring/advising experiences and ultimately increase student retention.

1:30-2:00pm**Missing Piece: Centering Student Voices in Higher Education**

Dejour Hollins, *Coordinator of Student Engagement, Identity, and Belonging, Massachusetts Bay Community College*

Pathways to Belonging: A Live Puzzle Challenge is an interactive workshop where participants collaboratively build a puzzle representing student belonging in higher education. Through hands-on problem-solving and dialogue, faculty and staff will identify barriers, explore solutions, and develop actionable strategies to create more inclusive, supportive environments that amplify student voices and experiences.

2:15-2:45pm**Community College Students as Participatory Action Co-Researchers (PAR): Engaging in Innovative, Meaningful, and Student-Led Approaches to Enhance Student Success at Massasoit Community College**

Tara Gully-Hightower, *Director of the Participatory Action Research Institute; with PAR Researchers Andrew Toy, Tisha Renee Williams, Poliana Santos, Demilade Adetoro, Elijah Chukwukwado, Cynthia Udenenwu, and Samuel Odunug*

Original and courageous, the Massasoit PAR Institute enhances student success by centering student voice through research "with" students, not "on" students. Students as co-researchers present impactful strategies and engage in interactive activities based on their study, Global Students: Supporting Their Brilliance, to illuminate the collaborative processes used to curate innovative student-support policies.

3:00-3:30pm**Community College Student Experiences: Learn from the Experts, Students!**

Laurel Carpenter, *Professor and Chair of Environmental Science, Holyoke Community College*

Community college STEM students from Holyoke Community College will participate in a panel discussion about their experiences in community college. Panelists will share their narratives around their academic assets, academic successes and challenges, discuss why they chose to attend a community college and share insights into what keeps them motivated and engaged.

10:15-10:45am**Biology and Nursing Alignment**

Amanda Lardizabal, Assistant Professor of Biology; Linden Crane; **Sarah Broughel**, Associate Professor of Nursing; **Gina Foley**, Associate Professor of Biology, Berkshire Community College

The Biology and Nursing departments at Berkshire Community College are working together to create a scaffolding process for students that ensures a smooth transition from the biology pre-nursing courses to the Nursing program. In this session, we will share the importance of alignment, the process of alignment, and initial findings. The primary focus of this work is to align the learning outcomes of the Fundamentals of Biology, Anatomy and Physiology, Microbiology, and Nursing courses. These efforts ensure that the Biology Department is providing a firm foundation for Pre-Nursing students. Before the formal start of this work, preliminary alignment has already improved program completion rates and NCLEX-RN pass rates. This crucial work will result in short-term benefits, by fostering student success and improving the student learning experience, and long-term benefits, by leading to safe, competent registered nurses.

11:00-11:30am**Building a Bridge Program to Empower Incoming Community College Nursing Students**

Deb O'Dowd, Assistant Professor of Nursing; **Clarissa Codrington**, Assistant Professor of English/ESL, Massachusetts Bay Community College

MassBay Nursing Summer Launch is a cross-disciplinary enrichment program for all incoming nursing students. The goal is to introduce concepts they will need including dosage calculation, linguistic, and communication techniques, giving the students opportunities to familiarize themselves with a new campus and faculty members and work on team-building.

12:45-1:15pm**Case Management, the STEM Starter Academy Model**

Hillel Sims, AVP of Academic Affairs, Dean of STEM; **Kasia Auguste**, STEM Coordinator/Case Manager, Roxbury Community College

Case Management, a major component of the STEM Starter Academy grant for many years, is not just about getting a student to graduation, but giving them as much along the way as possible.

1:30-2:00pm**Empowering STEM Students: Improving Outcomes Through Targeted Coaching**

Kristyn Norris, *STEM Coach*; **Alissa Torres Santiago**, *STEM Coach, Springfield Technical Community College*

STEM coaching gives extra support to students on academic warning, helping them stay on track and succeed. In just one year at Springfield Technical Community College, it's already made a big impact—fewer suspensions, better retention, and stronger academic performance. Learn how to bring STEM coaching to your campus and track its success.

2:15-2:45pm**HyFlex for Health Programs and Beyond: Maximizing Learner Engagement and Outcomes**

Julie Breen, *Professor*; **Elizabeth Stone**, *Associate Professor, Middlesex Community College*

Enhance your teaching with Hy-Flex technology! Discover practical strategies for an inclusive and dynamic learning environment. Build a community by engaging learners with synchronous discussions, breakout rooms, and online tools. Learn to integrate case studies and formative assessments for real-time feedback, empowering all individuals with a flexible and engaging experience.

3:00-3:30pm**Retention, Success, Persistence, Oh My!**

Brian L. Candido, *Department Chair and Professor, Computer Information Technology*; **Renee G. Tetrault**, *Professor, Office Computer Information Technology; Springfield Technical Community College*

STCC has supported the STEM Supplemental Instruction, SI, Program since 2010. The results are clear cut the students do considerably better with a SI. We want to share what we have learned during SI journey by presenting our findings, videos thoughts from SI's and directly from the students themselves.

10:15-10:45am**Dangers of AI and Automation: Encountering the Algorithmic Model of Education***Engin Atasay, Professor of Education, Bristol Community College*

Mapping out how schools are organizing their relationships with technology and accountability. Offering a brief critique of automation and algorithmic models of education, while exploring the dangers of AI to our workplaces, pedagogies and sensibilities. Insisting on developing reflective, meaningful and ethical experiences with technology through pedagogies and encounters of affect.

11:00-11:30am**NOTE: This session meets in K 101****Using Generative AI to Align a Course***Ed Morgan, Associate Dean for Institutional Assessment and Planning, Bunker Hill Community College*

Microsoft Copilot will align institutional learning goals, program learning objectives, course learning objectives and activities, and the assessment used to measure student learning. Bring your course and a laptop to try it!

12:45-1:15pm**Help has Arrived: AI as TA***Rachel Bancroft, Associate Professor, Language and Literature/ Co-coordinator Teaching and Learning Center; Patricia Allen, Professor, Language and Literature/ Co-coordinator Teaching and Learning Center, Cape Cod Community College*

Generative AI chatbots can help us manage some of the more tedious aspects of our workload, particularly administrative tasks and lesson planning. In this hands-on workshop, we'll try out 10 prompts to clear some clutter from our to-do lists and let us focus on the work we love.

How can we help students harness the power of generative AI and prepare them for the future while preserving academic integrity? In this workshop, we'll demonstrate the use of AI in four college course activities designed to encourage critical thinking, ethics, and autonomy.

1:30-2:00pm**It's Already in Their Phones; We Might as Well Drag It into the Classroom**

Rachel Bancroft, Associate Professor, Language and Literature/ Co-coordinator Teaching and Learning Center; **Patricia Allen**, Professor, Language and Literature/ Co-coordinator Teaching and Learning Center, Cape Cod Community College

How can we help students harness the power of generative AI and prepare them for the future while preserving academic integrity? In this workshop, we'll demonstrate the use of AI in four college course activities designed to encourage critical thinking, ethics, and autonomy.

2:15-2:45pm**AI-Powered Assessment - Transforming Student Evaluation and Feedback**

J.M. Grenier, Part-time Faculty; **Peter Shea**, Director of the Office of Professional Development, Middlesex Community College

Beyond concerns of plagiarism, AI has given us an opportunity to rethink how we do assessment. From design to interaction and feedback, learn about innovative tools and techniques that enhance both formative and summative practices and discover practical applications for your courses.

3:00-3:30pm**Integrating AI Tools into Classroom Environments**

Hao Loi, Professor; **Gargi Chug**, Associate Professor; **Charulata Trivedi**, Professor, Quinsigamond Community College

This proposal aims to present PyTutor, an interactive AI-powered Python tool developed in collaboration with MIT and Georgia State University (GSU). PyTutor enhances programming instruction by providing an inquiry-based approach and real-time code visualization, enabling students to better understand fundamental coding concepts such as loops, conditionals, and data structures. As Python becomes a required course across multiple disciplines at QCC, integrating PyTutor into classroom settings offers a unique, hands-on approach to programming education, enhancing student comprehension, debugging skills, and engagement. This session will demonstrate PyTutor's features, examine its impact on learning outcomes, and provide faculty with practical strategies for integrating AI-driven tools into their teaching to support student success.

10:15-10:45am**The Case for Low Skill Peer Reviewers***Eric Holmes, Adjunct Instructor, Berkshire Community College*

It is a common comment from students that they cannot provide quality peer review due to two factors: a lack of writing skill and a lack of topic knowledge. However, this presentation will demonstrate that peer reviewers lacking in writing skills and topic knowledge are highly effective at peer review.

11:00-11:30am**Strategies to Support Executive Functioning in the College Classroom***Peter Hess, Learning Specialist, Middlesex Community College*

Are you seeing more students struggling to stay focused and organized? Come learn about some specific, research-supported strategies that instructors can use to help all students, but especially those who struggle with 6 recognized aspects of executive functioning – activation, focus, effort, emotions, memory, and action.

12:45-1:15pm**Empowering Student Success: Building Confidence and Independence Through Notetaking Technology**

Terri Rodriguez, Associate Director of Student Accessibility Services, Quinsigamond Community College; Pamela Farron, Coordinator, Disability Resource Center, Berkshire Community College; Jaimie March, Assistant Dean of Student Support Services, Middlesex Community College; Jennifer Pike, Coordinator, Access & Disability Resources, Massasoit Community College; Kristie Proctor, Director, Student Accessibility Services, Quinsigamond Community College

Notetaking services have served as an accommodation for students with disabilities for decades. Yet, identifying qualified “peer notetakers” is challenging. Advances in audio capture technology have reduced the reliance on peer notetakers while improving student learning. Statewide accessibility service providers will discuss the technology and the improved access for students.

1:30-2:00pm**Shaping Learning Through Questions: Harnessing Elicitation and Prompt Engineering for Better Outcomes***Brady Hammond, Dean of English & Humanities, Quinsigamond Community College*

While prompt engineering and elicitation pedagogy might seem unrelated, they both rely on thoughtful crafting of questions to bring out meaningful answers. This session will examine their connections and classroom applications. Participants will learn strategies to craft questions that can foster engagement, critical thinking, and deeper learning experiences.

2:15-2:45pm**Strategies to Increase First-Year Mathematics Completion at QCC***Ulises Poyser, Professor and Coordinator of Mathematics; Ben Benton, Dean of Math, Science, and Engineering, Quinsigamond Community College*

QCC has implemented a strategy to improve first-year mathematics completion by using multiple placement measures, creating tailored mathematics pathways, and offering corequisite instruction. Despite pandemic challenges, progress is evident. This presentation will highlight our strategy, share preliminary results, and explore the future of mathematics education at QCC.

10:15-10:45am**Libraries for Student Success: How to Orient Your Policies, Procedures, and Practices towards Student Needs**

Anna Sarneso, Dean, Library, Learning Commons, and Tutoring & Academic Support Center, Bunker Hill Community College

When Bunker Hill Community College opened a new library, it was an opportunity to review existing policies, procedures, and practices to orient the library to student needs. Leading the library with a consistent goal of student success affects behavioral policies, scheduling services, instruction, and circulation, among other areas of librarianship.

11:00-11:30am**Measuring the Value of Library Services: The Impact of Technology Lending on Student Outcomes**

Carl Todd, Coordinator of Library Services, Holyoke Community College

For six years, we've lent laptops, Chromebooks, and hotspots to students while tracking their academic outcomes. Our data reveals improved retention and course completion, particularly among Hispanic and African American students. We'll present our findings, discuss challenges in outcome correlations, and our methodology for assessing the impact of technology lending.

12:45-1:15pm**BUILD: A Student Success Innovation Lab**

KL Pereira, Librarian/Archivist, Holyoke Community College; Alicia Hyman, Librarian, Holyoke Community College

The HCC Library's BUILD (Better Use of Information and Library Databases) research competition, now in its seventh year, continues to grow. By amplifying student voices, promoting inclusive research instruction, and fostering meaningful faculty-student-staff interactions, BUILD enhances avenues to access, mentorship, and critical engagement—key factors in advancing student success via high impact practices.

1:30-2:00pm**Breaking Barriers and Celebrating Impact: Engaging Students and Donors in the New Scholarship Resource Center**

Laura White, Assistant Director of Donor Relations; **Yaritza Barta**, Administrative Assistant for Scholarships and Donor Relations, Holyoke Community College

In 2024, Holyoke Community College opened the Scholarship Resource Center (SRC) -- an innovative on-campus space to provide greater student access to scholarship opportunities and foster deeper connections with campus partners. It quickly became a hub for celebrating the impact of donor support and is creating a greater culture of philanthropy campuswide. Attendees will learn how the SRC helped to demystify the scholarship application process, create a culture of philanthropy on campus, teach students the importance of giving back and expressing gratitude, build partnerships with campus and external partners through workshops, events, and social media engagement; and create an interactive space for donors to engage with us and learn more about the impact of their giving. Even in the midst of Free Community College for All, the SRC continues to be a space where students can gain access to supports and funding that ensures they make it to the finish line.

2:15-2:45pm**Partners in Opportunity and Innovation: Building a Strategic Partnership between Foundation and College**

Amanda Sbriscia, Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the HCC Foundation, Holyoke Community College

Advancing strategic priorities, responding to opportunities, and meeting emerging student needs cannot happen without two things: 1) funding; and 2) a strong partnership with your college's foundation. In 2023, the Holyoke Community College Foundation embarked on a process of strategic alignment to ensure that its areas of focus were in lock-step with those of the college. The 18-month process not only clarified those priorities, but resulted in a more engaged board of directors that remains focused on what matters most -- and that led to the launch of new student programs and services that are positively impact the student experience every day.

3:00-3:30pm

Driving Change with Every Gift: An Innovative and Inclusive Giving Campaign with Serious Impact

Julie Phillips, Executive Director of Development; Doug Scanlon, Laura White, Holyoke Community College

In 2020, Holyoke Community College launched a campaign titled, "TogetherHCC," which was aimed at providing support (financial and otherwise) to students during the global pandemic. Since then, TogetherHCC Drive to Change Lives has continued as a 24-hour giving campaign aimed at not only raising funds, but galvanizing the entire community around the importance of community college and the impact of gifts of all sizes. The campaign just wrapped-up its sixth year, bringing in 504 donors in one day and raising a nearly \$1 million, cumulatively, since the campaign's inception. Beyond fundraising impact, the TogetherHCC has created virtual space for all members of the community to gain inspiration and feel included, and when this happens, the impact on our students is extraordinary.

10:15-10:45am**Building Community Connections through Place-Based Learning**

Melissa MacDonald, Associate Professor of Sociology; **Aurora Bautista**, Professor of Sociology, Bunker Hill Community College; **Carlos Maynard**, Professor of Sociology, Bunker Hill Community College

This presentation highlights an innovative place-based learning initiative at Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC), focused on engaging students with the Charlestown, Chinatown, and Chelsea neighborhoods. By embedding community assets into our sociology curriculum, this initiative fosters meaningful connections between students and their local community environments. Through partnerships with community organizations, students participate in activities such as site visits, local events, and community service, enhancing their sociological understanding and civic awareness. This project aims not only to strengthen students' academic and personal growth but also to build lasting connections between BHCC and these communities. The presentation will share key insights, outcomes, and challenges from the pilot phases, demonstrating how place-based learning can be a powerful tool for student engagement and community empowerment.

11:00-11:30am**Gull Island Institute: A Liberal Arts Experience**

Catherine Sughrue Etter, Professor; **Mike Baldon**, Supplemental Instructor; **Courtney Boseck**, Student, Cape Cod Community College

This interdisciplinary course on Penikese Island explored the relationship between land, community, and responsibility through hands-on activities, including beach cleanups and land management. Students engaged with both Western and Indigenous traditions, reflecting on sustainability and stewardship. The program culminated in a community event to share lessons learned on environmental care.

12:45-1:15pm**Tapping into your story to land that job: The Pitch**

Andrea Parker, Director, Early Childhood Workforce Grants; **Jonathan Noel**, Associate Director - Internships and Career Development, Bunker Hill Community College

Presenters will facilitate a session that will drive student career development. Participants will learn how to facilitate a deep dive into one's own story, in order to create a pitch that is intended to land interviews and jobs with the best working compensation and conditions. Student voice will guide the reflection, including examples and templates for workshops.

1:30-2:00pm

Career Literacy from the Beginning of a Learner's Journey

Aurora Bautista, Professor of Sociology; **Pam Eddinger**, President; **Arlene Vallie**, Interim Provost; **Carlos Maynard**, Professor, Bunker Hill Community College

This interactive workshop explores career literacy and readiness integration in the curriculum among participants and their home institutions. Learn how Bunker Hill Community College developed programming through the Ethnographies of Work (EoW) initiative, focusing on cultural wealth and social mobility. Attendees will create lessons for early-stage learners, using the Toolkit and Resource Manual from BHCC's EoW.

2:15-2:45pm

Career Pathways for Community Leadership: A Massachusetts System-Wide Community College Initiative

John Reiff, Director, Civic Learning and Engagement, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education; **Cathleen McCarron**, Dean of Arts & Humanities, Social & Behavioral Sciences, and Adult Basic Education; Cape Cod Community College; **Raúl Gutiérrez**, Professor of Latinx Studies and Spanish and Learning Communities Coordinator; Holyoke Community College; **Erin Smith**, Civic Engagement Coordinator – Experiential Education Center; Bristol Community College

Career Pathways for Community Leadership is a learn-and-earn initiative currently in place or being developed at 11 of our 15 community colleges. Designed to position students to pursue careers with non-profit organizations or local government as community change agents, the initiative includes both curriculum and paid internships with community organizations.

3:00-3:30pm

From Pedagogy to Andragogy: Advancing Digital Literacy for Community College Students through OER and Workforce Readiness

Mya T. Bowen, Associate Professor, Information Systems Technology Department, STEM Division, Roxbury Community College

Community college students require a digital literacy competency journey that bridges pedagogy and andragogy, equipping them with both hard and soft skills essential for workforce success. This session explores how integrating Open Educational Resources (OER) and digital literacy fosters self-directed learning, adaptability, and career readiness in the AI-driven job market.

10:15-10:45am**Effective Course Management Strategies for a Positive Learning Environment***Tony Fontes, Professor & Chair, Business Administration, Bunker Hill Community College*

This session explores strategies to create engaging and inclusive classroom/course environments that foster student success. Participants will engage in discussion topics and share best practices regarding attendance, late work policies, disruptive behavior and other course management issues. By the end of this session, educators will be equipped with actionable tools to enhance classroom dynamics and improve student outcomes.

11:00-11:30am**Reconceptualizing Higher Education: Accelerated Baccalaureate Degrees at Bristol CC***Engin Atasay, Professor of Education; Marie Kacmarsky, Coordinator of Nursing Equity and Student Success; Jennifer Pimental, Senior Director of Nursing, Bristol Community College*

Envisioning and developing new landscapes for higher education requires us to rethink the traditional premises of degree attainment, academic curriculum and programming. Therefore, this talk examines how competency or skill based accelerated degrees—which are aligned with the contemporary needs of our communities and students—can lead the way in creating post-secondary educational opportunities for affordability, access, and student empowerment.

12:45-1:15pm**GenEd Reform – Changing Bristol’s General Education Requirements***Danielle Licitra, Director of Institutional Assessment; Tim Hathaway, Director of Curriculum Engagement, Bristol Community College*

This workshop is specifically for Bristol Community College Faculty. This workshop brings together faculty to collaboratively discuss Bristol's General Education requirements. Our current GenEd structure has two challenges: 1) Excessive requirements: With a total of 10 General Education requirements curriculum planning has become overly complex. 2) Misalignment with MassTransfer: Our current requirements do not align with MassTransfer, creating barriers for students.

1:30-2:00pm**Pilot Early Childhood Education Certificate Program**

Daiane Antonio, Assistant Professor, Early Childhood Education Department, Massachusetts Bay Community College

This session examines the strengths and challenges encountered by Portuguese-speaking early childhood educators in Massachusetts. It emphasizes a pilot Early Childhood certificate program at MassBay Community College that fosters language access and inclusive practices, aiding educators' professional development and advocating for systemic change to promote inclusive early childhood education.

2:15-2:45pm**Adaptive Leadership: Fostering Environments for Emergent Innovation in Higher Education**

Oscar R. Lanza-Galindo, Holyoke Community College

In an era of rapid change, traditional top-down leadership often falls short. This session explores emergent strategies—a dynamic, decentralized approach that fosters innovation, inclusion, and institutional resilience. Attendees will learn how leaders can foster environments where emergent solutions arise, empowering academic institutions to adapt and evolve in response to student and workforce needs.

3:00-3:30pm**Degrees of Tomorrow: Empowering the Future Workforce with Technology in Massachusetts Community Colleges**

Claretta T. Stokes, Professor, Springfield Technical Community College; ***Alissa Torres Santiago***, STEM Coach, Springfield Technical Community College

Discover innovative approaches for Massachusetts Community Colleges to integrate emerging technologies, workforce trends, and inclusive degree pathways. This presentation highlights the power of agile curricula, collaborative partnerships, and equitable opportunities, empowering students to thrive in the fast-evolving, tech-driven job market.

11:00-11:30am**The New Faculty Seminar: How Preparing and Retaining New Faculty Fuels Student Success**

Z Zinter, Assistant Professor, Business and Information Technology; **Yezenia Lopez**, Assistant Professor, Psychology, Greenfield Community College

Since the COVID-19 pandemic higher education has experienced increased turnover rates and morale has decreased. The preparation and retention of faculty is crucial to fueling student success. In this session we will discuss how Greenfield Community College has acknowledged the importance of this and created a new faculty development model that not only supports new faculty through successes and challenges, but also engages faculty in best pedagogical practices to foster a culture of acceptance, belonging, and inclusivity in the classroom.

12:45-1:15pm**Learning Together, Growing Within: The Synergy of Emotional Intelligence and Community in Academic Success**

Tom Niemi, Associate Professor and Chair, Business Department, Massachusetts Bay Community College

This session will explore how emotional intelligence and community in the classroom work together to enhance academic success. Participants will learn strategies for fostering self-awareness, empathy, and strong and healthy interpersonal connections, along with classroom activities to promote inclusive classrooms and emotional growth, ultimately boosting student performance and well-being.

1:30-2:00pm**Empowering Students: Enhancing Student Success with Guided Self-Placement and Co-Curricular Remediation**

Tom Greene, Interim Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs, Northern Essex Community College

Discover how Northern Essex Community College transformed student placement and remediation. Learn about a college-wide shift from Accuplacer to guided self-placement and proven co-curricular remediation options that replaced traditional proficiency requirements, enhancing student success and engagement.

2:15-2:45pm**Knowing Our Place: Rethinking Placement as a Tool for Data Gathering, Setting up Student Portfolios, and Student Success**

Jeff Van Dreason, *Dean of Institutional Assessment, Roxbury Community College*; **Danielle Tabela**, *Director of Testing Services and Assessment, Bunker Hill Community College*; **Randi Korn**, *Vice President of Retention and Student Success, Roxbury Community College*; **Sheila Victorin**, *Department Chair, English, Roxbury Community College*; **Carly Martino**, *Faculty, English, Roxbury Community College*

A panel discussion with faculty, administrators, and staff from different colleges discussing how self-guided placement can not only led to better placement results compared to traditional methods, but how it also offers an opportunity to improve data collection, advising influence, career placement, and student success.

3:00-3:30pm**The Bunker Hill Community College Holistic Approach in Supporting ELL Students**

Jeff Ellenbird, *Professor and Chairperson, English Language Learning Department*; **Vivian Lin**, *Academic Coordinator, Advising and LifeMap*; **Aurora Bautista**, *Professor, Behavioral Sciences*; **Angel Chen Ma**, *ACE Mentor in ELL Class, Bunker Hill Community College*

This panel will present on the BHCC holistic approach to supporting English Language Learners. The ELL program is a is a multilevel 6 credit, General Education college level course using Learning Community pedagogies - thematic based or content based instruction with an embedded Success Coaching and embedded student mentoring model.

10:15-10:45am**Caring Campus: Involving Community College Staff in Increasing Student Success**

Robert Rezendes, *Dean of Taunton Center*; **Rebekah Senay**, *Enrollment Clerk IV, Bristol Community College*

College students' interactions with faculty, staff, and peers shape their college experience, impacting belonging, confidence, and motivation. While structural reforms focus on student success, interpersonal interactions, especially with non-academic staff, are crucial. This session explores how staff behaviors—both traditional and virtual—enhance students' sense of belonging.

11:00-11:30am**Kids at School: Making it Easier for Student Parents in Campus Offices**

Sheryl Civjan, *Academic Advisor, Psychology Faculty Member, Holyoke Community College*

This presentation will describe a community-based learning project designed to make it easier for student parents to visit key campus offices with kids along. Students in an upper level psychology course designed a campus-wide project to make offices more family-friendly. "Play stations" for children were created in admissions, advising, financial aid, ESL and the library at HCC.

12:45-1:15pm**Free On-Campus Childcare; Good-bye Barrier, Hello Impact**

Kimm Quinlan, *Director of Early Childhood Initiatives*; **Emily Webber**, *Director of Child Watch*; **Ciaran Murphy**, *Assistant Director of Child Watch, Holyoke Community College*

Holyoke Community College presents the first free on-campus childcare program in Western Massachusetts for parenting students. Discover how it reduces barriers, supports academic achievement, and boosts enrollment. Join us to explore the strategies and data driving this impactful program's growth and success.

1:30-2:00pm**Building Collaboration and Engagement Around Complex Texts in the Early College Classroom**

Meagan Hughes, Director of Academic Achievement for STEM; and **Michelle Carney**, Director of Academic Achievement for Humanities, Argosy Collegiate Charter School

Participants will engage in a simulation of “this, not that” classroom engagement strategies to engage 100% of scholars in authentic comprehension activities.

2:15-2:45pm**Life Stressors, Trauma, and Resilience Presenting and Discussing Survey Results & Potential Implications for Community College**

Jeanie Tietjen, Professor of English, Director Institute for Trauma, Adversity, and Resilience in Higher Education; **Liz Stapleton**, Asst. Professor, Early Childhood Education; **Ugo Uzoeghelu**, Adjunct Faculty, Division of Health Sciences, Massachusetts Bay Community College

This session shares a novel and ground-breaking study conducted in November 2024 whose data forms a powerful portrait of basic needs, adverse childhood experiences, and resilience-building factors in student lives. Particularly given expanded access via MassReconnect/MassEducate, this data increases awareness of what students manage and the powerful resilience students demonstrate.

3:00-3:30pm**Beyond Resilience: Cultivating a Culture of Care through Innovative Wellness Access, Targeted Intervention, and Systemic Change**

Leeanne Hadsel, Senior Mental Health Counselor, Mount Wachusett Community College

Post-COVID, student success demands holistic well-being. This session explores integrated wellness access points, targeted interventions, and systemic culture shifts, leveraging digital resources and proactive care models. Learn to embed mental health support, foster belonging, and drive institutional transformation—redefining student success through a sustainable, equity-driven culture of care.

10:15-10:45am**Practical and Accessible Series: Building a Campus Accessibility Culture**

Marisha Marks, Instructional Designer; **Kyle Stephanie Kraus**, Instructional Designer, Springfield Technical Community College

We have developed a workshop series that teaches the tool and practical accessibility strategies for creating inclusive digital materials. We will outline the series, content we presented, and our recruitment process to build a culture of accessibility on our campus. Resources are provided for implementing similar initiatives at other institutions.

11:00-11:30am**Embracing Neurodiversity: Insights and Experiences from Our Campus Community**

Kristie Proctor, Director, Student Accessibility Services; **Taylor Rohena**, Coordinator, Student Accessibility Services; **Laura Tino**, Director of Testing; **Jennifer Arner-Welsh**, Professor of Psychology; **Samuel Sauvageau**, Junior Systems Analyst/Programmer, Quinsigamond Community College

A panel of QCC faculty and staff will discuss their experiences supporting neurodiverse students, including what neurodiversity means to them, what advocacy or education looks like from their perspectives, and effective support structures. This session highlights the strengths neurodiversity brings to campus and the importance of inclusivity.

12:45-1:15pm**UDL: The Next Generation**

Stephanie Clymer, Instructional Coordinator, Springfield Technical Community College

During this workshop, participants will learn the latest guidelines for the Universal Design for Learning. UDL 3.0 addresses critical barriers rooted in biases and systems of exclusion for learners with and without disabilities. You will work with other instructors and prepare to implement UDL 3.0 in your lessons.

1:30-2:00pm**Content for All: Reimagining Curriculum for Inclusiveness***Jill Silos, History Professor, Massachusetts Bay Community College*

Specific instructional methods can increase student engagement, but course content can also further student investment in their educational experiences. In this session, Dr. Jill Silos provides examples and suggests methods faculty can use to reimagine their curriculum to include greater representation of social, economic, political, and ability differences.

2:15-2:45pm**Why Stay?***Sharlene Malcolm, Professor and Program Chair of the Business Department, Roxbury Community College*

In this session, we'll explore effective strategies and best practices for improving student retention in a free college environment. As financial barriers are removed, the focus shifts to academic, social, and personal support systems that keep students enrolled and thriving. We'll discuss the impact of student retention on institutional success, share tips and tricks for fostering belonging and persistence, and highlight real-life examples of what's working at community colleges like Roxbury and Bristol. Together, we'll answer the essential question: why do students stay—and how can we help them want to?

10:15-10:45am**The Power of Coaching & Mentorship: Building Academic Confidence and Belonging for Men of Color**

Saúl A. Cabán, Director of ALANA Men in Motion; **Freddie Hernandez**, ALANA Mentor; **Miguel Velez**, ALANA Mentor; **Morgan Curtin**, Learning Coach, Holyoke Community College

This session explores how a structured coaching and mentorship model fosters both academic confidence and a sense of belonging for men of color at Holyoke Community College. Many students struggle not only with coursework but also with feelings of isolation and self-doubt. By integrating targeted academic coaching with relational staff mentorship, the ALANA Men in Motion program creates a transformative support system that helps students develop the skills, mindset, and community needed for success.

11:00-11:30am**Many Perspectives, One Community: Intercultural Humility and Learning Plans**

Ande Diaz, Chief Diversity Officer, Emerita, VP for Tree of Light Consulting Guild, Saint Anselm College

This session leverages diverse perspectives to create a robust learning community. Participants will reflect on the influences that shape their perspectives. The Intercultural Development Continuum will be introduced and small groups will begin to map Intercultural Learning Plans. Session is relevant to academic classes, co-curricular learning, workforce culture, and communities.

12:45-1:15pm**I'm Not Racist: Bridging Equity in Divisive Times**

Courtney Fisk, Director of SUCCESS Scholars, Massasoit Community College

As Joyner Lucas laments, "I wish that I knew yours," a lack of understanding perpetuates systemic inequities within higher education. In today's climate, where DEI initiatives face political resistance, it is critical to develop strategies that address these challenges while prioritizing student success. This session provides actionable solutions for designing programs that dismantle inequities, support marginalized students, and foster understanding. Participants will leave equipped to navigate resistance and align institutional values with initiatives that promote equity and inclusion, even in contentious times.

1:30-2:00pm**Influencing and measuring belonging through the lens of Pedagogy of Real Talk**

Kayla Caron, Registrar; **Vera Vasconcelos**, Admissions Administrative Assistant, Middlesex Community College

How do you create a relationship-rich environment? How do you establish transformative connections, relationships, and experiences with students and staff? Have you heard about the Pedagogy of Real Talk (PRT)? Do you want to make an impact but don't know where to start? Come learn how MCC colleagues have implemented the PRT model into their everyday work to intentionally impact belonging and the unexpected outcomes along the way.

2:15-2:45pm**Grow Equity Leaders & Guides: A Framework**

Mary Wiseman, Director of Instructional Innovation and Faculty Investment; **Jennifer Wallace-Johnson**, Associate Professor, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Springfield Technical Community College

Thinking about how to build relationships, promote a common language across your campus, and position equitable practices into your educational development strategies? Join us to learn how one Community College built equity champions across the college campus and beyond.

3:00-3:30pm**Supporting the Growth and Evolution of Student Groups: Case Studies of the Rainbow Connection and Gaming Club**

Laine Miller Clements, Project & Technology Specialist, Advising & Success; **Thomas Morgan**, Director, Student Engagement & Belonging, Bristol Community College

Rooted in theories of student development, we discuss the formation of clubs at Bristol Community College, benefits of club involvement, approaching conversations with student leaders about club values, self-determination of new club directions, adaptations to discourage bullying, and strategies for promoting continuity of student organizing in the "two-year" college environment.

10:15-10:45am**Let's G.R.O.W.! Programming for Students on Academic Probation and Suspension**

Colleen Yee, Director of Retention; **Derrick Moore**, LifeMap Navigator; **Samantha Riche**, LifeMap Navigator, Bunker Hill Community College

In summer 2024, Advising and LifeMap launched the G.R.O.W. (Get Ready, Opportunity is Waiting) program to support students not making satisfactory academic progress. This session will review the G.R.O.W. program outcomes and discuss collaborations with Financial Aid to support students from an academic and financial perspective, all in support of student retention.

11:00-11:30am**Social-Emotional Learning is Not One-Size-Fits-All: PIVOTing to Meet Student Needs**

Hannah Andry, Academic Advisor, North Shore Community College

This interactive presentation draws from research on the PIVOT Learning Model, a framework developed to operationalize culturally responsive Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in education. PIVOT—Promote equity, Integrate diverse perspectives, Value every voice, Open dialogue, and Team collaboration—ensures SEL is adaptable to students' cultural and lived experiences, fostering belonging, reflection, and holistic development.

12:45-1:15pm**Understanding How Community College Students Navigate Their Goals, Challenges, and College Experience in the Context of Behavioral Nudges**

Kevin Kam Li, Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs, Quinsigamond Community College

This presentation examined how mobile-delivered behavioral nudges influenced community college students' persistence using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Findings revealed positive responses, with nudges providing guidance, strengthening noncognitive skills, and reinforcing commitment. Insights highlight nudges' potential to enhance advising, institutional practices, and policies, supporting student success and persistence.

1:30-2:00pm**Leaning into Leadership- Supporting Student Development through Holistic Advising Strategies**

Hannah Blasco, Academic and Transfer Counselor for Lead- Female Leadership and Mentoring Program; **Karolyn Burgos-Toribio**, Community Outreach Coordinator for Lead- Female Leadership and Mentoring Program, Springfield Technical Community College

Creating meaningful relationships with students is essential in developing trust that equips them with self-confidence and resilience (Bloom, Hutson, & He, 2008), and that is our goal at STCC. This presentation will review accessible and effective strategies the Lead- Female Leadership and Mentoring program has implemented in order to provide the best wrap-around service to its students that session participants can take back to their own institutions to utilize.

2:15-2:45pm**How to Do the Work of Two When You are Only One**

Bob Mayer, Director of Veteran Services, Mount Wachusett Community College

Everyone is being asked to do more with less. You don't have to be superhuman to be a superstar. This presentation will illustrate how you can be more efficient, more effective and more joyful using a methodical and mindful technique.

3:00-3:30pm**Transfer isn't always vertical: Supporting Students Transferring to Community College**

Rebecca Siggelkoe Moreno, Assistant Director of Advising & LifeMap/Transfer Services, Bunker Hill Community College

Transfer initiatives typically focus on the 2-year to 4-year transition; however, community colleges are increasingly welcoming students with previous college experience. This presentation will review national and local transfer enrollment trends and discuss approaches for developing an inclusive and supportive campus environment for new transfer students. We will review student outreach initiatives, advising new transfer students, and technology and transcript evaluation procedures that promote a seamless onboarding experience. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of strategies that help transfer students get started with confidence.

10:15-10:45am**Navigating the Post-Pandemic Era: Transforming Student Enrollment at Bunker Hill Community College**

***Alicia D'Oyley**, Dean of Enrollment Management and LifeMap; **Melissa Holster**, Executive Director of Student Financial Services; **Jackie McMillion-Williams**, Director of Advising and LifeMap; **Maritza Onodje**, Director of Student Success Initiatives, Bunker Hill Community College*

The Bunker Hill Community College enrollment management team recognized the need to reevaluate and improve the onboarding process for both new and returning students during the COVID-19 pandemic. This effort aimed to ensure a smoother, more efficient transition into college life. As a result, the Start Now Enrollment Events were created to address common student pain points, boost engagement with campus resources, and enhance overall student success. In this session, discover how the BHCC enrollment team has evolved the Start Now events in the post-pandemic era.

11:00-11:30am**Scaling Smart: Using OKRs to Manage Enrollment Growth Without Overspending**

***Adam Klepetar**, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management; **Christina Wynn**, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Berkshire Community College*

This session will explore how community colleges can balance increased enrollment with financial sustainability. By applying OKRs (Objectives and Key Results), institutions can set measurable goals that align student success, operational efficiency, and budget discipline.

12:45-1:15pm**Expanding Access to Financial Aid Support Through Early Alerts**

***Kim Straceski**, Associate Director Financial Aid Compliance and Customer Service; **Lauren Le-Clair**, Associate Director of Admissions Operations and Technology, Holyoke Community College*

Massachusetts created MassReconnect to offset college costs for students 25 and older, requiring a FAFSA and affidavit confirming no prior degree. Holyoke Community College faced challenges connecting with students with incomplete FAFSAs or affidavits. In response, HCC implemented early alerts to improve communication and identify students with outstanding requirements.

1:30-2:00pm**Empowering Institutional Decisions with Strategic Analytics Dashboards: Leveraging Student Life Cycle Data and Labor Market Trends**

Veena Dhankher, *Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Analytics, Holyoke Community College*

Holyoke Community College (HCC) has developed strategic analytics dashboards to effectively monitor and optimize the student life cycle, spanning from enrollment to graduation. By visualizing data at each stage, the college is empowered to make data-driven decisions that enhance student success and retention. Leveraging insights from both the student life cycle and labor market trends enables HCC to build strategies around enrollment, student success, and program development that align with workforce demands.

2:15-2:45pm**Transforming the Schedule Build Process: Enhancing Efficiency**

Jeff Van Dreason, *Dean of Institutional Assessment, Roxbury Community College*; **Danielle Tabela**, *Director of Testing Services and Assessment, Bunker Hill Community College*; **Randi Korn**, *Vice President of Retention and Student Success, Roxbury Community College*; **Sheila Victorin**, *Department Chair, English, Roxbury Community College*; **Carly Martino**, *Faculty, English, Roxbury Community College*

Discover how Holyoke Community College streamlined academic scheduling with Coursedog! Learn how we eliminated manual redundancies, leveraged real-time data analysis, and enhanced efficiency to better support student success. Join us to explore best practices, challenges, and the impact of a data-driven scheduling approach on institutional effectiveness.

3:00-3:30pm**Fostering Degree Completion: Supporting Returning Adults and Credit for Prior Learning**

Cristy Sugarman, *Executive Director, Center for Alternative Studies and Educational Testing, North Shore Community College*; **Robert Kaulfuss**, *Credit for Prior Learning Coordinator, Middlesex Community College*

This session will explore strategies for fostering degree completion among adult learners, focusing on our approach to this demographic and the importance of Credit for Prior Learning (CPL). Attendees will learn how to support returning students, recognize prior experiences, and implement innovative approaches to enhance student success.