

NAASS

CAPITALIZING ON OPPORTUNITY

PATHWAYS TO STUDENT SUCCESS

2026 NAASS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 8-10, 2026 WASHINGTON, D.C.

62ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

We are thrilled to welcome you to Washington, D.C., for our annual gathering — a time to connect with colleagues, build community, and share in meaningful conversations. This year marks our 62nd conference, and our theme, “Capitalizing on Opportunity,” reflects our ongoing commitment to growth, collaboration, and impact in higher education. Our NAASS conference is dedicated to promoting the advancement of scholarship and research, with the goal of enhancing the critical nature of summer and special sessions for higher education institutions.





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome from the President PG 04

Location PG 05

Conference Sponsors PG 06

Schedule of Events PG 07

- Saturday, November 7 PG 07
- Sunday, November 8 PG 08
- Monday, November 9 PG 09
- Tuesday, November 10 PG 10

Session 1-3 Details PG 11 - 20

Excursion Details PG 21

Session 4-7 Details PG 22 - 31

WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT



Christopher Cofer

Executive Director, Office of Pre-College Programs
Syracuse University

Dear NAASS Members and Attendees,
Welcome to Washington, D.C., and the 62nd Annual Conference of the North American Association of Summer Sessions! On behalf of the NAASS leadership and conference planning committee, I'm delighted you're here, whether this is your first conference or your seventeenth.

This year's theme, Capitalizing on Opportunity: Pathways to Student Success, speaks to the heart of our work. Summer, winter, and special sessions expand access, support timely degree completion, offer flexible pathways, and give learners a chance to explore, recover, accelerate, or discover something new. Our respective offices and departments are where innovation is always on the table and where new ideas are incubated. We also represent one of the few spaces on our campuses where change is most often embraced and encouraged. I've been saying for years that the space in which we work is a playground of opportunity!

Our conference theme is also an invitation to each of us. We've traveled, set aside our inboxes (mostly), and carved out time to share with and learn from our peers. So, let's capitalize on it. Attend sessions that will expand your knowledge base and broaden your perspective. Introduce yourself to someone you haven't met before. Ask the burning question and bring home an idea or two you can put to use on your campus.

NAASS exists to provide leadership for the continual improvement of academic quality, student services, and financial success of summer, winter, and special sessions. We accomplish that together, and the real engine is our volunteers. I'm grateful to the Administrative Council, our regional vice presidents, executive committee, and the members of the various committees. Please take a moment to thank these individuals when you see them. Special thanks go to the entire conference planning committee and our chairs, Amanda Therrell and Angel Gonzalez, for making this week possible. If everything runs smoothly, it's because of them. If something doesn't, that's on me.

First-time attendees, you're in good company. We were all new once, and we're glad you're here. You have found your people! Tip from a long timer, make sure to write down the name of the institution with that gem of an idea you're going to steal. You're likely going to want to contact them for more details prior to implementation and you'll want to thank them at next year's conference for your newfound success.

Be sure to find some time to explore Washington, and let's keep the momentum going following this week as we look ahead to our 63rd annual conference in Chicago. Thank you for being part of NAASS. Enjoy the conference!

Best,
Christopher Cofer
President, North American Association of Summer Sessions

LOCATION

The Westin Washington, D.C. City Center is an upscale, pet-friendly hotel located at 1400 M Street NW, located near the White House, the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Dupont Circle as well as the Capital One Arena. It features modern rooms with signature Westin Heavenly Beds, a 24-hour state-of-the-art fitness center with Peloton bikes, and on-site dining at Infamy Restaurant & Bar.

Address: 1400 M St NW, Washington, D.C. 20005

Phone: (202) 429-1700



ANNUAL CONFERENCE SPONSORS

We extend our sincere appreciation to our sponsors for their generous support and partnership. Your contributions have been instrumental in the success of this year's conference and in creating a truly engaging experience for all attendees.

PLATINUM SPONSOR

Summer Discovery

GOLD SPONSOR

TeenLife®

U.S.News & WORLD REPORT



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SATURDAY | NOVEMBER 7

Registration/Help Desk
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM
National Ballroom Foyer

Administrative Council/Executive Commitee Meeting
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Tangent

Administrative Council/Executive Committee Dinner
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM
Mission Dupont Circle

New Administrators' Workshop Dinner
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM
Mission Dupont Circle
Check Slack/Email for more details
#2026-new-administrators-workshop

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SUNDAY | NOVEMBER 8

Registration/Help Desk
8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

National Ballroom Foyer

New Administrators' Workshop
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Ashlawn North

The New Administrators' Workshop is a pre-conference session for new administrators overseeing summer, winter, or special session programs. Led by NAASS members, it covers essential topics like administration, marketing, curriculum, hiring, communication, and reporting, equipping attendees with practical tools for their institutions.

New Administrators' Workshop Lunch
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Ashlawn North

Speed Networking
5:00 PM - 5:50 PM

Ashlawn South

For most of us, networking and meeting others in our field are one of the highlights of a conference. This year's opening event, Speed Networking, allows participants to meet others with similar interests and explore conversations as we open our conference! Join us for this great networking opportunity on Sunday, November 8th, from 5:00 to 5:50 p.m. All are invited to exchange information while meeting a variety of people. See you there!

President's Reception and Opening Session
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

National Ballroom A

Happy Hour with Summer Discovery
7:30 PM - 9:00 PM

Yard House: 812 7th St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

Registration/Help Desk
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
National Ballroom Foyer

Breakfast
8:00 - 8:50 AM
National Ballroom AB

Open Plenary
9:00 - 9:50 AM
National Ballroom AB

Session 1
10:00 - 10:50 AM
Various - See pages 12 - 13

Session 2
11:00 - 11:50 AM
Various - See pages 14 - 16

Regional Lunch/Meeting
12:00 - 12:50 PM
See page 17

Session 3
1:00 - 1:50 PM
Various - See pages 18 - 20

Organized Outings
2:00 - 6:00 PM
See page 21

Dinner on Your Own
6:00 - 9:00 PM

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

Registration/Help Desk
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
National Ballroom Foyer

Breakfast
8:00 - 8:50 AM
National Ballroom AB

Session 4
9:00 - 9:50 AM
Various - See pages 22 - 24

Session 5
10:00 - 10:50 AM
Various - See pages 25 - 27

Session 6
11:00 - 11:50 AM
Various - See pages 28 - 29

Lunch & Business Meeting
12:00 - 12:50 PM
National Ballroom AB

Session 7
1:00 - 1:50 PM
Various - See pages 29 - 31

Free Time
2:00 - 5:00 PM
Explore Washington, D.C.

Cocktail Reception
5:00 - 6:00 PM
National Ballroom Foyer

Banquet, Music, & Dancing
6:00 - 9:00 PM
National Ballroom ABC

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

SESSION 1: 10:00 - 10:50 AM

Every Touchpoint Counts: Stretching Reach without Stretching Budget

Location: Ashlawn North

Presenters: Marion Comi-Morog and Danielle Hillie, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Current students already know summer sessions exist; the challenge is moving them from awareness to action. The catch is that most summer school offices don't own many direct lines to students. This session looks at how to work within that constraint rather than around it. We'll cover how to identify the communication lines that already reach students and how to use them effectively: cross-departmental partnerships that multiply reach without multiplying budget, a faculty marketing toolkit that enables instructors to promote their own courses, summer events that double as engagement and marketing tools, and social media, where we'll talk candidly about balancing promotion with building an informative, interactive account that students actually want to follow. From there, we'll share lessons learned in crafting messaging that reads as helpful while still moving students down the marketing funnel. Attendees will leave with practical tactics for stretching limited touchpoints and a clearer sense of how to make marketing feel like a resource, not a pitch.

MARKETING

Panel: Growing Summer Courses Through Strategic Partnerships

Location: Ashlawn South

Presenters: Carrie Nordlund, Catherine Zabriskie, and Christine Baumgarthuber, Brown University and Barbara Rusen, Rutgers University–New Brunswick

Strong partnerships between Summer Session and other on-campus partners can play a pivotal role in expanding high-quality course offerings while supporting faculty throughout the course development process. This panel will explore how Brown University and Rutgers University have partnered with campus teaching and learning teams to support and expand summer course offerings.

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

SESSION 1: 10:00 - 10:50 AM

At Brown, Summer Session works closely with the Digital Learning and Design (DLD) team to increase online summer offerings while supporting faculty in developing high-quality courses. At Rutgers, Summer Session has partnered with Teaching, Innovation, and Inclusive Pedagogy (TIIP) to provide faculty resources and training focused on designing compressed courses. Panelists will discuss strategies for recruiting instructors, developing and supporting courses, ensuring accessibility and instructional quality, and coordinating across academic and administrative units. Together, these examples provide an opportunity to consider how campus partnerships can support faculty in designing courses for different instructional formats and shorter, intensive academic terms. The goal of the panel is to provide practical ideas for building effective campus partnerships that strengthen and expand summer programs, enhance the student experience, and support faculty in developing high-quality courses.

MODALITY

Summer Program Risk Mitigation: Emergency Playbooks and Communication with Stakeholders

Location: National Ballroom C

Presenters: Marcus Mundy and Katie Strothers, Summer Discovery

Hosting minors on campus brings a distinct set of responsibilities, and the most effective programs prepare long before students arrive. This session walks through a practical, year-round approach to risk mitigation for pre-college programs. We'll share a spring readiness checklist covering staffing, supervision, training, and compliance; model tabletop scenarios that help teams rehearse responses to medical, behavioral, and campus emergencies; and outline a summer communication plan that keeps families, university partners, and internal stakeholders informed when it matters most. Drawing on decades of residential program experience across leading campuses, presenters will offer adaptable tools that programs of any size can put to use next summer.

SPONSOR

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

SESSION 1: 10:00 - 10:50 AM

Roundtable: Supervising Super Staff: Best Practices

Location: Woodlawn

Presenters: Lindsay Osborne and Ursula Nayeli Rendon, University of California, Santa Cruz

Great leadership isn't a one-way street—it's a shared experience. Whether you manage student employees, lead professional staff, or thrive under an inspiring supervisor, your voice belongs in this conversation! Following a brief showcase of real-world insights and lessons learned from UC Santa Cruz Summer Session, we'll dive into an interactive roundtable discussion. Together, we'll explore best practices from both sides of the supervisory desk, swap creative management strategies, and brainstorm fresh ideas to unlock the full potential of your team—and yourself.

PRE-COLLEGE

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

SESSION 2: 11:00 - 11:50 AM

Building a High-Impact Summer Session Team with Undergraduate Students

Location: Ashlawn North

Presenters: Pamela Dexter, Miranda Meyer McCarty, Purdue University

At Purdue University, the Office of Summer and Winter Sessions employs undergraduate students as Peer Mentors to support pre-college and early start participants. In this session, we will share how undergraduate student employees have become valuable partners in the delivery and management of summer programs. Participants will learn strategies for recruiting, training, and supervising student staff while aligning their roles with program goals and student success initiatives. We will highlight how Peer Mentors enhance operational efficiency, strengthen participant engagement, and contribute to a positive summer experience for students, families, and staff. Through practical examples and lessons learned, attendees will gain insights into creating meaningful student employment opportunities that develop professional skills, foster leadership, and support program objectives.

This session will provide actionable approaches for effectively integrating undergraduate talent into summer session operations.

PRE-COLLEGE

On the Road: Domestic Travel Classes in Winter Term

Location: Ashlawn South

Presenters: Alana Speth and Katrina Hunter, University of Virginia

January Term, with its short nature (often just two weeks) provides a unique opportunity to take learning off campus. Without competing courses or other schedule restraints, students are able to engage in classes that include multi-day trips within the United States. This presentation will explore ways in which instructors at the University of Virginia have capitalized on the nature of J-Term to incorporate travel to study media in New York City, Civil Rights in the Deep South, and public policy in Appalachia, among others.

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

SESSION 2: 11:00 - 11:50 AM

We will also discuss the many challenges that come with taking learning off-site, including financial models, risk management, and collaborating with faculty.

WINTER TERM

How Summer Sessions Leaders Build Institutional Influence

Location: National Ballroom C

Presenters: Jennifer Larson, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Maria Lettiere, University of Chicago, Anne Van Arsdall, Colorado State University, and Allyson Morris, Santa Clara University

Summer Sessions offices are often expected to operate with entrepreneurial speed while navigating complex institutional structures, cross-campus partnerships, and evolving enrollment pressures. Yet many units struggle to move beyond being perceived as operational support offices rather than strategic institutional partners. This panel explores how Summer Sessions leaders can build institutional influence through operational excellence, proactive collaboration, and strategic alignment with campus priorities. Panelists will discuss how strong systems, clear processes, and intentional relationship-building can increase organizational credibility and create opportunities for Summer Sessions to shape broader institutional conversations around enrollment, student success, and innovation.Topics will include implementing project management systems and operational documentation, building cross-campus partnerships, aligning summer initiatives with institutional goals, and navigating the balance between visibility and agility within higher education administration. Panelists will share both successes and challenges from their own organizations, offering practical strategies for leaders seeking to strengthen their unit's effectiveness and institutional impact.

OPERATIONS

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

SESSION 2: 11:00 - 11:50 AM

Roundtable: AI Discussion

Location: Woodlawn

Presenters: TBA

Join us for a discussion on Artificial Intelligence and its impact on higher education in general and summer session specifically.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLEGENCE

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

LUNCH REGIONAL MEETINGS

Please pick up lunch in the National Ballroom and then take to respective meeting room.

Western Region
Location: Woodlawn
Presentors: Ursula Nayeli Rendon, Regional Vice President and Danniele Biala, Regional Assistant Vice President

North Central Region
Location: Ashlawn South
Presentors: Tony Peña, Regional Vice President

Middle/Southern Region
Location: Ashlawn North
Presentors: Michael Smith, Regional Vice President

Northeastern Region
Location: National Ballroom C
Presentors: Kristine Cullen, Regional Vice President

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

SESSION 3: 1:00 - 1:50 PM

Reimagining Learning: Designing Programs Without Constraints

Location: Ashlawn North

Presenters: Danniele Biala, University of California, Davis

What would your ideal program look like if budget, staffing, facilities, and traditional structures weren't barriers? In this interactive workshop, participants will use design-thinking strategies to create their dream learning program by focusing first on student needs, engagement, and impact rather than logistical constraints. By removing the limits that often shape planning, attendees will uncover innovative ideas, clarify their program priorities, and challenge assumptions about what programmatic learning can be. Through collaborative discussion and reflection, participants will identify practical ways to adapt elements of their vision into their own programs.

This session is designed to inspire creativity, encourage bold thinking, and provide educators and program leaders with fresh perspectives for designing meaningful, student-centered summer learning experiences.

OPERATIONS

Summer Language Institute: Leveraging Summer to Accelerate Language Learning and Meet Degree Requirements

Location: Ashlawn South

Presenters: Vera Abbate and Tonya White, University of Virginia

The University of Virginia's Summer Language Institute (SLI) is an intensive summer language program designed for UVA students, visiting undergraduates, high school students, graduate students, and lifelong learners seeking to fulfill language requirements, accelerate degree progress, prepare for study abroad, or strengthen professional language skills.

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

SESSION 3: 1:00 - 1:50 PM

In an intensive, near-immersion environment, students complete the equivalent of one year of Arabic or Chinese or two years of French, German, Italian, Latin, Russian, or Spanish during an eight-week summer session. Since 2022, the Summer Language Institute has nearly doubled its enrollment while maintaining strong student learning outcomes, as demonstrated through nationally recognized proficiency assessments. This presentation explores the program's enrollment growth, redesign efforts, strategic outreach initiatives, and student success outcomes. Participants will learn how targeted recruitment, innovative programming, and a focus on student needs have expanded access to intensive language study while preserving rigorous instruction and high levels of language proficiency.

OPERATIONS

Beyond Revenue and Enrollment: Telling the Summer Session Retention Story

Location: National Ballroom C

Presenters: Chris Pevey Harry, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee

Summer sessions are often recognized for driving enrollment and revenue, but their impact on student retention, academic momentum, and degree progress can be just as significant. This interactive working session will explore how institutions measure, document, and communicate summer's contribution to student success. Rather than a traditional presentation, participants will share metrics, reports, dashboards, planning documents, and other tools used to tell their summer retention story. Together, we will identify common measures, promising practices, and gaps in assessing summer outcomes. Participants will leave with new ideas, practical examples from peer institutions, and a stronger framework for demonstrating summer session value beyond enrollment and revenue.

BREAKOUT DETAILS: MONDAY | NOVEMBER 9

SESSION 3: 1:00 - 1:50 PM

Attendees are encouraged to bring a report, dashboard, metric, or question related to summer student success, retention, persistence, course completion, academic momentum, or degree progress.

RESEARCH

Roundtable for Private Institutions

Location: Woodlawn

Presenters: Maeve Skidmore, Southern Methodist University

This roundtable discussion brings together private institutions to explore how our summer programming aids student journeys. Participants will consider key issues such as affordability, student support, and distinctive academic and experiential opportunities. Participants are encouraged to bring questions and current challenges to shape discussion on how summer programming can better support student success.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C. ORGANIZED OUTINGS



OUTINGS 2:00 - 6:00 PM

US Holocaust Memorial Museum

100 Raoul Wallenberg Pl SW, Washington, DC 20024

1.4 miles from Hotel
33 minute walk from Hotel
12 minute Uber/Lyft Ride

US Capitol Visitor Center - Capitol Tour

1st St SE, Washington, DC 20515

2.0 miles from Hotel
46 minute walk from Hotel
17 minute Uber/Lyft Ride

National Museum of African American History and Culture

1400 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20560

1.2 miles from Hotel
28 minute walk from Hotel
13 minute Uber/Lyft Ride

Libary of Congress - Tour

101 Independence Ave SE, Washington, DC 20540

2.3 miles from Hotel
53 minute walk from Hotel
18 minute Uber/Lyft Ride

Please check the slack for more details on outings #2026-NAASS-ANNUAL-CONFERENCE

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 4: 9:00 - 9:50 AM

From Inspiration to Innovation: Mapping Summer Success Across Campuses

Location: Ashlawn North

Presenters: Anne Van Arsdall, Colorado State University and Tammy Johnson, University of California, Merced

At its best, NAASS is a place where ideas are shared, adapted, and transformed into innovations that support student success. This session highlights how UC Merced's Summer Engagement Map inspired Colorado State University's Summer Enrichment Map and how both have been implemented on their campuses. Tammy Johnson, Director of Summer Session at UC Merced, will discuss the creation of the original map, the collaboration behind it, and its impact on student engagement and success. Anne Van Arsdall, CSU Summer Director, will then share how CSU adapted the concept to create its own Summer Enrichment Map, including collaboration with campus partners, securing funding, and developing a multi-page website and videos. The initiative was also informed by student survey results and student success data. The session will also explore the value of sharing ideas within the NAASS community and adapting successful concepts to meet unique institutional needs.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Automated Workflows: How AI and Power Automate Streamlined Summer Contracts

Location: Ashlawn South

Presenters: Andreas Armenis, Wentworth Institute of Technology

Managing summer faculty and student staff contracts can be a time-consuming and repetitive process. In this session, I will share how I used Microsoft Power Automate to streamline contract creation and distribution for summer programs at Wentworth Institute of Technology. By connecting a centralized data source with a contract template, the workflow automatically generates individualized contracts, reduces manual administrative tasks, and improves consistency across the hiring process.

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 4: 9:00 - 9:50 AM

Beyond the technical workflow, participants will gain insight into the planning, implementation, and lessons learned throughout the project. The session will explore how automation can be applied to other area in summer and pre-college space.

Attendees will leave with practical strategies for identifying processes that are strong candidates for automation, an understanding of how AI and workflow tools can reduce administrative burden, and a real-world example that can be adapted to their own institutional needs. Whether you are just beginning to explore AI or looking to expand existing automation efforts, this session will provide actionable ideas that can save staff time and improve operational effectiveness.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLEGENCE

Rethinking the Website: From Information Repository to Recruitment Tool

Location: National Ballroom C

Presenters: Marion Comi-Morog and Jennifer Larson, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

UNC Summer School wanted to rethink the role of its website, from a repository of program information into a strategic recruitment tool. This session explores a practical framework for making that shift, without requiring a full content overhaul. We'll examine how to craft a compelling narrative around your summer school's value proposition, map distinct pathways to guide different audiences toward the right next step, and structure content in ways that serve both human readers and AI-driven search tools. We'll also discuss how website analytics can move beyond reporting and become a strategic input for ongoing decision-making.

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 4: 9:00 - 9:50 AM

Attendees will leave with a concrete checklist for building a digital experience that leads students from what the program offers, to why it matters, to how they enroll.

MARKETING

Roundtable: Beyond the Classroom: The Residential Experience of Pre-College Programs

Location: Woodlawn

Presenters: Mary Cuthbert, Worcester Polytechnic Institute

What happens when the academic day ends? During this roundtable discussion, we will explore how residential pre-college programs shape the student experience beyond the classroom. Participants will share approaches to evening and weekend programming, student supervision, campus access, community building, and balancing independence with safety. From structured activities and curfews to free time and off-campus opportunities, we'll discuss the policies, challenges, and best practices that influence residential life. Whether your program is well established or still taking shape, this session offers an opportunity to exchange ideas, learn from peers, and discover new ways to create meaningful and memorable experiences for pre-college students outside of class.

PRE-COLLEGE

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 5: 10:00 - 10:50 AM

Reimagining Summer: Pathways for Retention, Graduation, and Student Engagement

Location: Ashlawn North

Presenters: Amanda Therrell, University of South Carolina

Summer semester can be much more than an opportunity for students to earn additional credits. This session highlights a collaborative, data-informed approach to reimagining summer as a strategic tool for advancing student success. Drawing on conversations with academic leaders across the University of South Carolina, the presentation explores how historical enrollment, student progression, and course demand data were used to identify opportunities and inform discussions with each college. Participants will learn how data, combined with collaborative planning, encouraged colleges to think beyond individual course offerings and develop intentional pathways through certificates, minors, accelerated study plans, experiential learning, study abroad, and sequential coursework.

The session will share practical strategies for using data to engage campus partners, strengthen cross-unit collaboration, and position summer as an integral component of institutional planning that supports retention, timely graduation, and student engagement.

RESEARCH

The First Five Weeks: Intentional Programming for Student Success

Location: Ashlawn South

Presenters: Lindsay Osborne, University of California, Santa Cruz

Supporting early-start students demands an intentional bridge between academic rigor and social belonging. Most students come to campus and make the psychological decision to stay or leave almost immediately upon arriving, using the lens of their first experiences. It's well documented that students undergo significant transitions - traditionally mapped across the first 6 weeks of college- that critically impact long-term persistence.

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 5: 10:00 - 10:50 AM

In an accelerated 5-week summer session, incoming students are thrust into a compressed timeline, making it even more imperative that programming is intentionally created to help them quickly develop a sense of belonging as well as resilience strategies to increase retention. We'll use our programming calendar to show how we strategically map the 5-week student journey - from frontloading psychological safety, to demystifying academic failure, and finally, to building long-term agency. We'll also address lessons learned and ideas for continual improvement based on our past experiences

BRIDGE PROGRAMS

Calm in the Moment: De-Escalation Strategies for Supporting Minors on Campus

Location: National Ballroom C

Presenters: Dr. Steve Mazza, Summer Discovery

Summer staff are often the first to respond when a student becomes upset, overwhelmed, or reactive.

This session, led by a licensed mental health professional, gives residential and program staff practical tools for recognizing early signs of escalation and responding in ways that keep students safe, supported, and respected. Participants will learn how adolescent stress responses differ from adults', how to use tone, body language, and language choices to lower tension, and when to step back, bring in support, or follow emergency protocols. Through real-world campus scenarios, from homesickness and roommate conflict to peer disputes and emotional crises, staff will leave with a clear, confident approach to handling difficult moments this summer.

SPONSOR

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 5: 10:00 - 10:50 AM

Roundtable: Evolving with Intention: Sustaining and Reinventing Pre-college and Undergraduate Programs

Location: Woodlawn

Presenters: Aprille Logan, Syracuse University

Longevity is a strength, but it can also create inertia. How do established programs preserve what makes them successful while evolving with changing students, institutional priorities, technology, and the higher education landscape?

PRE-COLLEGE

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 6: 11:00 - 11:50 AM

Bridging Student Access Gaps Through Grassroots Campus Collaboration

Location: Ashlawn North

Presenters: Danniele Biala and Megan Wallace, University of California, Davis

As student needs continue to grow, institutions can expand support by strengthening campus partnerships rather than increasing budgets. This session explores a grassroots approach to capacity building through collaboration, cost sharing, and resource alignment. Participants will learn how to identify shared goals, build sustainable partnerships, and leverage existing programs to improve access to basic needs, academic support, and student engagement opportunities. Through historic examples, attendees will discover strategies for cohosting events, sharing resources, and maximizing impact while minimizing costs.

Whether supporting food security, wellness initiatives, or student programming, this collaborative model demonstrates how cross-campus partnerships can increase organizational capacity and create meaningful, equitable support for students without requiring significant new funding.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Effective Strategies for Program Administration and Organization

Location: Ashlawn South

Presenters: Sarah Purcell, Georgetown University

There are many moving parts to summer program administration and collaboration between faculty, staff, and your office is essential for a successful summer. In this presentation, we will talk about the methods we use for organizing and coordinating the logistics for 25+ pre-college summer programs.

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 6: 11:00 - 11:50 AM

The strategies we will discuss range the full program lifecycle from curriculum development through program delivery and record keeping and will deep dive into our program dashboard model for centralized program information.

PRE-COLLEGE

JSR Review Presentation

Location: National Ballroom C

Presenters: Sarah Sobek Ozburn, University of Wisconsin-Madison

This presentation will cover the JSR data collected in the previous 2023-24 survey, including now to use the new interactive data visualization. We will also address the currently open 2025-26 JSR to address any questions that institutions might have about the process, and collect suggestions for how to best present the results with the NAASS community. We will have a conversation about how to make use of the data, and generally share other ways that we use data in our Office of Summer Term at UW-Madison.

RESEARCH

Roundtable: Leveraging Campus Events to Market Summer Sessions

Location: Woodlawn

Presenters: Allyson Morris, Santa Clara University and Harriet Abe, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Join us for a dynamic roundtable on effectively marketing summer programs at special events. We will discuss strategies for participation in campus-wide events sponsored by other department(s), and hosting standalone events designed exclusively to spotlight the summer term. Whether you are connecting with current students, faculty, staff, and/or parents, this conversation will cover tailored approaches for every audience. Bring your insights, exchange creative ideas, and learn from peer successes and lessons learned. Discover fresh ways to boost visibility, build enthusiasm, and drive summer enrollment.

MARKETING

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 7: 1:00 - 1:50 PM

Empowering Student Talent: Managing High-Impact Roles in Administration and Social Media

Location: Ashlawn North

Presenters: Ursula Nayeli Rendon

As budget and staffing constraints shift professional duties to student staff, higher-education leaders must learn to delegate high-stakes responsibilities effectively. This presentation explores a modern student employment model that entrusts student employees with high-level responsibilities like front-line operations and social media management. Attendees will examine the challenges and strategic opportunities of trust and career development, along with actionable frameworks for supervising student employees—even when managing skill sets, such as emerging digital trends, that exceed a manager's own technical expertise.

MARKETING

Engaging Community Partnerships: Building Student Success

Location: Ashlawn South

Presenters: Jessica Lynch, University of Connecticut

Strong partnerships can play a vital role in helping students discover and pursue educational opportunities. This session highlights how collaboration among schools, community organizations, and supporters has helped grow participation in our pre-college programs and expand scholarship opportunities. Participants will learn about our partnership-driven approach, key successes, and practical strategies for building relationships that support student growth and long-term success.

PRE-COLLEGE

BREAKOUT DETAILS: TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 10

SESSION 7: 1:00 - 1:50 PM

Co-Designing the Future of NAASS

Location: National Ballroom C

Presenters: Owen Hooper, Johns Hopkins University

As NAASS looks toward its future, this interactive session invites members to reflect on what they value most about the association and what would make their membership more meaningful. Through individual reflection, small-group conversation, and collective prioritization, participants will identify opportunities for NAASS to build on its strengths and support members in the years ahead. Discussion may include professional learning, networking, year-round engagement, conference programming, and ways to contribute to the association's work. The session will conclude by highlighting the priorities that generate the greatest interest and inviting participants to consider how they may want to stay involved. Participants will leave with new connections and a meaningful voice in shaping NAASS's next chapter.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



NAASS

THANK YOU!

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped bring this year's conference to life.

Your ideas, energy, and generosity made this gathering possible. We're so grateful for the many hands and hearts that continue to make the NAASS community strong.

With appreciation,
The Conference Chairs, Amanda Therrell & Angel Gonzalez