Pennsylvania Workforce Development Association

HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE SUMMIT PROGRAM SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2027

8:00 am - 2:00 pm Higher Education & Workforce Summit Check-in *(ALC)*

9:00 am – 9:20 am Welcome and Strategic Framing *(ALC 101 & 102)*

9:20 am – 10:20 am Keynote Speaker *(ALC 101 & 102)*

Brandon Busteed, CEO, Edconic

From Degree Value to Talent Value: Why Regional Partnerships Matter

10:30 am – 11:15 am Breakout Session Round 1

- Who's On First? Mapping the Roles & Players in Your Regional Talent System – Debra Thompson, Strategy Solutions, and Mike Lawrence, Community Workforce Advancement *(ALC 103)*
- Building an Outcomes–Driven System to Measure Economic Mobility Across Education and Workforce Programs – Vibhat Nair, Magnolia Impact Solutions *(ALC 107)*
- Moving Careers Forward: The Promise of Skills-Based Hiring in Pennsylvania – Mohona Siddique and Dana Kunzman, CAEL *(ALC 203)*
- Talent In Motion: Interstate Migration of College Educated Workers – Peter Riley Bahr, Strada Education Foundation *(ALC 207)*

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11:30 am – 12:15 pm Breakout Session Round 2

- Designing Employer-Aligned Pathways: Advancing Workforce Alignment, Credential Innovation, and Market Relevance – Marcy McCarty and Chris D'Imperio, Elizabethtown College and Lindsay Knepp, Catherine Hershey School of Learning *(ALC 103)*
- Strengthening Employer Engagement Through Digital Talent Pipeline – Sylvester E. Williams, East Stroudsburg University *(ALC 107)*
- Industry Advisory Councils and Work-Based Learning Programs at Penn State University – Jamie Merida, Penn State University *(ALC 203)*
- From Classroom to Career: Building a High School -to- Work Framework for Energy Workforce – Gary McLaughlin, Constellation Energy and Melissa Day, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology *(ALC 207)*

12:30 pm – 1:45 pm Lunch

2:00 pm – 2:45 pm Breakout Session Round 3

- Workforce Pell – Melissa Schroeder and Alan Dodkowitz, Safal Partners *(ALC 103)*
- Registered Apprenticeships - Bridging the Gap Between Higher Education and Employer Needs. Kim Kuehl and Michelle Harkins, Early Connections *(ALC 107)*
- Beyond the Classroom: Aligning Prior Learning, Trades, Credentials, and Employer Needs into Regional Talent Pathways – Dr. Andrea Gannum Mosley, MosAL Consulting, Inc. *(ALC 203)*
- When Work Stops Working: Rethinking Participation in Workforce Programs – Vishal Shah, Community College of Philadelphia *(ALC 207)*

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3:00 pm – 3:45 pm Breakout Session Round 4

- From Parallel Effort to Shared Action: Building a 90-Day Alignment Plan for Regional Talent Systems - Bri Barnes-Eldert, REACH/NCAD *(ALC 103)*
- Skills for What's Next: Building Regional Pathways for Worker Success - Blair Corcoran de Castillo, Opportunity@Work *(ALC 107)*
- The State Vision for Higher Education and Workforce Development, Carrie Amann, PA State Board of Higher Education (ALC 203)
- Pathways to Possibility: An Innovative Approach to Helping Students Identify Skills, Interests, and Career Opportunities - Cathy Rychalsky, Workforce Board of Lehigh Valley and Yusul Dahl, The Century Promise (ALC 207)

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm Happy Hour *(ALC Lobby)*

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2027

8:00 am – 8:45 am Breakfast and Networking *(CUB 210)*

9:00 am – 9:45 am Breakout Session Round 5

- AI, Cybersecurity, and the Next Generation of Career Pathways – Beverly Magda, and Gloria Bell, Cedar Crest College *(EAB 102)*
- CTE – Judd Pittman, PA Department of Education and Briana Mihok, Education Resource Center, Penn State Allegheny *(EAB 103)*
- From Program Inventory to Regional Talent Strategy: How Leaders Decide What to Build, Scale, Redesign, Connect – and Stop - Rachel Kahn, Education Design Lab *(EAB 104)*
- Map the Gap: A Working Session for Workforce Boards, Higher Ed, and Employers - Kim Glenn, EDSI *(EAB 110)*

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2027

10:00 am – 10:45 am Breakout Session Round 6

- From Community Need to Workforce Solutions: How Continuing Education Builds Responsive Learning Pathwats – Jennifer Donahue, Temple University *(EAB 102)*
- From High School to Career Pathway: Connecting Secondary, CTE, and Postsecondary, and Workforce Systems – Kate Kreamer, Advance CTE *(EAB 103)*
- Natalie Cartwright, PASSHE Office of the Chancellor and Jillian Scholten, Credential Engine *(EAB 104)*
- The Power of Partnerships: Creating Workforce Pathways Together– Tuesday Stanley, PA Commission of Community Colleges *(EAB 110)*

10:45 am – 11:15 am Networking Break *(CUB 210)*

11:30 am – 12:00 pm Final Conversation: Where Do We Go from Here? *(CUB 210)*

EAB = Educational Activities Building CUB = Capitol Union Building

ALC = Academic Learning Center