RNL NC
ALTERING the
LANDSCAPE

JULY 22-24, 2025 | Atlanta, GA

hour-by-hour agenda

Subject to change: use conference app onsite for the most up-to-date agenda and to access meeting room names

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MONDAY, JULY 21

5:00-7:00 p.m.	RNLNC Registration Check-In

TUESDAY, JULY 22

9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	RNLNC Registration Check-In and Exhibit Area Open
11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	**Welcome and Opening Keynote Session:** **"The Future of Higher Education"** **Dr. Miguel Cardona, 12th U.S. Secretary of Education**
12:15-1:30 p.m.	**Opening Lunch Social**
1:45-2:45 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions (choose from up to 13 sessions):**

The Strategic Enrollment Planning Imperative:
Higher Education Past and Present
Wes Butterfield, Chief of Consulting Services, RNL
Higher education professionals are currently dealing with the most turbulent environment in decades. Fueled by the global pandemic, ongoing demographic shifts, rapid technological change, and increased scrutiny of the postsecondary enterprise by both government and the larger public, the pressure is on to attract, retain, and graduate students in greater numbers than ever before. This session will explore the major environmental trends that are challenging enrollment managers and suggest some potential solutions to these issues.

From Analysis Paralysis to Agile Decisions: Making the Most of Your Data for Success

Andrew Bressette, Vice-President for Enrollment, Berry College

Trevor Ehrenheim, Sr. Associate Director of Admission, Berry College

Berry College, a selective four-year private, has aligned our systems and planning to maximize the use of data throughout the admission funnel. Rather than wait for end-of-year data to determine next steps and future planning we use data weekly to identify gaps, emerging risks, and to pivot on our strategy leading to six straight years of exceeding our enrollment goals. In this presentation we will discuss our bi-weekly KPI meetings' top strategies for staying on top of your data, and ways to move from paralysis to agile decisions that identify risks early and maximize your goals.

SEO + Video: The Secret Ingredients to Boosting Your Website Traffic

Beka Pica, AVP, Creative, RNL

Rob Alexander, Director Search Engine Optimization, RNL

Zachary Rhodes, Client Solutions Consultant & Client Success, EM, RNL

Hear from an expert panel on the upward trend in using SEO and video to optimize and boost your website's traffic. We will share current statistics and a real-life case study on how to successfully grow your website traffic.

Saint Francis Moving from NCAA DI to DII Athletics: Transitioning to Division III Excellence

Father Malachi Van Tassell, T.O.R., Ph.D, President, Saint Francis University

Steve Soba, Vice President of Enrollment Management, Saint Francis University

Robin Bowlus, Vice President, Strategic Accounts, RNL

Mike Dziedziak, Executive Consultant, Financial Aid Services, RNL

In March 2025, the Board of Trustees of Saint Francis University in Loretto, PA, announced that they directed the president to pursue reclassification of its NCAA Division

I intercollegiate athletics program to Division III effective with the 2026 academic year. Saint Francis President Father Malachi Van Tassell, T.O.R., Ph.D, and Steve Soba, vice president of enrollment management, will share the story of the decision for this transition and their ongoing journey to build a stronger campus community for all of their students through mission, academics, and athletics.

AI Essentials for Higher Education

Rebecca Jenkins, Director of AI Product Marketing, RNL

This presentation will provide higher education leaders with a foundational understanding of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its potential impact on their institutions. We will explore key AI concepts, including machine learning, deep learning, natural language processing, and computer vision, and discuss their potential applications in various areas of higher education, such as teaching and learning, research, administration, and student support.

Leveraging Shared Experiences: How Collaboration Can Transform Enrollment

Melody Menefield Levine, Program Coordinator, Columbus State Community College

Dr. G. Merchel Menefield, Senior Graduate Advisor, Franklin University

Higher education recruitment and admission are influenced by processing applications and shaping enrollment outcomes. Also at the epicenter of this operation is building relationships between students, school counselors, and the admission counselors. The different ages and experience levels add various perspectives that can help move students through enrollment.and learning, research, administration, and student support.

Student Success 101

Sherri Erkel, Vice President, Consulting, Student Success, RNL

Julie Bryant, Vice President of Student Success, RNL

What is the definition of student success and how can you develop a plan to best retain your students? Join us to review the latest research and to consider a framework for approaching student success efforts at your institution. You'll

go back to your campus with a set of strategies to assess your needs and ideas for initiatives that will keep your students enrolled to graduation.

One River: A Data-Driven Transformation of Orientation to Improve Student Success
Elizabeth Gaskin, Vice President for Student Success, Indian River State College
Emily Mass, Associate Vice President of Recruitment and Admissions, Indian River State College
Rebecca Shearer, Chief Retention Officer, Indian River State College
In 2022, Indian River State College launched the Promise Program, bringing in the largest freshman class in the College's history. This majority First-Generation, Pell-eligible, and minority cohort presented new challenges in retention and course success. To address these needs, Indian River State College fostered a One River culture, leading to a collegewide collaboration to redesign New Student Orientation (NSO) and its virtual companion course (SLS1501). Through the Enrollment Roundtable, faculty, student success professionals, and institutional researchers analyzed data to enhance student outcomes. This session will highlight the collaborative, data-driven strategies used to improve gateway course success rates, retention, and utilization of academic support services.

From Student to Strategist:
Preparing the Next Generation of Enrollment Managers
Juan Vazquez, Associate Director, Texas A&M International University
From Student to Strategist: Preparing the Next Generation of Enrollment Managers explores the vital role of student employees in shaping the future of strategic enrollment management. This session focuses on how institutions can take intentional steps to develop student workers for leadership roles within their enrollment management organization. By fostering a growth-oriented environment, institutions can cultivate a pipeline of talented and forward-thinking enrollment management professionals ready to

tackle the evolving challenges of higher education. Join us as we discuss best practices and inspire the next generation of enrollment managers.

Recruitment for Rookies
Andrew Watson, Senior Consultant, RNL
Shelley Moss, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL
You've recently joined the admissions team or are new to Higher Education and you need help getting a grasp on the "lingo." You generally know what you're supposed to be doing, but you don't know what you don't know! This session will explain some of the terminology and metrics used in recruitment, financial aid, business offices, and budgeting, as well as help you understand reports that are critical within student recruitment. Come learn some of the lingo and tricks of the trade, and arrive willing to share ideas from your shop. This session will explore the language of student recruitment and provide context for how information about enrollment is often used on campus. This knowledge is meant to decrease new team member anxiety and assist you in being an effective new member of the team.

A Data-Driven Approach to Graduate Program Communications Planning
Jessica Ickes, Vice President, Marketing and Research Services, RNL
Anuja Siraj, AVP Digital Strategy, RNL
What are the most effective steps for retaining graduate students in the enrollment funnel? How do grad programs most frequently interact with prospective students, and to what extent does that match student preferences? What messages are most likely to continue to engage students from inquiry to application and from application to enrollment? These three questions will form the foundation of this interactive session.

Financial Aid for Rookies
Derek Flynn, Senior Vice President, Financial Aid Services, RNL
Understanding the many moving parts of financial aid is daunting enough, let alone taking this information and

building a strategic plan to use these dollars. This session will introduce attendees to the basics of financial aid (Financial Aid 101) while also introducing some basic fundamentals when building your own strategy. This session is geared toward professionals who may be new to financial aid and professionals wanting to learn the basics of building an aid strategy.

Build-a-Future:
Redefining Academic Writing and Admissions in the AI Era
Goran Trajkovski, Director, Data Analytics, Touro University Illinois
Dr. Jenelle Hodges, Director, Cybersecurity, Touro University Illinois
Dr. Chani Tessler, Vice Provost, Touro University Illinois
AI technologies are reshaping academic writing and admissions, presenting both challenges and opportunities for innovation. This session explores how institutions can shift from reactive approaches, like detecting misuse, to fostering integrity-driven systems that embrace AI. Participants will examine frameworks for using AI to personalize writing support, enhance creativity, and uphold academic rigor while addressing ethical considerations. By rethinking admissions and academic writing in the AI era, institutions can create systems that prioritize equitable access and empower authentic student voices.

2:45-3:15 p.m.   Refreshment Break

3:15-4:15 p.m.   **Breakout Sessions (choose from up to 13 sessions):**

Bridging Technology and Strategy: Increasing Student Engagement Through AI Chat and Search Marketing
Samantha White, AVP, Client Solutions Consulting,
Gia Bower, Account Manager, Halda
Ryan Myzak, Director of Undergraduate Admission, Marymount University

In the competitive landscape of college admissions, institutions are increasingly turning to innovative technologies to enhance student engagement and streamline the recruitment process.

This presentation explores a dynamic use case scenario featuring Marymount University's success in partnering with Halda's AI chat solution and RNL Student Search Marketing. By leveraging data-driven insights, Marymount has been able to identify students' interests and tailor communications to nurture them throughout the decision-making process. This case study highlights key strategies, outcomes, and lessons learned. Attendees will gain actionable insights into integrating AI chat technology into their recruitment strategies to create meaningful connections with prospective students.

How to Utilize Data-Driven Personalized Videos

Bill Haley, President, Allied Pixel

Tom Mikowski, Vice President of Business Development and Higher Ed Partnerships, Allied Pixel

Learn how data-driven personalized videos boost enrollment conversion by delivering tailored content that resonates with prospective students. See and hear how colleges are using existing student data and school photo and video assets to provide personalized messages and program highlights aligned with each student's interests. Discover how this targeted approach enhances engagement and builds a stronger connection with students, making them feel valued and understood. Dynamic and relevant, these videos ensure students receive the information they need to make informed decisions and take the next step in their enrollment journey, ultimately leading to higher conversion rates. Students who view their personalized videos are up to 5X more likely to enroll.

Navigating the Changing Landscape of Family Engagement in College Admissions

Dave Becker, CEO and Co-Founder, CampusESP

Raquel Bermejo, AVP for Market Research , RNL

The college admissions process has become increasingly complex, with families navigating a myriad of factors in supporting their students' higher education journeys. This session presents findings from a prospective study exploring the evolving preferences, concerns, and equity considerations of

families with high school students in the classes of 2025-2028.

We will delve into how families are approaching college planning, communication preferences, financial aid and affordability perceptions, and the role of campus visits and intercollegiate athletics. This session aims to provide admissions professionals with actionable insights to enhance family engagement strategies, promote inclusivity, and address the diverse needs of contemporary prospective student families.

Cultivating a S.A.F.E. Workplace
Michael Rubbo, Sr. Undergraduate Admission Counselor,
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Noah Murray, Sr. Undergraduate Admission Counselor,
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Jennifer Cantu, Undergraduate Admission Counselor,
The University of Texas at San Antonio
This presentation explores the S.A.F.E. framework—Supportive, Authentic, Fostering, Excellence—to cultivate a positive workplace environment. It emphasizes building trust, active listening, and encouraging open communication and recognition. Participants will learn strategies to enhance authenticity, empower employees, and align organizational culture with core values. The session highlights the importance of adaptability in navigating change and maintaining cohesion during challenges. Practical examples, such as effective onboarding and team engagement practices, will empower attendees to create a resilient, inclusive, and thriving work culture.

The Ethical Frontier:
Navigating Bias and Privacy in AI-Powered Higher Education
Subreina DeSouza, SVP AI Solutions Consulting, RNL
Keyana Scales, Senior Vice President, RNL
AI is transforming higher education, but ethical concerns like bias and privacy are crucial. This presentation will explore these challenges and discuss practical steps for responsible AI use, including developing guidelines, addressing bias, and protecting student data.

Key Takeaways: Understand AI bias and its impact; Learn how to protect student privacy; Develop a framework for responsible AI implementation.

Beyond Access: Enhancing Recruitment and Retention for Pell Students—A Holistic Approach

Michael Marshall, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Success, Goucher College

Lauren Keeling, Vice President for Enrollment, Marketing and Communication, Bellarmine University

Join enrollment leaders from Bellarmine University and Goucher College as they share proven strategies for recruiting and retaining Pell-eligible students. Learn how these two institutions enhanced recruitment and retention outcomes by implementing innovative financial aid models, data-informed engagement, and comprehensive support systems. Explore successful initiatives like HOPE Kentucky Scholars and Maryland Advantage (LAUNCH Scholars Network) and see how cross-campus collaboration and predictive analytics are helping to create sustainable pathways for Pell student success.

Redefining Student Success: Establishing a Culture of Care for Generation Z in Higher Education

Dawn Nail, Executive Director, North Carolina A&T State University

Generation Z, those born between 1997 and 2012, is reshaping higher education by placing a spotlight on the importance of inclusivity, mental health, technology, and affordability (Michigan Language Assessment, 2024). They test the status quo, expecting more from universities to meet their unique needs. Generation Z requires a personalized approach and a sense of community which is a break from previous generational learning styles that have become outdated. Consequently, higher education must challenge traditional norms, not only to retain students, but also for sustainability and to successfully matriculate students throughout their academic careers.

AI-Powered Education:
Innovations in Learning, Engagement, and Student Retention

Agnes Drupka, Assistant Director of Institutional Research,
UCNJ Union College of Union County NJ

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming education, offering unprecedented opportunities to personalize learning, enhance student engagement, and improve retention rates. This presentation explores the innovative ways AI is reshaping the educational landscape. We will examine AI-driven adaptive learning platforms that tailor instruction to individual students' needs, intelligent tutoring systems that provide real-time support, and predictive analytics models that identify at-risk students early, enabling timely intervention. Additionally, we'll discuss how AI-powered tools streamline administrative processes, optimize resource allocation, and deliver around-the-clock support through virtual assistants. By addressing both the benefits and challenges (such as ethical considerations and data privacy), this talk highlights how AI in education not only fosters improved academic outcomes but also builds more inclusive, responsive learning environments.

Enhancing Retention: A Comprehensive, Data-Driven Approach to Term-to-Term Re-Enrollment

Audra Taylor, Associate Director for Student Success
Technology and Analytics, Georgia Southern University

This presentation will detail the Re-Enrollment Strategy first developed and deployed at our institution in Spring 2024. The strategy describes retention goals, communication strategies and templates, campus partner coordination, and key checkpoints throughout the process. Since its launch, we have refined the process to include identifying students' reason(s) for stopping out and their communication preferences. This strategy has allowed us to quickly and easily target specific populations for outreach. Our results speak for themselves: Fall-to-Spring retention for our IPEDS Freshman cohort was 94% as of 12/24/2024, up 3% from the same day one year prior.

The Fundamentals of Strategic Enrollment Planning

Dawn Fortin Mattoon, Senior Vice President, RNL

The higher education landscape continues to change at a rapid pace, and the competition for students is fierce. Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) provides a disciplined approach to monitor the environment and to develop institution-specific strategic responses. Learn the absolute must do's for an effective SEP project, how to distinguish strategic initiatives from annual planning efforts, the steps to take for an effective SEP, and common pitfalls to avoid. We'll explore these questions and those from participants in this interactive session.

Strategies for Optimizing the Applicant Journey from Initial Interest to Successful Graduation

Brian Wayne, Graduate Programs Recruiter, Elizabeth City State University

This methodology emphasizes a holistic approach to the educational journey, focusing on the various stages of engagement, support, and transition that an individual experiences from the initial point of interest in a program to the successful completion of their degree. By systematically addressing each phases' entry into the program, the experiences and challenges faced during study, and the eventual transition out into the professional world, this guide seeks to provide actionable strategies and insights that can significantly enhance the overall experience and outcomes for students..

Using Research to Enhance Your Graduate and Online Program Strategy

Stephanie Seaton, Market Research Consultant, Financial Aid Services, RNL

Dr. Ken Newbold, Assistant Vice President, Market and Research Services

Graduate and online programs play a significant and growing role in program mix at many colleges and universities. In this session, we'll explore how to use market research including primary research, to understand the market for your existing graduate and online programs and to leverage it to consider emerging programs of interest.

4:30-5:30 p.m.	Happy Hour Welcome Reception
5:30 p.m.	Free Evening to Enjoy Atlanta

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23

7:00-8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
7:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	RNLNC Registration Check-In and Exhibit Area Open

8:15-9:15 a.m.

Breakout Sessions (choose from up to 13 sessions):

Assess, Strategize, and Operationalize (ASO): A Model for Enrollment Success
Boyd Bradshaw, Vice President, Towson University
Ashley Miller, Associate Vice President, Old Dominion University
This engaging session dives into the practical application of the ASO (Analytical Strategic Optimization) model, a key framework emphasized in the RNL Strategic Enrollment Planning Textbook, 3rd Edition, Chapter 5. We will highlight real case studies from two distinct public institutions on how utilizing this approach achieved enrollment success from recruitment to retention. Discover proven methods and practical tools for transforming enrollment challenges into opportunities for growth. Attendees will leave with actionable insights and recommendations on how they can implement this model at their institution.

Nurturing Transfer Student Parents for Enrollment Growth
Mary Beth Marks, Executive Director for Enrollment Management and Campus Events, University of the Pacific
This presentation outlines a data-driven approach to enhance parent engagement for transfer students. By integrating National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data with our CRM (Slate) and parent engagement platform (CampusESP), we create targeted inquiry pools and personalize communication. This includes email, text messaging, and interactive webinars. We track key metrics like application and enrollment rates, and analyze CampusESP data to measure engagement. This strategy

aims to improve communication, strengthen relationships with parents, and ultimately increase transfer student enrollment.

Decoding Student Preferences:
Effective College Communications and Website Strategies
Raquel Bermejo, AVP Market Research, RNL
Shauna Cox, Editor-in-Chief of The EvoLLLution, The Evolution
In the high-stakes world of college admissions, understanding the mindset of prospective students is your competitive edge. This eye-opening session reveals surprising insights from an in-depth study of high schoolers' behaviors, preferences, and pet peeves when engaging with colleges. We'll decode the often-misunderstood student perspective from their communication channels of choice to the website features that make or break their interest. Discover how to tailor your outreach, revamp your website, and leverage the power of personalization and AI to capture attention and build meaningful connections in today's digital-first admissions landscape. Don't miss these actionable strategies to transform your recruitment approach and rise above the noise.

Student Success: Gather and Use Data to Impact the Student Experience Across Your Campus – A Panel Discussion
Shannon Cook, Senior Consultant, Student Success Solutions, RNL
Kurtis D. Watkins, Ed.D., Dean of Student Affairs, South University
Susan Davies, Ph.D., Executive Vice President, Enrollment & Student Affairs, Augusta University
Student satisfaction surveys are a key component in assessing and ensuring the quality of the student experience. They allow institutions to understand student priorities and to target resources accordingly. To be most effective, institutions need strong response rates, a plan to review and respond to the feedback plus good collaboration with leadership. Representatives from four-year and two-year institutions will share how they are effectively gathering and using their student satisfaction d24nta, providing examples of what is working. This session will share the perspectives of the panelists and the moderator to identify how campuses can successfully use student satisfaction survey results.

Transforming Legislative Insights: The NDUS Experience

Ryan Jockers, Deputy Director of Data & AI Initiatives, North Dakota University System

The North Dakota University System (NDUS) is revolutionizing how legislative sessions are monitored and analyzed with NDUS LegiTrack AI. Our AI-driven system automates tracking North Dakota bills, amendments, hearings, and votes, providing real-time insights and actionable data. By integrating advanced language models and data processing techniques, we ensure that stakeholders receive timely alerts and comprehensive overviews of legislative activities. This innovative approach saves time and resources and enhances accuracy, efficiency, and decision-making capabilities. Join us to discover how NDUS sets a new legislative tracking and advocacy standard through cutting-edge technology.

Reset, Freeze, or Increase:
How to Make Pricing Part of Your Strategy

Jessica Ickes, Vice President, Market and Research Services, RNL

Dr. Jeffery Gates, Senior Vice President of Enrollment and Marketing, Stetson University

Derek Flynn, Senior Vice President, Financial Aid Services, RNL

Ever wondered if your institution is "priced right" or has your institution considered a change in price strategy like a reset or freeze? Students, families, and external audiences are increasingly aware of the cost of higher education. Yet even in a time of increasingly sophisticated approaches to pricing, some institutions still set their price annually without market insights or alignment with mission and institutional strategy. Hear from those who have made price strategy changes and RNL experts that can help you understand the impact of changes in price and how to use price as a key part of your strategy.

Establishing a Collaborative Framework for Student Success and Retention

DiAnna Washington, Director, Student Success & Retention, University of North Carolina Wilmington

Dr. Kevin Meaney, Executive Director of Housing and Residence Life

Successful and sustainable student success and retention strategies are most effective when driven by intentional and strategic collaboration across all divisions of a university. At the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW), an innovative approach to enhancing student success emerged through a joint effort between the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. This joint effort resulted in the creation of three key student success strategies, an operational definition of student success, the development of a comprehensive catalog of student success initiatives, and the launch of a student-focused marketing campaign to engage and inform the campus community. This presentation will outline the collaborative process used to achieve key student success strategies and highlight the impact of cross-functional partnerships in fostering a shared student success vision.

The Long Game:
Investing in Web and SEO for Visibility and Growth
Vaughn Shinkus, Senior Vice President, RNL
Todd Nucci, Director of Marketing and Digital/Web Services, Oakland University
Years of research demonstrate that search engines are the most-used resource among prospective students seeking educational opportunities at all levels. But search engine optimization isn't a quick fix—it's a long game requiring sustained attention and ongoing investment in website content and usability. Learn how Oakland University's multi-year SEO work in partnership with RNL has increased the university's overall visibility and driven undergraduate and graduate student engagement.

Optimize Your Outreach with College Board Search & Connections
Alicia Ortega, Senior Vice President, Client Solutions, RNL
Kevin Corr, Senior Director, Enrollment Solutions, College Board
With features like Interest in my College, Interest in my Peers, Landscape Context, and Connections, College Board Enrollment Solutions can help you optimize your outreach and recruit future scholars. And new enhancements coming this fall are

guaranteed to make it even easier for your school to stand out. Your RNL consultant can help you use the tools included in your subscription to maximize your reach and build a vibrant and robust class. Join our conversation to learn how to use these tools to build the class you want in partnership with RNL and College Board.

Building Connections That Convert:
Graduate Enrollment Success with Stories and Segmentation
Catie Connolly, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL
Zach Rhodes, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL
In today's competitive graduate and online enrollment landscape, personalized marketing isn't just a trend, it's a necessity. This session explores how segmentation, persona development, and storytelling can transform your marketing strategies to better engage prospective students and boost conversions. Learn how to create data-driven personas and use them to craft targeted campaigns featuring tailored emails, customized ads, and optimized web content. Discover the power of authentic storytelling, leveraging student testimonials, alumni success stories, and faculty spotlights to create emotional connections with your audience. Walk away with actionable strategies to build data-informed, highly personalized campaigns that resonate with graduate and online students and drive measurable results.

9:15-9:45 a.m.   .   Refreshment Break

9:45-10:45 a.m.   **Breakout Sessions (choose from up to 13 sessions):**

Master Prompt Engineering:
Unlock the Full Power of AI—No Experience Needed!
So Hye Park, AVP Applied AI, RNL
Want better results for your large language models (LLMs)? It all starts with the right prompt. In this interactive session, you'll learn how to write powerful, precise prompts that consistently deliver high-quality outputs —no technical background required. Join us to explore:
- The core elements of an effective prompt
- Common mistakes and how to avoid them

- Real-world examples that worked—and why
- Techniques for refining prompts through iteration
- Live, hands-on exercises to sharpen your skills

You'll leave with practical tools, expert tips, and the confidence to engineer prompts that consistently deliver high-quality outputs — no technical background prompts that work — every time. Get Ready to Engage: Planning to attend? Send your email address to **sohye.park@ruffalonl.com** by July 22, 2025, for temporary access to RNL Answers, our LLM-powered product used during the session.

RNL Student Search to Enrollment - Analyze, Qualify, Engage
Andrew Watson, Senior Consultant , RNL
Sam White, AVP Client Solutions, RNL
Learn more about how RNL's Student Search to Enrollment services strategically build demand and drive student conversion across the full enrollment funnel. RNL's predictive modeling helps to identify the prospects most likely to apply, and insight to prioritize the students most likely to enroll. Student Search to Enrollment combines powerful modeling, qualification surveys, award-winning creative, and omnichannel outreach to meet your enrollment objectives.

The Importance of Personalization in College Planning: From Interest to Application
Vaughn Shinkus, Senior Vice President, Ruffalo Noel Levitz
Dallin Palmer, Co-Founder, President, and COO, Halda
The college planning process has never been more daunting. Soaring costs, information overload, and rising uncertainty leave 12th graders facing tough decisions about their post-secondary paths. This session cuts through the noise, offering a data-driven exploration of the key role of affordability in shaping college choices.

Cut Through the Noise: Science-Backed Strategies to Reach Busy Students
Shar-day Campbell, Manager, Strategic Enrollment
Communications and Social Media, Houston Community College

Reaching today's distracted students isn't about sending more messages—it's about sending the right message at the right time. In this session, learn how a two-person team designed 60 behavior-triggered onboarding communications using Todd Rogers'™ research-backed principles for communicating with busy people. You'll walk through how they built a scalable strategy from scratch by writing the workflow logic, crafting each message, and aligning it all to key student behaviors. If you're short on time, staff, or budget but still expected to deliver clear, personalized outreach, this session will give you the frameworks and strategies to start strong or rethink what you already have.

Strategic by Design: Ensuring Every Plan Leads to Results
Dawn Fortin Mattoon, Senior Vice President, RNL
This session explores how institutions can ensure that planning is strategic. Strategic plans are grounded in data, aligned with mission, and designed for measurable impact. Participants will examine a framework for feasibility studies, operational efficiency assessments, academic master planning, institutional strategic plans, and financial modeling.

Trading Places:
Building Collaboration Across Admissions and Financial Aid
Samantha Hicks, Assistant Vice President of Financial Aid and Scholarships, Coastal Carolina University
Trey Wilson, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, Coastal Carolina University
Discover how an innovative week-long experimental switching roles between the directors of admissions and financial aid highlighted the power of collaboration in higher education. This session will explore lessons learned about fostering cross-campus partnerships, boosting staff morale, and enhancing leadership. Attendees will gain insights into breaking down silos, improving communication, and supporting holistic student enrollment experiences through this unique leadership initiative.

Real-Time Personalized Videos: Utilizing AI to Deliver Videos Instantly to Students on Your Website

Tom Mikowski, Vice President of Business Development and Higher Ed Partnerships, Allied Pixel

Dallin Palmer, Co-Founder, President, and COO, Halda

Does personalized video convert better than a generic one? Absolutely! Discover the new way of delivering personalized videos instantaneously when students visit your website. By answering a few interest-based questions, students can receive a data-driven video highlighting your school and programs that are relevant to their own background and interests. Hear and see results from a year-long pilot on how these videos performed in significantly boosting engagement and conversion rates. See real student comments on how they felt after receiving these videos.

Using Your Data for Improvement: What to Track and How to Create a Data Culture

Jessica Ickes, Vice President, Market and Research Services, RNL

Julie Bryant, Vice President for Student Success, RNL

Sherri Erkel, Vice President, Consulting Services, RNL

Colleges and universities are rich with data. But does our campus have a data-informed culture that is turning the data into information to support a data-informed culture to support your mission and strategic goals? From market data, to student success and retention data, to campus perception information, this important session will help you understand how to decide what data elements to track, how to use data and information to help you achieve your strategic goals, and to build your college or university's data capacity and culture.

All-In for Student Success: Implementation, Faculty Engagement, & Impact

Brenda Oursler White, Special Assistant to the Provost, SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology at Morrisville

Learn about an implementation strategy and impactful results launching the RNL College Student Inventory (CSI) utilizing SUNY ACE/ASAP funds to drive faculty engagement and student success

among first year and transfer students attending a highly diverse rural central NY College. Data analytics demonstrate correlations to higher GPAs, persistence, and retention rates. Stark differences were found between students who did and students who did not complete the CSI. Discover best practices for faculty engagement, establishing connections to first-year students, and approaches to converting skeptical faculty into CSI thought leaders.

Leveraging AI in Enrollment Management for Higher Education
David Barron, Vice President of Enrollment Management,
The University of Texas at Tyler
Today, we will explore how AI can address some of the most pressing issues in enrollment management. We will look at how AI can enhance recruitment efforts, streamline the admissions process, improve student retention, and support students through to graduation. Additionally, we will discuss real-world examples of institutions that have successfully implemented AI solutions and the benefits they have realized. By the end of this presentation, I hope you will have a clearer understanding of the transformative power of AI and how it can be leveraged to create more efficient, effective, and student-centered enrollment management practices.

Generations of Online Learners:
Understanding How to Market and Recruit All the Generations
Andrea Carroll-Glover, VP Graduate and Online Research, RNL
The online audience has firmly shifted from GenX/Millennial to Millennial/GenZ. Nearly half of students today are Millennials, and nearly a third are GenZ, but more than 20 percent are still GenX. How do you ensure that your marketing, messaging, and recruitment tactics are optimized to meet the needs of the widest possible audience? In order to help you navigate the increasingly complicated online education environment, RNL analyzed the findings of its recent national study of more than 1,500 prospective and enrolled online students by their generation. Attendees and facilitators will work through how the generations diverge and converge in their expectations and preferences, and think through how you can ensure your marketing, recruitment, enrollment, and retention efforts can best serve the age-diverse online audience.

Empowering Online Recruitment Success: Strategies for Training, Retention, and Support

Reena Lichtenfeld, SVP consulting, RNL

In this interactive session, higher education professionals will learn how to effectively train, retain, and support online recruitment staff to drive student success in a rapidly evolving online education landscape. Through a combination of expert insights, case studies, and role-playing exercises, participants will gain practical knowledge and skills to better understand the motivations of online learners, develop compelling value propositions, and leverage emerging technologies to drive recruitment and retention efforts.

10:45-11:15 a.m.	Break
11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	Keynote Session
12:15-1:45 p.m.	Hosted Lunch
2:00-3:00 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions (choose from up to 13 sessions):**

Empowering Hispanic Student Success: Strategies for Inclusive Recruitment & Family Engagement

Alicia Ortega, Senior Vice President, Client Solutions, RNL
Flora Calderon-Steck, Executive Director, Educational Partnerships, Forsyth Tech College
Ana Rodriguez, Director of Freshman Recruitment, University of Texas San Antonio

Many Hispanic students face cultural and systemic barriers, and universities must modernize their recruitment and support services. Research shows that successful programs require "cultural responsiveness and asset-based approaches" to truly serve Latino students. We will explore how technology can create more inclusive pathways to higher education for Hispanic families through case studies and practical demonstrations. We will examine how tools like AI-powered translation services, culturally tailored virtual experiences, and automated bilingual financial aid guidance can transform the enrollment journey. This session will provide actionable strategies to leverage technology in a way that builds trust and maintains cultural authenticity so institutions can better serve their Hispanic student population.

Lessons from Early Adopter of AI-Driven Technologies

Subreina DeSouza, Senior Vice President Advanced Solutions & Product, RNL

Latoya Jenkins, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Experience, University of Maryland Eastern Shore

David Kirschner, Associate Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, USC Gould School of Law

Join us for a panel discussion featuring two pioneering universities that have leveraged AI technology to revolutionize their enrollment processes and improve operational efficiency. Hear from the experts at University of Maryland Eastern Shore and USC Gould School of Law as they share their experiences, successes, and challenges in implementing AI-driven solutions to drive student recruitment, retention, and success. From chatbots to predictive analytics, learn how these institutions are harnessing the power of AI to stay ahead of the curve and create a more personalized, student-centric experience.

Launching Data Roadshows: Leveraging Survey Insights to Drive Collaborative Strategies for Student Success

Alisa Fleming, Director, Institutional Assessment, University of Phoenix

Sam Rodriguez-Flores, Assessment Manager, University of Phoenix

Universities play a pivotal role in preparing students to contribute to their field of study and community. As such, it is important to assess what students are learning and the impact of teaching on learning. Nationally normed surveys is one way to gather insights on perceptions of student learning and the university experience. While conducting the assessment is important, collaborating and disseminating the findings with stakeholders is equally vital. This session will provide practical strategies for engaging stakeholders and leveraging survey insights to drive action. Participants will leave with a framework for using survey results to support the student experience.

The Data Tells the Story:
Resourcing Advising for Student Success Outcomes

Tara Warden, Asst. Vice Provost, University of Cincinnati

As higher education leaders, student success administrators are charged with positively impacting student outcomes such as retention, persistence, academic performance, and graduation rates. The University of Cincinnati has improved graduation rates 21 percentage points and dramatically narrowed equity gaps by investing in the student experience. This session will illustrate the university's long-term use of the Student Satisfaction Inventory and other student experience data, as well as a model to analyze advising capacity. Join us to understand the types of data and evidence that "make the case" for resources to improve student outcomes.

Fostering a data-informed enrollment culture

Barrie Fitzgerald, Deputy Chief Officer, Valdosta State University
Jeanne Herman, Associate Vice President,
Youngstown State University
Dawn Fortin Mattoon, Senior Vice President, RNL

A successful strategic enrollment plan changes the way that institutions think, talk, and act regarding enrollment. Central to this success is a culture that is data informed. During this session we will hear from two data leaders that are facilitating strategic enrollment and fostering a data-informed culture.

Addressing Mental Health & Student Success: The Power of Peers

Whitney Bischoff, Community Prevention Advisor, Lost&Found

In the post-pandemic era, college students' mental health continues to be a pressing concern, often overwhelming counseling services and tasking student affairs professionals with filling the gap. Join us for an engaging session that explores the critical link between mental health, student retention, and success. Learn how students' well-being directly influences their decision to persist each semester and how non-clinical peer-to-peer strategies—such as skill-building, fostering connections, and relationship development—can significantly improve mental health and encourage help-seeking behaviors. Leave with actionable tools designed to meet the unique needs of your institution, enhance student satisfaction, and improve campus climate.

Innovative Strategies for Meeting Enrollment Amidst FAFSA Challenges

Paige Piontkowsky, Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Management, University of La Verne

The 2024-2025 academic year brought unique challenges into the space of undergraduate enrollment and financial aid. To meet undergraduate enrollment goals, we needed to implement innovative strategies for FAFSA completion and undergraduate enrollment. This session will explore leveraging predictive analytics, strategic partnerships between admission and financial aid offices, building trust and transparency with first-generation students, and strategically deploying admission and financial aid teams to maximize enrollment yield. This session will review practical examples, lessons learned, and actionable takeaways to maximize enrollment efforts through collaboration between admission and financial aid offices.

Thrive, Not Just Survive:
Building Sustainable Online Programs Beyond OPMs

Andrea Carroll-Glover, Vice President, RNL

Jeremiah Grabowski, Executive Dean of Online Learning, D'Youville University

In 2025, the online education landscape is undergoing a significant transformation, with institutions increasingly shifting away from traditional Online Program Management (OPM) partnerships towards more flexible and customized solutions. This evolution is driven by institutions' growing desire for control, cost-effectiveness, and the need to adapt to rapidly changing market demands.

This session will explore cutting-edge trends in online program management and the experiences of institutions transitioning to new models, with a focus on AI integration. Three key themes include:

- Assessment and Decision Making
- Managing Change and Planning for the Future
- The Impact of Transitioning away from traditional Online Program Management (OPM) partnerships

This session will present the latest research findings, including data from recent market reports showing a significant decline in new OPM partnerships and a rise in fee-for-service models. Attendees will gain valuable insights into navigating the evolving OPM landscape and building sustainable, AI-enhanced online learning ecosystems that align with their institutional goals and values

Maximizing Enrollment Through Digital Strategy: Bridging Expectations, ROI, and Budgeting

Anuja Siraj, VP Digital Strategy, Ruffalo Noel Levitz

Institutional enrollment and marketing leaders are challenged in securing the funds that it takes to successfully market programs today. With institutional resources tighter than ever, and sophisticated marketing tactics often more expensive than ever, how do you make a successful case for the additional resources? How do you set realistic expectations, demonstrate good stewardship of funds, AND maximize ROI? In this session, we will discuss how a comprehensive digital strategy can serve as the backbone of your enrollment efforts, helping you orchestrate five essential steps in your case: confirming demand, building a reverse funnel, developing a budget, writing a business case, and creating a continuous improvement plan. You'll learn how to present a clear, data-driven strategy that not only secures the resources you need but also positions your institution for sustained enrollment.

From Best Practice to Next Practice: Becoming an Enrollment Innovator

James Steen, Vice President, Enrollment Management & Marketing, Houston Christian University

In an era where best practices are no longer enough, smaller institutions must compete with larger universities for a shrinking pool of high school graduates. This session explores how institutions can thrive despite limited resources by:
- Maximizing enrollment funnel efficiency
- Developing distinctive brand messaging
- Removing barriers through direct admission policies
- Leveraging competitive merit award structures
- Converting resource constraints into strategic advantages

Learn how to transform traditional enrollment practices into pioneering approaches that help institutions not just compete, but excel in today's challenging recruitment landscape.

Embracing the Future:
AI as a Catalyst for Connectivism Learning Ecosystems
Jenelle Hodges, Director of Cybersecurity in Healthcare Certificate Program, Touro University
Dr. Goran Trajkovski, Director, Data Analytics, Touro University – Illinois
Dr. Chani Tessler, Vice Provost, Touro University Illinois
Education is undergoing a profound transformation, with AI revolutionizing how knowledge is accessed, shared, and applied across dynamic interworks. This session explores the principles of connectivism, a paradigm that views learning as an interconnected process withing technology-enhanced ecosystems. Attendees will discover how AI tools, such as adaptive learning platforms, intelligent tutoring systems, and real-time collaboration technologies, empower learners to engage deeply with knowledge wile fostering networked, personalized experiences.

3:00-3:30 p.m.   Refreshment Break

3:30-4:30 p.m.   **Breakout Sessions (Choose from up to 13 sessions):**

Enabling Success Across the Student Lifecycle:
Learnings from Millions Digital Conversations with Students
Dave Marshall, CEO, Mongoose
Jason Porter, VP, Customer Success, Mongoose
Meaningful conversations have the power to change lives—and new AI-driven insights reveal how. Join Mongoose to explore benchmark data from hundreds of institutions and millions of texting interactions with students. See how institutions have connected their messaging data directly to measurable gains in enrollment, retention, and advancement, turning insights into action. We'll also discuss broader trends in student engagement, and how Conversation Intelligence is helping institutions anticipate needs, foster connections, and support student success at scale.

Meeting Students Where They Are:
Bridging the AI Divide in College Planning
Raquel Bermejo, AVP for Market Research, RNL
Devin Purgason, Executive Director of Marketing and Student
Care, Forsyth Technical Community College
Ready to unlock the secret to connecting with today's tech-savvy (and tech-hesitant) students? Based on eye-opening research from 500 high school students, this session reveals four distinct personas that will transform how you think about AI in college planning. You'll discover why some students embrace AI while others shy away—and, more importantly, how to reach both effectively. Walk away with game-changing strategies to boost enrollment outcomes, including innovative hybrid counseling approaches and proven techniques to build student trust in AI tools. We'll share real-world examples of institutions successfully navigating this digital transformation, plus practical tips your team can implement immediately. Don't miss this chance to stay ahead of the curve as AI reshapes college admissions. Learn how to create a personalized, inclusive approach that meets every student where they are—whether they're AI enthusiasts or skeptics. Your enrollment strategy needs this session!

A Data Driven Approach to Serving Some College
No Credential (SCNC) Transfer Students
Drew Melendres, Cofounder, DegreeSight
There are more than 38 million Americans that have earned some college credits, but not completed a degree. This includes the current transfer students in the market. If you've ever wondered what these students are thinking, and how to reach them, then this is the session for you. We will look at data and trends to better understand these students and how to effectively recruit them. WIth the traditional age student population on the decline, these are the students not only of tomorrow, but the students of today.

Leveraging the Success of a Medical Immersion Camp to Drive Undergraduate Enrollment

Dana Famularo, Adjunct Professor, Nova Southeastern University

Kimberly Valenti

In 2017, the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine introduced a medical immersion camp for high school students. This camp offers experiential education opportunities for students interested in pursuing healthcare degrees. Participants engage in activities such as suturing, research, medical education technology, AI, and health informatics. These interactions with medical students and faculty play a pivotal role in fostering interest in the healthcare workforce. Additionally, the camp incorporates university tours and showcases the range of undergraduate and graduate programs available at Nova Southeastern University, serving as a valuable marketing tool.

Women in Higher Ed: Panel Discussion

Julie Bryant, Vice President for Student Success, RNL

Elizabeth Gaskin, Vice President for Student Success, Indian River State College

Dr. Stefanie Norris, Executive Director of Strategic Enrollment Initiatives and Transfer Pathways, University of North Carolina Wilmington

Alisa Fleming, Director, Institutional Assessment, University of Phoenix

Back by popular demand, this year's session will bring together a panel of professional women in higher education for an interactive discussion on strategies for negotiation, communication, and networking, plus managing the tides of change to effectively develop a successful career in higher education. In this session, the panel will explore practical strategies to create opportunities for career enhancement and advancement, along with ways to incorporate professional development into our busy lives.

Market Research: Market Share, Academic Programs, Pricing Sensitivity Studies, and Employee Surveys

Jessica Ickes, Vice President, Marketing and Research Services, RNL

Join the Market and Research Services team for this demonstration of select Market Research services including our enhanced Price Sensitivity Study with market simulator, Academic Program Demand Analysis, and Enrollment Projection Models to understand and improve your market share. We will also share information on our refreshed College Employee Satisfaction Survey.

Student Success Coaching: A Holistic Approach to Retention

Julie Everett, Student Success Coordinator, University of Nebraska at Kearney

Come and explore a comprehensive coaching model designed to support first-year college students holistically, addressing their academic, social, and personal needs. By tailoring mentorship, emotional support, and academic guidance to meet students where they are, we can create a more inclusive and effective transition to college life. Attendees will learn strategies to foster self-awareness, critical thinking, and resilience in freshmen, building meaningful connections that enhance student success and retention. Join us to discover practical approaches that empower first-year students and lay a foundation for their long-term well-being and achievement.

How to Bring Clarity to Your Financial Aid Award Offers using Personalized Video

Tom Mikowski, Vice President of Business Development and Higher Ed Partnerships, Allied Pixel

Amanda Craddock, Vice President of Enrollment Management, Coastal Carolina University

Derek Flynn, Senior Vice President, RNL

According to the 2023 U.S. Department of Education Study, 44% of students reported not fully understanding their financial aid award offers—and the number was 57% for first-generation students. Learn how Personalized Financial Aid Offer Videos leverage your existing data and media assets to provide clear

financial aid explanations on grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study while communicating affordability, value, and ROI. Additionally, Personalized Merit-Scholarship Videos engage students early in the recruitment process. Learn how colleges are using these innovative solutions to support yield and melt reduction efforts in their financial aid communication strategies.

From Clicks to Campus:
Cracking the Code on Enrollment Conversions
Cait Fitzpatrick, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL
Zach Rhodes, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL
In today's competitive higher education landscape, successfully guiding prospective students through the enrollment funnel requires strategic alignment between marketing and admissions teams. This presentation will explore how conversion tracking and intentional collaboration can drive higher conversion rates at every stage of the enrollment process—from awareness to enrollment. Attendees will gain actionable insights into using data to monitor and improve performance, implementing strategies to optimize each step of the funnel, and fostering visibility and partnership between departments. Real-world examples will demonstrate the impact of streamlined communication, shared goals, and innovative joint initiatives. Whether you're a marketing strategist, admissions professional, or enrollment leader, this session will equip you with the tools and tactics needed to increase conversions and achieve enrollment success.

The ROI Equation:
How to Prioritize Academic Programs When Budgets Are Tight
Anuja Siraj, AVP Digital Marketing, RNL
In an era of tightening budgets and rising digital marketing costs, how do you decide which academic programs deserve priority in your advertising strategy? This session will walk you through a clear, data-driven process to identify where your marketing dollars will make the greatest impact. We'll explore how to align digital spend with enrollment goals, assess program viability, and best return on investment (ROI) not just in leads, but in conversions, applications, and enrollments.

Whether you're in admissions, marketing, or enrollment strategy, you'll leave with a practical framework for making smarter, more strategic decisions with limited resources. If you're facing questions like "Where should be advertise first?" or "What metrics really matter?" - this is the session for you.

**Early Adopter of AI Experience:
Leveraging a Digital Assistant to Drive Enrollment Success**
Logan Fields, AI Solutions Specialist, RNL and Xavier University
Joel Munza, VP For Enrollment Management, Xavier University of Louisiana
Join us as Xavier University of Louisiana shares their journey of implementing a digital assistant on their website to drive enrollment success. Learn how they identified the need for a digital assistant, navigated the implementation process, and the significant impact it has had on their recruitment and admissions efforts. Discover the benefits of leveraging AI-powered technology to enhance the student experience, improve communication, and increase enrollment numbers.

THURSDAY, JULY 24

7:00-8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
7:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	RNLNC Registration Check-In and Exhibit Area Open
8:15-9:15 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions (choose from up to 13 sessions):**

Transfer Students Matter, Too! Tools for Changing the Campus Culture to Embrace Transfer Enrollment
Lauren Franklin, Director of Admissions, University of North Carolina Wilmington
Dr. Stefanie Norris, Executive Director of Strategic Enrollment Initiatives and Transfer Pathways, University of North Carolina Wilmington
How we recruit students and move them through the enrollment process can play as much of a role in retention as what we do once they arrive. University of North Carolina at Wilmington

(UNCW) has spent the last three years critically examining various transfer pathways to increase enrollment and student success. The presenters will share a timeline and action steps to decrease barriers for transfer students pre- and post-arrival. By leveraging partnerships with community college partners and on-campus, UNCW has enhanced the transfer student experience. Most recently, UNCW has done an internal review and identified how many barriers students face when entering the University can be solved with clearer communication and expectations. The goal of this conversation would be to hear from others about process and policy change that has made an impact on how transfer students enroll, retain, and graduate.

Avoid Sticker Shock:
Addressing Students' Fears About College Financing
Kim Myrick, Vice President of Campus Partnerships,
Ardeo Education Solutions
Kylon Alford Windfield, Vice President of Enrollment
Management, Jackson State University
Raquel Bermejo, AVP for Market Research, RNL
For many students, the prospect of financing a college education is daunting. From concerns about debt to uncertainty about the aid process, financial fears can significantly influence college choices and even deter students from pursuing higher education. This session will delve into the latest research on the financial anxieties of high school students, shedding light on the deep-seated fears and emerging trends shaping the college financing landscape.

Navigating the Crossroads:
The Case for Investment in Graduate-Online-Adult Programs
Alicia Ortega, Senior Vice President, RNL
Panel of higher education leaders
In this moderated session, campus leaders discuss the complex landscape of higher education as we approach the 2025-2026 academic year. Drawing from comprehensive data on traditional undergraduate, adult learner, graduate, and online student populations, we'll examine emerging trends and student preferences that demonstrate the need for investing in a balanced portfolio of academic programs to shape institutional success.

Level of Sacrifice:
Understanding "the Gap" of your student population
Presented by RNL consulting experts
Session description coming soon

Building the Talent Pipeline:
From College Promise to Career Success in South Texas
Matthew Hebbard, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, South Texas College
Melissa Pena, Director of Valley Promise, South Texas College
Discover how South Texas College's Valley Promise program is strengthening Texas' talent pipeline through comprehensive college transfer and workforce pathways. This session will showcase strategies for enhancing college access, including admissions and financial aid support, dual enrollment, data-driven decision-making, and partnerships with school districts and community stakeholders to foster college and career success. Attendees will gain practical insights into improving data processes, managing organizational change, and creating seamless student experiences from high school through college completion and workforce readiness.

Brand Clarity + UGC: Winning Big on Small Budgets
Beka Pica, AVP Creative, RNL
Beth Lowary, AVP Creative, RNL
Discover how to amplify your marketing efforts, regardless of your team size or budget. This session will show you how to develop a comprehensive brand guide and harness the power of user-generated content (UGC) to boost your institution's brand engagement and authenticity. Tap into the real voices of your campus community for inherently unique stories that connect, resonate, and builds brand credibility. Explore real-world higher education examples, gain actionable insights, and leave with practical tools, including a brand guide checklist and UGC playbook.

Recruit Parents, Enroll Students:
Family Engagement for Better Enrollment Outcomes
Amanda Craddock, Vice President of Enrollment Management, Coastal Carolina University
Joel Pendergrass, Director of Account Management, CampusESP

Family engagement drives results: Students with a parent using CampusESP have yield rates 7% higher than average. This session explores proven strategies to connect with, inform, and prove institutional value to parents, and includes insights and examples from the team at Coastal Carolina University, which achieved measurable success with its family-focused approach. Attendees will gain data-backed methods to effectively recruit parents, share critical admissions information, and achieve better enrollment outcomes.

The Trifecta:
Admissions, Academic and Student Service Partnership
Shelley Moss, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL
Vince Miller, Vice President Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

In this session, we will consider ways that admissions teams at the undergraduate and graduate levels can work collaboratively with academic departments, faculty, and student services to improve recruitment strategies and ensure student success from admission to graduation.

How Mastering SEO and Paid Search Can Make You Google™'s Best Friend
Cait Fitzpatrick, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL
Andrea Carroll-Glover, RNL

Want to get in Google's good graces? We'll show you how mastering both SEO and paid search can transform your digital marketing strategy and help you dominate search results. Google's algorithms reward websites that deliver valuable, relevant content, and with the right combination of organic and paid search tactics, you can ensure your institution stays top of mind for prospective students.

By the end of this session, you'll have a clear roadmap for how to combine the power of SEO and paid search in ways that get you noticed by Google and by the students you want to reach.

From Overwhelmed to Optimized: AI for Application Essay
So Hye Park, AVP, RNL
David Kirschner, USC Law School

So Hye Park from RNL and David Kirschner from USC Law School share their innovative approach to streamlining the application review process. Learn how they used RNL Answers to automate the initial review of thousands of law school application essays based on custom criteria — significantly reducing the time and effort required in what was once a highly manual process.

9:15-9:45 a.m.	Refreshment Break
9:45-10:45 a.m.	**Leaders in Higher Education: Keynote Panel Session**
10:45-11:15 a.m.	Break
11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions (Choose from up to 13 sessions):**

Raising the Bar: Delivering the Right Message at the Right Time
Tennyson Smith, Director of Recruitment,
Shelton State Community College

Since implementing our CRM, we have reached new heights in enrollment, connecting with students strategically with the right message. We have a shared vision within student services to ensure students receive communication similar to purchasing products from Amazon and shipping updates from USPS and FedEx. Let's learn together and share best practices on how the communication plan can improve recruitment, admission, and retention efforts.

Leveraging AI on a Campus Enterprise Level
Dr. Bree Cook, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and SUNO,
Southern University of New Orleans
Dr. James Ammons Jr., Chancellor, Southern University of New Orleans

Subreina DeSouza, Senior Vice President, AI Solutions Consulting, RNL

Hear from Southern University of New Orleans about their journey in implementing AI technology and governance across their campus. This presentation will provide a comprehensive overview of the university's approach, highlighting successes, challenges, and key takeaways including:

- How they assessed their needs and readiness of their campus community for AI adoption.
- Lessons learned form their experiences with AI-powered tools and technologies.
- How they are using AI to support enrollment, student success and institutional efficiency

Program Portfolio Revitalization with Academic Program Planning

Kenneth Newbold, Assistant Vice President, RNL
Dr. Stephannie Seaton, Market Research Consultant, RNL
Dr. Dawn Fortin Mattoon, Senior Vice President, RNL
Session description coming soon

Assessing Student Satisfaction for Online Learner Success

Julie Bryant, Vice President for Student Success, RNL
Jacqie Allen, Director of Online Student Success, Pima Community College

With more students turning to online learning programs, understanding the priorities of online learners is even more critical for student success efforts. How can student satisfaction data help to inform retention efforts for online programs? This session will highlight the experience of Pima Community College who has collected student satisfaction data and used it to inform decision making. Suggestions for the best ways to encourage online students to respond to the survey, as well as ideas for collecting additional qualitative feedback and recommendations for highlighting the data with various departments will be shared.

Empowering Students:
A Blueprint for Student-Centered Success

Erinne Weber, Executive Director of Strategic Retention and Academic Success, Wiley University

Discover transformative student-centered practices to enhance engagement, inclusivity, and academic growth. This interactive session emphasizes collaborative learning, adaptability, and reflective dialogue, equipping educators with actionable strategies to nurture a supportive educational environment. Leave with tools to reimagine education by placing students at the heart of learning.

Optimizing the Student Journey:
A Collaborative Approach to Enhancing Enrollment

Reena Lichtenfeld, Senior Vice President, RNL

Dr. Kerwin Graham, Dean of Enrollment, Greenville Technical College

Tarsha Brown, Community Outreach Specialist, Greenville Technical College

The goal of this session is to share the experience of student journey optimization work conducted at Greenville Technical College, where a comprehensive mapping of the student journey from inquiry through census was conducted to identify areas of opportunity for improvement. This collaborative effort involved stakeholders from various departments, current students, and other constituent groups to uncover barriers and develop action plans to address them. This session will highlight the benefits of this approach, including increased transparency, improved student experience, and enhanced enrollment outcomes.

Cross-Campus Collaboration: How Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions Can Work Together to Enhance

Shelley Moss, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL

Cait Fitzpatrick, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL

This presentation topic is designed for both Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions staff to collaborate and address common challenges and opportunities across both levels of higher education admissions. Discuss the benefits of cross-campus collaboration between undergraduate and graduate admissions

teams to improve overall institutional strategy, enhance recruitment efforts, and ensure consistency in branding and messaging.

Taking Grad Courses Online to Be Competitive
Six Red Marbles
Session description coming soon

12:15-1:45 p.m.   Lunch on Your Own

1:45-2:45 p.m.   **Breakout Sessions (Choose from up to 13 sessions):**

Building Strategic Advantage by Leveraging External Influences and Internal Strengths
Ken Newbold, Assistant Vice President, Market and Rsearch Services, RNL
Jessica Ickes, Vice President, Market and Research Services, RNL
Julie Bryant, Vice President for Student Success, RNL
This session will focus on enhancing institutional strategy through an exploration of key external influences such as demographic change, student and labor market demand, and market perception coupled with internal insights related to student and employee satisfaction.

Enrollment and the Emotional Well-Being of Prospective Students: Creating a Culture of Care
Raquel Bermejo, AVP for Market Research, RNL
Harrison "Soup" Campbell, Head of Community Experience
The road to higher education is a thrilling yet trying time for prospective students. As they navigate the complex college planning process, they grapple with profound anxieties about financial affordability, academic success, social belonging, and mental well-being. As higher education professionals, how can we create a more compassionate and supportive journey to ease their worries and empower their transition?

Maximizing Brand Awareness and Trust Through Evergreen Video Content

Mitchell Whitfield, Marketing & Analytics Coordinator, Weber State University

Weber State University's strategic initiatives include increasing top-of-mind awareness and perception of high quality. Focusing on Nursing, one of their hallmark programs, Marketing & Communications developed a strategic content plan developing How-To videos on common procedures and topics nurses will need to know. Utilizing keyword research, content analysis, and contemporary video editing methods, 29 videos were created and placed on YouTube. This effort yielded 82,480 views in 2024 and secured top 10 SERP positions for a variety of non-branded keywords.

Going Pro:
Positioning Graduate Professional Programs for Success

Vaughn Shinkus, Senior Vice President, RNL

Michelle Lacoss, Senior Director, Graduate Enrollment

Kelsey Nelson, Vice President, RNL

Students seeking healthcare and other professionally-focused graduate degrees have unique information needs and preferences in their search for the best-fit program. Learn more about the opportunities and challenges in reaching, enrolling, and retaining high-caliber prospective professional-degree students.

The Evolution of Search:
Meeting the Needs of Partners in an Ever-Changing Landscape

Jameson Willey, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL

Melody Ferguson, Dean of Admission, Pacific Lutheran University

Hillary Powell, Director of Undergraduate Admission, Pacific Lutheran University

This session will highlight the strategic partnership between RNL and Pacific Lutheran University (PLU), showcasing how we adapt and evolve our services year after year. We'll share the history of our collaboration, the current scope of our services, and provide examples of how we've modified our strategies based

on performance, conversion data, and PLU's internal initiatives. Additionally, we'll discuss how PLU continues the work post-RNL by leveraging survey data and leads, ensuring ongoing success in recruitment and enrollment. Join us to learn how dynamic partnerships drive results and support sustained growth.

Calibrating a Collaborative Communication Climate for Underserved Students

Woodrow Wilson Wagner, Director of Institutional Strategies, University of Houston-Victoria

To successfully engage and retain first-generation and unserved students, faculty and staff must provide learning experiences that meet students where they are to get them to where they need to be. This session will explore culturally responsive teaching and learning practices that help establish an effective communication climate based on respect, collaboration, empathy, and trust. We will also analyze specific strategies for communication and discuss how we can exemplify these in our classrooms and programs to resolve cultural incongruity and first-generation student communication disconnects, while increasing student engagement and retention.

Advising Across the Student Journey: A Panel Discussion

Evanne Raible, Ed.D, Senior Director of Transfer & Student Success Services, Christopher Newport University
Brenda Oursler White, Special Assistant to the Provost, SUNY Morrisville
Shannon Cook, Senior Consultant, Student Success Solutions, RNL

A key element of student success and retention is the identification and incorporation of advising techniques that are most appropriate for your student population. During this session, panelists will share their experiences with implementing effective advising strategies on their campuses. Attendees will learn how to champion best practices in advising at their institutions, strengthen engagement throughout the student journey, and improve retention and student success with personalized, data-driven messaging.

Unlocking Enrollment Success: Leveraging AI for Predictive Analytics, Engagement, and Efficiency

Rebecca Jenkins, AVP Product Marketing, RNL

Danielle Rauser, Senior Vice President, RNL

This presentation explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can revolutionize higher education enrollment. We'll delve into key areas:

- Data-Driven Insights: AI-powered analysis for predicting student success and informing strategic enrollment planning.
- Personalized Engagement: Leveraging AI for personalized communication and building stronger student relationships.
- Operational Efficiency: Streamlining admissions processes and empowering teams with AI-driven tools

Through real-world examples, this presentation equips enrollment leaders with the knowledge to effectively integrate AI and drive enrollment growth.

Lead to Enrollment and the Importance of Speed to Lead for Graduate and Online Students

Zachary Rhodes, Client Solution Consultant, RNL

Lori Cannistra, Senior Consultant, RNL

Join us to learn more about navigating lead to enrollment for the nontraditional student, including adult, graduate, and online target audiences. This session will highlight best practices to help you reach the right students in a competitive market and how to effectively move them through the funnel.

**The Art and Science of Financial Aid:
The Data is Only Half of the Story**

Ann Cools, Executive Consultant, Financial Aid Services, RNL

April Ford Peterson, Director of Financial Aid, Lee University; Elizabeth Pace, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, Lee University

In today's dynamic higher education landscape, financial aid is more than a means to support access—it's a powerful strategic lever for enrollment management. This session explores how

institutions can blend data analytics with human insight to make yield outreach more impactful and targeted. This session provides both the technical know-how and the strategic mindset needed to turn financial aid data into actionable intelligence.

3:00-4:00 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions (Choose from up to 13 sessions):**

The Value of Higher Education:
Using Concrete Data to Support the Case for College
Jonathan Shores, Chief Enrollment Officer/Executive Vice President, University of the Cumberlands
In an era of rising tuition costs and increasing skepticism about higher education, enrollment professionals and college administrators must be prepared to answer one critical question: is college worth it? This session provides actionable, research-based talking points supported by concrete data that highlight the lifelong value of a college degree beyond just financial return.

Attendees will gain insights into the societal, professional, and personal benefits of higher education and leave with compelling data points to confidently communicate these advantages to prospective students and families. Equip your team with the facts they need to advocate for the value of a college education.

Generations in Collision: How AI is Redefining the Future of Higher Ed
Friedi Maag, Principal AI Solutions Consultant, RNL
Join us for a session that delves into the AI-driven shift in communication and engagement styles across generations. We'll explore how AI is changing the way we interact with students, from Gen Z's preference for digital-first communication to Millennials' desire for personalized experiences, and how these changing expectations are redefining the student-faculty relationship and the future of higher education.

Developing, Implementing, and Improving Data-Informed Student Success Campaigns

Regina Wine-Nash, Student Success Systems Coordinator, James Madison University

Dr. Paul Mabrey, Director, Student Success Analytics, James Madison University

Using our experiences of developing and implementing data-informed student success campaigns, members of the Office of Student Success Analytics at James Madison University will discuss how they developed and implemented data-informed student success campaigns to improve retention and reduce equity gaps. With a focus on email and text campaigns, the presentation will discuss the value of integrating data-informed campaigns, explain the process for designing, implementing, and assessing campaigns, and help higher education professionals identify and design a student success campaign.

AI Governance and Why You Need It

Subreina DeSouza, Senior Vice President Advanced Solutions & Product, RNL

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming industries and institutions, including higher education. As AI becomes increasingly integrated into our daily lives and work, it's crucial to establish effective governance frameworks to ensure its ethical, responsible, and beneficial use. This presentation will delve into the critical aspects of AI governance and how it can protect your university.

Transforming Retention:
How the First Year Experience Elevates Student Success

Jennifer Collins, Associate Provost, Student Success, Florida A&M University

Dr. Allyson Watson, Provost/Vice President, Academic Affairs, Florida A&M University

Dr. Lewis Johnson, Associate Provost, Strategic Initiatives, Florida A&M University

Florida A&M University (FAMU) has demonstrated consistent improvement in second-year retention rates over the past several years, as illustrated in the graph. Starting at 80.5% in

2017, the retention rate has steadily increased, reaching a peak of 90.9% in 2021 before stabilizing at 89.7% in 2023. This upward trend reflects FAMU's targeted initiatives and commitment to student success, surpassing many public 4-year universities in Florida and maintaining a competitive position among public Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). This sustained growth underscores the effectiveness of academic support systems and retention strategies implemented by the Office of Freshmen Studies.

New Leaders, New Culture: Managing Staff Changes and Cultivating Cultural Transformation

Ken Huus, Vice President and Senior Consultant, RNL
Ryan Konkright, VP for Enrollment Management, St. Mary's University
Dr. Deena Slockett, Associate Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management, AdventHealth University

Leaders play a critical role in guiding both staff and institutions through transition. The appointment of new leaders on campus often coincides with a period of significant institutional change, including shifts in culture, organizational structure, and staffing. Effectively managing these transitions is crucial for institutional success. Hear how these enrollment leaders successfully navigated transitions AND realized enrollment success in that cycle, and take away tips and strategies you can use on your own campus. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of how to lead cultural transformation, support staff through change, and foster a shared vision for the future of their institutions.

Success of DLG + SEO Campaigns & Partnership with Admissions Team Leads to Increased Enrollments

Catie Connolly, Client Solutions Consultant, RNL
Chris Hogan, Interim Associate Dean for Faculty and Doctoral Programs, Michigan State University

In this session we will focus on factors that led to a 200% increase in enrolled students for an online master's degree at Michigan State University. The strong partnership between lead generation, search engine optimization, and a notable

admissions process has been key to increasing enrollment over multiple semesters. Gain actionable takeaways and tools for increasing the number of quality leads that covert into enrolled students.

Managing Financial Aid Strategically in an Unpredictable Market

Derek Flynn, Senior Vice President, Financial Aid Services, RNL

Every financial aid dollar you allocate has to be optimized and aligned with your enrollment and revenue goals. But as the higher ed market becomes more unpredictable, how do you ensure that your awarding strategies remain consistently sound? Join us for 60 minutes to discuss..

- How to optimize your financial aid plan to avoid surprises and missed goals.
- How to analyze your awarding to ensure every dollar is doing exactly what you need it to do.
- Ways to increase yield by helping students and families quickly understand and get excited about their financial aid packages.
- Common mistakes that you must avoid and opportunities you should seize.
- Trends and market shifts you will need to manage.

Leveraging Longitudinal Student Feedback Data for Strategic Improvement: A Five-Year Case Study from Wilbur Wright College

Gabe Estill PhD, Interim Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Wilbur Wright College

Wilbur Wright College systematically gathered and utilized student satisfaction data over a five-year period (2019-2024) to drive targeted institutional improvements and strategic decision-making. This case study illustrates the value of longitudinal data analysis for institutional research and strategic planning. By tracking satisfaction trends over multiple cycles, institutions can develop more targeted, evidence-based improvement strategies and measure the long-term impact of their interventions. Participants will discover how this type of data can be leveraged for strategic planning, accreditation reporting, equity-focused work, program review, community outreach, and benchmarking initiatives.

4:00 p.m.   Adjournment

See you next year at the 40th Annual RNL National Conference, July 21-23, 2026 in Chicago, IL!