

2025 USDLA National Conference

Welcome to St Louis! All times listed below are Central Standard Time.

This schedule was last updated 01/12/2025

Tuesday, June 17, 2025 12:00pm - 4:00pm

Virtual Conference Day 1

Zoom link will be sent to the email address you used to register for the conference at least 48 hours prior to the event.

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm | Welcome and Conference Orientation

12:30 pm - 1:15 pm | Using Conversation Protocols to Engage All Learners with Natalie Berger

1:30 pm - 2:15 pm | From Reactive to Proactive Accessibility: Practical and Scalable Considerations for Every Organization with Carli Cockrell

2:30 pm - 3:15 pm | Distance and Digital Education Leadership and Best Practices in Instructional Design and Learner Engagement with Emily Mulvihill

Distance and Digital Education Leadership and Best Practices in Instructional Design and Learner Engagement

Emily Mulvihill
CSU Pueblo

From Reactive to Proactive Accessibility: Practical and Scalable Considerations for Every Organization

Carli Cockrell
Moodle

Using Conversation Protocols to Engage All Learners

Natalie Berger
*Virtual Learning
Academy Charter
School*

Julie Moore
*Kennesaw State
University*

Wednesday, June 18, 2025 12:00pm - 5:00pm

Virtual Conference Day 2

Zoom link will be sent to the email address you used to register for the conference at least 48 hours prior to the event.

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm | Welcome and Announcements

12:30 pm - 1:15 pm | Leveraging Generative AI Tools for Course Materials Accessibility with Mounika Reddy Ragula

1:30 pm - 2:15 pm | Community, Collaboration & Consistency! with Shahla Hockensmith

2:30 pm - 3:15 pm | Big League Digital Badging: A Home Run Success Strategy with Charlotte Russell Cox and Larrisha McGill-Youngblood

3:30 pm - 4:15 pm | Exploring AI and its Resources for Students with Disabilities in a Virtual Learning Environment with Rhonda Wakelyn

Big League Digital Badging: A Home Run Success Strategy

Charlotte Russell Cox Larrisha McGill-
North Carolina Central University *Youngblood North Carolina Central University*

Community, Collaboration & Consistency!

Shahla Hockensmith
Strike School

Exploring AI and its Resources for Students with Disabilities in a Virtual Learning Environment

Rhonda Wakelyn
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Leveraging Generative AI Tools for Course Materials Accessibility

Mounika Reddy Ragula
Le Moyne College

Monday, June 23, 2025 11:00am - 5:00pm

Registration

Monday, June 23, 2025 1:00pm - 4:00pm

3-Hour Pre-conference Workshop

The T2 Countdown: What You Need to Know About ADA Web Accessibility Guidance: You Only Have 9 Months to Comply!

Why the timeline? Qualified persons are not protected from discrimination based on disability when trying to access public facilities or web-based programs and services, including access to educational institutions. Historically, accessibility has been framed in public policy with reference to physical settings (e.g., ramps, elevators), yet we are living in a digital world where many opportunities in educational institutions come from being able to access, use, and learn from digital materials. In the Spring of 2024 there was an update to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act whereby all web-based materials and mobile apps in public programs—including public educational institutions—must meet WCAG 2.1 AA, which are an internationally recognized set of web accessibility guidelines. The rule set a deadline for compliance in either two or three years based on the population of the area served. In this presentation, we will share more about WCAG as an organization, what the Levels A, AA, and even AAA are, and then help attendees plan timelines for how to meet the standards over the next several months. The goal will be to help attendees determine the scope of the material that they have in their institution; identify who in the community should be identified to be working on compliance, and then prioritize for success. Moreover, we will discuss long-term planning not just for thinking about digital material that already developed, but how to move forward to make digital instructional materials accessible from the outset.

Monday, June 23, 2025 1:15pm - 2:30pm

Pre-Conference Workshop Sessions #1

Human in the Loop Still Needed! The Generative AI Blind Spot

Myra Roldan
UnDesto AI

Teching Autism: Leveraging AI to Increase Social Engagement in ASD Learners

Tish Gallon Tye Wade
TLC Life Plans/CDC

Monday, June 23, 2025 2:45pm - 4:00pm

Pre-Conference Workshop Sessions #2

Start the Podcast! A low-cost, efficient, portable, and personalized way to deliver learning

Betty Dannewitz
ifyouaskbetty LLC

Stepping up to the plate: Facing the Age of AI head-on, integrating AI tools into the instructional design process

Frances Keefe
*University of New
Hampshire*

Monday, June 23, 2025 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Opening Reception

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 6:30am - 7:15am

Morning Stretch - Yoga

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 7:00am - 4:00pm

Registration

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 8:00am - 9:00am

Breakfast

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 8:45am - 9:00am

Opening Remarks

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 9:00am - 9:45am

Opening Keynote - Joe Sallustio

Commencement – A New Era in Higher Education Update, Joe Sallustio, Vice President, Industry Engagement at Ellucian and Co-Author of Commencement - Colleges and universities that provide millions of degree and non-degree credentials each year are a vital backbone of communities and economies. These institutions elevate the critical-thinking capacities of students and learners, and they provide crucial job skills and life skills to emerging workforces. But the skills we need, the ways in which we collaborate, and the very jobs available to graduates are changing. It's time for higher education to start anew. It's time for Commencement into a new era. Join us for a detailed insight into Joe's new book and how you can help to seize the moment to change higher education forever.

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 10:00am - 10:45am

Concurrent Sessions #1

Bridging Perspectives: Collaborating with Stakeholders to Adopt Inclusive Design Models in Distance Learning

Rebecca Reese
*Rocky Mountain
College of Art and
Design*

Overcoming Resistance to Structured Course Design

Ana Emlinger
Endicott College

Put Me in Coach: Gamified Storytelling Experiences to Foster Experiential Learning and Authentic Assessment

Stoney Gaddy
*Tulane University
School of Professional
Advancement*

The Value of SARA: Cost Savings and Compliance

Emilie Crawford

NC-SARA

Transformative Instruction: Connecting Malcolm Knowles Andragogy with Teaching Adults Online

Kevin Doran
*University of Southern
Maine*

Unlocking Excellence: A Hybrid Approach to Instructional Design

Joshua Gaul
Edge, Inc.

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 11:00am - 11:45am

Concurrent Sessions #2

An Approach to Help Achieve Faculty Work/Life Balance

Jacquelyn Cato
*Instructional
Connections, LLC*

Contextual AI: Discipline-Specific Approaches to Digital Learning

Lauren Hays
*University of Central
Missouri*

Designing courses for students with learning differences

Chuck sengstock
Landmark College

Engaging Hearts and Minds: How a Fandom Models Collaborative Learning

Rina Dakanay
*American College of
Education*

Home Run Lessons: Engaging Students with Digital Escape Rooms

Debra Luken
*University of Central
Florida*

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Lunch

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 1:00pm - 1:45pm

Keynote - Dustin York

Personal Branding: How to hit it out of the park!, Dustin York, Adjunct Professor at the University of Florida

Dr. Dustin York is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Florida and will appear at the USDLA conference through the generous support of UF CJC Online. Prior to entering academia, Dr. York worked in branding for the 2008 Obama Presidential campaign and agency clients like Pepsi Co. and Nike. Dr. York's specialties include digital branding and leadership branding, which he now brings to life in the classroom. Beyond his primary passion for teaching, Dr. York is a subject matter expert for CNN, Entrepreneur.com, and Forbes, a contributor for Harvard Business Review, and serves as a national keynote speaker and trainer. Dr. York is an American Marketing Association 4 Under 40 Awardee, an Edtech top 30 Education Tech Influencer, and an Apple Distinguished Educator.

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 2:00pm - 2:45pm

Concurrent Sessions #3

A holistic approach to course quality management

Wendy Pate
*Stevens Institute of
Technology*

Discover your personal brand with LEGO Serious Play.

Kevin Thorn
*NuggetHead Studios,
LLC.*

Hitting a Home Run: Bringing Lab and Data Science to Rural Students using distance learning tools

Rebecca Reynolds
*UT Health Science
Center*

Marcia Sharp
UTHSC

Sim Taylor

Jacen Moore

Keisha Brooks

Keep Online Students in Your Course with UDL Engagement Strategies

Emily Franklin
*University of Central
Florida*

Regulatory Curveballs: Can Your Institution Legally Offer Licensure Programs?

Kathryn Kerensky
State Authorization
Network (SAN)

Jana Walser-Smith
State Authorization
Network (SAN)

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 3:00pm - 3:45pm

Concurrent Sessions #4

Delivering Better Courses Through Video Engagement

Dr. Brian Ward
Pensacola State
College

From Chalk to Chatbots: Enhancing Instructional Design with Generative AI

James Moore
DePaul University

Harnessing The Power of PBS LearningMedia: Your Free Resource for Engaging Distance Learning

Tiffany Morgan
State of Iowa/Iowa
PBS

Learning Autobiographies: Fostering Self-Reflection and Goal Setting Online

Stacy Ybarra
San Antonio College

Revolutionizing Education: Innovative Techniques for Engaging and Effective Distance

Kristi Young Dionne Williams Terence Vinson Jason Mixon

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 4:00pm - 5:00pm

Networking Activity with John Chen

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Night on the Town - Mobile Roundtable Dinners

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 6:00am - 7:00am

Bill Jackson Memorial Sunrise Walk/Run

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 7:00am - 4:00pm

Registration

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 8:00am - 9:00am

Breakfast

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 9:00am - 9:45am

Keynote - Robbie Melton

The Tools Shaping the World of Artificial Intelligence, Robbie Melton, Associate Vice President – SMART Global Technology Innovation Strategist

Dr. Robbie K. Melton, selected as one of the 2024 Top 50 Women Leaders in Education and the 2024 recipient of the HBCU Lifetime Achievement Faculty Network Award, serves as Interim Provost/Vice President for Tennessee State University Academic Affairs and Vice President of Technology Innovations for the SMART Global Technology Innovation Center, and tenured professor at Tennessee State University. She serves as a global researcher and international consultant for SMART Artificial Intelligence (AI) an Academic eSports for Education and Emerging IOE (“The Internet of Everything”) Smart Mobile Technology of mobile devices, smart phone-tablets, wearables, smart gadgets and tools, and mixed reality of VR and AR. She formerly served as the Associate Vice Chancellor for Emerging Technologies for the Tennessee Board of Regents and the primary developer and chief administrator for the system wide Regents Online Degree Programs. Her tributes include: The 2023 Top 50 Women Leaders in Education, 2019 USDLA Hall of Fame, 2018, Distinguished Women of Legend, 2017 OLC Leadership, 2016, WCET Life Time Achievement, 2014 Top 30 Technologists, 2013 Apple Distinguished Educator, 2012 Top Fifty Technology Innovator; and 2012 WOW EdTechnology Awards. She was a featured speaker at the International UNESCO Mobile Learning Symposium. She known as an ‘Appologist, for her extensive research of best practices with mobile devices (smart phone, tablets, wearable, and the creation of a Mobile App Resource Center. Currently advocating for Open Education Resources (OER) for global access to education content. Plus, serving as an Education Technology Trainers for Malawi and various countries in South Africa in promoting worldwide that “Everyone Can Code and Create” and “Academic eSports – Mixed Reality Gamification” for the new innovations of SMART Immersive Teaching and Learning and a passionate advocate for empowering underserved populations, especially Black females, in becoming innovators and entrepreneurs for the digital world.

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 10:00am - 10:45am

Concurrent Sessions #5

Achieving Excellence in Distance Learning: USDLA Quality Standards Certification

Amanda Major
*University of Central
Florida*

Chuck Sengstock
Landmark College

Bill Ryan
Ryan Consluting, LLC

Engage & Educate: What L&D Can Learn from Successful Short-Form Video Creators

Matthew Pierce
*TechSmith
Corporation*

Hitting a Home Run with Virtual Student Engagement: Building a Connected Online Community

Sarah Rasmussen
*Dakota State
University*

Level Up Your Online Course: A Home Run Guide to Gamification

Susan Jardaneh Debra Luken
*University of Central University of Central
Florida Florida*

There's a Product for That! Digital Learning Entrepreneurship

Tammy McClain-Smith
EduXcellence

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 11:00am - 11:45am

Fireside Chat - Dr. Sedgwick Harris

Empowering Adult Learners: Leadership in Higher Education and the Future of Distance Learning for Adult Learners in the Age of AI with Dr. Sedgwick Harris, President of Bristol Community College - In today's rapidly evolving educational landscape, leaders in higher education are faced with the dual challenges of expanding access to distance learning while addressing the transformative impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on both learning and the workforce. This keynote presentation will focus on the critical role of leadership in higher education in fostering innovative distance learning solutions for adult learners, while also preparing institutions and policymakers to meet the growing demands related to AI. Special emphasis will be placed on supporting low-income and first-generation students and ensuring that they are not left behind in this technological shift.

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 12:00pm - 1:45pm

Awards Luncheon

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 2:00pm - 3:15pm

Workshop Sessions #3

AI for All Minds: Lessons from Neurodiversity to Transform Learning

Josh Penzell
Imagination Applied

Designing Impactful Online Experiences: How to Leverage Digital Communities to Drive Student Success

Katy Kappler
InScribe Education

Empowering Leaders in Distance Learning: Applicable Leadership Principles for Driving Success

Dr. Tennille Woodward
*GrowLeadEmpower
LLC*

Imposter Syndrome Steals Talent! Spot it and Stop it!

Betty Dannewitz
ifyouaskbetty LLC

Prompting for Pedagogy: Designing Tomorrow's Learning Experiences with Generative AI

Kate Sidarovich
Everspring

Kathy Groth
Everspring

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 3:15pm - 4:00pm

Sponsor Break and Drawings

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 4:00pm - 4:45pm

Concurrent Sessions #6

Beyond Artificial Intelligence (AI) Revolution: Transforming Higher Education Through Faculty-Driven AI Integration

Stephen Curda
*National Louis
University*

Jon Oelke
*National Louis
University*

Bridging the Gap: How Virtual Live Tutoring Closes the Achievement Gap and Enhances On-Site Teacher Effectiveness

Beverly Knox-Pipes,
EdD
*BKP Solutions/Nova
Southeastern
University*

Robert Belous
Stride Tutoring

Designing and Facilitating the Online Studio to Maximize Learner Achievement

David Knowlton
Southern Illinois
University
Edwardsville

Revolutionizing Psychomotor Skills Education in Nursing: Leveraging Virtual EHRs and Video Recording Tools

Dara Murray Kelly McClure
The University of West The University of West
Alabama Alabama

Science as the Exception- The specialized needs of our community college students

Chelsea Clegg
NICC

The Three C's of Distance Education: Classes, Conversations, and Community

Adrian Pina Michael Balbier Amanda Boddeker Jules Zimmerman
Dallas Theological Dallas Theological Dallas Theological Dallas Theological
Seminary Seminary Seminary Seminary

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Evening Activities

Thursday, June 26, 2025 8:00am - 10:00am

Registration

Thursday, June 26, 2025 9:00am - 12:00pm

Leading Under Pressure: Providing effective strategies to enhance stress management in the workplace

Let's connect to discuss strategies and best practices for enhancing our leadership efforts during challenges. Leading under pressure requires staying calm, maintaining open communication, and effectively delegating responsibilities. This approach helps your team remain focused on their purpose, manage expectations, and prioritize essential tasks. Effective leadership also involves strategic and tactical thinking, anticipating challenges, and working to eliminate them while balancing your responsibilities with those of your team. This workshop will focus on critical leadership skills needed during high-pressure situations. Key topics will include maintaining composure, acknowledging the situation, communicating openly and transparently, prioritizing tasks, delegating effectively, modeling resilience, ensuring clear expectations, and supporting your team. We will draw upon real-world strategies and engaging examples and invite participants to share their valuable experiences! Your insights could spark meaningful discussions and inspire others.

Thursday, June 26, 2025 9:00am - 4:00pm

Sententia Gamification Level 1 Certification

The ONLY Gamification Certification that earns you recertification* credits with SHRM, HRCI, and ATD.

This hands-on certification takes you through the 5-Quest, trademarked and proven process of gamifying your corporate training, HR compliance, or adult education program. By following the 5-Quest plan, you are essentially assured a successful outcome. The concept is simple... create a course just like you would a game, with an intriguing storyline, stunning graphics coupled with drop-dead aesthetics, then add gameplay elements like obstacles, levels, unlocks, boosters, and rewards. As your learners overcome obstacles, achieve level ups, and unlock boosters, they'll be learning and testing their skills. Throw in some in-game currency and your learners will be hooked on learning and earning as the feel-good hormones of dopamine, serotonin, endorphins, and oxytocin are released. Leverage the same techniques perfected by the gaming industry to captivate audiences by setting clear goals through game-like thinking, engaging stories, effective triggers, and continual feedback, recognition, and reward structures. These techniques boost motivation and engagement.

Thursday, June 26, 2025 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Lunch