



MARYVILLE COLLEGE

AI Summit

Maryville
College
Downtown
Center

118 E Church Ave.
Maryville, TN

Tuesday, May 12
Wednesday, May 13
2026

A Special Thank You to Our Sponsors:



Blount
Partnership



Maryville College AI Summit Schedule

All speakers and time subject to change. All times in EST.

Registration takes place on the [Eventbrite webpage](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/maryville-college-ai-summit-2024-tickets-754444444444) for the event and more information can be found at www.maryvillecollege.edu/AI

Tuesday, May 12

8:15am-9:00am: Registration and Networking

9:00am-9:15am: Welcome and Opening Remarks

9:30am-10:20am: Concurrent Sessions 1.1

Room 1	Hunter Kallay	PhD Candidate, University of Tennessee	<i>The Algorithmic Consensus: How AI Could Quiet Moral Progress</i>
Room 2	Kate Nash	Instructional Designer and AI Strategist, K Nash Inc.	<i>AI as a Thinking Partner: Strengthening Reasoning Before Writing</i>

10:30am-11:20am: Concurrent Sessions 1.2

Room 1	Daniel Janowski	AI for Operations Program Lead, Oak Ridge National Laboratory	<i>AI's Sweeping Societal Transformation</i>
Room 2	Marcus Blair	Founder, Omega Business Solutions	<i>AI Implementation: An Executive's Guide</i>

11:30am-12:20pm: Concurrent Sessions 1.3

Room 1	Jeff Huckaby	CEO and Co-Founder, Versalytix	<i>Research Alone Won't Feed the World: How Combining Academic Science, Enterprise Analytics, and First Principles Built an AI Platform for Farmers</i>
Room 2	Dr. Trey Conatser	Assistant Provost for Teaching and Learning, University of Kentucky	<i>Agency Over Agents: Fostering a "Durable" AI Literacy Across Curricula</i>

Maryville College AI Summit Schedule

Tuesday, May 12 cont.

12:30pm-1:30pm: Lunch, Rooms 1 & 2

1:30pm-2:00pm: Keynote Address, Rooms 1 & 2

- **Andrew Farrior, Co-Founder AXM, *AI and the Future of the Creative Economy***

2:10pm-3:00pm: Moderated Session

- *Artificial Intelligence and Healthcare: A Conversation with Trey McNear, System Director Finance, Strategy & Special Projects, Covenant Health*
 - Moderated by Dr. Niklas Trzaskowski, Director of the Career Center, Maryville College

3:10pm-4:00pm: Session 1.4

Room 1	Andy Lombardo	Technology Director, Maryville City Schools	<i>Vibe Code Live! Walk in with a Laptop, Walk Out with a Custom Chrome Extension Built by YOU</i>
Room 2	<i>AI in Conversation: A collaborative, small-group speed-exchange designed to reflect on and discuss the Summit's big questions.</i>		

Maryville College AI Summit Schedule

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Wednesday, May 13

8:15am-9:00am: Registration and Networking

9:00am-9:15am: Welcome and Opening Remarks

9:30am-10:20am: Session 2.1

Room 1	Alyssa Schoudel & Abhinav Mahajan	Senior Director of Technology & Technical Delivery Lead, Clayton	<i>Teach the Gap: How Faculty Can Lead in the Age of AI - Not Just Survive It</i>
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10:30am-11:20am: Concurrent Sessions 2.2

Room 1	Dr. Dan Ross	Associate Professor of Mathematics, Maryville College	<i>Using AI for Nonprofit Data Analysis</i>
Room 2	Felicia J. Slattery	Lecturer and Inaugural Generative AI Fellow, University of Tennessee	<i>Don't Ban the Bot - Befriend It: Prompt Powered Pedagogy for the Modern Classroom</i>

11:30am-12:20pm: Concurrent Sessions 2.3

Room 1	Jan Taylor	Senior Lecturer, Maryville College	<i>A Practical Framework for Better AI Decision-Making in Professional Settings</i>
Room 2	Joel Smith	Founder and CEO, TeachCraft	<i>AI Tools vs. AI Systems: What Authentic Learning Looks Like in an AI World</i>

12:30pm-1:30pm: Lunch, Rooms 1 & 2

1:30pm-2:00pm: Keynote Address, Rooms 1 & 2

- **Dr. Jay Eckles, Division Director for Application Development, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, *Prompt Engineering: The Power of Lenses and a Liberal Education***

Maryville College AI Summit Schedule

Wednesday, May 13 cont.

2:10pm-3:00pm: Moderated Session

- *C-Suite Perspectives on Artificial Intelligence*: Abhijit "AV" Verekar, Founder and CEO, Avèro Advisors, & Jason Leverant, President and COO, AtWorkGroup
 - Moderated by Dr. Heather McMahon, Assistant Dean for Academic Success; Professor of Theatre, Maryville College

3:10pm-4:00pm: Session 1.4

Room 1	<i>AI in Conversation</i> : A collaborative, small-group speed-exchange designed to reflect on and discuss the Summit's big questions.
Room 2	<i>AI in Conversation</i> : A collaborative, small-group speed-exchange designed to reflect on and discuss the Summit's big questions.

4:00pm-5:00pm: Networking

Speaker Lineup Tuesday, May 12

Keynote Speaker



Andrew Farrior Co-Founder, AXM

"AI and the Future of
the Creative Economy"

Andrew Farrior is Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer of AXM, where he focuses on how creators' work is used and credited in AI systems. His work supports artists, institutions, and companies in managing consent, attribution, and commercial participation when their assets are used by AI. AXM was recognized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) for digital innovation within the global creative economy, and has co-published policy papers with both the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and Howard Law School's Artificial Intelligence Initiative. He also serves as Director of Practice at the Miles College Cultural IP Research Hub, where he works with students to explore the frontier of AI and the creative economy.

*Speakers subject to change

Speaker Lineup Tuesday, May 12

Additional Speakers

Most sessions to be held concurrently



Hunter Kallay,
PhD Candidate,
University of
Tennessee

“The Algorithmic
Consensus: How AI Could
Quiet Moral Progress”

Hunter Kallay is a PhD candidate in philosophy at the University of Tennessee, and an adjunct professor at Pellissippi State Community College. His research focuses on philosophy of AI, moral epistemology, and philosophy of religion. He also writes FryAI, a daily AI newsletter read by over 55,000 subscribers.



Kate Nash,
Instructional Designer
and AI strategist, K
Nash Inc.

“AI as a Thinking Partner:
Strengthening Reasoning
Before Writing”

Kate Nash is an instructional designer and leadership development consultant with 25 years of experience building training and performance systems in corporate and entrepreneurial settings. She focuses on designing learning that drives real behavioral change by strengthening structure, cognitive rigor, and follow-through. In the last year, Kate has built and tested custom AI tools that support learning, reflection, and feedback loops, with a special focus on ethical, human-centered use of AI in education and professional development. Her work helps educators and leaders avoid hype or panic and use AI as a tool for clearer thinking, better decisions, and higher-quality outcomes.

*Speakers subject to change

Speaker Lineup Tuesday, May 12

Additional Speakers

Most sessions to be held concurrently



Daniel Janowski,
AI for Operations
Program Lead,
Oak Ridge
National
Laboratory

"AI's Sweeping Societal
Transformation"

Dan is the AI for Operations Program Lead in the IT Services Directorate at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), where he drives the development and deployment of advanced AI solutions in support of the lab's Operations, National Security, and Open Science missions. In this strategic role, he partners with stakeholders across the organization to identify high-impact opportunities, architect scalable Artificial Intelligence pipelines, and shepherd cutting-edge models from prototype to production—ensuring ORNL remains at the forefront of mission-critical AI innovation.



Marcus Blair,
Founder, Omega
Business Solutions

"AI Implementation: An
Executive's Guide"

Marcus Blair is the builder behind CoreIQ, an AI-powered business intelligence platform that helps organizations turn operational data into clear decisions. With a background in engineering and accounting, Marcus focuses on the practical realities of digital transformation, from data readiness to implementation. He regularly speaks on AI adoption strategies and leads hands-on workshops for growing mid-market teams and enterprises across the Southeast.

*Speakers subject to change

Speaker Lineup Tuesday, May 12

Additional Speakers

Most sessions to be held concurrently



Jeff Huckaby,
CEO and
co-founder,
Versalytix

"Research Alone Won't Feed the World: How Combining Academic Science, Enterprise Analytics, and First Principles Built an AI Platform for Farmers"

25+ year enterprise analytics veteran. First global retail hire at Tableau. Led analytics at three top-100 retailers. Built VersaAgro, a patented digital-twin AI platform, to help farmers worldwide grow better crops with less waste. Maryville College, Class of '98.



Dr. Trey Conatser,
Assistant Provost
for Teaching and
Learning,
University of
Kentucky

"Agency Over Agents:
Fostering a "Durable" AI
Literacy Across Curricula"

Trey Conatser is assistant provost of teaching and learning, director of Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT), and affiliate in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Studies at the University of Kentucky. He holds a PhD in English from The Ohio State University.

*Speakers subject to change

Speaker Lineup Tuesday, May 12

Additional Speakers

Most sessions to be held concurrently

“Artificial Intelligence and Healthcare”



Trey McNear, System Director
Finance, Strategy & Special
Projects, Covenant Health

Trey McNear is a healthcare finance and strategy executive with experience as VP of Ancillary Services in acute care. He currently leads system-level financial growth strategy, performance improvement, and capital optimization across acute and ambulatory operations.



Dr. Niklas Trzaskowski,
Director of the Career Center,
Maryville College

*Speakers subject to change

Speaker Lineup Tuesday, May 12

Additional Speakers

Most sessions to be held concurrently



Andy Lombardo,
Tech Director,
Maryville City
Schools

“Vibe Code Live! Walk in with a Laptop, walk out with a custom Chrome extension built by YOU”

Andy Lombardo is the Maryville City Schools Technology Director and has decades of edtech experience. He holds a B.S. and M.S. in Cybersecurity, a B.A. in English, and an M.Ed. in Instructional Design. He also maintains EdTechIRL.com and madeink12.com, and co-hosts the Zero Breach Zone podcast.

*Speakers subject to change

Speaker Lineup Wednesday, May 13

Keynote Speaker



**Dr. Jay Eckles,
Division Director for
Application
Development, Oak
Ridge National
Laboratory**

**“Prompt Engineering:
The Power of Lenses
and a Liberal
Education”**

Dr. Jay Eckles has 25 years of IT experience in higher education, research, finance, and retail. He is responsible for the AI for Operations program at Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

Speaker Lineup Wednesday, May 13

Additional Speakers

Most sessions to be held concurrently

“Teach the Gap: How Faculty Can Lead in the Age of AI —
Not Just Survive It”



Alyssa Schoudel, Senior Director of Technology, Clayton

Senior Director with 14 years at Clayton, leading the Technology PMO and driving AI enablement and acceleration across the enterprise. Partners with operations and technology leaders to deliver strategic technology solutions, scalable innovation, and a strong foundation to accelerate with the help of AI.



Abhinav Mahajan, Technical Delivery Lead, Clayton

Technology Delivery Lead at Clayton Homes, a Berkshire Hathaway company, leading AI platform architecture and delivery. Focused on enterprise AI foundations, MCP-based orchestration, and practical AI integration across digital and operational systems.

*Speakers subject to change

Speaker Lineup Wednesday, May 13

Additional Speakers

Most sessions to be held concurrently



Dr. Dan Ross,
Associate
Professor of
Mathematics,
Maryville College

“Using AI for Non-Profit Data
Analysis”

Dr. Dan Ross, Associate Professor of Mathematics at Maryville College, has taught college statistics and data analysis for over 15 years. He consistently pursues innovative approaches to teaching and is exploring the uses and impacts of AI in education. He is currently on sabbatical and is using his statistical skills to provide data analysis to several non-profit organizations as well as exploring the use of AI in this work to determine what value it can bring to non-profit organizations.



Felicia J. Slattery,
Lecturer and
Inaugural
Generative AI
Fellow, University
of Tennessee

“Don’t Ban the Bot - Befriend
It: Prompt-Powered
Pedagogy for the Modern
Classroom”

Felicia J. Slattery is a communication instructor and Generative AI Faculty Fellow at the University of Tennessee. A frequent speaker on AI usage, she specializes in AI literacy and "prompting with a purpose" to help students and professionals achieve unique, high-quality results.

*Speakers subject to change

Speaker Lineup Wednesday, May 13

Additional Speakers

Most sessions to be held concurrently



Jan Taylor, Sr.
Lecturer,
Maryville College

“A Practical Framework for
Better AI Decision-Making in
Professional Settings”

After 3 years deep in the AI rabbit hole, Jan Taylor helps faculty guide students and employers guide employees in using AI with clear, practical, and ethical guidelines.



Joel Smith,
Founder & CEO
of TeachCraft

“AI Tools vs AI Systems:
What Authentic Learning
Looks Like in an AI World”

Joel Smith is a former teacher, PBL specialist, and founder of TeachCraft, an AI-powered platform for K-12 instructional design. With 12 years in the classroom and a background in production, he builds tools that treat teachers as the architects of authentic learning, not just end users.

*Speakers subject to change

Speaker Lineup Wednesday, May 13

Additional Speakers

Most sessions to be held concurrently

“C Suite Perspectives on Artificial Intelligence”



Dr. Heather McMahon,
Assistant Dean for
Academic Success;
Professor of Theatre,
Maryville College

Dr. Heather McMahon holds a PhD in Theatre History, Literature, and Criticism from Indiana University, with a minor in Gender Studies. She coordinates the Gender and Women’s Studies minor and teaches Theatre at Maryville College, co-coordinates the ACA Teaching and Learning Institute, and serves on the editorial board of *Ecumenica*.



Abhijit “AV” Verekar,
Founder & CEO, Avèro
Advisors

As Founder & CEO of Avèro Advisors, AV leads public-sector technology transformations—from ERP selection and AI strategy to change management. Avèro Advisors has helped 200+ government agencies nationwide. AV builds in public, sharing insights via his podcast, YouTube, and Substack to bring government Fortune 500-level strategy.



Jason Leverant,
President & COO,
AtWork Group

Jason Leverant is President and Chief Operating Officer of the AtWork Group, a national staffing firm with over 100 locations in 30 states and more than \$325 million in annual revenue. A recognized industry leader, Jason serves on the American Staffing Association’s Board of Directors and is a frequent speaker on leadership, growth, and the future of work.

Summit Sponsorship

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About the Downtown Center

The Maryville College Downtown Center is located **118 East Church Avenue, Maryville, Tennessee 37804.**

Downtown Maryville offers several free parking options for Summit attendees. We recommend using the Downtown Center's lower parking lot, which is accessible via a left turn on Court Street just before Tri-Hop Brewery. Additional parking options include the Founder's Lot across from Dandy Lions Gifts, the City of Maryville Municipal Parking Garage, and the upper-level lot across from the Downtown Center on Court Street. Limited accessible parking is available at the front of the Downtown Center. If accessible parking is not required, attendees are encouraged to use one of the nearby parking lots.