

CLEVELAND, OH
NCHERP15
2026



**The 15th National
Conference on Higher
Education in Prison**

Beyond Access

April 8–10, 2026
Huntington Convention Center



Hosted by the
ALLIANCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN PRISON

Sponsors



The Austin E. Knowlton Foundation, Inc



THE ICHIGO FOUNDATION



Meals

Food will be provided by the Alliance for Higher Education in Prison for breakfast and lunch on Thursday and Friday. Food will be served outside of the Grand Ballroom.

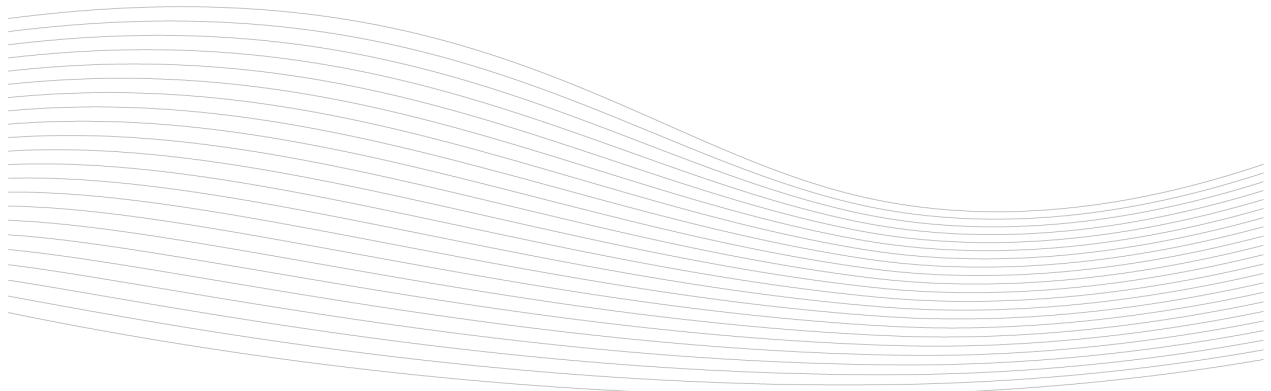
Social Media

Find the Alliance on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram: @allianceforhep. Tag us and use #NCHEP and #NCHEP15 to post about the conference.

NCHEP would not be possible without our community.

Thank you to everyone who has provided additional support during the conference planning process. A special thanks to the following individuals and organizations for expanding opportunities for participation at NCHEP 15:

- The Community
- A Revolutionary Press
- Portland State University Students
- Anonymous in Memory of Ellen Pullen



Language Guidelines

The Alliance believes that language is a powerful tool in shaping the culture and narrative in the field of higher education in prison, and in society as a whole. With this in mind, and drawing upon the rich history of work that has previously been engaged on this topic, we want to express our opposition to the usage of terms that are rooted in a history of violent and oppressive systems. Along with a vast majority of our community members, we share the view that terms such as “prisoner”, “inmate”, “offender”, “convict” and “felon” are stigmatizing, dehumanizing, discriminatory and continue to enact violence and do not acknowledge an individual’s full identity. We consider it standard practice to abstain from such language, unless you have experienced incarceration and choose to self-identify as such.

Our efforts are guided by a practice of conscious communication and the use of person-centered language (e.g., person who is currently incarcerated, person with justice involvement, to name only a few). This statement is meant to express the Alliance’s stance and preference on the usage of language and we commit to sharing this statement with participants in all public events, meetings and sessions hosted by the Alliance.

For anyone wishing to learn more about the various works that have been generated by colleagues across the country, many of whom are directly impacted by the prison system and have been leading voices in these efforts, please refer to these resources.



Digital Agenda

For detailed information about each session, please view the agenda via the Whova app or on our website. Whova's interactive digital agenda also allows attendees to sort by presentation track and access speaker information. The app also allows attendees to create personalized agendas.

Website

<https://www.higheredinprison.org/info/nchep-2026-agenda>



Join us on our official event app!

We're using *Whova* as our official event app. Join our event app to access:

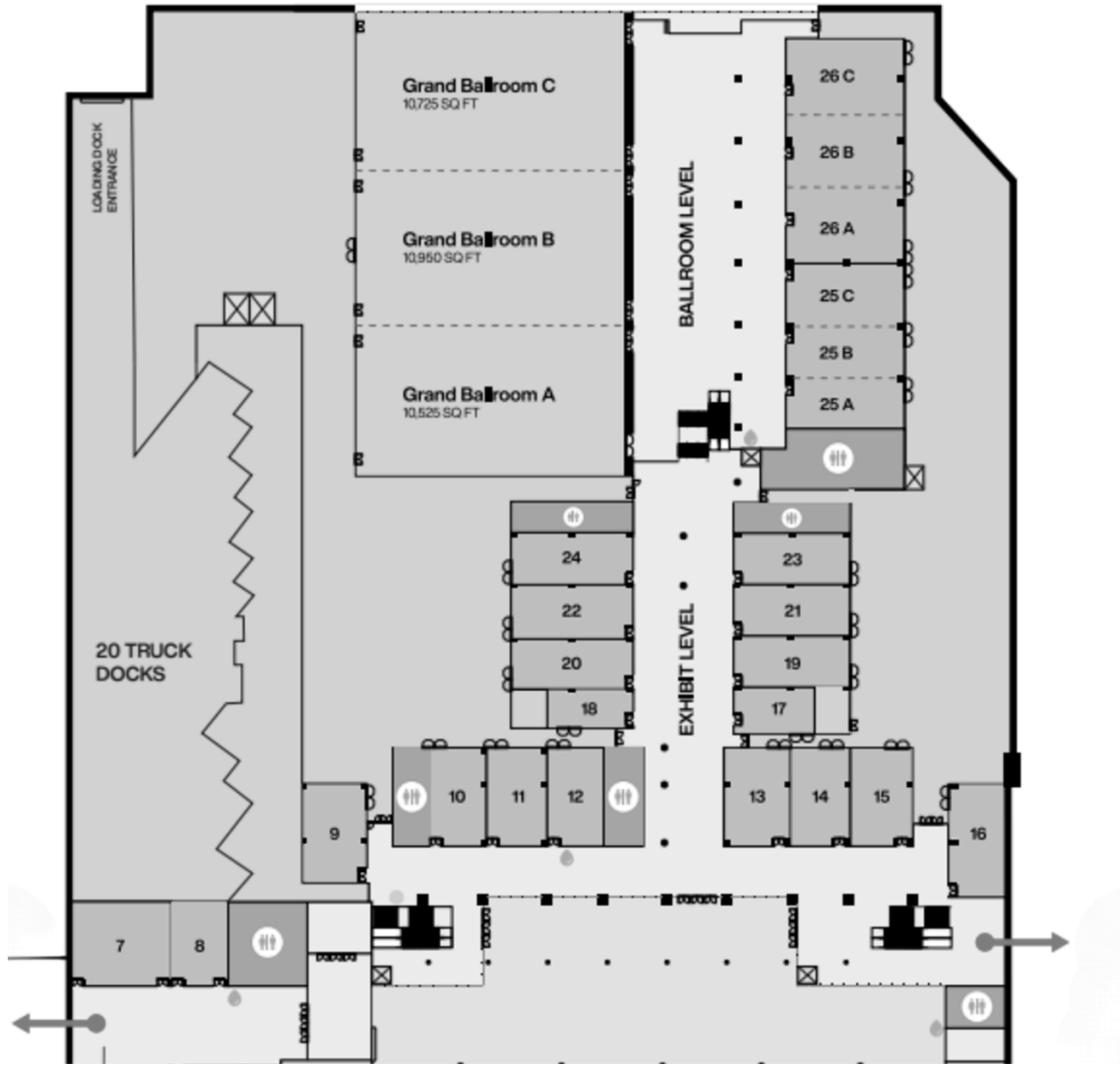
- ➔ Event announcements
- ➔ Personalized agenda, session details
- ➔ Speaker & attendee profiles
- ➔ Networking, meet-ups, messages
- ➔ Event documents
- ➔ Faster check-in

How to join:

1. Scan the QR code and download Whova from the App Store or Google Play.
2. Sign in or create an account with the email you registered with.

Having trouble joining? Search for our event and enter the invitation code: 66j2ynde41





Event Agenda

15th National Conference on Higher Education in Prison

Wednesday, April 08, 2026

- 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM** **Theatre as Education, Theatre as Recreation, Theatre for Change: Building Bridges Through the Oberlin Grafton Theatre Collective**
Location: 26B
Speakers: Anjanette Hall, Reyna Berry, Jasper Swartz, Evelyn Walker, Sophie Hull, Ellis Louda, Eric Gardenhire
- 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM** **Poetry as Transformative Pedagogy**
Location: 25A
Speaker: Sophia Roehrborn
- 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM** **Paper, Print, and the Power of Creative Expression (Drop In Session)**
Location: 26C
Speaker: John Vincent
- 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM** **Transformation over Transaction: Anthropology and Humanizing the Space Part 1**
Location: 25B
Speakers: Alec Griffin, Peter Fulks
- 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM** **Embodied Justice (Yoga and Mindfulness Practice)**
Location: 26A
Speaker: Abdi Awad
- 10:30 AM - 4:30 PM** **Site Visit: Prison Education Programs**
- 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM** **Long Midday Break**
- 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM** **Site Visit: EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute**
- 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM** **Site Visit: Tooling U-SME Vocational Training Site Visit**
- 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM** **Practitioner Perspectives on Building Remote Work-Based Learning**
Location: 26A
Speakers: Grace Meyer, Adrienne Taylor, Patrick Conway, Jon Geffen, Tereza Trejbalová, Dale Brown, Steven Ladwig, Essie Sellers, Matthew Cushing
- 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM** **Funding the Work: Strategies Beyond Pell**
Location: 25C
Speaker: Kate Cox
- 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM** **Transformation over Transaction: Anthropology and Humanizing the Space Part 2**
Location: 25B
Speaker: Alec Griffin
- 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM** **Financial Aid Basics for Today's PEP Landscape**
Location: 26B
Speakers: Sheila Meiman, David Futrell
- 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM** **Paper, Print, and the Power of Creative Expression, cont.**
Location: 26C
Speaker: John Vincent
- 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM** **From Combat to Classroom: Healing Trauma Through Education and Peer Connection**
Location: 25A
Speakers: Rory Andes, Candice Baughman

4:15 PM - 5:30 PM **NCHEP Film Festival Special Presentation: Roadtrip Nation's The Inside Scholars**
Location: Grand Ballroom A
Speakers: Ved Price, Brian McAllister

5:45 PM - 8:45 PM **NCHEP Film Festival Screenings**
Location: Grand Ballroom A

Thursday, April 09, 2026

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM **Registration**

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM **Breakfast**
Location: Grand Ballroom

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM **Conference Welcome and Reflection Plenary: Beyond Access**
Location: Grand Ballroom
Speakers: Ved Price, Kerri Moseley-Hobbs, Stanley Andrisse, Jennifer Sanders, Nahlee Suvanvej, Heather Perfetti, Sarah Kuczynski

9:00 AM - 9:00 PM **NCHEP Film Festival Screenings**
Location: Grand Ballroom A

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM **Coffee Break**

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM **Aligning Systems and Centering Students in the Colorado Coalition for Higher Education in Prison (C-CHEP)**
Location: 26A
Speakers: Stephen Hartnett, JoyBelle Phelan, Ben Boyce, Larissa Pettigrew, Jim Bullington, Lauren Hansen, Katie Nittmann, Serena Ahmad, Jason Bondurant, Sean Mueller

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM **Rooted in Purpose: The Transformative Power of Higher Education for Incarcerated Women through the P2P Scholars Program**
Location: 24
Speakers: Stanley Andrisse, Stephanie Fleming, Lisa Guirsch, Dacora Ross, Shakurah E., Myesha B.

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM **How to Build a Robust, Sustainable, and Fully-Integrated PEP: Hope, Love, and an Extremely Thorough, Painfully Particular Understanding of the Minute Inner Workings of Institutions of Higher Education**
Location: 19
Speakers: Dale Brown, McGwire Hidden, Sacelia Strong, Alexa Nussio, Jayson Hardin

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM **Meaningful Employment During and After Degree Completion: From HEP to Careers in Community Health through the MyTERN Reentry Employment Pathway**
Location: 20
Speakers: David Delvalle, Luis Bizzarro, John Sanchez, Nurudeen Alabi, Nathan Miksch

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM **Care for the Whole Prison: Expanding Higher Education Opportunities for Correctional Staff**
Location: 21
Speakers: Stephanie Gaskill, Jeremy Tripp, Darryl Epps, Bryan O'Connor

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM **You Be the Judge: A Simulated Debate on Work-Based Learning and Remote Work for Incarcerated Learners**
Location: 25ABC
Speakers: Daniel McGloin, Patrick Conway, Ramioka Robinson, Colleen Coffey, Doctoral Candidate, Steven Ladwig

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM **Justice by Design: The Incarceration to College Model for Transitional Age and K-12 Youth**
Location: 22
Speaker: Shani Shay M.Ed

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM **Federal Updates and Guidance on Pell and Prison Education Programs**
Location: 23
Speakers: Kerri Moseley-Hobbs, Sean Addie, Ashley Shuler

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	The Applied Humanities: An Experiment in Project-Based Graduate Study Location: 26C Speaker: Matthew Lockett
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Lunch Location: Grand Ballroom
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	The Sunshine Lady Foundation Grantees Lunch (invitation-only event) Location: 25A
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Texas Attendees Lunch (invitation-only event) Location: 25B
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Austin E. Knowlton Foundation Grantees Lunch (invitation-only event) Location: 25C
1:30 PM - 2:00 PM	Coffee Break
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Education Justice Tracker Demo Location: 25ABC Speakers: Terrell Harris, Tess Pendergrast, Jenna LaPietra
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Educating for Justice: The Architecture of Legal Learning Behind Bars Location: 19 Speakers: Diamond Fletcher, Jon Geffen, Maya Johnson, Dr Robbie Burnett, Kate Lovø
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Leading From the Margins at the Ohio Reformatory for Women Location: 24 Speakers: Mary Thomas, Tiyi Morris
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	From the Cell to Excellence: Reimagining Reentry as a Continuum of Learning for Black Students Impacted by Incarceration Location: 26A Speaker: Valerie Maynor
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	From Classroom to Career: Aligning Systems to Turn Education into Opportunity. Location: 26C Speakers: Jeremy White, Shani Shay M.Ed, Amy Doty, Kimberly Haven, Sherika Stewart-Rivera, Eldredge Blalock, David Delvalle, Jarrod M. Wall
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Breaking Down Barriers: Building Clarity and Connection Between Funders and Higher Ed in Prison Programs Location: 23 Speakers: LaTonya Penny, Vanessa Harris
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	A to the BID to the CDCR: Cal Poly Humboldt's Best Interest Determination Experience Location: 21 Speakers: Javier De La Torre, Arthur Monarque, Rebecca Silbert, Allan Wachendorfer, Steven Ladwig
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Work Release as a Gateway to Campus: Advancing Student Opportunity and Leadership Through Collaborative Reentry Partnerships Location: 20 Speakers: Arron Wheeler, Nia Tuckson, Marion Alberty, LaChan Hannon, Chris Agans
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Financial Aid in Flux: What New Rules Mean for Prison Education Programs Location: 22 Speakers: Sheila Meiman, Rachel Rotunda, David Futrell
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Coffee Break
3:15 PM - 5:45 PM	NCHEP Film Festival Special Presentation: The Alabama Solution (HBO) with Producer Alex Duran Location: Grand Ballroom A

- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **Correcting the Narrative: Community Health Worker Pre-Apprenticeships Inside Prison**
Location: 19
Speakers: Ben Wright, Shannon Ross, Bryan Winters, Latonya Baker, Laura Hawks, Callie Ward
- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **Expanding Educational Access to People who are Incarcerated**
Location: 24
Speakers: Belinda Wheeler, Kathie Montognese
- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **From Transactional to Transformative: Designing Memoir Curricula for Healing and Agency in Carceral and Clinical Contexts**
Location: 23
Speaker: Chad Seader
- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **Alumni Community Leadership by Design**
Location: 20
Speakers: James Davis III, Andrew Dickson, Shakur Collins
- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **Building Sustainable and Equitable Budgets for College in Prison**
Location: 25ABC
Speakers: Michelle Tolbert, Sheila Meiman, Richard Ray, Jessica Neptune
- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **Lessons from the Fair Chance to Advance RFP for States: Aligning Systems and Stakeholders to Strengthen Higher Education in Prison**
Location: 26B
Speakers: Jenna Dreier, Rebecca Villarreal, Peter Moreno, Rachel Sander, Cris Fanning
- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **A Shared Blueprint: Aligning Corrections, Education, and Workforce for Post-Release Success**
Location: 21
Speaker: Josh Gaines
- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **Breaking Chains, Building Futures Panel**
Location: 22
Speakers: Judith Negron, William Freeman, Desiree Riley, Oswald Newbold, II, Stanley Andrisse
- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **Embedding Mental Health Supports in the Continuity of Educational Care During Reentry**
Location: 26C
Speakers: Felicia Dixon, Jarrelle Marshall
- 4:45 PM - 5:30 PM** **Jesuit Prison Education Network Meeting** (invitation-only event)
Location: 19
- 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM** **Meet and Greet with HEP Funders**
Location: 25ABC
- 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM** **Open Mic**
Location: Grand Ballroom

Friday, April 10, 2026

- 7:00 AM - 9:00 AM** **Breakfast**
Location: Grand Ballroom
- 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM** **Radical Love as Reentry Infrastructure: A Scalable Model of Equity, Care & College Pathways**
Location: 26C
Speakers: Katrina Hoop, Victoria Scott, Linda Small
- 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM** **Hidden No More: Addressing Undiagnosed Disabilities in Higher Education in Prison**
Location: 23
Speakers: Ben Wright, Jenifer Montag
- 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM** **Empowering Student Leadership Behind the Walls — The Student Voice Council at Trinidad State College**
Location: 26A
Speakers: LiAnn Richardson, Justin Fornwalt, Larissa Pettigrew

- 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM** **Building High Quality Tutoring Programs for Higher Education in Prison: an interactive workshop**
 Location: 21
 Speakers: Chiara Benetollo, Lynne Sullivan, Roberto Gonzalez, Tara Ronda, Margy Wilcox
- 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM** **Ask the Accreditors: Questions from the Field**
 Location: 22
 Speakers: Pat Newton-Curran, Heather Perfetti
- 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM** **Establishing an Ecosystem Approach: Lessons on advancing student success and expanding technological infrastructure from New Hampshire's cross-sector statewide planning group**
 Location: 19
 Speakers: Nicholas Duffy, Sarah Kuczynski, Leah Maciejewski, Haley Shoaf
- 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM** **A Progressive Approach: Calculated Risk in Work-Based Learning**
 Location: 24
 Speakers: Jim Cunningham, Michael Stayer, Charles Bowen
- 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM** **Bringing Lived Experience to the Bank: The Role of Formerly-Incarcerated Funders in HEP**
 Location: 25ABC
 Speakers: Susie Bannon, Alex Duran, Aisha Elliott, Lily Gonzalez, Ashley Goldon
- 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM** **NCHPEP Film Festival Screenings**
 Location: Grand Ballroom A
- 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM** **Coffee Break**
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM** **Institutionalizing Statewide Commitment to Building Equitable and Sustainable Higher Education in Prison**
 Location: 25ABC
 Speakers: Rachel Sander, Peter Moreno, Hanan Al-Zubaidy, Chelsea Esquibias, Chris Agans
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM** **Collaboration: Student Leadership at Pelican Bay State Prison**
 Location: 24
 Speakers: Maxwell Schnurer, Mark Taylor, Tony Koji Wallin-Sato, Steven Ladwig
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM** **Eagles Bridging the Gap: Student Leadership at the Center of Higher Education in Prison: Student Voices as Leadership.**
 Location: 22
 Speakers: Supreme Hassan, Aaron Morin, Michelle Brooks, Nurudeen Alabi
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM** **Centering Student Voice Through Data in College-in-Prison Programs**
 Location: 21
 Speakers: Robert Gonyea, Alesha Seroczynski, Ronald Davis
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM** **Building College and Community Partnerships for Reentry – A Discussion of Identified Challenges and Emergent Strategies**
 Location: 23
 Speakers: Ess Pokornowski, Jessi Brewer, Rosalind Kabrhel, Jonathan Reid, Cara Moyer-Duncan, Charlie Rosario
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM** **From Margin to Center: The Necessity of a Womxn's HEP Consortium**
 Location: 19
 Speakers: Christina Dawkins, Meghan Lechner, Ann Duncan, Kathie Stromile Golden
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM** **Designing Cross-Sector Ecosystems of Support: A Hands-On Workshop Using the Operation Restoration, Tulane, and DPS&C Model**
 Location: 20
 Speakers: Heidi Coleman, Frederick Boutte, Stephanie King
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM** **The Re-entry Rubric: Embedding Transformation Beyond Access in Higher Education in Prison**
 Location: 26C
 Speaker: David A. Gethers

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	<p>Co-Educational Classrooms in Jail: Georgetown's Partnership with DC DOC in the Nation's Capital</p> <p>Location: 26A Speakers: Valerie Coats, Jason McCrady</p>
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	<p>Lunch</p>
1:00 PM - 1:30 PM	<p>Coffee Break</p>
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Digital Freedom Plans: Opportunity Scholars Justice Coding Lab</p> <p>Location: 24 Speakers: Erica King, Kristie Puckett, Darlene George, Ashley Mackie</p>
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Pooled Fund for Transformation: Guidance from the Field</p> <p>Location: 26C Speakers: Ankita Jhaveri, Miguel Leon</p>
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Including Student and Alumni Voices through Fellowships</p> <p>Location: 26A Speaker: Claire Corliss</p>
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Moving Beyond Referrals: Best Practices for Building Multidisciplinary Teams for Reentry</p> <p>Location: 21 Speakers: Jonathan Morgan, Devon Hickman</p>
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Unlocking Access: ADA, Accessibility, and Assistive Technologies in Carceral Classrooms and Libraries</p> <p>Location: 25ABC Speakers: Aaron Blumberg, Ess Pokornowski, Jenifer Montag, Madeline Jones, Ben Wright</p>
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Beyond Walls, Beyond Barriers: Modeling Sustainability in Prison Education Through Campus Partnerships</p> <p>Location: 23 Speakers: Trip Taylor, Elizabeth Shatswell</p>
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Data-Driven Academic Reentry: Building Seamless Academic Reentry Pathways from College-in-Prison to Post-Incarceration</p> <p>Location: 19 Speakers: Darryl Epps, Brendan Mapes, Sarah Cushman, Tess Pendergrast, Tommasina Faratro</p>
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Unlocking Pathways: Aligning Jail, College, and Community Systems in Western Massachusetts</p> <p>Location: 22 Speakers: Nicole Hendricks, Brianna Owen</p>
2:00 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Coffee Break</p>
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	<p>From Student to Leader: Breaking Barriers, Building Leaders, The Power of Lived Experience</p> <p>Location: 20 Speakers: Norma Hairston, Nicole Hendricks</p>
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	<p>Navigating Forward Year One: Sharing Student Stories, Impact Data, Lessons from the Field, and Next Steps</p> <p>Location: 22 Speakers: Kristin Paine, Sandy Wilson, Ashley Allison, Clemente Bell</p>
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	<p>Defining Quality Fair Chance Employment: What National Data Tell Us About Quality Jobs and Their Impact on Reentry</p> <p>Location: 26A Speakers: Charlotte West, Joel Negron, Rebecca Villarreal</p>
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	<p>Education as Freedom Work: Building Pathways for Release</p> <p>Location: 19 Speakers: James Soto, Alice Kim, Avalon Betts-Gaston</p>

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Women, Incarceration, Leadership, and the Transformative Power of Education

Location: 25ABC

Speakers: Deborah Fitzgerald, Alexa Garza, Lisette B. Hughes, Ramieka Robinson, Cheryl Wilkins

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Reimagining Student Support: Building a One-Stop Shop Student Center

Location: 23

Speakers: Paméla Cappas-Toro, Andy Eisen, Emily Kersten Warneke, Tessa Brunnenmeyer

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Evidence-Based Tools for HEP Implementation and Student Success

Location: 26C

Speakers: Ellen Cushing, Stephanie Gaskill, Michelle Workman, Haley Shoaf, Jennifer Juras, Amanda Bequette, Katie Owens-Murphy, Sara Alpert, Andrea Cantora, Efraín Marimón, Cara Moyer-Duncan, Amina Petrizio, Maggie Shelledy, Cory Pride

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Justice by Academic Discipline: The Role of Disciplinary Communities in Advancing Higher Education in Prison

Location: 21

Speakers: Megan Klein, Sarah Shannon, Darren Wheelock, Carla Barrett, Mary Nell Trautner, Gabriel Rosales

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Chaotic Good: Principles and Practices for Navigating an Unpredictable Landscape

Location: 24

Speakers: Ryan McCarthy, Stacy Burnett, Grace Cope

4:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Closing Keynote

Location: Grand Ballroom

Speaker: Brandon Chrostowski

