



2025 NAADA Annual Conference Education Session

DESCRIPTIONS & PRESENTERS

PLEASE NOTE: Educational Sessions are ONLY Open to Full Conference Package Holder Attendees

SESSION 1 | WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18 | 9:15-10:15 AM

Managing the Tough Stuff: Strategies for Navigating Organizational Challenges | Julie Conn

Overcoming obstacles such as disengaged, challenging, or disconnected faculty and organizational leaders can hinder individual and team progress. This presentation aims to provide strategies and tactics, with a particular focus on managing up, to effectively conquer these challenges.

Presenter: Julie is the Senior Director of Corporate Relationships for the UF/IFAS Advancement Office and has been in the fundraising field for 15 years. She has a BS in Animal Sciences from the University of Florida and an MS in Agricultural Economics from the University of Arkansas.

Stewarding Transformational Gifts: Insights from the UK Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment | Tressa Neal, Derrick Meads

In 2023, the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture, Food and Environment received a \$100 million transformational gift from the Bill Gatton Foundation. While securing this gift required significant effort, it marked the beginning of a larger journey. This session will offer insights into how we are honoring the donor's vision through strategic stewardship efforts at the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. We'll explore the collaborative roles of philanthropy, student success, and marketing and communications units in delivering meaningful impact and aligning with donor expectation.

Presenter: Tressa Neal is the Senior Director of Donor Relations for the UK Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. In this role, she leads the college's stewardship efforts and oversees a team to manage all gifts to the college. Tressa plays a key role in supporting the implementation of the \$100 million naming gift from the Bill Gatton Foundation, collaborating with colleagues in the college and across the university to execute the donor's vision and create a lasting impact on the college's tri-part mission.

Tressa Neal has served in the Office of Philanthropy and Alumni at Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food & Environment since 2017. She previously held roles on the philanthropy team in the UK College of Law and at the American Cancer Society in Louisville, KY.

Presenter: Derrick Meads serves as Director of Marketing and Strategic Communication for the University of Kentucky's Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. In this role, he leads the Agricultural Communications Service unit and works to advance the college's priorities, brand and messaging.

During his 19 years at the University of Kentucky Derrick Meads has worked with multiple colleges and departments to advance the university's strategic goals, including the UK colleges of Engineering, Nursing and Design, as well as the International Center, where he led successful campaigns requiring comprehensive marketing and communication strategies. Additionally, he was an active member of UK Staff Senate where he served on the President's Advisory Council.



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Strategic Imperative: Good Governance and Preventing Mission Drift | Seth Harden, Phil Anderson

This session will provide insight and define the imperative for not only thinking strategically, but documenting and measuring impact of strategic initiatives. Phil Anderson, founder of ReThink!, and Seth Harden, immediate past president and Strategic Planning Committee Chair of the Purdue Ag Alumni Association, will present in a conversational style why and how a 5-Year Strategic Planning Process should be approached and designed for Ag Alumni Associations of all types. Seth and Phil will provide an extra degree of value by discussing governance and mission-drift, two common bottlenecks for organizations trying to serve diverse stakeholders. Examples will include the Purdue Ag Alumni Association's recently completed 5-Year Strategic plan and a "look under the hood" of how that experience informed and calibrated the association's new plan.

Phil Anderson pulls from nearly 3 decades of experience leading and advising agriculture non-profits and Seth, along with his own professional experience in non-profits, holds a MPA with a concentration in Non-Profit Management. This combination provides for a unique blend of insight and knowledge that will provide the audience with actionable take-aways.

Presenter: Seth has served on the Purdue Ag Alumni Association Board for 13 years, starting as a departmental representative and recently completing his term as Board President. Seth has a particular passion for governance and strategy. Seth, a 3rd Generation Boilermaker from central Indiana, earned his Bachelors in Forestry in 2010. He went on to earn his MPA from the O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs at IU and now works as a project director at The Nature Conservancy, a global environmental NGO. Seth lives in Westfield, IN with his wife and fellow Purdue alumnus, Laura with their four kids...all future Boilermakers of course.

Presenter: Phil Anderson is the founder and Chief ReThinker at ReThink! Phil works with organizations and communities to invest their talents and passions in each other. Phil teaches through stories and draws from 23+ years of experience as the chief staff officer for four non-profits in agriculture and rural community development and subsequent experiences as a private consultant. Phil has also designed and presented training programs for the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, sharing the philosophy, principles, and practices of servant leadership with individuals and organizations. Phil graduated with a B.S. in agricultural economics from the Purdue University College of Agriculture, specializing in sales and marketing and was a member of the Indiana Agriculture Leadership Program's Class 2, a two-year educational program presented by AgrIIstitute. He is co-owner of his family's grain farm near Frankfort, Indiana and resides in Carmel, IN.

Creating Cohesion from Chaos: Using Websites as Your Digital Front Door

Jarred Shellhouse, Genevieve Howard, Michelle Enger

Your website is more than a digital front door - it's an opportunity to tell your story and invite your audience inside. Join us as we explore the challenges and triumphs of aligning university-wide branding with college-specific needs. Discover why website redesigns are fundamentally change management projects. Learn how to balance leadership goals with web design recommendations while you build consensus and manage expectations. Drawing from our own redesign experiences at the University of Missouri and the University of Florida, we'll share insights and strategies to help make your next website project a success!

Presenter: Jarred Shellhouse is the assistant director of communications for the UF/IFAS College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, focusing specifically on academic programs at UF/IFAS. He is responsible for the strategy and execution of communications and media for prospective and current students, alumni and faculty development programs related to



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teaching. Outside of work, you can catch Jarred watching the nearest Broadway musical, bleary-eyed trying to get through an early morning workout, turning his nose up at bad espresso, or spending time with his dog, Zoe.

Presenter: Genevieve Howard is the web & social media strategist for the Mizzou College of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (CAFNR). She specializes in web decluttering, relationship building, and tailored social media campaigns. In her personal life, she stays busy with five critters and home buying shows. She's thinking about getting into plants, with a particular fondness for holiday cacti.

Presenter: Michelle Enger is director of marketing and communications for the College of Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources at the University of Missouri, where she oversees student recruitment marketing, and showcasing research breakthroughs and extension impacts via all forms of media. She really does love reading, trivia, games and puzzles, yes, but mostly she wishes she had more time and space for building tracks and racing Hot Wheels.

SESSION 2 | WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18 | 10:30-11:30 AM

Building Against the Odds: A Capital Campaign During Challenging Times

Mary Ann Parsons, Ariel Waldeck

Ever feel like a building campaign is a pipe dream? This session offers practical insights into navigating the complexities of a capital campaign in challenging times. Using the recent opening of the UGA CAES Poultry Science Building (October 2024) as a case study, this session offers a candid look at the journey. We will explore the development and stewardship strategies that made it possible along with an opportunity to learn from our experiences – the successes, setbacks, and unexpected twists – to inform your own efforts.

Presenter: Mary Ann Parsons serves as the Senior Director of Development for the University of Georgia's (UGA) College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) and has over 20 years of experience in building strong relationships and executing successful fundraising campaigns. In this role, she leads a team of professionals in securing philanthropic support and engaging alumni to advance the College's land grant mission.

Parsons' agricultural roots run deep, having grown up on a cotton and peanut farm as well as showing and raising livestock. Mary Ann was very involved in FFA, serving in various leadership roles and receiving numerous awards on the local and state level, including state vice president, state prepared public speaking winner, Southern Region Star Farmer, and receiving her American FFA degree.

While a student at UGA, Parsons was a charter member and first president of the university's first agricultural sorority, Sigma Alpha. She holds a bachelor's degree in agricultural communications with a minor in agribusiness and a master's degree in agricultural leadership from UGA. She and her husband Mike are the proud parents of two teenagers, Haley and Caleb.

Presenter: Ariel Waldeck serves as the Director of Development Communications and Donor Relations for the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES). She has worked in event, communication and stewardship roles for 10 years.

Ariel grew up on a farm in Kentucky and showed Brown Swiss dairy cattle. Agriculture became a passion and shaped what her future would look like. She participated in as many FFA events and leadership roles as her advisor would throw at her.



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She attended the University of Kentucky, majoring in agricultural communications and public relations. Her next stop was the University of Georgia for a master's in agricultural leadership. A "big kid" job opportunity was created in Athens, and she's been supporting development efforts ever since.

Direction Determines Destination: Creating a Clear Alumni Relations Strategy | Laura Bayne

What do you think of when you hear alumni relations strategy? Do you picture a melting pot of all the ways you can connect with alumni and new ideas to try? What if developing a strategy looked a lot more like a step-by-step process for alumni to lead alumni through deeper levels of engagement and more meaningful involvement? In this session I will share how a leadership talk on "Direction Determines Destination" led me to question goals of events, articulate next steps, and create systems to ensure we were intentionally moving towards our goals. At the end of the talk I will share our alumni relations strategy graphic for internal stakeholders and alumni engagement handout that was produced from this strategy development process.

Presenter: Laura Bayne serves as the Director of Alumni Relations at the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) since November 2023. In this position, she is responsible for fostering strong connections between the college and its alumni, facilitating engagement opportunities, and functioning as the Executive Director for the CAES Alumni Board of Directors. Having experienced several roles at the university from school and college to central development and alumni relations, Laura enjoys evaluating processes and developing systems as well as collaborating to ensure the greatest impact for UGA students and alumni. Outside of her professional responsibilities, Laura enjoys long walks in the woods, volunteering at her church, and spending time with her husband, Josh, and their three kids, Kate, Avery, and Simon.

Crafting a Winning Communications Strategy for Student Recruitment and Yield

Nyssa Lilovich

This session will explore innovative approaches to designing and executing an effective communications strategy for student recruitment and yield. Attendees will learn how to craft compelling messages, leverage diverse communication channels and engage students in meaningful ways. Using real-world examples, the presentation will highlight strategies Purdue Ag has implemented. Perfect for professionals looking to boost enrollment or yield, and strengthen their outreach efforts.

Presenter: Nyssa Lilovich, lead communications specialist in the Purdue Department of Agricultural Communications, specializes in developing and implementing strategic communications plans. In her role, she helps shape Purdue Agriculture's outreach to prospective students, industry partners and global collaborators.

The Gen Z ERA | Interpreting Your Students Collegiate/Career Needs

Sarah Williams, Caitlin Conrad

Let's take a TOUR, exploring steps to engage Gen Z students in their college experience. In this session we will discuss strategies to foster connections around student success and career preparation during a student's first year and beyond. This includes tactics to combine career readiness and student engagement programming. Take this opportunity to think of the work you do with students as a Blank Space. Shake off all the things you have already tried and use this time to brainstorm ways to build and Taylor a new and Swift engagement program for your students. Join us in this interactive session that will challenge you to think outside of the box with Style.



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Presenter: Sarah Williams is an Academic Program Services Consultant for First-Year Experience and Student Success Experiences in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences at The Ohio State University. She is from Wilmington, Ohio and attended Ohio State where she received a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and a Master of Science in Plant Pathology. She has worked for Ohio State since 2009 in the Department of Plant Pathology and more recently, the CFAES Academic Programs Office. She has been able to work with curriculum development, assessment techniques, and has taught several classes centered around plant health, food security, first-year seminar, and peer mentor leadership. Her primary focus now is on student success initiatives including: first-year success, peer mentoring, living-learning communities, high-impact welcome programming, and student co-curricular involvement opportunities. Sarah has been recognized as a leader in the “Student’s First” mission of CFAES, specifically in her programming for new first-year students.

Presenter: Caitlin Conrad is a Career Development Coordinator in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. She has held this position for 5 years and in those 5 years she focused on anything under the Career umbrella. From career exploration all the way to salary negotiation. Prior to her current role she worked at Ohio State in the College of Arts and Sciences as a Career Coach for 1.5 years. Her educational background started at Ohio State. She graduated with a bachelor’s degree in agriculture, majoring in Community Leadership and minoring in communications. She also acquired a master’s degree in counselor education from Ohio University, which ultimately brought her back to her alma mater where she has the privilege to guide CFAES students through their career journeys.

SESSION 3 | THURSDAY, JUNE 19 | 9:30-10:30 AM

Baby 7, A Shy Clinician, and a Social Media Influencer: How We Harnessed a Perfect Storm

Laura Zimbrick, Megan Bips

Baby Seven, a premature horse that came to UTCVM in July 2024, had the good fortune of a spunky spirit and a social media influencer mom. The horse’s significant social media presence prompted weekly updates from our clinician, who casually mentioned where the followers could donate to help other horses in need. By the next morning, we had over \$10,000 in individual gifts from all over the country. What we did to support our clinician, steward those new donors and encourage them to give again, and build a relationship beyond the young horse could prove helpful to those wanting to seize opportunities that come and work with their faculty and staff to open doors to new donors.

Presenter: Laura Zimbrick has been with the University of Tennessee for three years, first starting as the Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving in 2022. She now serves as the Director of Development for UT College of Vet Medicine. She comes from the hospitality world, with over 20 years of experience in food and beverage, live events, and premium services. Though she has had some seriously fun jobs at Jack Daniels, the Fox Theatre Atlanta, and a myriad of other roles along the way, she has found a true fit with her current role. Laura lives in Knoxville with her husband, cat, Grace Knucklehead, and dog Molly. She is the 2023 recipient of the NAADA Torchbearer Award.

Presenter: Megan Bips is the Director of Stewardship and Donor Relations for the University of Tennessee’s Institute of Agriculture. Her work entails stewarding all donors within the four units of the Institute- the Herbert College of Agriculture, UT College of Veterinary Medicine, UT Extension, and AgResearch. She has an undergraduate degree from the University of California, Berkeley, and a master’s from Texas A&M University.



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Publications and Projects: Behind the Scenes | Emily Wickham

Learn about the projects and publications that were selected to be finalists for 2025. We'll discuss projects from start to finish, what worked well, what hiccups occurred and share any details that can be helpful to our colleagues.

Presenter: Emily Wickham is the communication and undergraduate program manager for the Department of Agricultural Communication, Education, and Leadership at the Ohio State University. In this role, Emily supports the department's growth through undergraduate recruitment and oversees initiatives that promote both the department and its students. Additionally, Emily manages the department's social media and communications efforts. Within NAADA, Emily serves as the chair of the Publications and Projects Contest committee, coordinating the evaluation of members' events, print materials, campaigns, and electronic media submissions.

Never Too Early: Embedding Alumni Networking Into Freshman Orientation Courses | James Krotz

Do your students express anxiety at the prospect of attending your university/college career fair? Do your alumni express an interest in mentoring undergraduate students, but you don't have an efficient way to connect them? We hope to help with that. In Purdue Animal Sciences (ANSC), our curriculum requires freshman to take ANSC 181: Professional Development and Exploration in ANSC. While the vast majority (over 80% by our data) of students aspire to attend veterinary school, this course and our department place an emphasis on parallel planning, pursuing multiple career paths simultaneously. We validate this by inviting over 50 Animal Sciences alumni and friends to attend classes. While it would be simpler to have these guests give a 5 minute presentation on their company and tell their story, we've moved to a "breakout session" style, where students have the opportunity to rotate around the large room and listen to the speakers they are most interested in. This has improved student attention span, career critical thinking, and networking skills, thus preparing them to attend the career fair and beginning their parallel planning. It has the added benefit of connecting ANSC alumni to current students, helping them track coming talent and fostering meaningful connections back to the department. We hope to share this format, both from an instructor, student, and alumni perspective, on how this course has improved student satisfaction and alumni relations.

Presenter: James Krotz is a Lead Academic and Career Advisor in the Department of Animal Sciences at Purdue University. As part of his role, James advises a caseload of 150 undergraduate students from orientation through graduation, as well as serving as the primary career advisor for the entire undergraduate population of 700+ students. He also teaches two career preparation and exploration classes, ANSC 18100: Professional Development and Exploration and ANSC 48100: Contemporary Issues in Animal Sciences. His special passion is for connecting students with alumni in the numerous and diverse career fields within animal health and agriculture, and he believes strongly in embedding networking opportunities throughout the undergraduate experience.

Presenter: James is a native of Belleville, KS and was influenced heavily by his grandfathers, both of whom were farmers. A proud 4-H alumni, he holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Kansas State University. James lives in Lafayette, IN with his wife, Haileigh, and 2-year-old son, Joseph.

The Value to Volunteers | Annie Story

Volunteers are the center of our organizations. Yet, volunteer management and best practices are often overlooked in organizations. In this session we will review the latest research and trends in volunteer management and share how you can implement key strategies and structure to provide a great experience to our volunteers. We all gain value from our volunteers, let's create systems that provide value to our volunteers to ensure they have great experiences with us.



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Presenter: Annie is an association management professional focused on member experience and organizational strength. Annie is currently the Executive Director of the Illinois Section American Water Works Association and has worked previously at the American Academy of Pediatrics, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and Agriculture Future of America. Annie has extensive experience in volunteer management and received her Certified Association Executive credential in 2016. She currently is a board member for the American Society of Association Executives. Annie grew up in rural Nebraska and received her bachelor's degree in public administration from the University of Nebraska Omaha and a masters degree in child, youth and family studies from the University of Nebraska Lincoln. Annie lives outside of Chicago with her husband, two daughters and their dog.

SESSION 4 | THURSDAY, JUNE 19 | 10:45-11:45 AM

Building Culture through Metrics - The Art of Creating a Successful Fundraising Operation

George Keegan

There are 3 things that leaders can do to build cultures that will support fundraising growth. Growth shown by great fundraising metrics. They happen to all begin with C - Clarity, Community and Consistency. In this session, we will dive deeply into each component that will make your organization a cultural and fundraising.

Presenter: George Keegan is the serves on the senior leadership team as the Senior Vice President for Development at the Purdue for Life Foundation. Previously serving as the Senior Associate Vice President for Development he supported the Daniels School of Business, College of Agriculture, College of Veterinary Medicine, the Purdue Polytechnic Institute, Purdue Global, the Purdue Military and National Security Ecosystem, and Purdue Innovates.

After a 12-year tenure in South Bend, Indiana at the University of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's College, where he launched an Academic Advancement model focused on funding of significant achievements in research and education as well as the Saint Mary's first ever continuous strategic plan model, Keegan was the Senior Associate Vice President of Washington State University Foundation where he worked directly with the VP for Advancement and Foundation CEO to identify campaign priorities and set fundraising goals for each of the individual constituent units as well as system-wide.

Cross Campus Collaboration to Capitalize on Corporate Philanthropy

Kyle Hensley, Stephanie Eastman Vozar

Corporate philanthropy is an ever-changing sector in development that requires a specific and modern approach. The UTIA Office of Advancement recently restructured and created a corporate specific role to better serve our industry partners and maximize our efficiency in that space. While the position is new, we've already found success in large part due to collaboration with colleagues across campus and the system. Join Kyle Hensley, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations for UTIA and Stephanie Eastman Vozar, Director of Corporate Philanthropy for the UT Knoxville campus, for a discussion on our approach to corporate relations. We'll talk specifics about our roles, how our positions fit within a major giving team, address challenges related to cross campus collaboration working with colleges, units, departments, and faculty and, how we've been able to maximize our impact by collaborating together and system wide.

Presenter: Kyle Hensley joined the UTIA Advancement Team in July 2023, bringing a lifetime of experience in the Tennessee Agriculture Industry and a passion for the University of Tennessee. A native of East Tennessee, Kyle grew up heavily involved in Tennessee 4-H. He holds a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of



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Tennessee's Herbert College of Agriculture and a Master's in Business Administration from UT's Haslam College of Business. He began his career as the Recruitment Coordinator for the Herbert College of Agriculture before spending 4.5 years with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's Business Development Division focusing on building value chain opportunities for producers and small businesses in the food and farm space. He also spent time at AgLaunch, a non-profit Ag-Tech accelerator program focused on supporting entrepreneurship in the food supply chain. He and his wife live in Lenoir City with their two daughters, Mary Beth and Emily. In his spare time he is an avid sports fan and a die-hard Tennessee Volunteer.

Presenter: Stephanie Eastman Vozar is the Director of Corporate Philanthropy at the University of Tennessee Foundation, bringing over 20 years of experience in business development and fundraising, specializing in corporate philanthropy. Originally from Flint, Michigan, Stephanie has made a significant impact in the nonprofit sector across the United States. Before joining the University of Tennessee, Stephanie relocated to Tennessee to take on the challenge of building a robust new development program at Young-Williams Animal Center. Prior to that, she held fundraising roles with several international organizations including the American Red Cross in both Florida and Michigan specializing in donor growth, retention, corporate relations and disaster fundraising, and served as Executive of Corporate Engagement at the Detroit Pistons for Palace Sports and Entertainment.

Stephanie has a BA in Applied Communications from the University of Michigan and is actively engaged in the community serving on several boards and committees including the Association of Fundraising Professionals and Powell United Methodist Church. Stephanie resides in Powell, TN with her husband Troy and their two adopted dogs, Thor and Biscuit.

Golden Opportunities for Alumni | Joel Hartman

Facilitating collaboration across college level alumni relations between campus partners. In this session, participants will learn about the interwoven culture Purdue practices to coordinate activities and collaborate together to bolster alumni engagement on a macro scale. We will share practical applications that are more important than ever in our integrated organizational and metric-based frameworks.

Presenter: Joel has 17 years of philanthropic and volunteer management experience. Three years with the American Cancer Society, thirteen years as a major gift officer with Purdue (12 in the College of Agriculture), and a year leading the volunteerism and college engagement initiatives for the foundation. He also has over a decade of experience serving on multiple non-profit boards.

Pocket Power: Using Your Smartphone to Capture Impactful Moments for Students, Alumni, and Donors | John Rice

Discover how the power of visuals can help strengthen connections with alumni and donors, fostering engagement and support through compelling storytelling. In this engaging session, learn how to elevate your smartphone photography and video skills with practical techniques designed for non-professionals. Explore the fundamentals of composition, lighting, and framing to capture stunning photos and videos effortlessly. Uncover tips and tricks for improving sound quality, stabilizing footage, and using built-in features to maximize results. Whether documenting everyday moments or creating content for social media, this session equips you with essential knowledge and creative insights to achieve polished, professional-looking results. No prior experience is needed—just bring your smartphone and an eagerness to learn and create!



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Presenter: John D. Rice is a video production expert with over 30 years of experience at a Land-Grant Institution, specializing in dynamic storytelling that connects with target audiences. Throughout his career, John has adapted to constant changes in the industry, from traditional media to the rise of digital platforms and social media. He has witnessed the transformation of video from a tool primarily used by professionals to a creative medium accessible to everyone. Passionate about innovation and knowledge sharing, John believes the true power of video lies in its ability to connect, educate, and inspire—now more than ever in the hands of all creators.

SESSION 5 | THURSDAY, JUNE 19 | 1:45-2:45 PM

Mastering the Art of Development

Julie Conn, Bailey Allison, Cody Helmer, Sara Olson, Ben Conner

Navigating donor prospecting and major gift fundraising comes with unique challenges, especially when facing difficult circumstances or starting out as a new development officer. In this panel, fundraising professionals from different career stages will share their experiences, lessons learned through trial and error, and practical strategies for identifying and cultivating major donors. Attendees will gain valuable insights into building meaningful donor relationships, overcoming fundraising obstacles, and setting a strong foundation for long-term success in development.

Presenter: Julie is the Senior Director of Corporate Relationships for the UF/IFAS Advancement Office and has been in the fundraising field for 15 years. She has a BS in Animal Sciences from the University of Florida and an MS in Agricultural Economics from the University of Arkansas.

Presenter: Bailey Allison obtained her bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University of Agribusiness with a minor in Economics/Agricultural Economics. Her belief in the agriculture industry and education has led her to her career as an Assistant Director of Development at the Texas A&M Foundation. Specifically focusing on new opportunities, Bailey has served in this position for 3 years.

Presenter: Cody is the Executive Director of Advancement for UF/IFAS with 25 years of fundraising experience, 12 of those years within the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).

Visual Storytelling: Modern Tooling for Traditional Methods | Seth Harden, Ben Massie

Video, both concise and long-form have quickly become the primary method for reaching audiences of all ages. Social media requires brief, but impactful content. Long-form video requires extensive planning, coordination, and a degree of investment sometimes out of reach for non-profits. Agriculture alumni offer a rich opportunity for authentic storytelling and insightful content. This session will showcase multiple mid-length video projects, including one completed for the Purdue Ag Alumni Association, and how these projects were conceptualized. The session will include: 1) What your videographer will want to know 2) Leveraging video narrative and footage to inspire action 3) How to build timeless video projects that are multi-purpose. Session attendees will walk away with a working knowledge of how to best utilize video to achieve goals, capture action, and drive success.

Presenter: Seth has served on the Purdue Ag Alumni Association Board for 13 years, starting as a departmental representative and recently completing his term as Board President. Seth has a particular passion for governance and strategy. Seth, a 3rd Generation Boilermaker from central Indiana, earned his Bachelors in Forestry in 2010. He went on to earn his MPA from the O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs at IU and now works as a project director at



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The Nature Conservancy, a global environmental NGO. Seth lives in Westfield, IN with his wife and fellow Purdue alumnus, Laura with their four kids...all future Boilermakers of course.

Presenter: Ben Massie is the founder and creative behind Flatland Films. Driven by a deep passion for capturing untold stories, in early 2020 he set out to find authentic narratives that resonate with the soul and highlight the intricate human connection to nature. Ben lives with his wife and sons near Battleground, IN.

Seeds of Success: Cultivating Future Leaders and Bridging Agriculture, Academia, and Industry through Mentorship | Julie Obermeyer, Meg Kester, Justin Swanson

This pilot mentorship program, born from a strategic partnership between agricultural industry leaders, a University development team, and college leadership, offers students a unique opportunity to connect with C-suite alumni, executives, and recent hires in the agriculture sector. Led by the college's Career Center and Alumni Relations professionals, the program provides students with valuable insights into the industry through personalized mentorship, exclusive organizational tours, and career advice directly from those shaping the field. Designed for professionals in student services, alumni engagement, and anyone interested in fostering deeper partnerships between academia and industry, this program bridges the gap between education and career, preparing the next generation of agricultural leaders for success.

Presenter: Julie is the Career Development & Corporate Relations Director in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (fondly referred to as CASNR) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a position she has held since 2011. Her role at CASNR is to coordinate career development efforts for the college, help students find successful careers and employers maximize their recruitment efforts. She has a bachelor's degree in advertising from the University of Nebraska at Kearney and a master's degree in leadership education at UNL. Presently, she is pursuing a doctorate in philosophy with an emphasis in leadership. Julie, her husband Phil, and their two kids live in Lincoln.

Presenter: Meg Kester is the Director of Strategic Initiatives and Alumni Engagement for the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. A proud two-time graduate of UNL, she holds a bachelor's and master's degree from the College of Education and Human Sciences and is currently advancing her expertise as a doctoral candidate in Educational Administration. With a deep passion for fostering meaningful connections, Meg spearheads CASNR's alumni engagement efforts, strengthening relationships between students, alumni, stakeholders, and industry partners. Her work focuses on creating impactful initiatives that bridge the past, present, and future of CASNR's community. Beyond her professional commitments, Meg and her husband, Ken, reside in Lincoln, Nebraska, where they enjoy time with their four adult children and one grandson.

Presenter: Justin Swanson works at the University of Nebraska Foundation as the Senior Director of Development for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a role he started in January of 2024. Prior to that Justin served as a Development Officer on behalf of the College of Business for 8 years. Before arriving at UNF he served as the Director of Community Engagement at Global Partners in Hope, an international community development organization based in Nebraska. Justin is a double graduate of UNL with a Juris Doctor from the College of Law and a Master of Arts in Journalism at the College of Journalism and Mass Communication. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in English/Communication from Trinity International University. Justin serves on several boards, including the Near South Neighborhood Association, the Lincoln Track Club, Common Cause Nebraska, and his church. When not with family or working Justin enjoys running, reading, and using his law license to support new and emerging nonprofits.



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Deans' Perspectives on Development and Alumni Relations | Kelly Delp

Deans play a pivotal role in shaping the vision and priorities of their institutions, and their perspectives on development and alumni relations are key to fostering meaningful engagement and sustainable growth. In this dynamic panel discussion, deans from our NAADA Dean's Track will share their insights on the evolving landscape of fundraising, donor engagement, and alumni connections.

The conversation will explore how deans collaborate with development professionals, align fundraising efforts with institutional priorities, and cultivate relationships with alumni and donors. Panelists will also discuss challenges, best practices, and innovative approaches to advancing their schools' missions through philanthropy and engagement. Join us for this candid discussion to gain valuable insights into how academic leaders view and approach development and alumni relations—and how you can partner with them to drive success.

Presenter: Kelly is a Senior Director for Development with the Purdue for Life Foundation for the College of Agriculture. She has been with the foundation since 2012 serving five years as a stewardship coordinator and eight years as a development officer. Kelly has a BS from Purdue in Agricultural Communication and an MA in Public Relations from Indiana University, Indianapolis. Outside of work, Kelly runs a Women's Twilight golf league, is a board member of the Lafayette Citizens Band, and serves on a fundraising committee for the Public Schools Foundation of Tippecanoe County. For fun you will find Kelly with her twin sister, Kristy, golfing, traveling, or reading.