



Thriving Together: Navigating Change in Higher Education Through Collaboration

powered by E&I Cooperative Services

POSTPONED - Details Forthcoming

Villa Maria College

About: Sponsored by **E&I Cooperative Services**, the forum is a transformative one-day event designed exclusively for higher education professionals. This immersive event focuses on collaboration and navigating uncertainty in today's complex and ever-changing environment. This event is provided at no cost for participants.

Educational Forum Agenda: "Collaboration and Navigating Uncertainty"

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM: Registration and Networking Breakfast

9:30 AM – 9:45 AM: Welcome and Opening Remarks

Speaker: Suronda Gonzalez, Executive Director, Upstate New York College Collaboration

9:45 AM – 10:45 AM: Session 1

The AI-Powered Campus: Transforming in Uncertain Times

Summary: As AI reshapes higher education, finance, procurement, and administrative offices must adapt to stay ahead. This session explores cutting-edge AI tools revolutionizing contract management, vendor analytics, budget forecasting, and operational efficiency. Discover how institutions are leveraging AI to navigate uncertainty, streamline workflows, and enhance decision-making in an evolving political and economic landscape.

Format: Presentation

Speaker: TBD

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM: Networking Break

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Session 2

"Breaking Silos: Collaboration Across Institutions"

Summary: A study in developing cross-institutional partnerships to maximize purchasing power, reduce costs, and streamline processes. Now more than ever, we need one another.

Format: Presentation or panel-style.

Speaker: Casey Laurienzo, Vice President of Community Engagement & Education, E&I Cooperative Services

12:00 PM – 12:45 PM: Lunch Break & Networking

12:45 AM – 1:45 PM: Session 3

"Scenario Planning for an Uncertain Future"

Summary: Engage in a hands-on workshop where small groups work through hypothetical scenarios—such as budget cuts, policy changes, or supply chain disruptions—to practice collaborative problem-solving and develop action plans.

Format: Workshop

Facilitator: Matt Larson, Sourcing Consultant, E&I Cooperative Services

1:45 PM – 2:00 PM: Networking Break

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM: Session 4

"Influencing Without Authority: Building Buy-In Across Departments"

Summary: Learn interpersonal and communication techniques to persuade stakeholders, gain support for initiatives, and align cross-departmental priorities—even when you lack formal authority. Founded on negotiation and communication best practices.

Format: Presentation

Speaker: Casey Laurienzo, Vice President of Community Engagement & Education, E&I Cooperative Services

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM: Session 5 – Collaboration Hour

"Collaborative Commitments: Building a Stronger Future Together"

Summary: Recap key takeaways from the day and invite participants to commit to actions or partnerships that will strengthen collaboration across institutions.

Format: Breakout/Group Discussion

Facilitator: Casey Laurienzo & Matt Larson, E&I Cooperative Services

3:45 PM – 4:00 PM: Closing Remarks and Survey

Speaker: Suronda Gonzalez, Executive Director, Upstate New York College Collaboration
